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HOW ARE DIRECTIVES FORMULATED IN SWAHILI? STRATEGY TYPES AND THE STATUS OF THE PARTICIPANTS OF AN INTERACTION[1]

ZOFIA PODOBINSKA

Summary

The present paper discusses the results of a survey conducted in order to receive an answer to the question posed in the title, i.e. how directives are formulated in Swahili in terms of the directness level of the utterance, considering the mutual relationship between the interactants. The data corpus on which I have based my study comes from 82 Swahili-speaking Tanzanian students.[2]

Introduction

The aim of the survey was to obtain from the respondents realisations of appropriate forms of directive speech acts (D), i.e. communication behaviour in which it is the Speaker's (S) intention to influence the Hearer's (H) observable behaviour, used in various everyday situations.

In the first part of the questionnaire, I modelled myself on the hypothetical situations used in a study of another Bantu language, namely Zulu, presented in E. de Kadt's article (de Kadt 1994),[3] so as to ensure comparability with other languages and to facilitate the identification of Swahili-specific features. The situations varied according to the following dimensions: dominance (social power between the interactants) and social distance (familiarity). Given below are descriptions of the 12 selected situations whose verbal realisations the respondents were requested to provide:

1. A student asks his room mate to clean up the kitchen he had left in a mess the night before.
2. A student has missed a class and asks another student to lend her some lecture notes.
3. A school principal asks a staff member to inform the other teachers about the next meeting.
4. A worker asks his employer for a raise.

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[2] To the authorities, the academic staff, and, above all, to the students of the Salvatorian Institute of Philosophy and Theology in Morogoro and the University of Dar es Salaam I offer my heartfelt thanks for their assistance in my research project.

[3] Five of them had been taken over, in turn, from the Cross-Cultural Speech Act Realization Patterns (CCSARP) international project (Blum-Kulka *et al.* 1989).

5. A policeman asks a driver to move her illegally parked car.
6. A resident asks a clerk in the electricity department not to cut off electricity, even though he has not paid his bill.
7. A student asks his teacher to obtain an extension for a homework assignment which he has not yet completed.
8. A university professor asks a student to give his lecture earlier than originally scheduled.
9. Two children are arranging a trip to the beach and suggesting what each of them should bring.
10. A child asks his mother to buy him a toy car.
11. A mother asks her daughter to tidy up the house.
12. A man asks his neighbours for a ride home.

The second part of the questionnaire comprised 19 lexical-syntactic structures used in Swahili to realise D that might theoretically be employed by S to make H perform a particular action. For the sake of simplification, the communication purpose was the same, regardless of the dimensions of social power between the interactants and familiarity: an attempt to make the partner open the window because of the heat/stuffy air in the room. Accordingly, the impact on H was not very strong. Even so, it was considered unacceptable by some of the respondents in certain cases, such as the subordinate>superior relation. The object of this part of the study was to determine the acceptability of those syntactic structures in the case of interactants playing various societal roles (such as father>child, teacher>student, friends of the same age, strangers on the train, child>mother, clerk>boss) and to evaluate their degree of politeness. The utterances used in the study had been selected in such a way as to represent all the strategy types under discussion for particular directness levels (see below). The structures under investigation had been identified on the basis of an earlier study of contemporary literary texts in Swahili (Podobinska 2001). An original-version sample questionnaire is given for reference in the Annex.

Another point I would like to make is that, having based my study exclusively on written material, I take neither non-verbal (posture, gestures, facial expression) nor paraverbal (e.g. intonation) behaviour, which may be as important as the verbal form itself in the communication process, into consideration in my analysis of the data.

As I have mentioned above, the questionnaire was completed by a total of 82 respondents. They were Tanzanian students aged between 23 and 35, mostly male, with women accounting for 16% of the group only, coming from a variety of ethnic groups from all over the country. With the exception of 4 cases, Swahili was not their first language. Nonetheless, 82% of the respondents claimed to speak Swahili at home. Generally, one can say that they were a group of young educated people using Swahili in everyday inter-ethnic communication, in addition to other local languages (overall, 42 were mentioned) and English at the university. This information will be of some relevance to the interpretation of the collected data corpus.

Going on to discuss the questionnaire itself, I would like to focus, in the first place, on the directness of the utterance, and on its relation to politeness in the case of D realised in Swahili, as this was the principal objective of the research project under discussion. Whence this need?

What inspired me to take up the study under discussion was a debate of many years' standing between students of various languages on the dependence of the perceived politeness of an utterance on the directness of the strategies employed. Some of them would consider the indirectness of an act of speech, because of its relation to optionality, to be a factor strongly influencing the politeness of an utterance. Describing the Tact Maxim, G. Leech (Leech 1983: 108) already put forward a thesis that the more indirect and elaborate a given D, the more tactful it is. In fact, the desire to comply with the requirements of politeness was thought to be the main reason for resorting to indirect utterances (Lakoff 1973, 1977, Leech 1980). This thesis was still advocated by P. Brown and S. Levinson (Brown & Levinson 1987: 69f.). More recent research has shown, however, that not all languages bear out the underlying assumptions of this theoretical model: the concepts of indirectness and politeness need not represent two parallel dimensions (cf. Blum-Kulka 1987). And so, for example, in some languages conventionally indirect acts, reconciling the principles of clarity and politeness, may be perceived as polite, while nonconventionally indirect acts may not always be regarded as particularly polite. Sometimes they may even be considered less polite than some direct D realisations (Weizman 1989). This is generally explained by the greater interpretation effort required from H in a given situation, since indirect formulations represent serious violations of the pragmatic clarity principle. Accordingly, in some languages the conventionally indirect formula represents a compromise between the two opposing requirements: not to seem to be imposing oneself too much on the interlocutor, and not to make oneself too unclear. On the other hand, directness involving the use of performatives may express greater respect for the interlocutor. The correlation between the politeness and the indirectness of the utterance in various languages has proved to be a more complex issue than it might originally have appeared. With time, a number of researchers began to question the universality of certain conversational behaviour norms, many of which have developed in the language practice of the Anglo-Saxon world.[4] Neither seemed my earlier observations concerning Swahili to support the above-mentioned thesis that the politeness of D should automatically follow from the indirectness of the utterance.

Discussion of results

In our analysis of the data corpus, let us first consider the question of the basic strategies used in the head act, i.e. the minimum unit that may realise, in our case, a directive speech act. Relying on the model propounded by Sh. Blum-Kulka and E. Olshtain (Blum-Kulka &

[4] A. Jucker (Jucker 1988: 377) notes that the rule of resorting to indirect behaviour is universally respected only by persons belonging to the English middle class; in other groups, it is used selectively.

