

The Morphosyntax and Functions of Demonstratives in Kiwoso

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This paper examines the morphology, syntax and functions of demonstratives in Kiwoso. Similarly to other nominal modifiers in Bantu language, demonstratives are closely tied to the noun class system, exhibiting agreement in number and grammatical gender. Kiwoso distinguishes three-way system of demonstratives: proximal, medial, and distal. Syntactically, demonstratives serve both as pronominal replacing nouns, and adnominal modifying nouns. Canonically, adnominal demonstratives occur post-nominally. However, depending on the functions they serve, they can appear before the nouns, for example in copular constructions. In terms of functions, demonstratives in Kiwoso serve several other functions in addition to spatial deixis, the basic function of demonstratives across languages. Demonstratives are used for emphasis and recognitional purposes. This paper offers a detailed description of demonstratives, situating Kiwoso within the broader linguistic typology of Bantu languages. The findings contribute to a deeper understanding of morpho-syntactic structures, linguistic and communicative uses of demonstratives in Bantu languages.

Keywords: *morphosyntax, semantics, demonstratives, Kiwoso, Bantu*

1 Introduction

Demonstratives are words or expressions that correspond to English words *this*, *that*, *here*, and *there*, considered to be among spatial deictic elements present in all spoken languages (Diessel 1999, 2006; Dixon 2003). Despite being a universal category, cross-linguistically, demonstratives differ considerably with regard to the number, form, and function (Diessel 1999: 36). For example, with regard to number, languages may have two demonstratives only, or may have up to twelve (Diessel 1999; Levinson et al. 2018). Many Bantu languages distinguish three demonstratives (Nicolle 2012, 2014; Van de Velde 2005, 2019). However, there are some Bantu languages with four demonstrative series which indicate referent very close to the speaker, near the speaker, near the hearer, and far from both the speaker and the hearer (Nicolle 2012). Drawing on these cross-linguistic insights, the present paper examines the demonstrative system of Kiwoso, with particular attention to its morphosyntactic properties and functional range. In doing so, the study contributes to broader typological debates on demonstratives in Bantu and enhances our understanding of deictic systems cross-linguistically.

The morphological makeup of demonstratives varies considerably across Bantu languages. In several languages, demonstrative forms include an initial element, as shown for Runyankore-Rukiga (Asiimwe 2014, 2024) and Chiyao (Taji 2024). However, for Kiwoso, no study has systematically examined the morphological structure of its demonstratives. This paper describes the forms of Kiwoso demonstratives, with particular attention to how they interact with the noun class system.

Syntactically, demonstratives are commonly classified according to the types of elements they co-occur with in a clause (Diessel 1999; Dixon 2003). Diessel, in particular, distinguishes four major categories: pronominal, adnominal, adverbial, and identificational demonstratives. Despite this typological framework, there is limited research on how these

categories are manifested in Bantu languages. This paper therefore investigates the four demonstrative categories in Kiwoso, drawing on freshly data in Kiwoso, Bantu.

Languages vary in the specific functions their demonstratives perform. However, it is widely acknowledged that the core function of demonstratives cross-linguistically is to coordinate the interlocutors' joint focus of attention (Diessel 2006: 464). Moreover, demonstratives do more than indicate spatial proximity: in many languages they also encode functions such as definiteness, topicality or focus, and contrast (Skilton 2024). For Kiwoso, however, no dedicated study has examined the functional range of demonstratives. Existing works on the language (Mallya 2016, 2020, 2024) mention demonstratives only briefly, if at all. This paper therefore offers a comprehensive account of the forms, syntactic distribution, and functions of demonstratives in Kiwoso. The paper addresses the following questions: (i) what are the forms of demonstratives in Kiwoso? (ii) How are demonstratives distributed syntactically? and (iii) what roles do demonstratives play in the language?

2 Background about Kiwoso

Kiwoso is one of the Chaga languages spoken in the Kilimanjaro Region of northern Tanzania. It belongs to Guthrie's (1948) Bantu classification Zone E, Group 60 (the Chaga group), and is specifically coded as E621D (Maho 2009). The community of speakers, known as the Wakiwoso, predominantly resides on the western slopes of Mount Kilimanjaro. The speakers refer to their language as Kiwoso, whereas neighbouring groups often call it Kikibosho in Swahili. In this study, the term Kiwoso is adopted, as it is the name used by the speakers themselves. Other closely related languages within the Chaga group include Machame, Kivunjo-Chaga, and Old Moshi.

According to the Languages of Tanzania Project (LOT 2009), Kiwoso is spoken by approximately 81,181 people. However, information regarding the number of speakers of Tanzanian languages is somewhat unreliable, since national censuses generally omit questions concerning ethnic affiliation and community languages. Kiwoso remains one of the largely undocumented Bantu languages of Tanzania, and consequently, written materials are limited. The available sources include a dictionary (Kagaya & Olomi 2009), dissertations (Mushi 2005; Mallya 2012, 2016). A few morphosyntactic studies have also been conducted (Mallya 2020, 2024).

Kiwoso is primarily used in informal communication, and its speakers are bilingual in Kiwoso and Swahili. Following the post-independence language policy of Tanzania, the use of ethnic languages in education and other official domains is restricted. As a result, Kiwoso is not employed in formal contexts or for official purposes. There are currently no publications or radio broadcasts in the language. In educational settings, especially primary schools, children are discouraged from using indigenous languages, as Swahili serves as the main language of instruction. Because Kiwoso lacks official recognition, it has no standardized orthography.

The present paper does not aim to provide a comprehensive grammatical description of Kiwoso. However, a brief overview of its morphology, including its noun class system is provided. This background serves to contextualize the subsequent discussion of the forms, distribution, and functions of demonstratives, and offers insight into aspects of nominal morphology relevant to the analysis.

3 Methodology

As a native speaker of the language and a trained linguist, I prepared a list of constructions containing proximal, medial, and distal demonstratives. The demonstratives were distributed in both pre-nominal and post-nominal positions. Then, the constructions were given to four native speakers of Kiwoso to give their acceptability and grammaticality judgements. The constructions were prepared both in Kiswahili and in Kiwoso. The Kiswahili version was given to native speakers of Kiwoso, who were also fluent speakers of Kiswahili. The consultants were asked to translate the Kiswahili constructions into Kiwoso. Oral narratives were also employed to elicit data for this study. Three speakers were asked to narrate familiar traditional stories. The data extracted from the narratives and from the structured questionnaires were analysed to establish the forms, syntactic distribution, and the functions of demonstratives in the language under study. The approach employed for collecting the information analysed in this study was adopted given the fact that Kiwoso is largely undocumented, it has a limited corpus, and only a scant written texts are available in the language.

