

Two Narrated Folktales in Kitumbatu: Wealth or Blessing, The Woodcutter and the Angel of Death

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Kitumbatu is a dialect of Swahili primarily spoken on Tumbatu Island, off the northwest tip of Unguja in Zanzibar. This article aims to present two folktales narrated by a speaker of the Gomani variety of Kitumbatu.

Keywords: Swahili, Kitumbatu, folktale

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1. Introduction*

This article presents two narrated folktales in Kitumbatu. In the coastal areas of Eastern Africa, there are several language varieties that are classified as Swahili dialects (Nurse and Hinnebusch 1993). Kitumbatu is one such dialect, primarily spoken on Tumbatu Island, off the northwest tip of Unguja Island in Zanzibar.¹

On Tumbatu, there are two wards: Gomani and Jongowe. The narrator of the present tales was from the former. Assuming that there is dialectal variation within the varieties summarised as ‘Kitumbatu’ (Furumoto 2020: 99), this article should be regarded as a material of Kitumbatu-Gomani.

2. Basic information of the text

2.1. Information on the recording

The recording was conducted by the author on 26 March 2017 in Gomani Ward on Tumbatu. The recorder and microphone were DR-05 and AT810F, respectively. The sampling rate was 44.1kHz, while the bit-depth was 16 bit. While four tales were included in the recording, only two are presented in this article. The speaker, Mzee Asani, narrated

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¹ The word Kitumbatu can be decomposed into *ki-* and *tumbatu*. The prefix *ki-* can function to form the names of various languages and dialects.



the tales to a number of local people. Before he started to tell the tales, he was given an explanation that the tales would be recorded. The author was not physically present while the tales were told. The transcription was carried out in cooperation with Faki Pandu Makame and Mtwana, who are also from Gomani.

The narrator, Mzee Asani, was a male in his sixties at the time of recording. He had lived in Gomani since birth, and used to go to the coastal areas of the Tanzania mainland and Pemba Island for fishing. The tales were handed down to him from his elders when they were in the fishermen's camps and the fields where they ploughed.

2.2. Transcription policy and outline of the Kitumbatu grammar

The following Kitumbatu phonemes are transcribed using the italicised orthography of Standard Swahili: the vowels /i, e [ɛ], a, o [ɔ], u/, the stops and affricate /p, t, ch [tʃ], k/, the prenasalised obstruents /mb, nd, nz, nj [nɔ̃], ng [ŋg]/, the implosives /b [ɓ], d [ɗ], j [ɟ], g [ɡ]/ the fricatives /f, v, th [θ], dh [ð], s, z, sh [ʃ], gh [ɣ], h/, the nasals /m, n, ny [ɲ], ng' [ŋ]/, the liquids /l, r/, and the approximants /y [j], w/. Note that the IPA symbols in brackets represent the approximate phonetic values of the respective sound. Additionally, the following transcription policy is adopted: aspiration and nasal syllabicity are marked with the IPA symbols assigned for them; the advanced palatal lateral approximant, which is peculiar to Kitumbatu, is represented by *l* and an apostrophe (*l'*); *∅* is used for a prefix without a phonological form; the first characters of passages and proper nouns are written in lowercase, and periods are not added at the ends of the passages; compounds are segmented by plus signs, reduplication is marked with tildes, and other morpheme boundaries are signalled by hyphens.

The glossing conventions primarily follow the Leipzig Glossing Rules. However, certain points should be noted for ease of interpretation of the text.

Nouns in Kitumbatu are categorised into several noun classes. I follow the classification of Standard Swahili, which differentiates noun classes numbered from 1 to 18 (minus 12–14) (Meinhof 1932: 128). In this classification, odd and even numbers correspond to singular and plural markings, respectively, with the exception of classes 15–18. Modifiers change their form according to the noun class of their head nouns, whereas verbs can be marked with the subject and object prefixes which alternate according to the noun classes of the subject and object nouns, respectively.

In the glosses of nouns and modifiers, noun class information is provided to show the agreement relationship; more precisely, the noun class information of the demonstrative and the subject and object prefixes is always noted; in contrast, when nouns and other modifiers lack correspondent(s) (e.g., head nouns, modifiers, and verbs), their noun class information is omitted. The noun class information is glossed using only the numbers. While the first and second persons are represented by numbers 1 and 2 in the same way as classes 1 and 2, they, unlike the class numbers, are shown together with SG or PL.

The referents of class 1 and 2 nouns are animate. Verbs in the infinitive form are categorised as class 15. Classes 16, 17 and 18 are the so-called locative classes, referring to places. For other noun classes, it is difficult to associate each noun class with a specific semantic class.

Some nouns as well as adjectives can be analysed as including a noun class prefix. However, they are not overtly segmented into a prefix and a stem unless the prefix functions as a diminutive or augmentative marker.

In addition to the subject and object prefixes, verbs can be accompanied by a TAM (tense-aspect-mood/modality) prefix. It should be noted that clause sequence is in most cases realised with the consecutive prefix *ka-*, which occurs in the TAM prefix slot, rather than with a specific conjunction marker.

Relative clause formation is also signalled through a prefix attached to verbs. The relative clause prefix changes its form according to the noun class of head nouns. Note that the class 16 (i.e., a locative class) relative clause prefix *po-* can function to form ‘when’ clauses, which often appear in the texts.

Non-borrowed verbs have a segmentable final vowel which alternates in accordance with TAM inflection. In the transcriptions, the final vowel is not overtly segmented. In glosses, colons are inserted between the lexical meaning of verbs and the inflectional value associated with the final vowel.

A class of verb stems can be analysed as including derivational suffixes which can, for example, be glossed as ‘causative’, ‘applicative’, ‘reciprocal’, ‘passive’, or ‘neuter’. This grammatical information is also shown using colons without overt segmentations of suffixes.

In some vowel-initial verb stems, morpheme boundary is blurred because the initial vowel is, at least on the surface, absorbed in the final syllable of the preceding morpheme. Because of this, vowel-initial verb stems as well as verbal prefixes (seem to) have allomorphs. Hyphens, which indicate morpheme boundaries, are inserted before the vowel which emerges as a result of concatenation (e.g., *wa-* + *-ita* > *w-eta*). Such vowel-initial verbs are accompanied by an empty morph *ku-* in certain environments. This empty morph is attached to monosyllabic verbs as well and is not overtly segmented in the transcriptions.