Olshtain 1984),[5] who distinguish nine strategy types among utterances in terms of their directness level, I have employed a similar indirectness scale[6] in analysing Swahili.[7]

Let us now list these strategies, illustrating them with examples in the language under consideration. Let us begin with those lexical-syntactic forms that directly express the conventional pragmatic sense. Their linguistic (locutionary) form provides information on the character of the utterance. They may, therefore, be interpreted in conformity with S's intention, regardless of the situation. The most direct (explicit level) D realisations are those that are syntactically marked as such. Three strategy types may be included here:

Mood derivable: the grammatical mood of the verb in the utterance marks its illocutionary force as a request or command. This is the most typical way of performing the acts of speech under analysis: in the language system, the imperative sentence is a means designed primarily to realise D. In Swahili, the imperative sentence may contain a verbal group in the imperative, adhortative or subjunctive mood. The paradigms of the first two moods are limited to the second person (singular and plural). By contrast, the subjunctive mood paradigm includes three persons in the singular and three in the plural. For example, *fungua dirisha* [imp]/*ufungue dirisha* [subj] 'open the window'. Even though numerous studies have shown that requests in the imperative are rare in most of the communication situations in English, for example, a high percentage of imperatives was unexpectedly noted for Zulu, another Bantu language (30.4%, cf. de Kadt 1995). As we will see below, this form is very frequently used in Swahili (37.6%). It is not always considered polite, however.

Explicit performative: the illocutionary force of the utterance is explicitly named by the speaker. Constructions involving the so-called performative verbs,[8] such as *-omba* 'to ask, to request', *-sihi* 'to beg', *-pendekeza* 'to suggest', *-dai* 'to demand' or *-amuru* 'to command, to order' fall into this category. Used in the first person in the present tense, they convey direct information concerning the aim of the utterance of which they are a part. They name a given speech act, at the same time creating a certain reality. The illocutionary force of the utterance is thus explicitly named by S, e.g. *nakuomba ufungue dirisha* 'I am asking/requesting you to open the window'. The formula with the verb *-omba* is the standard polite form in Swahili, and is therefore widely used (47%). This is also the case in Zulu, incidentally (27.7%, cf. de Kadt 1995). By contrast, it is only rarely noted in English. The other above-mentioned performatives were noted sporadically in my data, except for *-sihi* 'to beg' and *-pendekeza* 'to suggest', perhaps, in the case of persons of equal status.

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[5] A study under the CCSARP project (Blum-Kulka *et al* 1989).

[6] The reason was to ensure cross-cultural comparability. The perception of the notion of directness by *Swahili speakers* might be different.

[7] Cf. attempts to classify strategies according to their directness level in research on request acts (including Searle 1975, 1979, Ervin-Tripp 1976, House & Kasper 1981, Blum-Kulka 1987).

[8] Cf. Austin 1962.

Hedged performative: utterances embed the naming of the illocutionary force. This term designates constructions in which performative verbs, rather than being used, as is usual, in the present tense in the indicative, stand in the conditional, or in another tense, or are preceded by a modal verb, whereby their performative character is weakened, e.g. *ningeomba* 'I would ask', *ningependa/nilitaka kukuomba* 'I would like to/I wanted to ask you to....'.[9] No occurrences of any equivalents of the English form 'I have to/must ask you to....' were found in my data.

The remaining strategies are indirect realisations, where S's proper intention may be understood in a situational context only. The next four strategy types belong to the conventionally indirect level. These are conventionalised strategies in a given language, such as 'could you....?' in English. They are represented by those realisations which refer to the contextual preconditions that must be met for the act to be performed:[10]

Obligation statement/locution derivable: the illocutionary force is directly derivable from the semantic meaning of the utterance. S may indicate that a given action has to be performed, using a construction with a modal verb, and in Swahili also with the noun *lazima* 'need, necessity', which requires the verb following it to stand in the subjunctive. For example, *ina(ku)bidi/ina(ku)pasa/unalazimika/lazima ufungue dirisha* 'you must open the window'. Utterances in the form of indicative sentences concerning H's future behaviour, i.e. assertions that H will perform a given action (a reference to the propositional condition), also fall in this category. In this case, the main verb stands in the future tense. As we will see below, it is not a form too frequently used in Swahili. It occurs rather infrequently in our corpus (7.7%), except for the roles of the teacher or close friends.

Want statement/scope stating: the utterance expresses the speaker's intentions, desire or feeling *vis-à-vis* the fact that the hearer does something (a reference to the sincerity condition). S formulates his wish in the form of an assertion. Saying that one wants H to do something implies persuading him to do that, e.g. *ningependa ufungue dirisha* 'I'd like you to open the window'. This occurs also in utterances with the verb *-taka* 'to want, to desire', e.g. *nataka ufungue dirisha* 'I want you to open the window', a form that definitely cannot be regarded as polite in Swahili.[11] It is therefore recommended to replace it with the passive construction: *unatakiwa* 'you [are wanted] to', or with other verbs, such as *-hitaji* 'need':

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[9] Occasionally, Swahili constructions in this form were understood literally, e.g. regarding the past tense used in them, and were therefore regarded as no longer relevant.

[10] Cf. felicity conditions for D as defined by J. Searle (Searle 1975), such as the sincerity, propositional, essential and preparatory conditions.

[11] It has been pointed out to me that a person using this word will be regarded as ill-bred. As one informant put it, „even in a pub, buying oneself a drink for one's own money, one usually precedes an order with the word *naomba*". Suggestions were made for the question *hutaki kufungua dirisha?* 'don't you want to open the window?' from the second part of the test to be replaced with *huwezi...?* 'cannot you....?'. For comparison, in Luganda this strategy was rated as the most polite (in five investigated situations), and the performative was ranked fifth on the politeness scale (Lwanga-Lumu 1999).

nahitaji 'I need ....' or the above-mentioned *-penda* 'to like'. This strategy type constitutes 4.2% in our data corpus.

Suggestory formula: language-specific utterances involving suggestions concerning a certain action, e.g. 'How about opening the window?'. Forms of this kind are rarely found in the Swahili data, e.g. *kwa nini hufungui dirisha?* 'why haven't you opened the window?', *ungefungua dirisha* 'you would open the window'.

Preparatory: involves a reference to the preparatory condition. An assertion that H can perform a given action, or an inquiry whether (s)he can do so, is used in various languages when (s)he is actually expected to perform it, e.g. *unaweza kufungua dirisha?* 'can you open the window?' (*-weza* 'can, to be able to, to be capable of, to have a possibility to'). This is the principal polite request strategy in English, and possibly in Indo-European languages in general. In Swahili, even though it is possible to build the grammatical form itself, it rarely functions as a request (0.7%). This is also the case in Zulu (moreover, rather not in the interrogative form). Only several examples of this kind of usage were reflected in the data under analysis.[12]

And, finally, there is the nonconventionally indirect level, i.e. an open set of indirect strategies, or hints. In the case of acts of this kind, it is difficult to indicate any established schemes. Two basic strategy types belong here:

Strong hints: realise requests by a partial reference to the object or element necessary for the act to be performed, e.g. *mbona dirisha limefungwa? = fungua dirisha* 'why is the window closed?' = 'open the window!'.

