

A Dialectal Difference across Kikongo Varieties in the Democratic Republic of Congo: The Case of Kimanyanga and Kindibu

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ABSTRACT

The current paper has examined the dialectal difference between Kimanyanga and Kindibu, the two varieties of Kikongo spoken in the Democratic Republic of Congo, mainly in the province of Kongo Central. It has been disclosed that there are vowel and consonant change in both Kimanyanga and Kindibu lexicons. In syntax, topicalisation is applied differently and the primary verbs Be and Have are not similar, either in the two varieties. Semantically, there are many free variation and an instance of false cognate has been disclosed.

Key words: *dialect, variation, dialectal difference, topicalisation, emphasis, regional dialect, phonological process and agglutination.*

Dans la recherche des différences dialectales entre les deux variétés de la langue Kikongo, notamment le Kimanyanga et le Kindibu. Le chercheur décèle le changement au niveau lexical, où les mêmes lexiques Kikongo se différencient en voyelles, en consonnes et l'insertion des consonnes. Au niveau syntaxique, l'emphase est appliquée différemment. Les verbes d'auxiliaires primaires se différencient aussi. Au niveau sémantique, les deux variétés contiennent des lexiques exhibant la variation libre qui n'affecte pas leurs valeurs sémantiques. Un exemple d'un faux ami a été décelé.

Mots clés : *dialecte, variation, différence dialectale, thématissation, emphase, variété régionale, processus phonologique et agglutination.*

INTRODUCTION

Language varies from one place to another, from one social group to another. The geographical variation is a regional dialect while a social variation is a social dialect. A regional dialect is a variety of a language that is spoken in an area. This variety shows dialectal differences with others (Hudson 1996). Kikongo spoken in the Democratic Republic Congo, mainly in the province of Kongo central has many varieties such Kimanyanga and Kindibu. This paper aims at showing the dialectal differences between the mentioned two regional varieties which are spoken respectively in the territories of Luozi and Mbanza ngungu in the province of Kongo Central.

As it is established by many scholars in Sociolinguistics that all aspects of a language are subject to variation including phonemes, morphemes, structures and meaning. The paper points out the dialectal difference between the mentioned two varieties at the following levels: Phonology, morphology, syntax and semantics.

To do this, the researcher needed data from speakers of two territories of Kongo central in the District of Cataractes. As for the field for investigation, the settings such as lorry parks in some municipalities of Kinshasa were selected. The reason behind this selection is the facility to find native Kikongo speakers who come to sell the farm products in the capital city. First, the lorry park of Rond Point in the municipality of Ngaba where taxi buses from Mbanza Ngungu and Kwilu ngongo park was selected. It is the setting where Kindibu native speakers may be found. The other lorry park selected was located at the municipality of N'djili, mainly in Quartier 7 neighborhood where lorries from the territory of Luozi, manyanga park. In the two lorry parks, the researcher observed the native speakers anticipatively by having a short talk with. Other data came from the



passive observation where the researcher observed a considerable number of the Kikongo speakers in the different settings of Kinshasa such as market. The observed sounds of the Kikongo speakers were transcribed for analysis.

I. ON KIKONGO

This section deals with generalities on Kikongo. It has two subsections. The first one focuses on sociolinguistic aspects of Kikongo while the second one provides some relevant linguistic features of Kikongo.

I. 1 SOCIOLINGUISTIC ASPECTS

It is unavoidable to talk about Kikongo without mentioning the former Kongo Kingdom. In the northern part of Angola, there was a most powerful kingdom of Southern Sahara. It was administratively and politically organized. The king called (Ntotela) who lived in the capital city called Mbanza Kongo. the kingdom had nine provinces and the current capital city of the Democratic Republic of Congo belonged in the province of Mpumbu. When Diego Cao arrived at the Congo The language spoken in this kingdom is Kikongo with intelligible varieties throughout the Kingdom(Bendel 1995:35).

