

## **Nasal assimilation in Mozambican Ngoni**

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*The purpose of this paper is to present phonological data with focus on nasal assimilation processes of a hitherto unstudied Bantu language namely Mozambican Ngoni spoken by around 35000 speakers in Northern Mozambique (Ethnologue). It is related to Chingoni in Tanzania (Ngonyani 2003), but even more closely to Matengo (Yoneda 2006) and therefore belongs to Guthrie's N.10 group or the Rufiji-Rovuma cluster (Nurse & Philippson 2003).*

*In Mozambican Ngoni the prefixes mu- and ni- of the noun class system and the verb concord system undergo essentially the same assimilation processes:*

*The mu- prefix (cl.1, cl.3, 2.sg., 2.pl.subject, 2.sg. or 3.sg.object) becomes a syllabic nasal homorganic to the following consonant. When followed by a weak consonant like a sonorant the assimilation is bidirectional. The sonorant becomes a nasal itself, the outcome being two nasals in a row. Restricted assimilation occurs in the class 18 mu- prefix.*

*The ni- prefix (1.sg.subject or object, class 9/10) suffers total assimilation with the following consonant resulting in a simple nasal when followed by a sonorant or a prenasalized consonant when followed by a stop.*

*When combining two of the above mentioned prefixes in a verb, assimilation rules are partially blocked, thereby preventing the occurrence of three consecutive nasals.*