

# Formal and Informal Development of the Swahili Language: Focus on Tanzania

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## 1. Background

This paper summarizes some issues that pertain to the recent formal and informal development<sup>1</sup> of the Swahili language (autonym: Kiswahili, henceforth SW) in Tanzania. As known and widely discussed in academic and popular contributions regarding the status and use of SW this development is, to a large extent, directly related to the Tanzanian language policy which after independence in 1961 put emphasis on SW as an authentic symbol of the Tanzanian nation.<sup>2</sup> In this context, the socio-economic, political and ideological orientation formulated by JK Nyerere who pursued his vision of an African socialism called “Ujamaa” was a substantial stimulating element in support of implementing this language policy. As a consequence, in particular after the year 1967 when the Ujamaa policy gained momentum, SW played a dominant role in most domains of language use where people were to be addressed or supposed to play an active role in a dialogue with the political leadership, civil servants, etc.

Needless to say that this orientation of widely using the common people’s language SW went along with important decisions that focused on corpus development. The expanding use of SW and its introduction into domains which were a stronghold of English as the language of the former Trusteeship administration prompted the coinage of terms for these domains (e.g. National Assembly/Parliament, ministries and administration, education) and the further standardization of the language. This corpus development was a necessary step for gradually taking over from English the role of the major official medium of communication in the country and as expressing an authentic Tanzanian identity with an optimum of public response.

The establishment of the National Swahili Council (“Baraza la Kiswahili la Taifa” – henceforth BAKITA) demonstrated the seriousness with which the development of SW was embarked on in those years. The creation of BAKITA was a precondition for facilitating the process of formal language standardization with particular reference to terminology development.

## 2. Terminology Development by BAKITA and TUKI – Achievements and Problems

The work initiated by BAKITA with regard to corpus development resulted in various substantial publications that in the field of terminological elaboration are known as “Tafsiri Sanifu” (Standard

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\* A completely revised and updated version of a paper which was originally read at the Swahili panel of ACAL 2005, 1<sup>st</sup> April 2005 in Savannah, then submitted for publication in June 2005.

<sup>1</sup> The term “formal language development” refers to work that is done by an institution (such as BAKITA or the Institute of Swahili Research – TUKI) which was appointed to deal with language related issues, especially corpus development. “Formal” is opposed to “informal language development” which is understood as spontaneous, non-institutional, societal language development that is not monitored by a Language Board or a similar institution tasked for dealing with language matters.

<sup>2</sup> The late president JK Nyerere (1965: ii) defined Swahili as the national language of Tanzania (“Kiswahili ni lugha ya Taifa Tanzania” - Swahili is the language of the Tanzanian nation).

Translation). Until 1985 five booklets that contain terminology lists of various subjects were published (BAKITA 1972-1985). "Tafsiri Sanifu" no. 1 was of particular importance, as it provided the standard translations for government institutions which subsequently changed their names from English to SW. Wordlists no. 2, 3, 4 and 5 focused mainly on terms for subjects that are taught in secondary schools. The compilation of these terminology lists was in compliance with the 1969 decision to gradually phase in SW as the medium of instruction beyond primary education.<sup>3</sup> To give an example - Terminology List no. 5 (1985) contained 549 terms in agronomy, 324 terms in agricultural engineering, 124 terms in motor mechanics, 72 terms in photography and additional terms for other subjects.

The standardization work that a particular terminology list had to undergo is reflected in cyclo-styled versions like "Kamusi" (3, "Magonjwa ya Mifugo, Mimea na Wadudu Waharibifu" [Animal and Plant Diseases and Pests]) which after discussion and approval by BAKITA was then published. There were also terminology supplements in BAKITA's journal "Lugha Yetu" (Our Language). Moreover, the public was regularly informed about the progress in formal terminology development by BAKITA whose standard terms were reprinted in the SW Sunday newspaper "Mzalendo" (The Nationalist).<sup>4</sup>

BAKITA was also supportive to the "Primary Technical Dictionary English - Swahili" compiled by Rajmund Ohly (Ohly 1987) who extracted 8,000 technical terms from existing publications (mainly the "Vitabu vya Ufundi" [Technical books] series published by the Tanzania Publishing House TPH). A summary of SW terminology development is given by Mwansoko (1999: 146) who states that 20,975 lexical items were coined until 1989.<sup>5</sup>