Kikongo makes part of bantu languages belonging to the niger congo family It is the language of bakongo living in four countries, Angola, DRC, Congo Brazzaville and Gaboon. In the DRC, mainly in Kongo Central, there are many varieties and subvarieties of Kikongo . The following four varieties are considered as major ones: Kindibu, Kiyombe, Kinyanga and Kintandu. Apart from those varieties, Kimunu kutuba was created as a Dasch prasche, a roof language by colonialists mainly for administration. Unfortunately, it is not welcome by bakongo who think that it does present their cultural inspiration. Some even think that is a way to damage their cultural languages. As a result, it is not spoken throughout Kongo Central. It is mainly spoken in urban areas, in Boma, Matadi and others areas near urban centers such as Kenge, Nduizi, Kinzamuete and Tombagio. (Mwangi Mwangi 2014). The urban Munu Kutuba speakers distinguish their language from the Kikongo varieties as they call the latter (kibwala), village language and former (Kikongo ya Letat), urban Kikongo.

This study focuses on the major varieties: Kindibu and Kimanyanga which are spoken in the district of Cataractes. Kiyombe is spoken in the District Bas fleuve and Kitandu in the Lukaya District are excluded for the sake restriction . It worth noting Kiyombe is closely related to Kimanyanga while Kindibu is related to Kintandu. In the analysis, something will be pointed out concerning the Kintandu and Kiyombe.

II.2 LINGUISTIC ASPECTS

There are five Kikongo vowels which may have high or low tone:

(a, e, i, u, e)

The five vowels maybe tense or lax, which makes the total number of ten vowel sounds in Kikongo. (Ndonga 2011:68). Kikongo is tone Bantu language with high and low tone. The tense feature of vowel sounds implies the vowel germination as for examples /aa/, /ee/, /ii/, /oo/ and /uu/. This germination may distinguish lexicons :

1. Sala:to do
2. Saala: to remain

For example (1) means to do while (2) has the meaning of remaining as illustrated below:

- 1.1. Sala kisaku kiaku Do your work.
- 1.2. Saala nge mosi Remain alone.

As for consonantsounds,the following table gives more illustration:

Table1: Kikongo consonant sounds

TYPES	BILABIAL	LABIO DENTAL	ALVEALAR	ALVEALAR PALATAL	VELAR
VOICELESS	p	f	t	s	k

VOICED		b	v	d	z	g
MID	VOICELESS	mp	mf	nt	ns	nk
NASAL	VOICED	mb	mv	nd	nz	ng
NASAL		m		n		
LATERAL				l		
SEMI CONSONANTS		w			y	

As it is identified, the nasalized consonants or mid nasal consonants /m/ or /n/ are attached with other consonants. It can take either /n/ or /m/ depending on the features of the connected consonants (Luntadila 2015) For examples:

1. Mpu hat
2. Mbungu drinks
3. Ndunda Vegetable
4. Nzo House
5. Ngolo Strength
6. Ntu Head
7. Mfumu King
8. Nsoso Nail
9. Nkulu Ancestor
10. Mvuma Flower

With the above examples, m- is connected with (p,b,f,v) and n- is connected with (d,z,s,k)

Syntactically, Kikongo has SVO syllable structure. Topicalisation is much more applied in sentences. For examples:

1. Ku zandu ntukidi. I am from market.
2. Malavu ngizi nua ye beno. I have to share beverages with you.
3. Malembe, malembe tukuendila. We have to move slowly.
4. Ko tueti kuenda. We are going there.

In the above examples, in 1 zandu (market) is topicalised. In 2 malavu (beverages) is topicalised. In 3 Malembe (slowly) is topicalised and in 4 kuna (there) is topicalised.

Kikongo has sixteen basic nominal classes; those nominal classes are identified by taking into account the nominal prefixes displayed below:

Table 2: Nominal classes in Kikongo

CLASSES	NOMINAL PREFIXES	FEATURES
1	Mu-, n-	Humans
2	ba	Plural of class 2
3	Mu-, n-	Plants and inanimate
4	mi-	Plural of class 3
5	di-, li-	Vegetal, parts of the body
6	Ma-	Plural of class 5
7	Ki-	Diverse, attitude
8	Bi-	Plural of class 7
9	n-, m- yi- i-	Animals and diverse
10	n-,m-, zi-	Plural of class
11	Lu-	Attitude, diverse
12	Tu-	Plural of class 11
13	Bu-, wu-	Attitude, diverse
14	Ku-	Parts of the body

15	Ma-	Plural of class 14
16	Fi-	Diminitive

II. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF THE DATA

This section examines ten selected sentences from the transcribed data taken from the different fields of investigation. They were essentially some excerpts of conversation. In the analysis, both Kimanyanga and Kindibupattern sentences are displayed. A pattern sentence in either Kimanyanga or Kindibu was contrasted to sort out dialectal difference. For the sake of restriction not all the transcribed data were analyzed and discussed, Pattern sentences were selected and others were included as similar examples.