4 The morphology of demonstratives in Kiwoso

This section focuses on the description of demonstratives in terms of morphology. The morphology of demonstratives varies across languages. In many Bantu languages, demonstratives consist of an initial element (Du Plessis et al. 1992), such as *a-*, *e-*, or *o-*, depending on the vowel of the agreement prefix of the head noun (Visser 2008). However, not all demonstratives involve an initial vowel. For example, in Runyankore-Rukiga, only the proximal and the medial demonstratives exhibit an initial element *-a* (Asimwe 2014, 2024). In other languages such as Chiyao (Taji 2024), an initial element is optional when a demonstrative occurs in both pre-nominal and post-nominal positions, as examples in (1) illustrate. The examples demonstrate that it is only the pre-nominal demonstratives which host the initial vowel *a-*.

- (1) Chiyao a. *ali* *li-koswé* *li*
 5.DEM.PROX 5-rat 5.DEM.PROX
 ‘this rat’
 b. *achila* *chi-téla* *chíla*
 7.DEM.DIST 7-tree 7.DEM.DIST
 ‘that tree over there’ (Taji 2024: 20)

The findings from Kiwoso show that, as in Runyankore-Rukiga, an initial vowel *e-* is consistently realized in proximal and medial demonstratives, while distal demonstratives lack this prefix. This distribution indicates a morphophonological distinction tied to the deictic hierarchy. In addition, the morphological shape of Kiwoso demonstratives is jointly determined by the noun class system, which supplies the appropriate agreement prefix, and by the spatial location of the referent relative to the speaker and addressee, as exemplified in Table (1).

Table 1: Noun classes and demonstratives in Kiwoso

Class	Prefix	Example	Gloss	Demonstratives			Example
				Proximal	Medial	Distal	
1	<i>mu-</i>	<i>mu-na</i>	child	<i>e-tu</i>	<i>e-to</i>	<i>u-lya</i>	<i>muna etu/eto/ulya</i>
2	<i>wa-</i>	<i>wa-na</i>	children	<i>e-wa</i>	<i>e-wo</i>	<i>wa-lya</i>	<i>wana ewa/ewo/walya</i>
3	<i>n-</i>	<i>n-ji</i>	tree	<i>e-tu</i>	<i>e-to</i>	<i>u-lya</i>	<i>nji etu/eto/ulya</i>
4	<i>mi-</i>	<i>mi-ji</i>	trees	<i>e-ti</i>	<i>e-to</i>	<i>tya</i>	<i>miji eti/eto/tya</i>
5	<i>i-</i>	<i>i-du</i>	ear	<i>e-lyi</i>	<i>e-lyo</i>	<i>lya</i>	<i>idu elyi/elyo/lya</i>
6	<i>ma-</i>	<i>ma-du</i>	ears	<i>e-wa</i>	<i>e-wo</i>	<i>alya</i>	<i>madu ewa/ewo/walya</i>
7	<i>ki-</i>	<i>ki-andu</i>	knife	<i>e-kyi</i>	<i>e-kyo</i>	<i>kya</i>	<i>kyandu ekyi/ekyo/kya</i>
8	<i>shi-</i>	<i>shi-andu</i>	knives	<i>e-shi</i>	<i>e-sho</i>	<i>shya</i>	<i>shyandu eshi/esho/shya</i>
9	<i>n-</i>	<i>mburu</i>	goat	<i>e-yi</i>	<i>e-yo</i>	<i>iya</i>	<i>mburu eyi/eyo/iya</i>
10	<i>n-</i>	<i>mburu</i>	goats	<i>e-ti</i>	<i>e-to</i>	<i>tya</i>	<i>mburu eti/eto/tya</i>
11	<i>u-</i>	<i>u-dende</i>	leg	<i>e-lu</i>	<i>e-lo</i>	<i>lwo</i>	<i>udende elu/elo/lou</i>
14	<i>u-</i>	<i>u-doko</i>	laziness	<i>e-lu</i>	<i>e-lo</i>	<i>lwo</i>	<i>udoko elu, elo, lou</i>
16	<i>a-</i>	<i>a-ndo</i>	place	<i>yaa</i>	<i>yoo</i>	<i>alya</i>	<i>ando yaa/yoo/alya</i>
17	<i>ku</i>	<i>ku-ndo</i>	place	<i>kunu</i>	<i>eho</i>	<i>kulya</i>	<i>kundo kunu/eho/kulya</i>

The data presented in Table (1) indicates that Kiwoso uses a three-way demonstrative system (proximal, medial and distal demonstratives) to mark the distance of a referent in relation to the position of the speaker and the hearer. The proximal demonstrative indicates the referent near the speaker, non-proximal or medial demonstrative mark the referent near the addressee, and the distal demonstrative encode the referent far from both the speaker and the addressee. Examples in (2) demonstrate three-way demonstrative system in Kiwoso.

- (2) a. *ki-liko ekyi ki-tu*
 7-spoon 7.DEM.PROX 7-small
 ‘this small spoon’
 b. *ki-liko ekyo ki-tu*
 7-spoon 7.DEM.MED 7-small
 ‘that small spoon’
 c. *ki-liko kya ki-tu*
 7-spoon 7.DEM.DIST 7-small
 ‘that small spoon’

Furthermore, the data examined in this paper demonstrate that the proximal demonstrative in Kiwoso begins with *e-* and ends with *u-*, *a-*, or *i-*. The initial element for the medial demonstrative is also *e-*, but the final element is consistently *-o*. Generally, both proximal and the medial demonstratives in Kiwoso are formed by prefixing an initial vowel to the CV noun class prefix. The distal demonstrative lacks an initial vowel, but ends with *a-*, except for the classes 11 and 14 which involve vowel *-o* at the end. The distal demonstratives are formed by

the CGV noun class prefix, but for classes 1, 2, 3, 6, 9, 16, and 17, the distal demonstratives are formed by attaching noun class prefix of the respective noun in addition to the CGV base.