Mild hints: utterances that do not include any references to the request proper, nor to any of its elements, but are interpreted as request acts because of the context, e.g. *kuna joto sana hapa => fungua dirisha* 'it's very hot in here' => 'open the window!'. This form was not noted in the data under analysis. It was considered acceptable (and polite), however, by many respondents in the second part of the questionnaire.

A statistical analysis of the occurrence of the above-mentioned strategy types in the data corpus has shown:

85.22% direct strategies [1-3],

13.75% conventionally indirect strategies [4-7],

and 1.03% hints only [8, 9].

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[12] However, there are other phrases in Swahili, functioning along similar lines, i.e. expressing lack of obligation on H's part, which are added to the head act, such as *ukiweza* 'if you can', *kama ingewezekana* 'if it would be possible' etc., noted more frequently than the question with *-weza* 'can, to be able to, to be capable of'

For comparison, let us add that a similar test for Zulu has shown 58%, 20% and 22% respectively (cf. de Kadt 1995). It is worthy of note that, as opposed to Swahili, in Zulu hints of both kinds may play a significant role, even in such situations as a mother addressing her child, and are generally available in request situations twice more frequently than in English. In Swahili, by contrast, merely a few strong hints were noted in the corpus as a whole.

In Table 1, findings for other languages are given (cf. Blum-Kulka & House 1989). The division of strategies in terms of directness is slightly different here from the one presented above, however, with the first five strategies considered jointly as impositives. Moreover, only five of the requestive situations were covered (1, 2, 5, 8 and 12 in our questionnaire).

Tab. 1 Distribution of strategy types in different languages (%)

	Impositives [1-5]	Conventionally Indirect Strategies [6-7]	Hints [8-9]
Swahili	95.0	3.9	1.1
Australian English	9.8	82.4	7.8
Canadian French	21.7	68.9	7.1
German	20.5	76.7	2.8
Argentinian Spanish	39.6	58.4	2.0
Hebrew	33.4	58.4	8.0

Consequently, among the languages presented here, Swahili is characterised by a very high proportion of direct strategies (95%), coupled with an exceptionally low proportion of nonconventionally indirect strategies (1%), and the striking complete absence of mild hints (see Table 2). Accordingly, it differs considerably from the pattern displayed by the other languages (between 10% and 40% impositives). Given this very high proportion of direct utterances as compared to the other languages, conventionally indirect strategies are not frequently noted in Swahili (less than 4%, as compared to 58-82% for some non-African languages). Finally, as regards nonconventional indirect strategies, here too, Swahili (1%) differs from the pattern of such languages as various varieties of French and English or Hebrew (7-8%). German and Spanish locate themselves between them, with 2-3% hints.

Generally speaking, this high level of D directness in Swahili may be regarded as yet another proof that the postulate of the universality of close link between indirectness and politeness put forward by some scholars must be challenged. Naturally, these direct strategies in Swahili may be mitigated by means of other linguistic devices, i.e. nonverbal devices or politeness discourse strategies not covered in this study.

Let us now take a brief look at the strategies preferred by Swahili speakers in various situations. To this end, the 12 situations under analysis have been divided into groups according to the mutual status[13] of the interactants:

[13] In local culture, status is based on factors such as age, the role in the group, occupation, sex and education. Nowadays, financial situation is another important factor influencing an individual's social status

S of higher status as compared to H (3: school principal>member of staff, 5: policeman>driver, 8: teacher>student, 11: mother>daughter),

S and H of equal status (1: roommates, 2: schoolfriends, 9: children, 12: neighbours),

S of lower status as compared to H (4: worker>employer, 6: resident>clerk, 7: student>professor, 10: child>mother)

The choice of a given discourse strategy may also be largely influenced by the degree of acquaintance (familiarity) between the partners.[14] That is why in each subgroup defined in terms of the interlocutors' mutual status the situations under discussion have been arranged according to the growing degree of familiarity between the interactants (in the case of S of higher status, compare the lack of acquaintance in the policeman>driver relationship, superficial acquaintance in the school principal>member of staff and teacher>student relationships and close intimacy in the mother>daughter relationship). The use of particular strategy types for each situation under investigation is presented in Table 2.

Tab. 2 Strategy types used in a given situation (%)

SITUATION	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
I. Speaker>Hearer									
5. Policeman /illegally parked car/	89.6	6.3	-	1.0	1.0	-	-	2.1	-
3. School principal /meeting/	64.6	29.3	-	1.2	4.9	-	-	-	-
8. Teacher /lecture/	19.5	12.2	-	45.1	22.0	-	1.2	-	-
11. Mother /cleaning/	69.2	16.5	-	8.8	5.5	-	-	-	-
II. Speaker=Hearer									
2. Schoolfriend /lecture notes/	21.6	71.6	-	-	2.3	-	3.4	1.1	-
12. Neighbours /ride home/	7.0	87.2	-	-	1.2	2.3	2.3	-	-
1. Roommate /mess in the kitchen/	41.6	37.1	-	6.7	2.2	9.0	1.1	2.3	-
9. Children /beach/	71.7	4.7	-	18.9	1.9	1.9	-	0.9	-
III. Speaker<Hearer									
6. Resident /electricity/	25.8	74.2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
4. Worker /salary raise/	4.6	81.4	7.0	1.1	3.5	1.2	-	1.2	-
7. Student /homework/	3.6	88.1	1.2	2.4	-	-	-	4.7	-
10. Child /toy car/	17.5	67.4	-	7.0	8.1	-	-	-	-

Strategy types are marked 1 to 9:
1. Mood derivable
2. Explicit performative
3. Hedged performative
4. Obligation statement
5. Want statement
6. Suggestory formula
7. Preparatory

[14] And by the degree to which D is rated an imposition, i.e the effort required from H to accede to the request (Brown & Levinson 1987: 76).

8. Strong hint
9. Mild hint

I. When S of higher status realises D, the choice of a given strategy depends, as in other situations, on their mutual relationship and the effort required from the partner. Generally speaking, however, in this group S does not make a point of mitigating D, since his awareness of H's position allows him to work his will on H. The main strategy used by the respondents is the imperative (except for Situation 8: teacher>student).

Thus, the main strategy employed by the policeman is the imperative (89.6%):

1. *We mama! ondoa gari lako haraka. [ ]* (20/5)
Hey lady / woman! Take your car away quickly. [ ]

The mother asking her daughter to tidy up the house also mostly uses the imperative (69.2%), though not as frequently as S in the first case. The verb *-omba* also occurs among the strategies employed (16.5%):

2. *Rozi hebu safisha nyumba [...]* (6/11)
Rozi, tidy up the house [...]