Unfortunately, the fruitful terminology development work that was carried out under the umbrella of BAKITA came to a standstill in the first half of the 1980s. The reason for this discontinuation of the formal corpus development in the field of terminology can be found in the reluctance of the then political leadership of Tanzania to fully implement a language policy that makes SW the language of instruction and learning after primary school. As late as in 1984 the Presidential Education Commission again recommended the replacement of English in secondary schools by SW. Subsequently, however, the strategy paper "Mfumo wa Elimu" (The education system) directed in paragraph 19:

Lugha ya kufundishia: Lugha zote mbili Kiingereza na Kiswahili zitatumika kama lugha za kufundishia. Lugha ya Kiingereza itaimarishwa katika ngazi zote za elimu (Tanzania 1984: 19).<sup>6</sup>

The situation facing Tanzanian language planners and lexicologists in those years was aptly described in an editorial of the journal "Kiswahili" which is edited by the Institute of Kiswahili Research (TUKI), hence seen from the perspective of a highly authoritative institution:

Uongozi wa 'Awamu wa Kwanza' uliweka mwongozo na vyombo vya kukuza lugha ya Kiswahili kitaifa. 'Awamu' hiyo ilikifanya Kiswahili kiwe lugha halisi ya taifa na ya kimataifa. Hata hivyo mwishoni mwa 'Awamu' hiyo pamekuwa na kulegalega katika juhudi za kukuza Kiswahili. Sera 'mpya' ya elimu ya juu haikukipa nafasi Kiswahili, bali imesisitiza zaidi matumizi ya lugha ya Kiingereza. Kiswahili kimelaumiwa kuwa kimesababisha kushuka kwa kiwango cha elimu nchini... hakuna sera kamili ya lugha ya taifa. Wakuzaji wa Kiswahili hawajaelezwa sababu wala kupewa malengo ya kufikia katika shughuli zao. Kila siku wanaunda istilahi na kuandika vitabu vya kitaaluma, lakini hawaelezwi istilahi na vitabu hivyo vitatumiwa lini na wapi! Ukosefu wa sera ya lugha nchini ndicho kikwazo kikubwa cha maendeleo ya lugha ya Kiswahili leo (TUKI 1985:vii).<sup>7</sup>

<sup>3</sup> See Tanzania (1969: 12).

<sup>4</sup> In those days "Mzalendo" was one of the newspapers owned by the then ruling Tanganyika African National Union (TANU) and since 1977 by Chama cha Mapinduzi (CCM, Revolutionary Party) which is still in power.

<sup>5</sup> Details in Legère (1991), for further information see also Kiango (2004).

<sup>6</sup> Language of instruction: Both languages English and Swahili will be used as medium of instruction. The English language will be consolidated at all levels of education.

<sup>7</sup> The leadership of the "First Phase" (i. e. Nyerere and his Cabinet - author) drew up the guidelines and established institutions for the promotion of Swahili at the national level. This "Phase" made Swahili a true national and international language. Nonetheless, at the end of this "Phase" the activities in promoting Swahili lost momentum. The "new" policy for higher education has given Swahili no chance, but puts more emphasis on English. Swahili is

Therefore, it is clearly no coincidence that for almost 20 years BAKITA made no terminology lists available in a printed form. Formal terminology development was no longer supported by those who were responsible for funding and guiding this kind of BAKITA's activities, as in their eyes there is no market for the results of the standardization work. Those who shared this view included the then Minister of Education and Culture, Joseph Mungai, who by just brushing away his ministerial responsibility for BAKITA (which was under his Ministry) stated in public at the Swahili Day in 2000 that "...Kiswahili was not yet sufficiently developed'" (quoted in Yahya-Othman 2001:81).

In recent years the 1997 document "Sera ya Utamaduni" (Cultural Policy, Tanzania 1997) was again a substantial step forward towards the full empowerment of SW. This position paper comprehensively defines the importance and role of this language in Tanzania. It also includes the suggestion to make Swahili ultimately the de-jure (e.g. by an act of parliament) official language of Tanzania. However, the then Ministry of Education and Culture<sup>8</sup> which published this policy document did not take appropriate steps to embark on the implementation of this and other substantial recommendations that took years to be formulated and to be released as a generally acceptable version. Again, the then Minister's declared preference for English and his indifference, if not to say hostility to SW, was the stumbling block that made progress in this respect impossible.