Locative classes (16 and 17) present a different picture partly because Kiwoso lacks productive locative prefixes found in many Bantu languages (see Mallya 2024). Kiwoso has two locative nouns: *ando* and *kundo*, as shown in Table 1. Both nouns signify ‘place’, but they are pragmatically different. The noun *ando* is interpreted as a place which is definite, specific, known, visible, and near to both the speaker and the addressee, whereas the noun *kundo* is understood as an indefinite place, unspecific, invisible, and far from both the speaker and the addressee. The demonstratives of classes 16 and 17 refer to places or locations, as shown in Table (1). These forms are exemplified further in Table (2) and example (3) to clarify the differences between the nouns *ando* and *kundo* in relation to demonstratives.

Table 2: Demonstratives of locative classes

Proximal	Medial	Distal
<i>yaa</i> ‘here’	<i>yoo</i> ‘there’	<i>alya</i> ‘over there’ (far from both speaker and addressee)
<i>kunu</i> ‘here’	<i>eho</i> ‘there’	<i>kulya</i> ‘over there’ (broad and unspecific place)

- (3) a. *yaa/yoo/alya* *a-ndo* *ku-cha*
DEM.PROX/MED/DIST 16-place 17-nice
‘Here/there/over there is a nice place.’
- b. *kulya* *ku-ndo* *ku-cha*
17.DEM.DIST 17-place 17-nice
‘Over there is a nice place.’
- c. **ku-lya* *a-ndo* *ku-cha*
17.DEM.DIST 16-place 17-nice

Examples in (3) show that the noun *ando* can be modified by the demonstratives *yaa* ‘here’, *yoo* ‘there’, and *alya* ‘over there’, all of which refer to locations that are physically visible to the interlocutors and can be reinforced by extra-linguistic cues such as pointing. However, *ando* cannot co-occur with the demonstrative *kulya* ‘over there (out of sight)’, which denotes a location outside the immediate visual field. Instead, *kulya* is compatible with the locative noun *kundo*, as illustrated in (3b). This pattern suggests that in Kiwoso the demonstrative *kulya* is primarily reserved for non-visible or displaced locations that are either already mentioned in the discourse or are inferable through shared knowledge between speaker and addressee. Such a restriction aligns with broader Bantu tendencies in which distal non-visible demonstratives serve both spatial and discourse-anaphoric functions.

5 Categories of demonstratives in Kiwoso

Demonstratives have been classified differently by different scholars. For example, in their general typological works, Diessel (1999) and Dixon (2003) categorized demonstratives based on the type of elements with which they occur in a clause. Based on his analysis, Diessel (1999: 2) states that demonstratives occur in four different syntactic contexts: they may occur as independent pronouns in argument position, they may occur with a noun in a noun phrase, they

may function as verb modifiers, and demonstratives may occur in copular and non-verbal clauses. Based on the identified syntactic contexts, Diessel identified four categories of demonstratives, namely pronominal, adnominal, adverbial, and identificational demonstratives. These categories are largely unexplored in Bantu languages, and Kiwoso in particular, hence the sections that follow discuss the four categories of demonstratives drawing examples from Kiwoso.

5.1 *Pronominal demonstratives*

Pronominal demonstratives indicate which entity is being referred to. The pronominal demonstratives can stand alone as a complete noun phrase or independent pronouns; thus, they can replace nouns (Diessel 1999: 72), and especially those understood from contexts. The fact that these demonstratives display noun attributes, they show noun grammatical distinctions such as noun class and number agreement (see Table 1). All three forms of demonstratives in Kiwoso can be used pronominally as the subject and serve as object, as shown in (4) and (5), respectively.

- (4) a. *ewa wa- le- end-a kinaange icho*
2.DEM.PROX 2- PST- go- FV 7market the other day
'These ones went to the market the other day.'
- b. *eto ti- le- dom- a*
10.DEM.MED 10-PST- small- FV
'Those ones were small.'
- c. *walya wa- le- kumb- a nungu*
2.DEM.DIST 2- PST- sell- FV 9pot
'Those ones sold the pot.'
- (5) a. *wa- le- kund- a eshi*
2- PST- like- FV 8.DEM.PROX
'They liked these ones.'
- b. *wa- le- waanga-a walya*
2- PST- call- FV 2.DEM.DIST
'They called those ones.'
- c. *wa-le- sand-a eshi na esho*
2- PST- mix- FV 8.DEM.PROX and 8.DEM.MED
'They mixed these and those ones.'

The examples show that in both argument positions, pronominal demonstratives serve to track a referent that is identifiable in the physical context and accessible to both speaker and hearer. They may also point to a referent that has been previously introduced in the discourse, thereby presupposing shared knowledge between the interlocutors about that referent.

5.2 *Adnominal demonstratives*

Adnominal demonstratives modify nouns. In Bantu languages, they can occur before or after the noun they modify, as shown in Kirundi and Luganda (Van de Velde 2005), respectively. In other languages, adnominal demonstratives can appear in both positions, as established in

Makonde (Makanjila 2019) and Chiyao (Taji 2024). In Kiwoso, canonically, adnominal demonstratives can only appear post-nominally, as examples in (6) demonstrate. If the adnominal demonstratives appear in the pre-nominal positions, they are interpreted differently, as detailed in §5.4.

- (6) *surum-a shi-liko eshi na bakuri eto*
Hide- FV 8-spoon 8.DEM.PROX and 10bowl 10.DEM.MED
saani tya na safuria che tedu- n
10plate 10.DEM.DIST and 10pot not POSS-NEG
‘Keep these spoons and those bowls. Those plates (over there) and pans are not ours.’

The demonstratives *eshi*, *eto*, and *tya* in example (6) modify the nouns *shiliko* ‘spoons’, *bakuri* ‘bowls’, and *saani* ‘plates’, respectively. This example shows that, as with pronominal demonstratives, adnominal demonstratives exhibit concord with the noun class prefixes of the nouns they modify. In other words, each demonstrative form is morphologically aligned with the noun class of its head noun, reflecting the characteristic agreement patterns of Bantu nominal morphology.