I. TUETI KWIZA (Kimanyanga) MU KWISA TUNA (Kindibu)

We are coming.

Observing carefully the kindibu sentence, there is topicalisation. The deep sentence of Kindibu looks as follows:

I.1 TUTA KWISA

To give more light, the verbBe used in the present continuous tense do not have a similar verbal root in both dialects of Kikongo. In Kimanyanga, the verbal root is (-eti) while it is (-uta) in Kindibu.Observe first the complete conjugation in Kimanyanga:

- Mono ngieti Kwiza - I am coming
- Ngeye weti Kwiza - You are
- Yandi weti - He,she,it is
- Beto tweti - We are
- Beno lweti - You are
- Bau beti - They are

Second, inKindibu:

- Mono ngita Kwisa - I am coming
- Ngeye uta - You are
- Yandi tuna - He,she,it is
- Beto tuta -We are
- Beno luta - You are
- Bau beta - They are

While applying topicalisation, the sentence in kindibu, first, the verb KWISA is moved in front of the sentence. second, there is a lexical change whereby the labio dental voiceless consonant /t/ in (-uta) verbal root has become a nasal alveolar/n/ and yielded /UTA/. Finally, the verbal prefix Mu is added next to the tropicalized verb to in front of the sentence and structure looks as follows:Figure 1: Topicalized verb in Kindibu

e MU KWISA i TUNA ti

In the above figure, (i) is the moved verb, (ti)is the extracting site and(e) is the added affix in the context of topicalisation.

Another aspect noticed is the use of the voiced palatal alveolar /z/ in Kimanyanga and the voiceless palatal alveolar/s/ in Kindibu with the verb KWIZA, which in both dialects has the same semantic value. This change may be considered as free variation across Kikongo dialectal variation. This free variation is different from the

English one as it operates graphemically not phonologically. In fact, there is a graphemic variation which does not affect the meaning since the verb does not have a unique form whereby there is a phonemic variation of /z/ into /s/. This graphemic variation as it may be called is common across Kikongo dialectal variation even the change of /f/ into /v/. Here are five examples:

1. Maza- Masa water
2. Malavu- Malafu Beverages
3. Makasu-Makazu cola nuts
4. Loso- lozo Rice
5. Madeso- Madezo Beans

This topicalisation in the context of the present continuous tense is also applied to Kimanyanga yielding the structure in the figure below:

Figure n02: Topicalised verb in Kimanyanga

e MU i KWIZA TUENA ti

Similar operations as in Kindibu but in lexical change, if we look at the phonological level, there is diphthongization comparing it to Kindibu whereby the intervocalic/u/ becomes a diphthong /ue/. Another possibility, there is a vowel addition whereby /e/ is added to /u/ to yield TUENA.

II. MAFWA MENA YETO (Kimanyanga)

MAFWA TUNA MAWU (Kindibu)

We have a death case.

The above two sentences of both Kimanyanga also revealed topicalisation. This time a noun is topicalized. The deep structures of the concerned sentences look as follows:

II.1 TWENA YE MAFWA

II.2 TUNA YE MAFWA

While the noun MAFWA is topicalised, first in Kimanyanga, there is a lexical change as the topicalised noun attaches its nominal prefix (ma), which is the plural of class 5, to the verbal root (TWENA). The latter becomes (MENA) and the initial consonant and semi which were attached to (TWENA) are sent to the extracting site to be connected with (YE) and yields (YETO). The complete surface structure is:

MAFWA i MENA ti YETO

In Kindibu, the same noun is topicalised, there is not lexical change as the verbal root is intact. The topicalised noun prefix (MA) is sent the extracting site and becomes (MAWU). (YE) is deleted. The surface structure is then:

MAFWA i TUNA ti MAWU

This process is generally noticed in both Kimanyanga and Kindibu with different operations as discussed above. In Kongo Central, one can easily identify both Manyanga and Ndibu speakers thanks to syntactic features. The following sentences were transcribed:

II.a. Kiese kiena yeto mu ntima. We are happy.