The change of attitudes towards SW and the outspoken focus on maintaining and, where possible, expanding the status of English has been widely discernible since the 1980s, when a study on English as the medium of instruction in secondary schools confirmed the latter's endangered position which is a truism to educationists and language planners in the country. Details of the pro's and con's that were debated in those years are well documented in Roy-Campbell (2001, see chapter 5 and 6) or Mekacha (1997). This debate continues even now, in particular when the then Education Minister was approached in 2003 to select three secondary schools for a pilot study in which SW was planned to be the medium of instruction. This initiative was bluntly rejected the former Minister's argument being "Watanzania wengi wamekuwa wakitaka watoto wao wafundishwe masomo ya sekondari kwa lugha ya Kiingereza... huenda wazazi wangeandamana kupinga Kiswahili..." (Rutaihua 2003: 5).<sup>9</sup>

The role of English in Tanzania is emphasized by some stakeholders, whenever there is an opportunity. Again, the former Minister of Education was leading this discussion. This would not be worth mentioning, would at the same time he had argued also in favour of SW, thus supporting a bilingual policy that is widely recommended by e.g. UNESCO. But this was not the case. Thus, a 2003 two page advertisement disseminated a ministerial speech full of eulogies for English, while for the national language SW Minister Mungai just reserved a negative remark about "Swahili fundamentalists somewhere out there who would like us to change to Swahili as medium of instruction for secondary and higher education..." (Tanzania 2003: 31).<sup>10</sup>

Given the prevailing climate that has not been supportive to BAKITA's terminological work, it is no wonder that for almost 20 years no terminology lists were produced. A breakthrough came again in 2003, when 1300 terms for AIDS and STD were coined.<sup>11</sup> These and other terms (e.g. for literature 243, psychiatry 172) were publicized in the 2004 "Tafsiri Sanifu" No. 6 brochure (BAKITA 2004). Suffice it to note here that the printing was funded by the Finnish Embassy in Tanzania, as obviously no ministerial funds were available.

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blamed for falling standards in education in the country... There is no comprehensive policy for the national language. Swahili promoters were not yet explained reasons or objectives to be achieved in their activities. They constantly coin terms and write educational books, but they are not told when and where the terminologies and books will be used! The lack of a language policy in the country is indeed the major obstacle for the development of Swahili today. Author's comment: Suffice it to note here that by 1990 all textbooks for secondary schools (except biology and mathematics) were translated into SW.

<sup>8</sup> Since end 2005 the newly established Ministry of Information, Culture and Sports is responsible for language matters.

<sup>9</sup> Many Tanzanians want their children to be taught in secondary school in English ... parents would probably demonstrate against Swahili... Comp. also Carren (2003), Mwananchi (2002), Tembe (2003).

<sup>10</sup> For the on-going discussion see papers in publications such as in Brock-Utne, Desai, Qorro (2003, 2004), Rubanza (2002), etc.

<sup>11</sup> See BAKITA (2003).

In the late eighties and nineties the terminology development in Tanzania shifted to TUKI. This institute had a long tradition of coining terms for a number of subjects. Its predecessor, the Inter-territorial Language (subsequently Swahili) Committee, since its formation in 1930 had disseminated in the “Bulletin” (and later in the “Swahili” journal) a number of terms that reflected the rich potential of SW to cope with modern concepts. In recent years TUKI discussed and subsequently published terminology lists for e.g. literature, biology (approx. 1175 entries), chemistry (approx. 1450 entries), physics (approx. 1220 entries), etc. TUKI publications include further “Istilahi za Ufundi wa Magari na Matrekta” (Car and Tractor Mechanics Terms; Tumbo-Masabo & Mwansoko 1997), “Kamusi ya Biashara na Uchumi Kiingereza-Kiswahili” (Dictionary of Commerce and Economy; Tumbo-Masabo & Chuwa 1999), “Kamusi ya Sheria” (Law dictionary; Mlacha 1999), “Kamusi ya Tiba” (Dictionary of Medicine; Mwita & Mwansoko 2003), “Kamusi ya Historia” (Historical Dictionary; Mwansoko, Tumbo-Masabo & Sewangi 2004), etc.

The material developed by TUKI and BAKITA evidences well the far-reaching formal corpus development that SW has undergone in particular from the 1970s onwards. Despite deficiencies and inconsistencies in the terminology lists, Tanzania via BAKITA and TUKI succeeded within a short span of time in creating and disseminating terminologies for important domains of SW language use. In doing so, these institutions contributed to strengthening the position of the standard variety of SW that is characterized by a comparatively stable lexical stock which facilitates SW’s role as the dominant medium of communication in Tanzanian society. In fact, in important domains of language use, people operate a language which clearly reflects the effects of the standardization process. This is true for the language used in newspapers and journals (probably excluding the advertisement section), in radio, TV, in education, and, what is specifically important, in official domains like administration, the courts, national assembly, in public functions, etc.

