

(a) The noun-class system. Here emphasis is placed on the differences between noun-class prefixes in old Swahili and those of Standard Swahili.

(b) Nominal derivation. The suffixes that are used in nominal derivation process of old poetry are compared to the ones used in Standard Swahili.

(c) Pronouns, possessives and demonstratives are compared in the two language forms.

(d) Verbal morphology in both old-poetry Swahili and Standard Swahili is discussed.

This book adds to the fast growing literature on Swahili language. It is particularly useful to the students of classical Swahili literature. Its strength lies in the fact that it brings together useful information which is scattered in various sources. This book has, however, one main limitation. It is written in German and this makes it inaccessible to the vast majority of Swahili students in East African universities. One can only hope that the author will one day think of translating it into English or Swahili so as to broaden its readership.

Paul M. Musau

**RUGATIRI D.K. MEKACHA: *THE SOCIOLINGUISTIC IMPACT OF KISWAHILI ON ETHNIC COMMUNITY LANGUAGES IN TANZANIA: A CASE STUDY OF EGINATA*. 1993. BAYREUTH: BAYREUTH AFRICAN STUDIES, 260 pp., DM 29.-**

In most African countries, and indeed other parts of the world, multilingualism is the rule rather than the exception. This phenomenon provides an interesting subject of study for sociolinguists. One could, for example, investigate in which domain (e.g. office, market, church etc.) each of the languages in a multilingual situation is used. It is also possible to study in linguistic terms the influence of one language on another. One may also wish to examine what is known as code-switching, i.e. the use of more than one language in speech.

The book under review by R.M. Mekacha is a recent contribution to the fascinating study of languages in contact. The book examines the co-existence of Kiswahili and community languages in Tanzania. It specifically makes reference to the patterns of language use and acquisition among the Nata of Tanzania.

This book is divided into ten chapters. Chapter one provides a general understanding of the Tanzanian sociolinguistic profile where Kiswahili is steadily becoming the dominant language for most of the people. This chapter shows that in some cases Kiswahili is taking over the functions that were assumed to be the preserve of English while in other cases it is becoming the first language of some young Tanzanians. This chapter argues that there is an emerging language shift in favour of Kiswahili in Tanzania.

Chapter two discusses indicators which are symptomatic of language shift. These are: language attitudes, patterns of language use, code-switching and diminishing communicative proficiency in the local language.

Chapter three discusses in detail the theoretical basis upon which the study is founded. It also discusses elaborately the methodology used to elicit data and the sampling design. This is a useful chapter for those who may wish to conduct similar studies or to replicate the results of this study.

Chapter four shows clearly how a language (Kiswahili) which is associated with social mobility, power and religion may gain ground in an environment where other languages are used. It also shows how Kiswahili in Tanzania has been used after independence to check ethnic parochialism.

Chapter five discusses with reference to relevant data the patterns of language use and acquisition. This chapter mainly shows that the position of Kiswahili has strengthened after independence in many respects. Thus, for example, there are now fewer members of the younger generation who learn other community languages as was the case in the previous days; there are now many more people who learn Kiswahili first and their mother tongue later; and that the formal learning of Kiswahili has decreased with age, i.e. many younger people learn their Kiswahili informally among their peers before they go to school.

Chapter six is an examination of patterns of language use in various domains. Here it is shown that ethnic languages dominate among the family members, in the neighbourhood, in the market place (except with strangers) and in the various cultural and traditional leisure activities. Kiswahili on the other hand, is used when talking about modern sports, in public work, in school, in government and in religious gatherings.

Chapter seven considers the kind of attitudes that Tanzanians (here the Nata people) have toward Kiswahili and the ethnic languages. From his interviews, the researcher concludes that many people in Tanzania associate ethnic languages with backwardness, illiteracy, and lower socio-economic status. On the other hand, increasingly more people associate Kiswahili with modernity, social mobility and higher socio-economic status. Thus as far as the author is concerned, language attitudes in his research area tend to favour Kiswahili than the ethnic languages. To be sure, however, there are certain functions that are typically associated with ethnic languages. Thus while nationhood and national unity that goes beyond single ethnic groups is associated with Kiswahili, culture and ethnic solidarity are associated with ethnic languages.

Chapter eight investigates code-switching as an aspect of language shift while chapter nine reports on aspects of diminishing communicative proficiency among the Nata in their own language. Chapter ten summarises and draws conclusions from the whole study.

This study is a positive contribution to the study of languages in contact. To the extent that the findings of this study are generalizable to the whole of Tanzania the book is particularly useful in showing the "competitive co-existence" between Kiswahili and other languages in Tanzania.

This study has, however, several shortcomings:

- (a) It is rather global in the sense that it spreads too widely and at times too thinly. This could have been avoided if the scope of the study had been limited to fewer issues which could have

been treated more exhaustively. For instance, the chapter on code-switching could have been more elaborate. It would, for instance, have been interesting to show the linguistic nature of what was code-switched, the reasons for code-switching according to the informants themselves and their attitudes towards this phenomenon.

(b) In a few instances, the author uses words without operationalizing them. For instance, in chapter five the author describes "linguistic knowledge" among his interviewees. It is not clear how linguistic knowledge should be interpreted or how it should be measured in this context.

(c) There is lack of adequate description of methodology in parts; for instance, in chapter nine the author compares language proficiency between the young and the old but he does not describe the testing and the scoring procedures. This lack of information renders the interpretation of the results of this chapter rather difficult.

All in all, this book provides interesting reading not only for students of linguistics but also for other readers who might be interested in linguistic matters.

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