Syntactic units do not always correspond to phonetic phrases or blocks in terms of pronunciation. For example, subject noun phrases, which occur in the preverbal position by default, tend to be uttered together with the preceding clauses rather than with the related verbs. In the transcriptions, such intra-clause intervals are not overtly marked.

In the text, some influences of Standard Swahili can be observed. For example, the past prefix *li-*, which has likely been borrowed from the standard variety (cf. Miyazaki and Takemura 2019), is often used. For some words and expressions, the narrator seems to be able to consciously switch Kitumbatu and Standard Swahili, considering that he translated some Standard Swahili expressions into Kitumbatu.

3. The text of the tales

3.1. Wealth or blessing

- (1) *poukwa+pokwale² makame wa makame na msile wa-ka-takana*
 once_upon_a_time 1.PN CONN.1 PN COM PN SM2-CONSC-want:REC

wa-ka-oana *au wa-ka-l'ol'ana* *kwa kitumbatu*
 SM2-CONSC-marry:REC or SM2-CONSC-marry:REC with Tumbatu_dialect

‘Once upon a time, Makame of Makame and Msile were attracted to each other and they got married. In Kitumbatu, (we say) “*wakal'ol'ana*” (instead of “*wakaoana*” for “they got married”).’

- (2) *wa-ka-takana* *wa-ka-l'ol'ana* *wa-ka-vyal'a* *wana* *wao*
 SM2-CONSC-want:REC SM2-CONSC-marry:REC SM2-CONSC-bear 2.children their.2

sita ya *saba kichinjamimba*
 six CONN.1 seven lastborn_child

‘They were attracted to each other. They got married and had six children. The seventh one was the lastborn child.’

- (3) *sasa wa-ka-kal'a* *wa-ka-kal'a* *kwa bahati nzuri* *hata wale*
 now SM2-CONSC-stay SM2-CONSC-stay with 9.luck good.9 even DEM.DIST.2

wazee wao *wa-Ø-po-kufwa* *kwaza a-li-kufwa* *ḡmoja yule*
 old.2 their.2 SM2-PFV-REL16-die first SM1-PST-die one.1 DEM.DIST.1

‘And they lived happily. When their elders (parents) were on their deathbed, one of them (the father) passed away first.’

- (4) *badala ya* *ku-fwa yule* *ḡzee ḡmoja a-ka-w-eta*
 9.instead CONN.9 INF-die DEM.DIST.1 old.1 one.1 SM1-CONSC-OM2-call

wale *wanawe*
 DEM.DIST.2 children:his

‘When he was about to die, he called his children.’

- (5) *a-Ø-po-w-eta* *wale* *wanawe* *a-ka-wa-uza* *nyiye*
 SM1-PFV-REL16-OM2-call DEM.DIST.2 2.children:his SM2-CONSC-OM2-ask PRO.2PL

ḡ-na-taka *razi* *ama mali*
 SM2PL-IPFV-want blessing or wealth

‘When he had called his children, he asked them, “Which do you (ye) want, blessings or wealth?”’

- (6) *wale* *watoto* *sita wa-ka-taka* *mali* *yule* *ḡmoja*
 DEM.DIST.2 2.children six SM2-CONSC-want wealth DEM.DIST.1 one.1

kichinjamimba *a-ka-taka* *razi*
 lastborn_child SM1-CONSC-want blessing

‘The first six children wanted wealth, while the lastborn child wanted blessings.’

² *poukwa+pokwale* and *paukwa+pakawa* are typical phrases that indicate the beginning of tales. In general, the story teller says *poukwa* (or *paukwa*) and the audience responds to it with *pokwale* (or *pakawa*), although in this case the narrator of the present tales himself said both.

- (7) *kwa hivyo wale wa-ka-pewa mali na yule*
 with DEM.MED.8 DEM.DIST.2 SM2-CONSC-give:PASS wealth COM DEM.DIST.1
mwana a-ka-pewa razi
 1.child SM1-CONSC-give:PASS blessing
 ‘So, the six children were given wealth, while the (lastborn) child was given blessings.’
- (8) *hata a-Ø-po-kufwa mzee wao mwengine mami yao³ maana*
 even SM1-PFV-REL16-die old.1 their.1 other.1 1.mother their.9 reason
yule mzee wao kwaza babi yao sasa huyu mzee
 DEM.DIST.1 old.1 their.1 first 1.father their.9 now DEM.PROX.1 old.1
wao wa pili mami yao
 their.1 CONN.1 second 1.mother their.9
 ‘When the other one, their mother, was about to die. — That is, the first one (who passed away) was their father. This second one is their mother.’
- (9) *sasa huyu a-li-po-kufwa a-ka-wa-ita a-ka-wa-ambia au*
 now DEM.PROX.1 SM1-PST-REL16-die SM1-CONSC-OM2-call SM1-CONSC-OM2-tell or
a-ka-w-eta
 SM1-CONSC-OM2-call
 ‘When this (mother) was about to die, she called them (her children). Or (we say) “*akaweta*” (in Kitumbatu instead of “*akawaita*” for “she called them”).’
- (10) *a-Ø-po-w-eta wa-ka-ja wa-k-ambiwa m-na-taka*
 SM1-PFV-REL16-SM2-call SM2-CONSC-come SM2-CONSC-tell:PASS SM2PL-IPFV-want
nini wanangu mali ama razi
 what children:my wealth or blessing
 ‘When she called them, they came, and they were asked, “Which do you (ye) want, wealth or blessings?”’
- (11) *sasa wale wana sita wa-ka-sema suye tu-na-taka*
 now DEM.DIST.2 2.children six SM2-CONSC-say PRO.1PL SM1PL-IPFV-want
mali
 wealth
 ‘The six children said, “We want wealth.”’