II.b. Kiese tuna yawu mu ntima.



While listening to the two utterances, the native Kongo can easily identify the tribes of the speakers. This evidently exhibits the function of a language serving as cultural clues or social identification (Wardough 2006).

III. TUABEDI KU NZO AKU. We were at your place.

TUKELE KU NZO AKU

both Kimanyanga and Kindibu sentences above contain the verb to be in the present perfect tense. They are not similar. Kimanyanga uses (KUBA) while (KU KALA) is maintained in Kindibu. For the sake of clarification, the table below provides the complete conjugation.

Table3: The verb to be in the present perfect tense

KINDIBU	KIMANYANGA	MEANINGS
Mono nkele	Mono mbedi	I have been
Ngeye keke	Nge wabedi	You have been
Yandi keke	Yandi wabedi	He , she,he has been
Beto tutekele	Beto tuabedi	We have been
Beno lukele	Beno luabedi	You have been
Bau bakele	Ba babedi	They have been

To contextualize with examples in both Kimanyanga and kindibu, look at the sentences below:

III.a Bau babedi ku sikulu mu nsiuka. They were at school this morning.

III.b Bau bakele ku sikulu mu nsuika.

Moreover, the same difference is noticed with the same verb in the simple past tense. As the following table displays it.

Table 4: The simple past tense of to be

KINDIBU	KIMANYANGA	MEANINGS
Mono yakala	Mono yaba	I was
Ngeye wakala	Nge waba	You were
Yandi wakala	Yandi waba	He , she,he is was
Beto tuakala	Beto tuaba	We were
Beno luakala	Beno luaba	You were
Bau bakala	Ba ba	They were

Even in the past progressive, the form is respected. For examples:

III. c Beno luaba ku mu sevanga, buabu weka muntu. (Kimanyanga)

You were laughing at him, now he has become a very important person.

III.d Beno luakala kumsevanga, wawu seka muntu. (Kindibu)

It is interesting to notice that the difference is both at syntactic and lexical levels. It can be gathered that Kimanyanga is (Ku ba) variety while Kindibu is (Ku kala) one. Kiyombe is also a Ku ba variety while Kitandu belongs to Kala one.

IV. TALA ZIDI! (Kindibu)

Look at his/her face.

TALA ZIZI ! (Kimanyanga)

In the above two sentences, there is an instance of the graphemic free variation. This time, there is consonant change observed in /zidi/ and /zizi /whereby the labio dental voiced /d/ has become alveolar voiced/z/.

Apart from the above free graphemic variation, in both Kindibu and Kimanyanga, there are a considerable lexicon showing intense free graphemic variation whereby there is either consonant change or consonant addition or both and deletion. Here is the list of ten lexicons gathered from the collected data.

Table 4: Consonant change /addition and deletion

N0	KINDIBU	KIMANYANGA	MEANINGS
1	seva	seya	To laught at
2	kieleka	kedika	truth
3	wawu	Buabu	now
4	Nzola	Zola	love
5	Bosi	Mboki	After
6	Kinkutu	Kinkuti	shirt
7	Lukutakanu	Lukutukunu	Meeting
8	Nsambuadia	Nsambodia	Seven
9	Nkovi	Nkovia	Vegetable
10	sakanina	sakanana	To kid with

To identify the concerned changes from Kindibu into Kimanyanga:

In 1, the consonant /v/ has become /y/.

In 2, first the vowel /i/ in the initial consonant is deleted. Second, the medial consonant /l/ has become /d/ influencing the vowel attached to become /i/.

In 3, first there is the consonant change in the two syllables which becomes /b/. Second, there is vowel insertion /u/ in the first syllable which becomes /bua/

In 4, there is a deletion of the nasal consonant /n/

In 5, there is both addition of the nominal prefix /n/ at the initial position and the consonant change whereby /s/ has become /k/.