3. *Binti yangu, naomba usafishe nyumba* (11/11)
My daughter, I'm asking you to tidy up the house

Similarly, the school principal uses either the imperative (64.6%) or the verb *-omba* (29,3%):

4. *Tafadhali toa taarifa kwa walimu kuhusu...* (49/3)
Please, give the teachers information about

5. *Naomba uwaarifu walimu kwamba kutakuwa na mkutano hapa shuleni.* (35/3)
I'm asking you to inform the teachers that there will be a meeting here at school.

The teacher asking a student to make his presentation earlier resorts to a greater number of strategies than the former S: from obligation statement [6] (44.1%), through want statement [7] (22%) or imperative [8] (19.5%) to explicit performative with the verb *-omba* [9] (12.2%):

6 *Itakubidi uwahi kuhudhurisha kazi yako wiki moja kabla ya tarehe iliyopangwa kutokana na mabadiliko ya ratiba.* (3/8)
You will have to present your work a week earlier than planned because of a change in the schedule

7 *Mwanafunzi wangu nataka utoe mhadhara wako wiki moja mapema zaidi na ratiba ilivyopangwa* (74/8)
My student, I want you to give your presentation a week earlier than scheduled

8. *Tafadhali utoe mhadhara wako wiki moja kabla ya ilivyopangwa.* (52/8)
Please, give your presentation a week earlier than scheduled

9 *Samahani, nakuomba utoe mhadhara wiki moja mapema kutokana na badiliko la ratiba [...].* (19/8)
Excuse me, I'm asking you to give your presentation a week earlier because of a change in the schedule [...].

Generally speaking, the teacher does not feel obliged, rather, to show politeness *vis-à-vis* his interlocutor, given that he goes as far as using the forms *itakubidi* 'you will have to' and *nataka* 'I want', which indicates that his role is perceived as highly authoritative.

II. In the case of persons of equal status talking to each other, direct strategies, such as the imperative and the performative verb *-omba*, continue to dominate, except for Situation 9 (children). What distinguishes this group from the previous one is a change of proportions, with the performative being used more frequently.

If the interlocutors are not close friends, as in the case of the request for a lift, the explicit performative is the preferred strategy (87.2%). The proportion of the imperative is low here (7%):

10. *Naomba mnisaidie lifti kama mnaelekea nyumbani* (67/12)
I'm asking you to help me [by giving me] a lift if you are going home.

11. *Nipe lifti hadi nyumbani jirani zangu* (23/12)
Give me a lift home, my neighbours.

Similarly, a student asking another to lend him lecture notes mostly uses the performative verb *-omba* (71.6%). The proportion of the imperative is higher here (21.6%), as compared to the exchange between the neighbours.

12. *Naomba uniazime muhtasari wako wa masomo, nitarudisha sasa hivi* (6/2)
I'm asking you to lend me your lecture notes, I'll give them back at once.

13. *Nipe muhtasari wa masomo tafadhali.* (15/2)
Give me lecture notes, please.

In the 'mess in the kitchen' case, S also resorts to the imperative (41.6%) or the performative verb *-omba* (37.1%). As can be seen, he uses them in similar proportions:

14. *Mwenzangu tafadhali safisha jikoni ulimoacha takataka usiku uliopita* (24/1)
My friend, please, clean up the kitchen that you left in a mess last night.

15. *Naomba usafishe takataka kule jikoni.* (26/1)
I'm asking you to clean up the mess over there in the kitchen.

The children, by contrast, tend to use more diversified strategies, including the imperative [16] (71.7%) and the obligation statement [17, 18] (18.9%) :

16. *Tupange safari ya kwenda ufukweni na tupendekeze vitu tutakavyochukua* (11/9)
Let us arrange a trip to the beach and let us suggest the things we will take with us.

17. *Wewe utachukua vitu hivi hapa na mimi hivi huku.* (1/9)
[It will be you/As for you,] you will take these things here and me those there.

18. *Tutakapokwenda ufukweni inabidi kila mmoja wetu abebe vitu vifuatavyo, soda, biskuti na nguo za kuogelea n.k.* (58/9)
When we will go to the beach, it is necessary for each of us to take the following things: soda, biscuits, swimsuits etc.

It is worth noting that the verb *-omba* is hardly ever used in the last situation. The decisive factor is probably a great familiarity between the interlocutors. It is understandable that in a conversation between two persons of equal status who are on intimate terms with each other excessive politeness would be undesirable. Another conspicuous feature is sometimes the jocular atmosphere of these conversations, the use by some respondents of a specific register typical of young people, which is an in-group identification marker here.

III. S of lower status will probably choose his words much more carefully than the interlocutors in the previous situations. In this case, the performative verb *-omba* is the main strategy for all situations (between 67% and 88%).

Thus, the performative *-omba* is the main strategy in Situation 7, in which a student talks to the teacher (88.1%):

19. *Samahani Profesa, naomba uahirishe ukusanyaji wa kazi ya nyumbani kwa sababu bado sijamalizia yangu* (45/7)
Excuse me, Professor, I'm asking you to postpone collecting the homework, because I haven't completed mine yet

In the case of the request for a raise, too, the use of the verb *-omba* was decidedly the first choice (81.4%):

20. *Samahani bosi! Ninaomba uniongezee mshahara* (9/4)
Excuse me, boss! I'm asking you to raise my salary.

In the case of the resident at the office in Situation 6, the other strategy besides the verb *-omba* (74.2%) was the negative form of the subjunctive (25.8%):

21. *Ndugu karani ninaomba nisikatiwe umeme ingawa sijalipa hesabu yangu [...]* (11/6)
Brother clerk, I'm asking for electricity not to be cut me off even though I haven't paid my bill yet [...].

22. *Tafadhali usinikatie umeme nitalipa.* (15/6)
Please, don't cut me electricity off, I'll pay.

And, finally, the use of *-omba* was the preferred strategy of a child asking his mother to buy him a toy (67.4%):

23. *Mama! naomba uninunulie gari ya kuchezea* (4/10)
Mother/Mummy! I'm asking you to buy me a toy car.

Having examined these main strategy types as used in particular situations, one can see clearly what the general preferences of Swahili speakers are like as regards formulating D, depending on the involvement of persons of different status and different degree of familiarity in the conversation. Language usage is evidently conditioned by the relationship between the interlocutors. Nonetheless, the questionnaire results show beyond all doubt that it is direct strategies that play the most important role in the realisation of this speech act in Swahili. Speaking of their directness, one must not leave a certain fact unmentioned, however. Namely, even among these most direct strategy types (or, in a broader sense, among the impositives [1-5]) one can find such that are formulated less directly than the others. Passive verbal forms [*-W-*] belong here.[15] The passivisation mechanism may concern the imperative as well as performatives and the verb *-taka* 'to want'.