³ Some kinship nouns such as *mami* ‘mother’, *babi* ‘father’, and *ndugu* ‘sibling’ primarily follow the agreement pattern of classes 1 (singular) and 2 (plural). The possessive pronouns corresponding to these nouns, however, appear in the class 9 (singular) and class 10 (plural) forms.

- (12) *yule kichanjamimba a-ka-sema miye na-taka razi*
 DEM.DIST.1 1.lastborn_child SM1-CONSC-say PRO.1SG SM1SG:IPFV-want blessing
 ‘The lastborn child said “I want blessings.”’
- (13) *sasa wale wa-li-kaa pale nyumba-ni baadaye kwa*
 NOW DEM.DIST.2 SM2-PST-stay DEM.DIST.16 house-LOC afterwards with
muda mrefu kidogo wa-ka-mw-angasa yule ndugu yao
 3.duration long.3 little SM2-CONSC-OM1-chase DEM.DIST.1 1.sibling their.9
 ‘Then they stayed at home afterwards for a short while. They (the six children) chased away their brother (the lastborn child).’
- (14) *ku-sha-fahamu ku-mw-angasa wa-li-m-fukuza*
 SM2SG-COMPL-understand INF-OM1-chase SM2-PST-OM1-chase
 ‘Have you (the audience) understood (the meaning of) “*kumwangasa*” (to chase him away)? They chased him away.’
- (15) *wa-ka-mw-angasa wa-ka-mw-ambia na hii nyumba mali*
 SM2-CONSC-OM1-chase SM2-CONSC-OM1-tell COM DEM.PROX.9 9.house 9.wealth
yetu we ku-taka razi nenda ka-l’ye razi
 our.9 PRO.2SG SM2SG-want:PFV blessing go:IMP ITV-eat:IMP 10.blessing
zako huko ka-l’ye razi zako
 your.10 DEM.MED.17 ITV-eat:IMP 10.blessing your.10
 ‘When they chased him away, they told him, “This house is our property (wealth). You wanted blessings. Go and enjoy your blessings. Go and enjoy your blessings.”’
- (16) *yule ndugu yao wa-ka-m-toa mle nyumba-ni*
 DEM.DIST.1 1.sibling their.9 SM2-CONSC-OM1-put_out DEM.DIST.18 house-LOC
kwa njia ya ku-mw-angasa
 with 9.road CONN.9 INF-OM1-chase
 ‘As for their brother, they kicked him out of the house.’
- (17) *sasa a-k-enda huko a-ka-eshi a-ka-eshi a-ka-eshi*
 now SM1-CONSC-go DEM.MED.17 SM1-CONSC-stay SM1-CONSC-stay SM1-CONSC-stay
 ‘Then he (the lastborn child) reached a place and lived a life there.’
- (18) *kwa bahati nzuri kule a-Ø-ko-kwenda a-k-enda*
 with 9.luck good.9 DEM.MED.17 SM1-PFV-REL17-go SM1-CONSC-go
a-ka-pata mtu mwema
 SM1-CONSC-get 1.person good.1
 ‘Fortunately, he came upon a good person in the place where he reached.’

- (19) *a-ka-wa a-na-ishi na-e pale bi-mkubwa mmoja au*
 SM1-CONSC-COP SM1-IPFV-live COM-PRO1 DEM.DIST.16 Mrs.-big.1 one.1 or
bi-kikongwe
 Mrs.-old.7
 ‘He lived with this person, an aged person, an old lady, there.’
- (20) *a-ka-ishi pale kama mwanawe yule a-ka-ishi*
 SM1-CONSC-live DEM.DIST.16 like 1.child:her DEM.DIST.1 SM1-CONSC-live
na-e baadae a-ka-wa tajiri yule kijana
 COM-PRO1 afterwards SM1-CONSC-COP 1.rich DEM.DIST.1 1.young_man
yule
 DEM.DIST.1
 ‘He lived there as if he were her child. He lived with her, and finally, he, the young man, became rich.’
- (21) *badala ya ku-wa tajiri sasa wale wa-Ø-o-taka mali na*
 instead CONN.9 INF-COP rich now DEM.DIST.2 SM2-PFV-REL2-want wealth COM
mali wa-taka mali wale wa-li-kwenda majambazi pale
 wealth SM2-want:PFV wealth DEM.DIST.2 SM2-PST-go rogues DEM.DIST.16
 ‘For those who had wanted wealth, they wanted wealth, (but) they became rogues instead of being rich.’
- (22) *wa-ka-wa-nyng’anya ile mali wa-ka-iba*
 SM2-CONSC-OM2-rob DEM.DIST.9 9.wealth SM2-CONSC-steal
 ‘They committed robbery. They committed theft.’
- (23) *wa-ka-baki ha-wa-na kit^hu sasa i-li-bidi yule*
 SM2-CONSC-remain NEG-SM2-have thing now SM9-PST-compel DEM.DIST.1
yule ndugu yao kule wa-li-m-taka
 DEM.DIST.1 1.sibling their.9 DEM.DIST.17 SM2-PST-OM1-want
 ‘They remained (home, but) they did not have anything. So, they needed their brother (the lastborn child).’
- (24) *a-ka-ja pale kwa hapa suye tu-na-sema*
 SM1-CONSC-come DEM.DIST.16 with DEM.PROX.16 PRO.1PL 1PL.SM-IPFV-say
ndugu yao mwana+kwao⁴ mwana+kwao halafu a-ka-ja
 1.sibling their.9 child+their.17 child+their.17 later SM1-CONSC-come
pale
 DEM.DIST.16
 ‘Their brother, we call “*mwanakwao*” in the dialect of this place rather than “*ndugu yao*” (as in Standard Swahili), came there.’