In 6, there vowel change finally, the final syllable has changed /u/ to /i/.

In 7, there is a complete vowel harmony with /u/ as the third and fourth syllable have adopted /u/.

In 8, the diphthong in the medial syllable has become monophthong /o/.

In 9, there is the addition of the final vowel /i/

To close with 10, there is vowel substitution in the third syllable for the sake of harmony.

Moreover, the above linguistic terms may also be called isoglosses. They are terms which make different the two regional dialects (Hudson 1996).

VI.. BANTU BABINGI BAKEDI KU KINZI (Kimanyanga)

Many people were at the party.

BANTU BAYINGI BAKELE KU KINZI (Kindibu)

The two sentences above the quantitative marker is not similar in the two varieties. Kimanyanga uses – ingi as the quantitative agglutinating different noun prefixes with which it is referred to. Kindibu uses – yingi instead. The following table provides different noun prefixes attached to the marker in both Kindibu and Kimanyanga:

Table 5: The dialectal difference with the quantitative marker -ingi

N0	KINDIBU	KIMANYANGA
1	Bayingi	babingi
2	Mayingi	Mamingi
3	Zayingi	Zazingi
4	Wingi	Kingi
5	Tuayingi	Tuatingi
6	Miyangi	miamingi
7	Luayingi	Luingi
8	Kuayingi	Kuakingi
9	Biayini	Biabingi
10	yayingi	yingi

In the above table, Kindibu attach the semi vowel /y/ and /w/ to the quantitative marker while the Kimanyanga attach mostly the consonant of the noun prefix to –ingi. Here are some sentences with different noun phrases: They are presented respectively in Kimanyanga and Kindibu.

1. Malavu mamingi nduini wunu. I drank a lot of beers.
 - 1.1 Malavu mayingi nduini wunu.
2. Lulendo luyangi ka vuidi. He is very proud.
 - 2.1. Vuidi Lulendo luingi
3. Babingi babokolo, kansi bafuima bana solua. Many are called, few are chosen.
 - 5.1. Bayingi babokolo kansi bafuima si basolua.

VI. BA MULAMBILA MADIA MA NTOKO. (Kimanyanga)

They cooked for him/her a delicious meal.

BAM'LAMBILA MADIA MA MBOTE (Kindibu)

In the above sentences, the third person personal pronoun object singular is wholly presented as (mu) in Kimanyanga. In Kindibu, there is elision whereby the final vowel /u/ in the affix /mu/ is deleted and graphemically replaced by an apostrophe.

This fact of using/ (m'/ instead of /mu/ make a distinction between the two dialects. The manyanga speakers mainly in affirmative statements use mu instead of /m'/ that Ndibu speakers use in both affirmative and negative statement.

Here is a similar example in both Kimanyanga and Kindibu:

1. Lumbu ki kayiza luaka ba mulambila loso ye madezo.

The day he/she arrived, they cooked for him/her rice and beans.

2. Lumbu kaluaka bam'lambila loso ye madezo.

VII. NGIZIDI KIDIVO YAKUSADISA Kimanyanga

I have come to help you.

NGIZIDI MPASI VO YAKUSADISA Kindibu

In the two sentences, the function words kidivo and mpasi vo contributes in dialectal difference. There are a lot of function words which have the same semantic value but lexically different in the above two dialects. The table below provides a list.

Table6: Function word difference

N0	KINDIBU	KIMANYANGA	MEANINGS
1	bosi	Mboki	In order to
2	Kanela vo	Mpeleko	Even if
3	Mu diambu	Kadi	Because
4	bukina vo	Bu diena vo	as
5	wuna	Buna	so

In the daily speech, the above functin words are used respectively in Kindibu and Kimanyanga.

VIII. KUNSEYANI Kimanyanga

Do not laugh at him/her.

KA KUNSEVI KO Kindibu

What is interesting to examine about the two sentences is the use the imperative in both Kimanyanga and Kindibu. The Kimanyanga form is emphatic as the affix –ani attached finally. The following sentences may be illustrated:

1. Kaluvilakani
2. Kaluendani
3. Ka lulebakani
4. Ka luyimbilani
5. Ka lusambilani

One may wonder whether this possibility is used in Kindibu. In Kindibu, to make the imperative emphatic, simply the final element of KA..Ko is deleted as for examples:

1. Ka ludie Do not eat
2. Ka luyibi Do not steal
3. Ka luyobidi Do not take bath
4. Ka luendi Do not go
5. Ka vovi Do not speak

The two different forms of emphatic imperative are used to serve as dialectal difference.