[15] Cf. a division of directives propounded by H. Haverkate (Haverkate 1988: 69), who distinguishes three types of directives in terms of directness:
- direct: fully explicit in indicating H as the performer of the postulated action,
- partly indirect: half-explicit, half-implicit, they express the action only, without indicating its performer,

On the one hand, passivisation makes it possible to avoid indicating directly the person having some expectations *vis-à-vis* the partner, for example by using:

- *unaombwa* 'you are requested/asked to' instead of *nina(ku)omba* 'I am asking/requesting you to':

24. *Unaombwa, ujitayarishe kutoa mhadhara wako wiki moja mapema zaidi [...]* (8/38)
You are asked to prepare yourself to give your presentation a week earlier [...]

- *unaamriwa* 'you are ordered to' instead of *ninakuamuru* 'I am ordering you to':

25. Unaamriwa: hamisha gari lako kutoka hapa kabla sijakushitaki (5/38)
You are ordered/told: take your car away from here before I accuse you.

- *unatakiwa* 'you [are wanted] to' instead of *ninataka* 'I want you to':

26. [...] unatakiwa usafishe jikoni ulimoacha takataka usiku uliopita. (1/5)
[...] you [are wanted] to clean up the kitchen that you left in a mess last night.

Generally speaking, these were not forms frequently employed by the respondents; rather, they were used sporadically. From among them, only the form *unatakiwa* 'you [are wanted] to' was used particularly often by the teacher, probably to mitigate the categorical character of the utterance (we must bear in mind that *-taka* 'to want' belongs to those Swahili verbs whose use is discouraged for reasons of politeness).

On the other hand, passivisation makes it possible to avoid explicitly mentioning the person expected to do something. S has a number of options at his disposal: he may apply passivisation to the impersonal form [class 9 *i-*] of the imperative, or to the indicative in the future tense, or to the infinitive, for example:

- *i(si)fanywe* [Imp] 'let it (not) be done' instead of *u(si)fanye* '(don't) do it',

-*naomba/nataka i(si)fanywe/ni(si)fanywe* [Imp] 'I am asking/requesting/I want it (not) to be done (for me)' instead of *naomba/nataka u(si)fanye /u(si)nifanyie* 'I am asking/requesting/I want you (not) to do it (for me)',

- *itafanywa* [Ind-Fut] 'it will be done' instead of *utafanya* 'you will do it',

- *naomba/ombi langu ni /inanibidi/ninahitaji kufanywa* [Inf] 'I am asking/requesting etc. it to be donet' instead of *naomba* etc. *ufanye* 'I am asking/requesting etc. you to do it'.

This second type of passivisation, making it possible to avoid mentioning H, was applied mainly in the case of the employee addressing his superior in the workplace [27] (13 occurrences) and of the resident addressing a clerk (11 occurrences):

27. *Bosi, mimi ombi langu ni kuongezwa mshahara [...]* (4/68)
Boss, concerning me/as for me, my request is for my salary to be increased [...]

28. *[...] Mhadhara wako utatolewa wiki moja kabla ya ratiba ilivyopangwa.* (8/54)
[...] Your presentation will be given a week earlier than scheduled

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• indirect: fully implicit, lacking even any indications what kind of action is to be performed

29. *Mwanangu nataka nyumba yote iwe safi.* (11/30)
My child, I want the entire house to be clean.

In the next example both elements, i.e. both S and H, were avoided by means of passivisation. We have a description of the result of an action here, without the agent being mentioned. Neither is it said explicitly who expects that result:

30 *Hii nyumba inatakiwa kufanyiwa usafi ... umesikia?* (11/68) (instead of *nataka usafishe nyumba*)
The house needs (lit. is wanted) cleaning .. have you heard?

It must be noted, however, that passivisation is only rarely resorted to except for the situations listed above (the teacher, the subordinate in the workplace, the resident at the office).

Another thing worthy of note is that, unlike Xhosa and Zulu usage, where it is a popular politeness strategy, in Swahili the substitution of the third person for the second person as a neutral agent would produce the opposite effect, diminishing the partner's role.

To recapitulate, one must note once again that the most typical strategies for realising D in Swahili are direct strategies, regardless of the interlocutors' mutual status. Differences in this respect tend to manifest themselves, rather, in the choice of a specific strategy from this level (see imperative and performative in Table 3). In the case of S of higher status, the use of the imperative clearly predominates in the proportion of 4:1 as compared to the performative.[16] In the case of S of lower status, we have to do with the opposite situation, with the performative *-omba* indisputably predominating over the imperative as 7:1. Finally, partners of equal status employ these two forms in similar proportions (more or less 1:1). In other words, a general, very marked tendency may be observed for the performative *-omba* to be used more and more frequently, and, on the other hand, for the imperative as well as the obligation and want statements to be used less and less frequently, as H's position increases, and *vice versa*.

Tab. 3 Strategy types used according to the status of the participants of an interaction

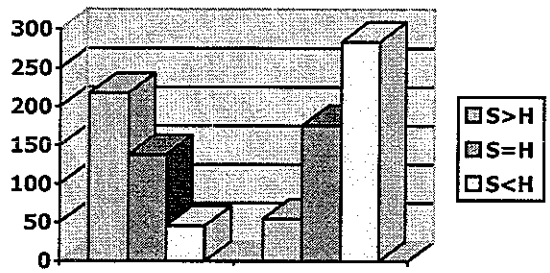
status speaker: hearer	imperative	performative *-omba*	obligation statement & want statement	suggestory formula & preparatory	hints
S>H	218	55	75	1	2
S=H	138	176	33	18	4
S<H	46	284	19	1	5

It must be remembered, moreover, that certain societal role types distinguished themselves in terms of the strategies employed as compared to the other interactants of similar status. I am referring here to the strategies used by the teacher (a person of high status), marked not

[16] As regards the usage of *-omba* by persons occupying higher positions in the social hierarchy, the informants' opinions differ widely. Some of them see some kind of weakness in this kind of behaviour on S's part, and this does not positively affect other people's respect for that person, nor discipline among the employees in the case of a superior, for example. It would be in line with the below interpretation of the function of this verb in Swahili. Others, however, claim that it cannot be considered a mistake, S simply has a choice.

only by their distinct character, but also by their greater diversity, with the obligation statement and want statement predominating. As regards partners of equal status, in the case of the two children the obligation statement was frequently employed (on a reciprocal basis, incidentally, i.e. with S undertaking to make his own contribution). The use of performatives was reflected as rarely here as in the case of the policeman and the illegally parked car (S's higher status, the interactants not being acquainted, and, in addition, H's guilt!).