- (25) *wa-ka-elewana badala yao yule yule ndo*
 SM2-CONSC-compromise 9.instead their.9 DEM.DIST.1 DEM.DIST.1 EMPH
a-ka-wa ile mali badala yao i-Ø-yo-baki
 SM1-CONSC-COP DEM.DIST.9 9.wealth 9.instead their.9 SM9-PFV-REL9-remain
a-ka-wa ndo ka-na-y-endesha veye au ka-na-i-l'ongoza
 SM1-CONSC-COP EMPH SM1-IPFV-OM9-manage PRO.1 or SM1-IPFV-OM9-manage
kwa ki-hapa
 with 7-DEM.PROX.16
 'They compromised in that instead of them, he (the lastborn child) would manage the property (wealth) that remained. In the local dialect of this place, (we say) "kanailongoza" (rather than "kanayendesha" for "he manages the property").'
- (26) *sasa wale jamaa wa-ka-ishilia patupu*
 now DEM.DIST.2 2.fellows SM2-CONSC-live:APPL empty.16
 'The elder brothers (who had wanted wealth) lived in the empty place.'
- (27) *a-ka-wa yule mw-e-taka razi a-ka-faulu ndo*
 SM1-CONSC-COP DEM.DIST.1 REL:SM1-PFV-want blessing SM1-CONSC-succeed EMPH
mwisho hapa
 end DEM.PROX.16
 'The one who wanted blessings succeeded. The tale is over here.'

⁴ The possessive pronouns of classes 16, 17, and 18 (locative classes) can refer to places of the possessor. This considered, the literal translation of *mwana+kwao* (child+our.17) can be 'a child in their place.' In the same vein as *mwana+kwao*, *mwana+kwetu* (child+our.17) and *mwana+kwenu* (child+your.17) mean 'our brother' and 'your brother', respectively.

3.2. The woodcutter and the angel of death

- (1) *paukwa+pakawa hapo zamani za kale ku-li-kuwa*
 once_upon_a_time DEM.MED.16 10.long_ago CONN.10 long_ago SM17-PST-COP
na mwenda+k^huni⁵ mmoja
 COM 1.woodcutter one.1
 ‘Once upon a time, there was a woodcutter.’
- (2) *a-li-kuwa hapo mzee mmoja wa kiume kazi yakwe*
 SM1-PST-COP DEM.MED.16 old.1 one.1 CONN.1 male 9.work his.9
a-li-kuwa ka-na-kwenda k^huni tu
 SM1-PST-COP SM1-IPFV-go wood only
 ‘He was an old man. For his work, he only used to go to cut wood.’
- (3) *ka-na-kwenda k^huni a-ka-ja a-ka-m-k^ha mkewe*
 SM1-IPFV-go wood SM1-CONSC-COME SM1-CONSC-OM1-give wife:his
a-ka-piga mafungu pale
 SM1-CONSC-hit portion DEM.DIST.16
 ‘He used to go to cut wood. (Every time) he came (back home), he gave it to his wife, and she made bundles of wood.’
- (4) *zi-k-ozwa zi-k-esha-kuzwa hu-patwa pesa wat^hu*
 SM10-CONSC-sell:PASS SM10-CONSC-finish-sell:PASS HAB-get:PASS money 2.people
wa-k-eza posho
 SM2-CONSC-see necessities
 ‘And then the bundles were sold. After the bundles were sold, money was obtained. The people (the man and his wife) used to seek necessities (for life with the money).’
- (5) *sasa siku moja yule mwenda+k^huni yule a-li-choka*
 now 9.day one.9 DEM.DIST.1 1.woodcutter DEM.DIST.1 SM1-PST-get_tired
kwa juwa
 with sun
 ‘One day, the woodcutter got tired from the sun.’
- (6) *ka-ji-sitiri mahal’a ch^hini ya kiburi*
 SM1-REFL-shelter:PFV place 9.ground CONN.9 shade
 ‘He found shelter under the shade.’

⁵ The compound *mwenda+k^huni* ‘woodcutter (woodman)’ can be decomposed into *mwenda* ‘the one who goes’, derived from *-enda* ‘go’, and *k^huni* ‘wood.’

- (7) *sasa badala ya ku-ji-sitiri pale ch^hini ya*
 now 9.afterwards CONN.9 INF-REFL-shelter DEM.DIST.16 9.ground CONN.9
kiburi a-li-pita m^hu mweupe au mwepe sana⁶
 shade SM1-PST-pass 1.person white.1 or white.1 very
 ‘While sitting under the shade, a very white man passed by there.’
- (8) *kwa bahati nzuri yule m^hu mw-e-pita pale*
 with 9.luck good.9 DEM.DIST.1 1.person REL:SM1-PFV-pass DEM.DIST.16
a-ka-fanya kama he-m-ona kamwe
 SM1-CONSC-do like NEG:SM1:PFV-OM1-see at_all
 ‘Fortunately, the man who passed by there behaved as if he did not see the man
 (under the shade) at all.’
- (9) *k-onwa huyu mw-e kiburi-ni hapa*
 SM1-see:PASS:PFV DEM.PROX.1 REL:SM1-PFV shade-LOC DEM.PROX.16
k-onwa ni yule m-na-pita
 SM1-see:PASS:PFV by DEM.DIST.16 REL:SM1-IPFV-pass
 ‘(But) the man under the shade was seen by the one who passed by there.’
- (10) *sasa huyu a-li-ja vyakwe⁷ mbele ku-fika mbele*
 now DEM.PROX.1 SM1-PST-come his.8 front INF-arrive front
a-ka-sikia wat^hu wa-na-kuja
 SM1-CONSC-hear 2.people SM2-IPFV-come
 ‘The man (who passed by there) moved forward and found that people were
 coming.’
- (11) *rongorongorongorongo a-k-enda-ji-gel’uza kisiiki pale*
 ONOM[Voice of crowd] SM1-CONSC-go-REFL-transform log DEM.DIST.16
 ‘He transformed himself into a wood log there.’
- (12) *ku-ji-gel’uza a-ka-sikia a-ka-pita mmoja kile kisiiki*
 INF-REFL-transform SM1-CONSC-hear SM1-CONSC-pass one.1 DEM.DIST.7 7.log
ki-ka-m-chana
 SM7-CONSC-OM1-slit
 ‘One person heard the transformation and came close to the log. The log cut that
 person.’

⁶ The narrator translated the Standard Swahili form *mweupe* ‘white’ into the Kitumbatu form *mwepe*.

⁷ The class 8 possessive pronouns co-occur with *-ja* ‘come’ and *-enda* ‘go’ to express movement without indicating concrete goals.