5.3 Adverbial demonstratives

Adverbial demonstratives are expressions that indicate location, equivalent to the English words ‘here’ and ‘there’ (Diessel 1999). Other terms used to refer to demonstratives that encode location include local adverbial demonstrative (Dixon 2003: 62), locative adverb (Heine et al. 2020: 403), locative demonstrative (König 2015: 3), and demonstrative adverb (Diessel 2006: 473; Levinson 2018: 1).

In many Bantu languages, adverbial demonstratives are derived from the locative noun classes 16-18 (see Ström 2015; Asiimwe 2024). However, similarly to many other Bantu languages, adverbial demonstratives often form three-way spatial systems in Kiwoso indicating proximal, medial, and distal distance relative to interlocutors. The three forms can be used pronominally, standing as an independent pronoun or modifying the verb, as (7a) and (7b), respectively, illustrate. Also, adverbial demonstratives can be used adnominally modifying the locative nouns, as shown in (8).

- (7) a. *yaa/yoo/kulya ku-fane*
DEM.PROX/DEM.MED/DEM.DIST 17-dirty
‘Here/there/over there (this place/that place/the place over there) is dirty.’
b. *wa-ndu walya wa-le- ch- a yaa wa-le- lal- a*
2-people 2.DEM.DIST 2- PST-come-FV DEM.PROX 2- PST-sleep-FV
yoo na kulya
DEM.MED and DEM.DIST
‘Those people who came here slept there and over there.’

- (8) *yaa mmba ku-fane*
DEM.PROX 9house 17-dirty
‘Here in the house is dirty.’

In (7a), *yaa* ‘here’ *yoo* ‘there’, and *kulya* ‘over there’ stand alone as independent pronouns indicating the location or place, whereas in (7b), the demonstratives specify the location or place described by the verbs. In (8), the adverbial demonstrative *yaa* ‘here’ modifies the locative noun *mmba* ‘in the house’.

5.4 Identificational demonstratives

Identificational demonstratives are also referred to as demonstrative identifiers (Diessel 1999). These form of demonstratives are used in copular constructions to introduce, indicate, or identify a referent in speech situation. As genuine deictic expression, identificational demonstratives are primarily used with reference to entities in the speech situation. The core function of the identificational demonstrative reflects the other terms used to refer to it, namely pointing demonstratives (Rehg & Sohl 1981: 150) and deictic identifier pronoun (Carlson 1994: 160). In Kiwoso, identificational demonstratives can be used to refer to entities present in the speech situation (9), or referents which have been referred to previously (10), and entities which are not present in the current speech context or previously mentioned, but the interlocutors have a shared knowledge about them, as exemplified in (11).

- (9) *ewa nyi-wo wa-le-shaam-a n-lima*
2.DEM.PROX COP-those 2-PST-climb-FV 3-mountain
‘These are the ones who climbed the mountain.’

- (10) *kya kyo kyaamba kya wa-na*
7.DEM.DIST COP-that 7.land 7.POSS 2-child
‘That one is the children’s land.’

- (11) *tya nee ndoori mbicho*
10.DEM.DIST were 10.disease bad
‘Those were bad diseases.’

The examples in (9-11) indicate that identificational demonstratives in Kiwoso, as commonly occur in other languages involve copula and non-verbal clauses. It has been shown that all the three demonstrative dimensions in Kiwoso can be used to encode identificational demonstratives. The data indicate further that the distal demonstrative form in addition with the past tense copula *nee* ‘were’ are used to refer to entities which are not available in the speech context or which have not been mentioned before, but interlocutors have a shared knowledge about them. The examples illustrate that the copula *nee* is not compatible with proximal and medial identificational demonstratives, which denote entities that can be seen (9) or referred to previously (10).

5.5 Manner demonstratives

Manner demonstratives are a relatively under-described category of demonstratives in Bantu languages. Unlike adnominal or pronominal demonstratives that locate referents, manner demonstratives are words or expressions that indicate how actions are performed, translated as ‘this/that way’ or ‘like this/that’ (Diessel 1999). Morphologically, manner demonstratives in Bantu languages typically occur as suffixal forms that attach to an appropriate noun-class

concord or agreement marker. In Kiwoso, when the manner demonstrative modifies a noun, the manner base occurs with the agreement prefix of the corresponding noun class, as illustrated in (12). However, when it modifies the verb, the construction consistently takes the locative prefix *ku-*, as shown in (13). Similarly to many other Bantu languages, in Kiwoso, manner demonstratives are often accompanied by gestures, as indicated in example (12b) or demonstration on how an action is performed, as (13) shows.

- (12) a. *wa-ndu wadi/ wado wa-fung-w- e*
2-people 2.DEM.PROX 2.DEM.MED 2- arrest-PASS-PFV
‘People like these/those should be arrested.’
- b. *wa- le- ur- a ki-kabu kidi/ kido*
3PL- PST-buy-FV 7-basket 7.DEM.PROX 7.DEM.MED
‘They bought a basket like this/like that.’ (touching/pointing to the basket)
- (13) a. *wa- le- wad-a kudi kudo*
3PL- PST- hold-FV 17.DEM.PROX 17.DEM.MED
‘They held like this/like that.’ (showing how they hold it or gazing at someone demonstrating)’
- b. *wa- le- fin- a kudi kudo*
3PL- PST- dance-FV 17.DEM.PROX 17.DEM.MED
‘They danced like this/like that.’

The examples indicate that manner demonstratives in Kiwoso encode only proximal and medial distinctions and cannot refer to entities or actions located far from both speaker and hearer. Consequently, their use is restricted to referents within the immediate physical environment, where they function to anchor an entity, action, or activity in the ongoing conversation or in previously introduced discourse. This pattern suggests that manner demonstratives in Kiwoso are closely tied to perceptual accessibility in that the manner of action must be visually or contextually available to both interlocutors for the demonstrative to be used.

This section has discussed the forms of demonstratives in Kiwoso. It has been demonstrated that in addition to the four classes of demonstratives identified by Diessel (1999), there is also manner demonstratives which entail an aspect of how something is done. The section that follows focuses on the positions of demonstratives in relation to the nouns they modify and their syntactic distribution in the verbal domain.