The following graph illustrates the frequency of the use of the imperative and of formulae involving the verb *-omba* depending on the interlocutors' mutual status:



1-Imperative 2-Performative *-omba*

Let us now focus on the verb *-omba* for a while. My analysis has shown it to be the clearly predominating strategy in Swahili,[17] unlike in the English language. The use of formulae including the performative *-omba*, such as *(ni)naaomba ufanye kitu/(unipe) kitu* 'I request/I am requesting that you do sth./(give me) sth.', increases in Swahili as H's status increases, and may be regarded as the most typical strategy in interaction S of lower status>H of higher status. It must, therefore, be a polite strategy *vis-à-vis* H, notwithstanding its high level of directness as shown on the scale adopted here. It is, incidentally, a popular strategy of realising a request act in verbal exchanges of this kind not only in Swahili, but also in other African languages, such as Xhosa and Zulu. Moreover, in those languages, too, it is considered a polite form. As evident from the above, there is a clear contradiction between the high level of directness of the performative and Swahili speakers' opinion, shown by the questionnaire, that this form is the most polite one of all.

The assumption that the indirectness of the utterance is related to optionality locates performatives very high on the directness scale. Both S and H are overtly defined here, and so is the expected action. At the same time, performatives are believed to be used when a speaker needs to define his speech act as belonging to a particular category (Leech 1980).[18]

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[17] As one informant aptly put it, *„lugha ya naomba ufanye kitu fulani imetawala"* 'the language "I am asking you to do something" rules'.

[18] One must not always identify specific speech acts with the overt occurrence of performatives, however, since performative verbs need not necessarily represent particular types of illocutionary acts.

Thus, a form like *(ni)naomba*, where the speaker says that he is realising a request, explicitly expresses S's wish *vis-à-vis* H concerning a future action to be performed by H, and S's assumption that H is able to do so (cf. Bach & Harnish 1980).

Presumably, the very frequent use of 'could/can you...?' in English requests (the most common request strategy in this language) is based on the principle of mutual respect for the other interactant's autonomy, and results from the lack of a clear division into roles of social domination and subordination.

On the other hand, data from Xhosa indicate that the use of the performative to make a request is most probable in the case of a person of lower status assuming that the partner is able or willing to perform a future action. In this case, therefore, the performative is polite in that it overtly defines, firstly, S as being in a position of need, i.e. the petitioner, and, secondly, H as being in a position to fulfil this need, i.e. the caregiver. Performatives are thus highly deferential as they give overt acknowledgement of the caregiving and petitioning roles involved. By contrast, in using the imperative, S does not pay deference to H's capacity to do so. The speaker is presuming that he has authority over the hearer. This alternative framework for analysing performative requests was suggested by D. Gough (Gough 1995). Presumably, in Swahili the situation is similar.[19]

Thus, while in Western culture, basically, the degree of politeness is directly related to the respect for the interlocutor expressed by means of indirectness, and by leaving him a freedom of action, such indirectness, as we have seen, need not necessarily be regarded as a universal politeness marker. The use of indirect strategies in D seems, therefore, to be based on one of the many possible socio-cultural patterns, typical of English-speaking communities. As regards Swahili, we may definitely conclude that through one's direct behaviour one may (like in Xhosa) either show respect for the interlocutor, as is the case when the performative *-omba* is used, or fail to show him respect, as in the case when the imperative is employed.

Speaking of the imperative, the use of its various forms depending on the relationship between the interactants seems to be an important issue. As has been mentioned above, the Swahili imperative may assume various forms. It is commonly accepted that the subjunctive form is marked by a higher degree of politeness as compared to the straight imperative. What kind of conclusions may be drawn from the questionnaire concerning this matter? Unexpectedly, there is a marked general preference among the respondents for the imperative and the adhortative moods taken together, almost regardless of the interactants' status (Table 4).[20] The only exception are partners of equal status, close acquaintances, in a conflict-free

[19] One informant claimed that concepts associated with the verb *-omba* included in Swahili *unyenyekevu* 'humility, submission', *utii* 'obedience' and *unyonge* 'meanness, poverty'. At the same time, the petitioner realises that the decision concerning granting the request rests with H.

[20] Please note that the negative form, as common, basically, to the imperative and subjunctive moods, has not been taken into account in this comparison.

situation: the children. In this case the subjunctive is frequently used. By contrast, these all forms are not often employed in the case of S of lower status (with the exception of child addressing his mother), and so it is difficult to formulate any definitive conclusions relying on the few examples in which they occur. None of the affirmative forms of the imperative were noted in the case of a student talking to his professor, which confirms the authoritative character of H's role.

Tab. 4 Use of the imperative, adhortative and subjunctive moods in a given situation

SITUATION	imp	adh	subj
I. Speaker>Hearer	**67.9%**	**18.6%**	**13.5%**
5. Policeman /illegally parked car/	**80**	**2**	**3**
3. School principal /meeting/	**10**	**34**	**9**
8. Teacher /lecture/	**9**	**1**	**5**
11. Mother /cleaning/	**47**	**3**	**12**
II. Speaker=Hearer	**32.1%**	**23.6%**	**44.3%**
2. Schoolfriend /lecture notes/	**-**	**18**	**1**
12. Neighbours /ride home/	**1**	**4**	**1**
1. Roommate /mess in the kitchen/	**22**	**9**	**5**
9. Children /beach/	**19**	**-**	**51**
III. Speaker<Hearer	**17.9%**	**71.4%**	**10.7%**
6. Resident /electricity/	**4**	**4**	**1**
4. Worker /salary raise/	**1**	**2**	**1**
7. Student /homework/	**-**	**-**	**-**
10. Child /toy car/	**-**	**14**	**1**

We already know what kind of strategies our respondents would use depending on a given situation. For comparison, let us now look at the respondents' opinions concerning the acceptability of particular strategy types, depending on the relationship between the interlocutors. The second part of the test was designed to serve the investigation of this problem. This time, six roles only, differing by position on the vertical dimension of dominance and by position on the horizontal dimension of social distance, had been selected for the questionnaire (Table 5).

Tab. 5 Acceptance of strategy types in a particular relation between interactants (%)

	Father >child	**Teacher >student**	**Friends**	**Stra-ngers**	**Clerk >boss**	**Child >mo-ther**
1. Fungua dirisha Open the window [imp].	**86.25**	**78.75**	**67.50**	16.25	*8.75*	11.25
2. Ufungue dirisha Open the window [subj].	**61.25**	**63.75**	**51.25**	17.50	*5.00*	*6.25*
3. Unifungulie dirisha Open the window for me [subj+obj-pref].	**61.25**	**61.25**	**56.25**	15.00	20.00	15.00
4. Ninakuomba ufungue dirisha I'm asking you to open the window.	33.75	31.25	**58.75**	**88.75**	**66.25**	**83.75**
5. Ninapendekeza tufungue dirisha I'm suggesting we open ~.	12.50	25.00	**73.75**	**81.25**	42.50	41.25