- (13) *ku-m̄-chana yule damu puripuripuripuri*
 INF-OM1-slit DEM.DIST.1 10.blood ONOM[sound of bleeding]
zi-na-m̄-lawā zile damu zi-ka-wa
 SM10-IPFV-OM1-come_out DEM.DIST.10 10.blood SM10-CONSC-COP
zi-na-m̄-lawā mara a-ka-dok^hoka
 SM10-IPFV-OM1-come_out once SM1-CONSC-break_off
 ‘As a result of cutting that person, blood was running out, blood was running out.
 Finally, he bled to death.’
- (14) *badala ya ku-sha-ku-dok^hoka yule*
 9.afterwards CONN.9 INF-finish-INF-break_off DEM.DIST.9
wa-Ø-po-kwisha-uka wale war^hu kile kisiki
 SM2-PFV-REL16-finish-leave DEM.DIST.2 2.people DEM.DIST.7 7.log
ki-ka-ji-rudi m^hu vile~vile
 SM7-CONSC-REFL-return person DEM.DIST.8~RED
 ‘After his death, when the crowd of people had left, that log again transformed
 itself into a man.’
- (15) *ki-k-enda vyakwe hata ku-fika mbele a-ka-sikia wana⁸*
 SM7-CONSC-go his.9 even INF-arrive front SM1-CONSC-hear 2.children
wengine wa-na-kuja
 other.2 SM2-IPFV-come
 ‘It (he) went forwards and then found other people were coming.’
- (16) *baada ya ku-wa wa-na-kuja wale*
 9.afterwards CONN.9 INF-COP SM2-IPFV-come DEM.DIST.2
ki-ka-ji-gel’uza miembe⁹
 SM7-CONSC-REFL-transform mango_tree
 ‘Once they came, it (he) transformed itself (himself) into a mango tree.’
- (17) *yule babu yule a-ka-ji-gel’uza miembe*
 DEM.DIST.1 1.father DEM.DIST.1 SM1-CONSC-REFL-transform mango_tree
a-ka-tojesa yembe haba pale ch^hi
 SM1-CONSC-fall:CAUS mangoes few DEM.DIST.16 ground
 ‘The man transformed himself into a mango tree and dropped mangoes to the
 ground.’

⁸ In (15), the noun *wana* ‘children’ is used to refer to people, rather children.

⁹ While in Standard Swahili *miembe* is categorised as a plural noun of class 4, in Kitumbatu it is a singular noun of class 3, as suggested by its agreement pattern.

- (18) *lakini kule jul'u ku-na nyingi zile yembe*
 but DEM.DIST.17 upwards SM17-have many.10 DEM.DIST.10 10.mangoes
sasa
 now
 'But there were a lot of mangoes up (in the tree).'
- (19) *he mayembe mayembe wa-ka-l'okota pale*
 INTJ mangoes mangoes SM2-CONSC-pick_up DEM.DIST.16
 "'Mangoes! Mangoes!' They picked up (mangoes).'
- (20) *wa-k-ona aa hizi he-z-e-tu-tosha*
 SM2-CONSC-see INTJ DEM.PROX.10 NEG-SM10-PFV-1PL-suffice
 'And they thought, "These (mangoes) do not suffice for us (There's not enough for us)."'
- (21) *wa-fanye maarifa ili wa-pate zile zi-Ø-zo*
 SM2-do:SBJV plan in_order_to SM2-get:SBJV DEM.DIST.10 SM10-PFV-REL10
jul'u
 upwards
 'They needed to make a plan in order to get those (mangoes) up (in the tree).'
- (22) *katika yale maarifarifa yao li-li-kwanyuka lile tawi*
 in DEM.DIST.6 6.plan their.6 SM5-PST-break.NEU DEM.DIST.5 5.branch
moja li-ka-m-piga mmoja a-ka-fwa pale~pale
 one.5 SM5-CONSC-OM1-hit one.1 SM1-CONSC-die DEM.DIST.16~RED
 'While they were talking, a branch broke off the tree, and hit a man. (As a result,) he died there.'
- (23) *a-Ø-po-kwisha-kufa yule wa-ka-m-chukul'a weziye*
 SM1-PFV-REL16-finish-die DEM.DIST.1 SM2-CONSC-OM1-take fellow:his
wa-k-enda vyao
 SM2-CONSC-go their.8
 'After he died, his friends picked him up and they left there.'
- (24) *wa-k-enda vyao kwa bahati nzuri*
 SM2-CONSC-go their.8 with 9.luck good.9
wa-Ø-po-kwisha-ji-sita ule miembe
 SM2-PFV-REL16-finish-REFL-move_away DEM.DIST.3 3.mango_tree
u-ka-ji-kukut^ha u-ka-rudi vile~vile mwanaadamu kama
 SM3-CONSC-REFL-shake SM3-CONSC-return DEM.DIST.8~RED human like
kawaida
 usual

‘They left there, luckily. Once they disappeared, the mango tree shook itself and then it again transformed into an ordinary person.’

- (25) *sasa yule babu yule kule yule mwenda+k^huni*
 NOW DEM.DIST.1 1.father DEM.DIST.1 DEM.DIST.17 DEM.DIST.1 1.woodcutter
yule a-ka-m-piga kelele ee babu we ni-ngoja
 DEM.DIST.1 SM1-CONSC-OM1-hit noise INTJ 1.father PRO.2SG OM1SG-wait:IMP
ni-ngoja ni-ngoja
 OM1SG-wait:IMP OM1SG-wait:IMP

‘The woodcutter shouted out, “Sir, wait for me, wait for me, wait for me!”’

- (26) *yule babu a-ka-m-ngoja*
 DEM.DIST.1 1.father SM1-CONSC-OM1-wait

‘The man (who had been a mango tree) was waiting for him.’

- (27) *a-Ø-po-m-ngoja je vipi*
 SM1-PFV-REL16-OM1-wait ITRG how

‘While he was waiting, (he asked,) “What happened?”’