6 The syntax of demonstratives

Bantu languages exhibit three patterns of demonstratives in terms of positions relative to the nouns they modify, namely demonstratives that occur before the nouns they modify (preposed demonstratives), those that appear after the nouns (postposed demonstratives) and the demonstratives that occur before and after the nouns they modify (circumdemonstratives or doubled demonstratives) (Van de Velde 2005). However, in many Bantu languages, the canonical position of the demonstratives is in post-nominal position, as attested in languages like Fipa, Ganda, Haya, Kikuyu, Zulu (Van de Velde 2005), Makhuwa (Van der Wal 2010), and Chiyao (Taji 2024). Example (14) from Lugwene illustrate.

- (14) Lugwene *ó- mu-sáále ogw-ó*
AUG- 3-tree 3.DEM.MED
‘that tree’ (Ahn & Van der Wal 2022)

Although uncommon, in some Bantu languages including Lega, Sile, Rundi (Van de Velde 2005), Fwe (Gunnink 2018), and Ha (Harjula 2004), demonstratives occur before the nouns they modify (15). It has been established further that in Linga and Luba (Van de Velde 2005), Runyankore-Rukiga (Asiimwe 2014, 2024), and Shimwela (Taji & Mreta 2017) demonstratives can occur in both pre-nominal and post-nominal positions, as (16) exemplifies.

- (15) Ha *izo súka zì-bíri*
10DEM.DIST 10hoe 10-two
‘those two hoes’ (Harjula 2004: 75)

- (16) Shimwela *aji mikóngo ji*
4.DEM.PROX 4-tree 4.DEM.PROX
‘these tree’ (Taji & Mreta 2017: 12)

As there is no systematic study that has been conducted to examine the syntactic distribution of demonstratives in Kiwoso, the discussion below provides a description of demonstratives in Kiwoso to establish their positions in relation to the nouns with which they occur. Furthermore, the paper examines the properties of demonstratives in co-occurrence with other modifiers such as adjectives, numerals and possessives.

6.1 Position of demonstrative in the noun phrase in Kiwoso

In Bantu languages, demonstratives are part of nominal modifiers, as such, canonically, they follow the nouns they modify. Similarly to many other Bantu languages, the position of demonstratives in Kiwoso is after the nouns they modify, as examples in (17) indicate.

- (17) a. *mu-na etu mu-ntu*
2-child 2.DEM.PROX 2-small
‘this small/young child’
b. *kelya ekyo kya mu-na*
7food 7.DEM.MED of 2-child
‘That food is for the child.’
c. *shi-liko shya shya-ko shi-dadu*
8-spoon 8.DEM.DIST 8-POSS 8-three
‘those three spoons of mine’

The examples in (17) indicate that all the three demonstrative dimensions can modify nouns, and they all occur after the respective nouns, as the proximal, medial, and distal demonstratives *etu* ‘this’, *ekyo* ‘that’ and *shya* ‘that’, respectively, in (17) illustrate.

Although many adnominal modifiers occur in post-nominal position, in many languages, demonstratives occur before the nouns they modify (Van de Velde 2005, 2019). Kiwoso do not allow adnominal demonstratives to occur before the nouns they modify. The study findings indicate that the position of demonstratives determines the role the

demonstrative plays in the nominal domain. For example, in Kiwoso, pre-nominal demonstratives *etu* ‘this’ *eto* ‘that’ and *ulya* ‘that’ in example (18) do not modify the noun *muna* ‘child’. They identify specific referents in speech situation rather than modifying the nouns (see §5.2).

- (18) *etu* *mu-na* *eto* *mu-na* *ulya* *mu-na*
1DEM.PROX 1-child 1DEM.MED 1-child 1DEM.DIST 1-child
‘This is a child’ ‘that is a child’ ‘that (over there) is a child’

Similarly to many other Bantu languages, Kiwoso allows demonstrative stacking. However, the co-occurrence of more than one demonstrative within the same clause or noun phrase is pragmatically motivated rather than semantically redundant. In particular, Kiwoso permits two identical demonstratives to appear in sequence, typically in post-nominal position, as illustrated in (19). Similarly to adnominal demonstratives exemplified in (19), the pronominal demonstratives can also co-occur, as shown in (20). Similar results have been reported in Runyankore-Rukiga (Asiimwe 2024). This pattern of doubling a demonstrative is commonly used to express insistency, emphasis, or speaker reinforcement.

- (19) a. *i-rinda elyi elyi/elyo elyo/lya lya*
5-dress 5.DEM.PROX/DEM.MED/DEM.DIST
‘this/that/that very dress’
b. *i-kumbi lyidi lyidi/lyido lyido*
5-hoe 5.DEM.PROX/DEM.DIST
‘the very same hoe (different distance from the speaker)’
- (20) a. *ekyi ekyi* ‘this very one’
b. *ewa ewa* ‘these very ones’
c. *kulya kulya* ‘that very (same) place’

The data examined show that it is also possible for different demonstratives to co-occur, one appearing in pre-nominal position and the other one positioned after the noun, as (21) illustrate.

- (21) a. *ewa* *wa-na walya*
2.DEM.PROX 2-child 2.DEM.DIST
‘These are those children.’ (we both know about)
b. *ewo* *wa-na walya*
2.DEM.MED 2-child 2.DEM.DIST
‘Those are those children.’
c. *eki* *ki-kombe kya*
7.DEM.PROX 7-cup 7.DEM.DIST
‘This is that cup.’
d. *ekyo* *ki-kombe kya*
7.DEM.MED 7-cup 7.DEM.DIST
‘That is that cup.’

The examples in (21) show that in Kiwoso, proximal or medial demonstratives may co-occur with a distal demonstrative, with each form contributing a distinct function. The proximal and

medial demonstratives occur pre-nominally, where they serve their core spatial-deictic roles. In contrast, the distal demonstrative appears post-nominally, where it conveys a recognitional meaning, signalling that the referent is assumed to be familiar or identifiable to the hearer.

