The Syntax of Chichewa

This comprehensive study provides a detailed description of the major syntactic structures of Chichewa. Assuming no prior knowledge of current theory, it covers topics such as relative-clause and question formation, interactions between tone and syntactic structure, aspects of clause structure such as complementation, and phonetics and phonology. It also provides a detailed account of argument structure, in which the role of verbal suffixation is examined. Sam Mchombo's description is supplemented by observations about how the study of African languages, specifically Bantu languages, has contributed to progress in grammatical theory, including the debates that have raged within linguistic theory about the relationship between syntax and the lexicon, and the contributions of African linguistic structure to the evaluation of competing grammatical theories. Clearly organized and accessible, The Syntax of Chichewa will be an invaluable resource for students interested in linguistic theory and how it can be applied to a specific language.

Sam Mchombo is Associate Professor in the Department of Linguistics, University of California at Berkeley. He is possibly the leading authority on Chichewa, having trained other internationally renowned scholars of the language, and inspired a whole generation of students in Malawi with his work on Chichewa poetry. He is well-known and respected both as a language instructor and theoretical linguist, and as well as editing Theoretical Aspects of Bantu Grammar (1993), he has published articles in many journals including Language, Linguistic Analysis, and Linguistic Inquiry.
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The Syntax of Chichewa

SAM MCHOMBO
Dedicated to my mother
Harriett B. Mchombo
who passed away when the book was in production
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Abbreviations

appl applicative suffix
asp aspectual
assoc associative marker
caus causative suffix
clt clitic
cond conditional
cont continuous
cop copula
dem demonstrative
dim diminutive
dir directional marker
distdem distal demonstrative
fut future-tense marker
fv final vowel
hab habitual
impl imploring
inf infinitive marker
loc locative marker
mod modal
neg-cop negative copula
nom nominal
NP noun phrase
OM object marker
perf perfective marker
pass passive
pl plural marker
poss possessive
pref prefix
pres present-tense marker
prog progressive
proxdem proximal demonstrative
### List of abbreviations

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<th>Abbreviation</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>pst</td>
<td>past-tense marker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q</td>
<td>question word</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>recip</td>
<td>reciprocal morpheme (affix)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reflex</td>
<td>reflexive morpheme</td>
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<tr>
<td>rel</td>
<td>relative marker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>relpro</td>
<td>relative pronoun</td>
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<tr>
<td>SM</td>
<td>subject marker</td>
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<tr>
<td>stat</td>
<td>stative</td>
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<td>subjun</td>
<td>subjunctive</td>
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<tr>
<td>VP</td>
<td>verb phrase</td>
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<tr>
<td>VR</td>
<td>verb root</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VS</td>
<td>verb stem</td>
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### Tone marking

- High tone, as in ā.
- Falling tone, as in ā̆.
- Rising tone, as in ē.
- Low tones are unmarked.