- (28) *a-ka-sema aa lel’o u-ma-ni-l’anga ajabu k^hubwa maana*
 SM1-CONSC-say INTJ today SM2SG-PRF-OM1SG-show 9.wonder big.9 reason
pale u-Ø-po-pita pale ni-vu pale
 DEM.DIST.16 SM2SG-PFV-REL16-PASS DEM.DIST.16 SM1-PST:COP DEM.DIST.16

kichaka-ni hw-e-ny-ona
 bush-LOC NEG:SM2SG-PFV-OM1SG-see

‘Then he (the woodcutter) said, “Today, you showed me a big wonder. (I was) at the place where you passed. I was in the bush, and you did not see me.”’

- (29) *lakini kamwe yule babu ka-m-ono yule ndo*
 but actually DEM.DIST.1 1.father SM1-OM1-see:PFV DEM.DIST.1 EMPH
ka-na-mu-onesha makusudi kwa ku-wa ka-m-ono
 SM1-IPFV-OM1-see:CAUS intentionally with INF-COP SM1-OM1-see:PFV

‘However, in reality, the man (who showed the wonder) had seen him (the woodcutter). He was showing (himself) to the man (the woodcutter) on purpose. Because of this, he (the woodcutter) saw the man (who showed the wonder).’

- (30) *pale u-ma-geuka kisi ku-m-chana m^hu*
 DEM.DIST.16 SM2SG-PRF-transform log SM2SG-OM1-split:PFV 1.person
ke-sha-dok^hoka pale
 SM1-COMPL-break:NEU DEM.DIST.16

‘“You transformed into a wood log there. You cut a man. He has fallen dead.”’

- (31) *u-ma-ji-gel'uza miembe u-ma-m-piga mt^hu tawi*
 SM2SG-PRF-REFL-transform mango_tree SM2SG-PRF-OM1-hit 1.person branch
ke-sha-dok^hoka
 SM1-COMPL-break:NEU
 ‘‘You transformed yourself into a mango tree there. You hit a person with a branch,
 and he has fallen dead.’’
- (32) *aka vipi hebu kwaza ny-ambia*
 INTJ how INTJ first OM1SG-tell:IMP
 ‘‘How? Just tell me.’’
- (33) *a-ka-mw-ambia kwani babu mie hu-n-iji*
 SM1-CONSC-OM1-tell ITRG father PRO.1SG NEG:SM2SG-OM1SG-know
 ‘He (who showed the wonder) replied, ‘‘Don’t you know me, sir?’’
- (34) *aa si-kw-iji*
 INTJ NEG:SM1SG-OM2SG-know
 ‘‘I don’t know you.’’
- (35) *u-ka-sikia zirairi ndo mie*
 SM2SG-COND-hear angel_of_death EMPH PRO.1SG
 ‘‘If you hear of the angel of death, that’s me.’’
- (36) *aka iyo weye ehe zirairi ee*
 INTJ DEM.MED.1 PRO.2SG INTJ angel_of_death INTJ
 ‘‘Is it you?’’ ‘‘Yes.’’ ‘‘The angel of death?’’ ‘‘Yes.’’
- (37) *a-ka-sema pale ni-Ø-po-ji-gel'uza kisiki pale*
 SM1-CONSC-say DEM.DIST.16 SM1SG-PFV-REL16-REFL-transform log DEM.DIST.16
pale tena si-na-tajwa
 DEM.DIST.16 again NEG:SM1SG-IPFV-mention:PASS
 ‘He said, ‘‘When I transformed myself into a wood log there, I was not
 recognised.’’
- (38) *ndimi za war^hu mbaya wale wa-ta-taja huko*
 10.tongues CONN.10 people bad.10 DEM.DIST.2 SM2-FUT-mention DEM.MED.17
ka-ul'wa ni kisiki
 SM1-kill:PASS by log
 ‘‘The tongues of the people were bad. Probably, they said that he was killed by
 the log.’’

- (39) *na hapa a-Ø-po-pigwa ni tawi huyu*
 COM DEM.PROX.16 SM1-PFV-REL16-hit:PASS by branch DEM.PROX.1
wa-t-enda-taja ka-pigwa ni tawi lya miembe miye
 SM2-FUT-go-mention SM1-hit:PASS:PFV by 5.branch CONN.5 mango_tree PRO.1SG
ha-wa-ta-ni-taja hawa
 NEG-SM2-FUT-OM1SG-mention DEM.PROX.2
 ‘‘And in the place where he was hit by the branch. Probably, they mentioned that he was hit by a branch of the mango tree. It is likely that they did not mention me.’’
- (40) *sasa zile ndo t^hegerezo zangu na-mo-patia wat^hu*
 NOW DEM.DIST.10 EMPH 10.traps my.10 SM1SG:IPFV-REL18-get:APPL people
 ‘‘They (mangoes) are my traps which catch people.’’
- (41) *aa weye si-ye kwani kama weye ndi-ye miye*
 INTJ PRO.2SG NEG-PRO1 ITRG if PRO.2SG EMPH-PRO1 PRO.1SG
sa-kufwa vipi kifo changu ki-ta-kuja vipi
 SM1SG:FUT-die how 7.death my.7 SM7-FUT-come how
 ‘‘No, you are not (the angel of death). If you are, how will I die? How will death come to me?’’
- (42) *a-ka-mw-ambia we ku-ta-fwa bahari we ku-t-enda*
 SM1-CONSC-OM1-tell PRO.2SG SM2SG-FUT-die sea PRO.2SG SM2SG-FUT-go
ku-fa bahari-ni
 INF-die sea-LOC
 ‘He (the angel of death) told him (the woodcutter) ‘‘You will die in the sea. You will (go and) die in the sea.’’
- (43) *yule mt^hu a-li-pendezwa sana kwa kw-ambiwa ka-nda*
 DEM.DIST.1 1.person SM1-PST-like:CAUS:PASS very with INF-tell:PASS SM1-go
ku-fwa bahari-ni maana kule a-li-ko ha-i-ko
 INF-die 9.sea-LOC reason DEM.DIST.17 SM1-COP-REL17 NEG-SM9-PRO17
 ‘The man (the woodcutter) was pleased to be told that he would (go and) die in the sea because there was no sea in the place where he was.’
- (44) *ka-wa bara jul’u uko*
 SM1-COP:PFV inland upwards DEM.MED.17
 ‘He was far inland.’