### **3. Informal Terminology Work**

In view of what has been said above, formal SW terminology elaboration did not cover all domains of language use. Language standardization in Tanzania mainly focused on some selected domains and was in particular triggered off by the vision to make this language a medium of instruction in post-primary education.

It is a matter of fact that from a historic perspective SW speaking people in East Africa had to be creative in many ways whenever they were exposed to socio-economic achievements as well as technological progress and required to take this into account language-wise. Accordingly, for many years informal lexical elaboration played a prominent role in the development of SW. This was in particular the case in those years when formal SW standardization was still in its infancy. Thus, the then Inter-territorial Language Committee did only rarely and to a limited extent provide SW speakers with technical terms for various domains of science and technology. People encountered machines and equipment that came from overseas, but nothing was done to familiarise them with the function or repair in a language they were proficient in (certainly not English). That’s why the terms used currently by e.g. car mechanics are, to a large extent, borrowings from English, as demonstrated by Samson (1989). Although local people had to drive, to service or to repair cars, busses or bikes, neither proper vocational training nor manuals were available in SW. Accordingly, in a typical “learn-by-doing” process, which took place in garages or at the helm, car mechanics and other people created their own terms which subsequently spread and became accepted in society. When BAKITA came forward with new terms, the users rejected them, as reported by Samson (1989). As a consequence, informal terminology development in car mechanics and other domains of e.g. technology, but also beyond it, is a matter of fact that cannot be neglected in the terminology discussion. This aspect is further taken into account below with regard to initiatives of creating terms in conceptualizing in SW computer and communication technologies.

When the computers and mobile phones were imported to East Africa, a similar process was observed. Users and consumers at the grassroots such as secretaries and typists, people in the computer or mobile phone shops, those who run training courses, technicians, etc. created a vocabulary of their

own that is gradually expanded. Thus, they adopted the loan-word “kompyuta” and invented the term for the cell/mobile phone – “simu ya mkononi”,<sup>12</sup> “barua pepe” (e-mail), “mtandao” (internet) and many others. This terminology which is the result of informal, spontaneous coinage has consistently grown over the past years. In this respect, neither BAKITA nor TUKI were involved for a couple of years. None of these institutions paid proper attention to the dynamism of the process which, on the one hand, would have needed proper formal term elaboration in cooperation with ICT experts. On the other hand, the variants in use had to be collected, checked and standardized. Thus, monitoring and concurrently counselling could have facilitated the understanding and use of modern technologies in a user-friendly way. An important opportunity of providing the public with adequate ICT terms right from the start was missed. Therefore, it is no wonder that there are sometimes conflicting terms which complicate the communication. This is the case with e.g. “(computer) mouse” where people use either “mouse” (source language term, English), “mauzi” (loan word), “panya” (which was adopted as a SW equivalent, but meaning rat), “kipanya” (a diminutive form of “panya”), “buku” (mouse), and “kipenyezi” (functionally describing the device).<sup>13</sup>

A look at various published sources, services and devices that are produced or offered in Swahili by mobile phone companies (computer sales managers almost entirely operate in English or code-switch when technical issues are dealt with) provides an informative insight into the on-going process of informal term coinage. These terms are necessary for a smooth interaction between the mainly SW speaking costumers and the service providers, for informing the public about new achievements, selling the products, facilitating the mobile phone use, etc. Relevant terms can be traced in a variety of printed texts in form of fliers, newspaper advertisements,<sup>14</sup> in the case of Vodacom Tanzania even in a tri-monthly glossy magazine (English/SW) “Sauti ya voda®”,<sup>15</sup> on the prepaid vouchers that are bilingually produced, etc.<sup>16</sup> The costumers service operates either in SW or English. Hence, whenever the service/help desk number is dialled, the answering voice directs the caller in either language towards balance enquiry (which could be displayed as SMS in SW), recharge section, air-time transfer, billing system, etc.<sup>17</sup> In this context, the following terms are used:

- “bonyeza” (enter, dial),
- “huduma kwa mteja masaa 24” (24 hours costumers service),
- “mfumo wa kulipia kabla” (pre-paid billing),
- “milio bomba ya simu” (cool ringing sounds),
- “mtandao nchi nzima” (country wide network),
- “muda wa maongezi” (air-time),
- “papo kwa hapo mfumo wa kuongeza muda wa mawasiliano” (instant recharge system), also mfumo wa papo na hapo”,
- “salio” (account balance),
- “tarehe ya mwisho wa salio” (airtime expiry date),
- “ujumbe mfupi wa maneno” (SMS), etc.