6.2 Co-occurrence of demonstratives with other modifiers

Languages which exhibit postposed demonstratives show variation in terms of the position of demonstratives among the post-nominal modifiers (Van de Velde 2005). For example, in languages such as Logoli (Van de Velde 2005), Ha and Sukuma (Rugemalira 2007) the order is relatively free, as shown in (24). On the other hand, in Eton (Van de Velde 2005), Mashami (Rugemalira 2007), and Chiyao (Taji 2024) the order is restricted. In Chiyao, for example, the postposed demonstratives occur after all modifiers in the nominal domain, including the relative clause (Taji 2024: 47-48), while in Eton, the demonstratives occur after all other modifiers, but before the relative clause (van de Velde (2005:4).

- (22) Sukuma a. *a-bha-nu* *bha kwandya a-bha-tano* *a-bhane*
 AUG-2-people of first AUG-2-five AUG-POSS
a-bho
 AUG-2.DEM.MED
 ‘those first five people of mine’
- b. *a- bha-nu bha-tano bho-se a- bho* *a- bhane*
 AUG- 2- people 2- five 2-all AUG-2.DEM.MED AUG-POSS
 ‘all those five people of mine’
- c. *a- bha-nu a- bho abha kwandya a-bha-tano a-bha-wiza*
 AUG- 2- people AUG-2.DEM.MED of first AUG-2-five AUG-2-nice
a-bhane
 AUG-POSS
 ‘those first five good people of mine’

(Rugemalira 2007: 146)

Examples in (22) indicate that the order of demonstrative in Sukuma is free. For instance, the demonstrative is final in (22a), last but one in (22b), and immediately after the head noun in (22c). In Kiwoso, the postposed demonstratives appear before any other modifiers including possessives and adjectives (see example 17). Rugemalira (2007: 139) presents similar pattern in Mashami, a closely related language to Kiwoso.

This section has shown that syntactically, demonstratives serve pronominal and adnominal functions. The former can stand alone as a noun phrase or as independent as pronoun, whereas the latter modifies the nouns. The pronominal demonstratives display typical characteristics of nouns in that they can function as subject or object, and be cross-referenced on the verb as a subject or object marker. The adnominal demonstratives occupy post-nominal position. The adnominal demonstratives occur before any other post-nominal modifiers in Kiwoso.

7 Functions and the uses of demonstratives in Kiwoso

It has been mentioned that the core function of demonstratives in any language is to focus the interlocutors' attention on referents or locations and establish a shared understanding between the interlocutors in the surrounding speech or discourse situation by way of pointing (Diessel 1999: 2; Dixon 2003: 61-62). Diessel (1999: 7) in particular, categorizes demonstratives into two major classes based on their functions, namely exophoric and endophoric. The two roles are relevant in Kiwoso, thus the discussion on the functions of demonstratives presented in this section follow Diessel's (1999: 7) categorization. Therefore, §§7.1-7.2 focus on the exophoric and endophoric functions of demonstratives in Kiwoso, while other uses of demonstratives including emphatic and recognitional functions covered in §§7.3-7.5.

7.1 Exophoric (spatial-deictic) function

Exophoric (spatial-deictic) uses of demonstratives is the primary feature in deictic expressions, and a core function of demonstrative across languages (Diessel 1999: 94; Himmelmann 1996). In exophoric uses, the demonstratives refer to entities in the physical environment, as shown in (23).

- (23) a. *sukuma i-kongo elyi*
push 5-log 5.DEM.PROX
'Push this tree trunk (log).'
- b. *ining-a wa-na eembe elyo*
give-FV 2-child 5-mango 5.DEM.MED
'Give the children that mango.'
- c. *wa- le- ining- o ki-kombe kya*
3PL- PST- give- PASS 7-cup 7.DEM.DIST
'They were given that cup (over there).'

As mentioned in the preceding section, many Bantu languages, including Kiwoso, exhibit three degrees of spatial deixis, as illustrated in (23). Typically, speakers employ gestural expressions such as touching, pointing, or directing eye gaze to draw the addressee's attention to the intended referent. In (23a), the proximal demonstrative *elyi* 'this' denotes that the entity *ikongo* 'tree trunk' is located close to the speaker, allowing the speaker to physically touch or display the object to the addressee. In (23b), the medial demonstrative *elyo* 'that' indicates that the object is situated near the addressee. Conversely, in (23c), the distal demonstrative *kya* 'that over there' signals that the referent is distant from both the speaker and the addressee. In the latter two cases, the speaker cannot physically touch the object but can instead gesture toward it, either by pointing with a finger or using eye gaze because the referent remains within the shared physical environment of the interlocutors.

7.2 Endophoric uses

Although the primary function of demonstratives is to focus the hearer's attention on objects, persons or locations in the speech situation, they may also refer to linguistic entities in discourse, and this is an endophoric use of demonstratives. The endophoric use is categorized

into two uses: anaphoric and discourse deictic use (Himmelman 1996: 224-29). The data indicate that the two categories of uses are attested in Kiwoso, as detailed in the following:

Anaphoric function

Anaphorically, demonstratives refer to entities already mentioned in the previous discourse, and they are used to keep track of the prior referents (Diessel 1999: 95). Himmelman (1996: 26) considers anaphoric use of demonstratives as “tracking use”. In many languages, anaphoric demonstratives are restricted to the distal or medial form (Nicolle 2012). The findings of this study indicate that all three forms of demonstratives in Kiwoso can be used anaphorically, as exemplified in (24).

- (24) a. *wa-ka wa-le- ur- a umbe. umbe tya ti- ka- fo*
 2-woman 2- PST-buy-FV 10.cow 10.cow 10.DEM-DIST 10-PERF-die
ti- la- shaa
 10-NEG-produce
 ‘Women bought cows. Those cows died without reproducing.’
- b. *wa-na wa-le-fik- a wa-ka- lal- a wa-la- ly-a. ekyo*
 2-child 2-PST-arrive-FV 2- PERF-sleep-FV 2-NEG-eat-FV 5.DEM.MED
keumir-a wandu
 pain-FV 2-people
 ‘The children arrived and slept without eating. That surprised people.’