6. Ninakuamuru ufungue dirisha. I'm commanding you to open ~.	**51.25**	**60.00**	*5.00*	*1.25*	16.25	*1.25*
7. Ningependa kukuomba ufungue dirisha. I would like to ask you to open ~.	20.00	21.50	**62.50**	**82.50**	**70.00**	**60.00**
8. Nilitaka kukuomba ufungue dirisha. I wanted to ask you to open ~.	17.50	18.75	**58.75**	**63.75**	**61.25**	**56.25**
9. Lazima ufungue dirisha. It's necessary for you/You must open ~.	**60.00**	**65.00**	18.75	*6.25*	*3.75*	*6.25*
10 Afadhali ufungue dirisha. You had better open ~.	48.75	**51.25**	**82.50**	**67.50**	37.50	41.25
11 Utafungua dirisha You will open ~.	**56.25**	**65.00**	40.00	13.75	*10.00*	*8.75*
12. Utafungua dirisha? Will you open ~?	37.50	48.75	**65.00**	22.50	20.00	23.75
13. Nataka ufungue dirisha. I want you to open ~.	**71.25**	**68.75**	47.50	*6.25*	17.50	11.25
14. Kwa nini hufungui dirisha? Why haven't you opened ~?	**73.75**	**70.00**	**68.75**	30.00	22.50	32.50
15. Unaweza kufungua dirisha? Can you open ~?	**52.50**	**66.25**	**72.50**	**71.25**	41.25	35.00
16. Hutaki kufungua dirisha? Don't you want to open ~?	**65.00**	**67.50**	**53.75**	17.50	11.25	11.25
17. Mbona dirisha limefungwa? Why is ~ closed?	**75.00**	**76.25**	**73.75**	45.00	36.25	41.25
18. Kuna joto sana hapa. It's very hot in here.	**60.00**	**51.25**	**73.75**	**70.00**	**57.50**	**61.25**
19. Nina joto sana. I'm very hot.	40.00	30.00	**67.50**	**50.00**	45.00	**65.00**

Even though major differences may be observed between the opinions of various respondents, some regularities may be noted as well. In the case of the imperative forms (the imperative and subjunctive moods [1-3]), a dividing line resulting from the interlocutors' social power and social distance is clearly visible. On one side, we have S of higher status and close friends of equal status, and on the other side, S of lower status and strangers. The former are more willing to use the forms under consideration; apparently, they have the right to do so, while the latter definitely use them more rarely. This confirms the observations resulting from the analysis of the first part of the corpus. Also confirmed is the respondents' unwillingness to use the following forms in the case of S of lower status: the performative verb *-amuru* 'to order, to command' [6], the noun *lazima* 'necessity' [9], the obligation statement in the form of an assertion in the future tense [11], and the verb *-taka* 'to want' [13].[21] In the case of *-amuru*, the prohibition is extended to include interlocutors of equal status as well. Unexpectedly, the acceptability of hints of both types [17-19], as well as the

[21] It was suggested that the use of *-amuru* 'to command, to order' be limited to the army and the police. I was told that it could be used, as a last resort, e.g. by a father in the case of a child being stubborn, or, possibly, in some emergency.

query preparatory strategy [15] turns out to be high in all situations.[22] Another conspicuous feature is a much higher acceptability of the subjunctive, in the case of S of lower status, in those cases where the verbal complex contains the object pronoun *-ni-* 'for me, me' [3], indicating the beneficiary, and the absence of any difference of this kind in the other situations. The above-mentioned „caregiver-petitioner" system seems to manifest itself again, in a sense.

Generally, it may easily be observed that many more strategies were considered acceptable than „actually" employed. The fact that respondents consider a given strategy acceptable does not definitely mean they would use it themselves in a given situation. As we have seen, in spontaneous usage, they basically limit themselves to two main patterns, and use the other lexical-syntactic structures much less frequently. Besides, the imposition[23] in the case of opening the window differed from the imposition of the situations we had had to do with earlier.

The test results clearly show a preference for direct forms in realising D in Swahili. However, the degree of politeness of a given utterance definitely must not be regarded as depending exclusively on its position on the indirectness scale. In judging the degree of politeness of a given utterance, it seems necessary to take other factors into account in addition to the directness level, i.e. the forms of address, upgraders or downgraders, and adjuncts to head act, which may play a significant role in this respect.[24] This problem, however, lies beyond the scope of the present article. I will content myself with mentioning one of the politeness markers, the word *tafadhali* 'please', as an expression inseparably linked to the problem of D discussed in this paper. As evident from the list given below (Table 6), it was generally used quite frequently, with the exception of the situation with the children going to the beach (no occurrences). Thus, the reservation made by J. Maw and Y.A. Omar

[22] Some of my informants voiced some reservations, however. What aroused their doubts was precisely the ambiguity of the utterance. Some would restrict the use of *-weza* to those situations where the point is actually to verify someone's capabilities, e.g. in talking to a friend who may be too short to reach the window, or a situation of parents joking with young children learning how to open windows, doors, etc. Others advised me against making the father use the sentence from example [19], as the only response to that would be *kaoge* 'go and have a bath', and this would mean exceeding a child's competence. On the other hand, the same sentence uttered in the clerk>superior situation could arouse a suspicion of the clerk's being lazy. One informant said that language should be „*wazi katika maana*" 'unambiguous, clear as far as the meaning is concerned', otherwise it would lead to misunderstandings.

[23] Even though absolute imposition is theoretically identical for all the situations under discussion, in practice it is not equally 'typical' of each listed H to perform the same kind of action. Some respondents found it quite difficult, for example, to imagine a boss opening a door at the office at the request of a person of lower status, something that seems quite natural in the father>child or teacher>pupil situations. We can see, basically, that even if the situation is objectively the same, its social meaning differs, depending on the interlocutors' interpersonal context.

[24] Moreover, E. de Kadt (de Kadt 1994) suggests that the politeness phenomenon be considered in the context of the interaction as a whole, rather than in isolated utterances. The point is that particular culture-specific patterns of politeness are also based on interaction between such elements as the non-verbal aspect of communication, body language, and the organisational structure of the communication exchange, i.e. factors that are not taken into account in the present study.

(Maw & Omar 1984) that this formula should not be used in addressing a partner of lower status does not find confirmation here (cf. the following situations in the Table 6: 5, 3, 8 and 11). On the other hand, the phrase is clearly used more and more frequently as H's status increases. A question also arises whether the function of *tafadhali* is not being extended in Swahili to cover that of *samahani* 'excuse me', used as an announcement of a forthcoming verbal contact with an element of excuse for the imposition involved.[25]

Tab. 6 Use of *tafadhali* 'please'

	S>H					S=H			S<H			
Situation	**5**	**3**	**8**	**11**	**2**	**12**	**1**	**9**	**6**	**4**	**7**	**10**
Frequency	11	22	6	5	16	18	24	-	43	33	21	4
		total=44				**total=58**				**total=101**		

The forms of address are the last important point one cannot pass over in silence in this context. Even though Sh. Blum-Kulka (Blum-Kulka 1989) simply includes them in the category of alerters, i.e. elements whose function it is to alert the hearer's attention to the ensuing speech act, it seems, nevertheless, that in a language like Swahili they deserve a special treatment.[26] They may be used not only to show respect for one's interlocutor (e.g. by using the standard respectful titles: *mzee* 'old, honourable', *mheshimiwa* 'Excellency, respected', or the professional-functional titles: *profesa* 'professor', *mkuu/bosi* 'boss') or intimacy (e.g. *rafiki yangu, mwenzangu* 'my friend'). They may also perform the function of in-group identification markers. This is true in particular of forms belonging to the familial and pseudo-familial terminology (e.g. *mama* 'mother/mummy', *mwanangu* 'my child', *binti yangu* 'my daughter', *dada* 'sister', *kaka* 'brother', *shangazi* '(paternal) aunt'). Their role is to define the mutual relationship between the interactants ('sense of belonging'), and to recall thereby, as it were, the rights and obligations resulting from it, or to express the need for group solidarity. They may reflect certain relations existing *à priori* between S and H and create them at the same time. This is a crucial matter, particularly, it would seem, in the case of D.