IX. KONSOLUMBU ITANGANGA NKUMBU ANI

I mention his/her name every day.

LUMBU KA LUMBU ITANGANGA NKUMBU ANI

The sentence in Kimanyanga uses an adequate form to express distributive idea instead of using the distributive word konso. It consists of inserting the affix ka between the concerned noun. For examples:

1. Nsuika kaNsuikaEach morning
2. Ngonda ka ngondaEach month
3. Mvu ka MvuEach year

In Kindibu, this form is applied differently by inserting ye to yield:

- Nsuika ye Nsuika
- Ngonda ye ngonda
- Mvu ye mvu

In Kindibu, the linking word(ye) can be omitted without affecting the meaning:

1. Muntu muntu kakitala. Each one must look at himself/herself.
2. Mwana Mwana ka kidia kiuvu. Each one to think.

It is important to mention that the insertion of (Ka) in Kimanyanga and (ye) between nouns for a distributive purpose generally concern nouns that are related to periods of time such day, week and so on.

In Kindibu, sometimes the deletion of (ye) provides an idea of emphasis in Kindibu even if it used with nouns related to period of time such as:

1. Mama wayiza luaka mpimpa mpimpa. He arrived late at night.
2. Nki wizi sala kuku nsuika nsuika ? What have you come to do here this very early morning?

In 1, the repetition of mpimpa gives the idea of late at night while in 2. The provided idea is very early morning.

XNGIETI ZONZA YE MBUTA MUNTU. (Kimanyanga)

I'm having a talk with a senior citizen.

MUZONZA NGINA YE MBUTA MUNTU (Kindibu)

I'm quarreling with a senior.

The two sentences in both Kimanyanga and Kindibu do not have the same meaning. In fact, zonza is false cognate in both dialect as shown below:

Table 8: False cognate in both Kimanyanga and Kindibu

FALSE COGNATE	KIMANYANGA	KINDIBU
ZONZA	To talk or discuss	To quarrel

As the table shows it, the meaning is different in both dialects. You can the following sentences in Kindibu:

10a. Mwana mbote kena yandi ka zonzi ye muntu.

He is kind kid, he is conflictual.

10b. Kento ye bakala bazeyi zonza.

They (husband and wife) always quarrel.

These two meanings have provided the two different nouns derived from the zonza: Kinzonzi and Minzonza which respectively mean family talk and disputes.

CONCLUSION

The paper examined the dialectal differences between Kimanyanga and Kindibu. Thanks to ten pattern sentences drawn from Kimanyanga and Kindibu speakers, it has been disclosed that both varieties have difference at morphological, phonological, lexical and syntactical levels. At the lexical and morphological levels, the lexical units used in both varieties differ with the following processes: 1 in consonant change, 2 vowel change, 3 vowel

deletion or insertion and 4. Consonant deletion or insertion, 5 vowel or consonant substitution, whole syllable change.

At the lexical level solely, some cases of isoglosses are identified where specific vocabulary or linguistic items are used exclusively by Ndibu and Manyanga speakers. They are displayed in the tables 4,5 and 6.

At the syntactical level, the primary auxiliary verbs Be and Have are conjugated differently. This may lead the prospective scholars to identify respectively the two varieties Kindibu and Kimanyanga as a 'kala' and a 'ba' varieties. The topicalisation process is applied with different lexical change. The changes are displayed in figures 1 and 2.

There are a few semantic changes. The deletion of the Kikongo linking affix (ye) used in the distributive expressions provided a new meaning. The free variation identified with different lexicons do not affect the meaning. This may show the mutual intelligibility across the Kikongo dialectal continuum. The only false cognate identified concerns the use of the verbs 'Zonza' in both Kindibu and Kimanyanga. In the former it has the meaning quarreling while in the latter the meaning is positive as it is related to talk. The table 8 provides illustration.

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