- (45) *kwa bahati nzuri yule a-li-kal'a miaka yakwe*
 with 9.luck good.9 DEM.DIST.1 SM1-PST-stay 4.years his.4
a-na-yo-kal'a wee a-ka-kal'a wee a-ka-kal'a wee
 SM1-IPFV-REL4-stay INTJ SM1-CONSC-stay INTJ SM1-CONSC-stay INTJ
 'Fortunately, the man (woodcutter) lived a long life.'
- (46) *a-li-zukulu kw-enda ku-tembel'a ku-tembelea we kamwe kule*
 SM1-PST-think INF-go INF-walk INF-walk:APPL INTJ at_all DEM.DIST.17
ku-vu si kwao
 SM17-PST:COP NEG their.17
 '(One day,) he (the woodcutter) made up his mind to go on a tour. The place (where
 was planning to visit) was not his place at all.'
- (47) *kule ka-vu k-ende ki-maisha tu kama vile*
 DEM.DIST.17 SM1-PST:COP SM1-go:PFV DIM-life only like DEM.DIST.8
tu-na-vyo-m-ona yule mwezetu hapo ki-mara
 SM1PL-IPFV-REL8-OM1-see DEM.DIST.1 fellow:OUR DEM.MED.16 DIM-temporary
 'He visited the place temporarily, as we go to see a friend somewhere temporarily.'
- (48) *sasa ka-na-ja-tizama wazee wakwe*
 now SM1-IPFV-come-see 2.old his.2
 'He was going to see his elders (parents).'
- (49) *a-Ø-po-kuja hapa kwa mfano kama ja hapa*
 SM1-PFV-REL16-come DEM.PROX.16 with example like like DEM.PROX.16
petu siku hiyo a-k-enda pale kichangani¹⁰
 OUR.16 9.day DEM.MED.9 SM1-CONSC-go DEM.DIST.16 PN
 'When he arrived here. It was a place like here, our place, for example. On that
 day, he went to Kichangani.'
- (50) *a-Ø-po-fika pale kichangani pale tena*
 SM1-PFV-REL16-arrive DEM.DIST.16 PN DEM.DIST.16 again
he-kuja kwa mtumbwi ka-jiswa hapo irara¹¹ kwa
 NEG:SM1:PFV-come with boat SM1-bring:PASS DEM.MED.16 PN with
helikopta
 helicopter
 'When he arrived at Kichangani, he did not come by boat, but he was brought to
 Irara by helicopter.'

¹⁰ Gomani is otherwise called Kichangani.

- (51) *a-Ø-po-fika pale a-ka-y-ona yale maji*
 SM1-PFV-REL16-arrive DEM.DIST.16 SM1-CONSC-OM6-see DEM.DIST.6 6.water
ya-pwi y-ende huko
 SM6-ebb:PFV SM6-go:PFV DEM.MED.17
 ‘When he arrived there, he found that the tide had ebbed and gone out.’
- (52) *a-ka-sema a kama mt^hu ka-vu ka-wahi mapema*
 SM1-CONSC-say INTJ if 1.person SM1-PST:COP SM1-be_in_time:PFV early
a-nge-diriki nda pata vi-pweza na vi-kunga pale popo
 SM1-CFL-be_able_to go get DIM-octopus COM DIM-eel DEM.DIST.16 PN
lakini kesho sa-l’amka mapema ni-pite hapo
 but tomorrow SM1SG:FUT-wake_up early SM1SG-pass:SBJV DEM.MED.16
fundiyoni¹² ni-kat^he njiti zangu za njori basi
 PN SM1SG-cut:SBJV 10.sticks my.10 CONN.10 spear INTJ
 ‘He said, “If a man had come here earlier, he would have been able to go catch octopuses and eels on Popo Island. Tomorrow, I will wake up early. I should pass through Fundiyoni, and I should cut sticks to make fishing spears.”’
- (53) *siku ya pili a-li-fanya juhudi k^hubwa a-ka-l’amka*
 9.day CONN.9 second SM1-PST-do 9.effort big.9 SM1-CONSC-wake_up
mapema a-k-enda pale fundiyoni
 early SM1-CONSC-go DEM.DIST.16 PN
 ‘The next day, he did his best; he woke up early, and he went to Fundiyoni.’
- (54) *a-ka-kat^ha njiti za kw-eza njori a-ka-funga njori*
 SM1-CONSC-cut 10.sticks CONN.10 INF-be_able_to spears SM1-CONSC-tie spears
a-ka-teleṃka hapo usawa wa pa-Ø-po-ja
 SM1-CONSC-descend DEM.MED.16 11.direction CONN.11 SM16-PFV-REL16-come
pa-ka-wikwa vyombo hapo
 SM16-CONSC-put:PASS boats DEM.MED.16
 ‘He cut sticks for fishing spears, made spears, and then went down to the place where the boats had been moored.’
- (55) *a-ka-wa ka-nda a-k-emba nyimbo zakwe we wat^hu*
 SM1-CONSC-COP SM1-go SM1-CONSC-sing 10.songs his.10 INTJ 2.people
wa-na-chokol’a veye ha-na a-na-cho-kona
 SM2-IPFV-spear PRO.1 NEG:SM1-have SM1-IPFV-REL7-see
 ‘Then he went and he sang a song. Others were spearing fish, while he could find nothing.’

¹¹ There is a place called Irara in Gomani.

¹² There is a place called Fundiyoni in Gomani.