Summary

To recapitulate: the present paper establishes the basic patterns of D realisation by Swahili speakers, taking into account the relationship between the interactants, notably their mutual status and, to a lesser degree, social distance. What is definitely surprising is that, in spite of the wide range of strategies that may be produced by the language system as such (cf. Podobińska 2001), two schemes predominate, with minor exceptions, with their usage depending on the mutual status of interactants. The dimension of social power is essential

[25] One informant described this word as mitigating the categorical character or sharpness of the message.

[26] Even though in other languages, too, a request or an order accompanied by the forms of address seems to be perceived as more polite than a realisation without them.

here. In the case of interlocutors with equal status, ther choice of a given kind of verbal behaviour may be influenced, to a large extent, by their degree of familiarity.[27] This confirms that the linguistic research perspective needs to be combined with the interpersonal research perspective.

The distribution of strategies on the directness-of-utterance scale has shown that direct strategies clearly dominate in Swahili in this speech act type. The highest level of indirectness, represented by mild hints, has not been noted at all (let us recall here that even though the respondents failed to generate hints spontaneously, they nevertheless found them acceptable). As evident from the above, the model in which the nine D strategies are ordered with the growing indirectness levels corresponding to the growing politeness levels is unacceptable in the case of Swahili. Here, the phenomenon under discussion should be considered from a different perspective, distinct from that applicable to Anglophone culture. My findings confirm yet again that the correlation between the politeness and the indirectness of the utterance, based on giving H an alternative, is by no means a universal phenomenon. The conversational rules of the Western world seem to be in conflict with the politeness rules of Swahili speakers. In the Swahili cultural area, where the social hierarchy is a factor exerting much stronger influence on human behaviour than in the Western world, it seems more important to overtly express S's respected attitude *vis-à-vis* H than to emphasise the fact that the partner is given an alternative (even though [s]he is not deprived of such an alternative).

It is my hope that the present paper has highlighted some of the limitations the Eurocentric perspective has imposed on the understanding of D in African cultures, and that it will help to include alternative cultural norms, to a greater extent, in the communication process. Finally, I must point out that, in view of its character, the test carried out as part of my research project could reveal exclusively general cultural patterns in the field under investigation. It could not, however, shed any light on actual usage of language in naturally occuring discourse.[28]

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[27] Cf. „semantics of power" vs. „semantics of solidarity" (Brown & Gilman 1960).

[28] It has been pointed out to me that in the case of verbal behaviour, one may observe marked differences here even in the case of various ethnic groups. The Kenyan variation of Swahili, I was told, is reportedly characterised by the use of the verb *-omba* in the sense, rather, of begging or prayer to God.

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Annex: sample questionnaire

Kidadisi kuhusu matumizi ya lugha ya Kiswahili

A. Maelezo: Lugha hutegemea uhusiano wa wazungumzaji, mada inayozungumzwa na mahali. Andika chini msemaji atakayomwambia msikilizaji katika hali 12 zifuatazo:

1. Mwanafunzi anamtaka mwenziwe wa chumbani asafishe jikoni alimoacha takataka usiku uliopita.
2. Mwanafunzi wa kike anamtaka mwanafunzi mwingine amwazime muhtasari wa masomo.
3. Mwalimu mkuu anamtaka mfanyakazi mmoja awaarifu waalimu wengine kuhusu mkutano ujao wa shuleni.
4. Mfanyakazi anamtaka mwajiri wake amwongezee mshahara.
5. Askari polisi anamtaka dereva wa kike ahamishe gari yake iliyoegeshwa kinyume cha sheria.
6. Mwenyeji anamtaka karani katika ofisi ya umeme umeme usikatwe ingawa hesabu haijalipwa naye kama ipasavyo.
7. Mwanafunzi anamtaka profesa wake aahirishe utoaji wa kazi ya nyumbani kwa sababu bado hajaimaliza.
8. Profesa wa chuo kikuu anamtaka mwanafunzi atoe mhadhara wake wiki moja mapema zaidi ukilinganisha na ratiba ilivyopangwa.
9. Watoto wawili wanapanga safari ya kwenda ufukweni na kupendekeza kila mmoja achukue vitu gani.

10 Mtoto anamtaka mamake amnunulie gari ya kuchezea.
11 Mama anamtaka binti yake asafishe nyumba.
12 Mtu fulani anawataka majirani wanaoishi naye mtaa mmoja wampe lifti nyumbani.

B. Maelezo: Kuna joto sana. Msemaji anataka msikilizaji afungue dirisha. Chini una hali sita na sentensi 19 (tazama jedwali) msemaji anazoweza kuzitumia. Tia alama kwenye sentensi zote atakazoweza kuzitumia, kwa maoni yako, katika hali hizo sita mfululizo na halafu darajisha sentensi zote ulizozichagua kutoka pole sana hadi pole kidogo kwa kutumia namba.

	I. baba >mtoto	**II. marafiki wa rika moja**	**III. mtoto >mama**	**IV. mwalimu >mwana-funzi**	**V. karani >mkubwa wake wa kazi**	**VI. watu wasio-fahamiana kwenye treni**
1. Fungua dirisha.						
2. Ufungue dirisha						
3. Unifungulie dirisha						
4. Ninakuomba ufungue dirisha.						
5. Ninapendekeza tufungue dirisha.						
6. Ninakuamuru ufungue dirisha.						
7. Ningependa kukuomba ufungue dirisha.						
8. Nilitaka kukuomba ufungue dirisha.						
9. Lazima ufungue dirisha.						
10. Afadhali ufungue dirisha.						
11. Utafungua dirisha.						
12. Utafungua dirisha?						
13. Nataka ufungue dirisha.						
14. Kwa nini hufungui dirisha?						
15. Unaweza kufungua dirisha?						
16. Hutaki kufungua dirisha?						
17. Mbona dirisha limefungwa?						
18. Kuna joto sana hapa.						
19. Nina joto sana.						