The data demonstrate that Kiwoso employs demonstratives with a range of anaphoric functions, similarly to many other Bantu languages. For instance, in (24a), the distal demonstrative *tya* encodes co-reference to the previously mentioned noun *umbe* ‘cow’, thereby fulfilling a referential function. In (24b), the antecedent of the medial demonstrative *ekyo* is not a noun but an entire clause, *wakalala walalya* ‘they slept without eating’. This shows that, in Kiwoso, the antecedent of a demonstrative may be either a nominal or a clausal expression. Notably, the proximal demonstrative is not used anaphorically in referential contexts, regardless of whether the antecedent is a noun or a clause. Instead, distal demonstratives commonly refer back to noun antecedents, while medial demonstratives typically take clausal antecedents. Demonstratives in Kiwoso also encode topic continuity. Beyond these functions, Kiwoso demonstratives perform several other anaphoric roles, including referent disambiguation, topic shift or reintroduction, and contrastive reference, as illustrated by the examples in (25a), (25b), and (25c), respectively.

- (25) a. *wa-na wa-bhi bhe-tola-a nfongo ulyo umwi kafuluk-a*
 2-child 2-two 2- cross-FV 3ridge DEM.MED one fall- FV
 ‘Two children were crossing the ridge that one fell.’
- b. *wa-na wa-le- uk- a shuule wa-kaidyia misa.*
 2-child 2- PST-leave-FV school 2-pass by church
 ‘The children left the school and pass by the church.’
Paadi kaamb-a shing-a nlango! wa-na walya wa-kadich-a
 Priest say-FV close-FV 3door 2-child 2.DEM.DIST 2- run- FV
 ‘The priest says closed the door! Those children run away’.
- c. *wa-ka wa-le- ur- a nungu niini na ngitu. Iya*
 2-woman 2- PST-buy-FV 9pot big and small 9.DEM.DIST

ngitu i-kabarik-a
 small 9-break- FV

‘Women bought big and small pots. That small one broke.’

In (25a), the demonstrative *ulyo* clarifies that it was only *one* of the children who fell and broke a leg, thereby identifying the specifically affected participant among multiple potential referents. In (25b), the demonstrative *walya* re-introduces the earlier referent *wana* ‘children’ after an intervening clause, signalling a return to an established topic. Example (25c) illustrates contrastive reference, where the demonstrative *iya* marks the *small pot* as the salient referent in contrast to the *big pot*. Together, these patterns demonstrate the rich anaphoric and discourse-organizing functions encoded by Kiwoso demonstratives.

Discourse-deictic usage

In discourse-deictic uses, demonstratives refer to abstract such as propositions, events, or ideas in the discourse as a whole rather than a concrete specific referent in the physical world (Diessel 1999). The demonstratives with discourse-deictic function are used to link two discourse units, namely the one in which they are embedded and the other one to which they refer (Diessel 1999). Discourse-deictic usage is closely related to anaphoric propositional reference because both refer to information already available within the discourse, though they operate at different levels of reference. In anaphoric propositional reference, the demonstrative typically points back to a specific proposition in the immediately preceding text, treating that proposition as a discrete referential entity, as shown in (24b). In discourse-deictic usage, however, the demonstrative refers to broader stretches of discourse, guiding the listener’s attention to a larger discourse segment as a meaningful unit. Such reference may involve earlier statements, ideas, events, or propositions, or may project forward to subsequent discourse, as illustrated in (26).

- (26) a. *wa- le- kumb-a mburu wa-kaur-a nguku! ekyo kye-umir-a wandu*
 3PL- PST-sell- FV 10goat 2- buy- FV 9hen 7DEM.MED 7-hurt-FV 2people
 ‘They sold the sheep and bought the hens! That hurt people.’
- b. *a- le- shind-a mi-tihani. ekyo ki- le- n - ning-a sifa*
 2SG- PST- pass- FV 4-exam 7.DEM-MED 7- PST-OM-give- FV respect
 ‘He passed the exams. That made him respected.’
- c. *a- le- waang-a n-kutanu kaded-a na wa-miku tubu*
 2SG- PST- call- FV 3-exam talk- FV with 2-elder only
Ekyo kyo wa-le- n- kund-i- a
 7.DEM-MED 7-was 2- PST-OM-love-APPL- FV
 ‘He called the meeting and talked to elders only. That was the reason they loved him.’

The examples in (26) demonstrate that, beyond their referential and tracking functions, demonstratives may also serve to structure, evaluate, and frame discourse. In such instances, they extend their deictic scope beyond specific entities, propositions, or events to encompass larger discourse segments. The demonstrative *ekyo* in the examples refers not to the individual events, ideas or propositions, but to the preceding discourse as a coherent unit.

7.3 Emphatic function

Alongside their exophoric, anaphoric, and discourse-deictic uses, demonstratives also serve an emphatic function. Pragmatically, demonstratives may be used not merely to track a referent, but to foreground it, highlighting its discourse importance. In the majority of languages, the emphatic role is achieved when the existing demonstrative is reinforced morphologically by either adding extra deictic particles or through doubling the demonstratives (Lyons 1999; Asiiimwe 2024). For example, in Kiswahili, demonstratives are reduplicated to encode emphasis (Lyons 1999: 116). The findings of the present study indicate that in order to highlight or single out the exact entity or object being referred to, the Kiwoso speakers use demonstrative reduplication. Examples in (27) illustrate.

- (27) a. *wa- le- kor- a kelya kya kya*
3PL-PST-cook-FV 7food 7.DEM.DIST 7.DEM.DIST
‘They cooked that very/same food.’
- b. *waanga wa-na ewo ewo*
call 2-child 2.DEM.MED 2.DEM.MED
‘Call those very (same) children.’
- c. *shi-adu eshi eshi ngi-sh- i- a*
8-shoe 8.DEM.PROX 8.DEM.PROX 1SG-look-APPL-FV
‘These very (exactly) shoes are what I am cooking for.’
- d. *ekyi ekyi kyo kelya kyaho*
7.DEM.PROX 7.DEM.PROX 7.is 7.food 7.POSS
‘This very one is your food.’

The examples in (27) show that the repetition of demonstratives make the objects/entities referred-to to stand out from other parts of the information conveyed. It has been realised that, in Kiwoso, emphasis can be encoded through reduplication of the same demonstrative forms, as (27) shows. However, it is possible to combine locative and non-locatives demonstratives to indicate emphasis, as shown in (28).