An interesting creation is the verb “-bipu” which is a loan word (i.e. beep) the meaning of which in SW being – to give somebody a ring that requests him/her to call the caller (who cannot afford the call him/herself).

<sup>12</sup> *simu* (noun class 9, telephone) *i-* (concord morpheme class 9) *-a* (connective, of) *m-* (noun class 3) *-kono* (hand) *-ni* (locative, in), literally “telephone of in hand”.

<sup>13</sup> *Ki-* (prefix class 7) *-peny-* (verb stem, penetrate) *-ez-* (causative) *-i* (final vowel denoting an actor); the Microsoft SW glossary opts for “kipanya” (Ngamizi 2004: 56).

<sup>14</sup> There are probably approx. 60 daily or weekly newspapers now published in Sw (p.c. K. Kahigi, 8 June 2005). Some of them are also available on the web, e.g. “Uhuru” ([www.uhuru.info](http://www.uhuru.info)), “Nipashe” ([www.ippmedia.com](http://www.ippmedia.com)), “Dar Leo” ([www.bcstimes.com/darleo](http://www.bcstimes.com/darleo)), “Maisha” and “Spoti Starehe” ([www.bcstimes.com/maisha](http://www.bcstimes.com/maisha) or [/spotistarehe](http://spotistarehe)), etc.

<sup>15</sup> Consulted in 2004/5, more recently no new edition was found.

<sup>16</sup> Although English is the official language and widely promoted in formal domains in Namibia, the cell phone company MTC, aside from Afrikaans and German, produces basic instructions in Herero, Khoekhoegowab, Kwangali and Ndonga of what to do when recharging an account.

<sup>17</sup> A list of vodacom services is given in SW in a flier called “Muongozo wa haraka” (Quick guide, Vodacom s.a.).

Compared to cell phone technology and its dissemination in SW, the support in SW for computer users has been far less. Computers, printers, software and accessories normally come with their handbooks or documentation which is written in English. The whole computer terminology in English was imported to a largely non-English speaking environment, where larger parts of computer users in offices were struggling to learn how to operate a PC and its software. Similar to car mechanics, this was mainly a process of “learn-by-doing” (or learn from others) which involved also the emergence of relevant terms (or variants). It was only in 2003 that a software guide in SW which was compiled by a TUKI staff member and dealt with Wordperfect (Chuha 2003) was printed in Tanzania. Earlier a textbook about computers was compiled in Canada and available for sale in East Africa (Ali & Mwikalo 2000). To a large extent, both published sources followed the tradition to introduce a term in English and subsequently describe it in SW. Nonetheless, the Chuwa material makes also an effort to suggest terms which are inherent to SW such as “kumbukizi” (memory, the Ngamizi [2005] version is “kumbuko”), “mchakato” (processing), “menyu” (“menu), “tarakishi za mahesabu” (numerical keypad, Ngamizi [2005]: “kibaonamba”).

A list of informally coined terms in computer technology and application is given in Petzel (2005). As expected, the author recorded a rather high number of English loanwords and English expressions as well as calques, hybrid verbs of the structure class 15 prefix “ku-“ plus English verb stem, but also genuine SW terms that clearly demonstrate the great potential of the language. It is obvious that various conflicting variants are in use, as the standardization process has just started with the Microsoft localization project (see below). But without doubt, there is ample proof for informal SW development which contributes well to consolidating the position of SW as a “jack-of-all-trades”.

Quite recently the Kenyan Mwanashehe Saum Mohammed made the following statement: “Every continent seems to have a language in the computer, and here we are with nothing” (quoted by Lacey 2004:2). In fact, African languages have been ignored by most computer software projects.<sup>18</sup> A step forward in this direction was the recent release of a commercial SW spell checker (“Orthografix II”) which was developed by Arvi Hurskainen in Helsinki. Other Finnish computer programs with SW as the target language include SWATWOL (a morphological analysis program), SWATAG (a tagging program), SALAMA (which stands for “Swahili Language Manager”, processing SW text), etc.<sup>19</sup>

In June 2004 the Microsoft East Africa office in Nairobi made a statement (published in Majira 2004) regarding SW computer terminology. In those days Microsoft had agreed to produce the MS Office software in SW. The major argument for this decision was obviously the great potential of SW and its prominent position in East Africa. It was argued that the Microsoft focus is more on “community outreach than business development” (Lacey 2004:2), but one can be sure that the estimated future 10 million PC people using SW Microsoft programs will ultimately not be a negligible factor in generating profit.