- (56) *sasa wakati wa ku-rudi yule a-li-katiza pale*
 now 11.time CONN.11 INF-return DEM.DIST.1 SM1-PST-CUT:CAUS DEM.DIST.16
 ‘When he returned (the place where he stayed at), he took a shortcut there.’
- (57) *a-ka-li-kut^ha kongwa hilyo*
 SM1-CONSC-OM5-meet 5.fork DEM.MED.5
 ‘He encountered a forked stick.’
- (58) *pa-na mpandikizi wa nyambo jambo hili*
 SM16-have 3.giant CONN.3 octopus 5.AUG:OCTOPUS DEM.PROX.5
jambo kubwa hilyo
 5.AUG:OCTOPUS big.5 DEM.MED.5
 ‘There was a giant octopus. It was huge.’
- (59) *lile jambo li-Ø-po-m-ona yule mt^hu*
 DEM.DIST.5 5.AUG:OCTOPUS SM5-PFV-REL16-OM1-see DEM.DIST.1 1.person
li-ka-ngia m^hle nyumba-ni mwakwe kutubwi
 SM5-CONSC-enter DEM.DIST.18 house-LOC his.18 ONOM[sound of sinking]
 ‘Upon seeing the man, the octopus went into its den.’
- (60) *a-k-anza ku-toa mabwe yakwe mifinge ile*
 SM1-CONSC-start INF-put_out 6.stones his.6 4.stones DEM.DIST.4
a-ka-toa mifinge kila a-ka-toa yule nyambo
 SM1-CONSC-put_out stones every SM1-CONSC-put_out DEM.DIST.1 1.octopus
ka-na-jisa mapya kila a-ka-toa ka-na-jisa mapya kila
 SM1-IPFV-bring new.6 every SM1-CONSC-put_out SM1-IPFV-bring new.6 every
a-ka-toa ka-na-jisa mapya
 SM1-CONSC-put_out SM1-IPFV-bring new.6
 ‘The octopus started to put out stones. It put out stones, and then it brought new ones (stones). Once it put out stones, it brought new ones. Once it put out stones, it brought new ones.’
- (61) *yale maji ya-na-jal’a*
 DEM.DIST.6 6.water SM6-IPFV-rise
 ‘The water (tide) was rising.’
- (62) *k-ogelea ha-v-iji he*
 INF-SWIM NEG:SM1-OM8-know INTJ
 ‘He did not know how to swim.’

- (63) *a-k-ona hapa maji ya nyonga sasa*
 SM1-CONSC-see DEM.PROX.16 6.water CONN.6 waist now
 ‘He realised that the water had reached waist level.’
- (64) *kule ku-na mwanambasha*
 DEM.DIST.17 SM17-have PN
 ‘There was (a river called) Mwanambasha.’
- (65) *k-ogelea si-v-iji huyu nyambo huyu*
 INF-SWIM NEG:SM1SG-OM8-KNOW DEM.PROX.1 1.OCTOPUS DEM.PROX.1
ni-mw-ache kesho ni-je ni-fikile mwazo
 SM1SG-OM1-leave:SBJV tomorrow SM1SG-COME:SBJV SM1SG-arrive:APPL:SBJV first
huyu
 DEM.PROX.1
 ‘(He said,) “I do not know how to swim. For this octopus, I must give up. Tomorrow, I should come to (catch) this.”’
- (66) *a-ka-wika alama yakwe ya ule ujiti k^hando kidogo*
 SM1-CONSC-put 9.mark his.9 CONN.9 DEM.DIST.11 11.wood 9.edge little
ya ile p^hango a-ka-ja vyakwe
 CONN.9 DEM.DIST.9 9.hole SM1-CONSC-COME his.8
vyavyavyavyavyavyavya
 ONOM[sound of walking by the waterside]
 ‘He left a wooden mark at the edge of the hole. Then he went on his way.’
- (67) *yale maji ya-na-ḡ-zidi tu a-ka-ja vyakwe*
 DEM.DIST.6 6.water SM6-IPFV-OM1-exceed only SM1-CONSC-COME his.8
 ‘The water level exceeded his height while he was making his way.’
- (68) *hata a-Ø-po-fika mwanambasha pale a-ka-ngia katika*
 even SM1-PFV-REL16-arrive PN DEM.DIST.16 SM1-CONSC-enter in
kidimbwi cha ḡsewele
 7.pool CONN.7 crab
 ‘When he reached Mwanambasha, he fell into a tide pool of crabs.’
- (69) *na ḡle vidimbwi-ni mwa ḡsewele maji hu-wa hu-wa*
 COM DEM.DIST.18 pool-18.LOC CONN.18 crab 6.water HAB-COP HAB-COP
mengi a-ka-tukumia kutubwi
 many.6 SM1-CONSC-drown ONOM[sound of drowning]
 ‘There was a large amount of water in the tide pool. He was drowning.’

- (70) *basi ile shahada yakwe mengi ile mengi ile*
 INTJ DEM.DIST.9 9.last_word his.9 many DEM.DIST.9 many DEM.DIST.9
 ‘His last word was “*mengi*” (many).’

- (71) *zirairi a-ka-ja a-ka-mw-ambia je*
 1.angel_of_death SM1-CONSC-COME SM1-CONSC-OM1-tell ITRG
se-kw-ambia ku-ta-fwa bahari weye
 NEG:SM1SG:PFV-OM2SG-tell SM2SG-FUT-die sea PRO.2SG
 ‘(When he said this word,) the angel of death emerged and asked him, “Did I not tell you that you would die in the sea?”’

- (72) *i-ka-wa ndo isha hadithi*
 SM9-CONSC-COP EMPH finish 9.tale
 ‘The tale ends.’

Abbreviations

APPL	applicative	ITV	itive
AUG	augmentative	LOC	locative
CAUS	causative	MED	medial
CFL	counterfactual	NEG	negative
COM	comitative	NEU	neuter
COMPL	completive	OM	object marker
COND	conditional	ONOM	onomatopoeia
CONN	connective	PASS	passive
CONSC	consecutive	PFV	perfective
COP	copula	PN	proper noun
DEM	demonstrative	PL	plural
DIM	diminutive	PRF	perfect
DIST	distal	PRO	pronoun
EMPH	emphatic	PROX	proximal
FUT	future	PST	past
HAB	habitual	REC	reciprocal
IMP	imperative	RED	reduplication
INTJ	interjection	REFL	reflexive
INF	infinitive	REL	relative clause
IPFV	imperfective	SG	singular
ITRG	interrogative	SM	subject marker
		SBJV	subjunctive

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