- (28) a. *lya kulya i-kari lyako*
5.DEM.DIST DEM.DIST (locative) 5-car 5.POSS
‘That one over there is my car.’
- b. *walya kulya wa-na wao*
2.DEM.DIST DEM.DIST (locative) 2-child 2.POSS
‘Those ones over there are their children.’
- c. *mmba iya alya yao*
9house 9.DEM.DIST DEM.DIST 9.POSS
‘That house over there is theirs.’
- d. *wa-na ewa yaa wao*
2-child DEM.PROX DEM.PROX (locative) 2.POSS
‘These children right here are theirs.’

Examples in (28) indicate that pronominal and adnominal demonstratives can combine with locative demonstratives to highlight an object or a person referred to in the discourse. The objects emphasized in the examples in (28) were described in relation to a given location. The

findings demonstrate further that speakers may also employ reduplication of locative demonstratives to emphasise location of the referents, rather than the referents themselves. Therefore, depending on the distance of location or place of a referent from the interlocutors, forms such as *kunu kunu*, *kulya kulya*, *yaa yaa*, and *yoo yoo* can be used to encode emphasis of referent’s location or place. Examples in (29) are indicative.

- (29) a. *wa- le- tan- a mmba kunu kunu*
3PL- PST- build-FV 9house here here
‘They built the house in this very place (exactly here).’
b. *wa- le- lal- a yoo yoo Muchi*
3PL- PST-sleep- FV there there Moshi
‘They spent the night exactly there at Moshi.’
c. *wa- le- id- a yaa yaa*
3PL- PST-pass-FV here here
‘They passed through in this very place (exactly here).’
d. *wa- le- baki kulya kulya*
3PL- PST-remain there there
‘They remained exactly over there.’

The locative demonstratives *kunu* and *yaa* entail that the location referred to is near/closer and visible to both speaker and addressee. On the other hand, *yoo* indicates that the location is far from both the speaker and the addressee although it can be visible (within their reach) to both. *Kulya* denotes that the location is far from both speaker and addressee, and it is invisible to them (beyond their reach). It is only the shared experience between the two interlocutors that enables them to identify the place/location being talked about.

It is not only pronominal and locative demonstratives that can be reduplicated to encode emphasis in Kiwoso. Manner demonstratives *kudi* ‘this way/like this/in this manner’ and *kudo* ‘that way/like that/in that manner’ are also commonly doubled to emphasis exactly way that something is done, or to stress the style of doing or performing something, as shown in (30). The demonstrative *kudi* unlike *kudo* is often accompanied by touching the object being indicated.

- (30) a. *wada kudi/kudo*
‘Hold this/that way/like this/that.’
b. *wada kudi kudi/kudo kudo*
‘Hold exactly this way/that way.’

Doubling demonstratives to express emphatic role is a widely used mechanism in many Bantu languages including Makhuwa (Van der Wal 2010), Fwe (Gunnink 2018) Chiyao (Taji 2024), and Runyankore-Rukiga (Asiimwe 2024).

7.4 *Recognitional use*

Recognitional function is achieved when a demonstrative is used to refer to a referent which has not been previously mentioned and which is not physically present, but which the speaker assumes the hearer can identify because it forms part of their shared knowledge (Diessel 1999: 105; Himmelmann 1996: 230-39). Recognitional uses are distinct from exophoric uses in that

in the former, the environment shared by the speaker and hearer is cognitive, whereas the context shared in the latter is physical (Nicolle 2012: 21). In recognitional uses, the referents are identified within the interlocutors' shared cognitive environment. In Kiwoso, recognitional function is encoded by medial (31a) or distal demonstratives (31b).

- (31) a. *kelya kya wa- le- kor- a ki-le-tosh-a*
7.food 7.DEM.DIST 3PL-PST-cook-FV 7-PST-enough-FV
'The food that they cooked was sufficient.'
b. *mwalimu ulyo a- le- dek- a*
1.teacher 1.DEM.MED 2SG-PST-disappear-FV
'That teacher disappeared.'

As a core characteristic, recognitional demonstratives activate information that the speaker assumes is already part of the hearer's background knowledge (Diessel 1999: 105; Himmelmann 1996: 230-239). In (31a), the demonstrative signals that the speaker knows the hearer can readily identify the cooked food being referred to, even though it has not been explicitly mentioned in the current discourse. Similarly, in (31b), both interlocutors share common knowledge about the teacher in question, perhaps because they were taught by the same individual or attended the same school where that teacher worked. The recognitional demonstrative thus relies on mutual, culturally or personally shared experience to facilitate reference.

This section has described the functions of demonstratives in Kiwoso. The analysis presented in this section has shown that in addition to marking spatial relations (deictic function) demonstratives in Kiwoso are used to emphasize a particular referent, denote definiteness, and activation of old information.

8 Conclusion

Demonstratives are among essential components of language that enables speakers and addressees develop a shared sense of reference in both physical and discourse contexts. This paper has examined demonstratives in Kiwoso in relation to form, syntactic structure and functions. The findings demonstrate that Kiwoso exhibits three-way system of demonstratives, namely proximal, medial, and distal. These forms are deeply integrated into noun class system. It has been established further that the morphological structure of demonstratives in Kiwoso involves an initial element *e-* for the proximal and medial forms.

Syntactically, demonstratives in Kiwoso display both pronominal and adnominal characteristics. The adnominal demonstratives are canonically postposed. The findings indicate that in addition to their primary function (spatial-deixis), demonstratives serve other linguistic and communicative roles such as marking emphasis and recognitional function.

This study has contributed insights into morphosyntactic typology and semantic-pragmatics of demonstratives in Bantu languages. The paper has focused on demonstratives in the spoken discourse, it would be interesting to conduct a comparative study on the morphosyntax and semantic-pragmatics of demonstratives in Kiwoso and other related Bantu languages to provide deeper insights into Bantu syntax, morphology, and linguistic typology.

Abbreviations

APPL	applicative
AUG	augment
DEM	demonstrative morpheme
DIST	distal
FV	final vowel
LOC	locative
MED	medial
NEG	negation
OM	object marker
PASS	passive
PFV	perfective
PL	plural
POSS	possessive
PROX	proximal
PST	past
SM	subject marker
SG	singular

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In SKASE Journal of Theoretical Linguistics [online]. 2026, vol. 23, no. 1 [cit. 2026-06-30]. Available on web page <http://www.skase.sk/Volumes/JTL61/05.pdf>. ISSN 1336-782X