First results of this SW localization endeavour were presented to the public in November 2004. The team of experts in charge of coining terms was composed of Tanzanian (both Mainland and Zanzibar) and Kenyan scholars, while the subsequent assessment group included also representatives from Uganda (besides Kenyans and Tanzanians). Upon completion of the first project phase the following information was released in the press:

MICROSOFT Corporation has unveiled a new edition of *ki-Swahili Technology Glossary* as part of its effort to bridge the digital divide. The development marks the completion of a critical phase of the company's ki-Swahili Localisation Programme. The Glossary was formulated by a team of volunteer linguistic experts drawn across the Eastern Africa region at an estimated cost of US\$ 100,000 (about Tsh 110 million)... “The new ki-Swahili Technology Glossary will now act as a baseline for the next phase of development, which is the building of the ki-Swahili Language Interface Pack (LIP),” Patrick Opiyo, Microsoft localisation manager, told reporters ... “With the ki-Swahili LIP, computer users will be able to install a ki-Swahili desktop version as a ‘skin’ on top of existing installations of Windows and standard Microsoft Office applications...” (Anyanzwa 2004: 1).

<sup>18</sup> The Microsoft Word 2002 version lists under “tools” the following languages: Afrikaans, Amharic, Edo, Fulfulde, Hausa, Ibibio, Igbo, Kanuri, Oromo, Somali, Sutu, Tamazight (Berber), Tigrigna, Tsonga, Tswana, Venda, Xhosa, Yoruba, Zulu. But only the SW spell checker which was installed by the author was really operational. Scanner software for optical text recognition (OCR) developed by IRIS supports SW as well.

<sup>19</sup> More details see Bibliography (2006: xviii).

The result of this phase of the Swahilization project was a terminology list of 3000 English terms with their equivalents in SW which were required for translating Windows software into SW. This terminology list (Ngamizi 2005) can be taken as a benchmark in the history of SW. It was compiled in a short time of less than six months. The material provides SW standard equivalents of English terms for a domain which is rather technical. Hence its existence is another strong argument against those who blame SW for not been properly equipped to become the medium of communication in domains of technology and science. Moreover, a claim like that by e.g. Minister Mungai of SW's alleged under-development does not hold water either. In view of the software development a far-reaching impact may be assumed, since this software will empower many Tanzanians (and other East Africans) to better understand and use the computer and its components and will also facilitate the introduction of computers in primary schools where SW is the medium of instruction and learning.

The structure of the Ngamizi terminology list is demonstrated below. The Chairman of the expert team, Prof. K. Kahigi, made this terminology list available to the author of this paper in February 2005. The file name is "Ngamizi Superversion 1" and referred to as Ngamizi (2005) accordingly. In the list, there is the English term, followed by its definition or description and finally the SW term which was created by the expert team. No details about the SW term and how/why it was selected or coined is given. Thus a term like "ngamizi" is listed as the equivalent of the English term "computer" without further comment. But it is understood that this term is a compromise, because the Kenyan team members were in favour of calling the computer "tarakishi", whereas the Tanzanians advocated the borrowed term "kompyuta" that is a well established word in Tanzanian society. Hence, "ngamizi" was proposed by a Kenyan team member who referred to his first experience with a computer which processed (swallowed "-meza" in standard SW, "-miza" in dialect) data.

Here is another example of term coinage which is extracted from Ngamizi (2005: 6):

ASCII	Code representing characters in the English language as numbers. Each character is assigned a number from 0 to 127. Most computers use ASCII to represent text and to transfer data from one computer to another.	Mfumo MKUHA (Msimbo sanifu wa Kimarekani wa Ubadilishanaji Habari)
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In cooperation with TUKI the Computer Department of the University of Dar es Salaam has also embarked on SW programs. The focus of the project which is funded by SIDA/SAREC is on translating free software such as "Open Office". First results such as the SW version "Jambo OpenOffice" (free download from [www.kilinux.udsm.ac.tz](http://www.kilinux.udsm.ac.tz)) have meanwhile become available. In addition, "Translate.org.za" of South Africa is in contact with Tanzanian colleagues who develop SW computer terminology to study their experience in using an African language in ICT technologies.<sup>20</sup> However, the SW computer terminology developed at the University of Dar es Salaam falls more into the category of informal development, as the terms lack the wide approval which is peculiar to the Microsoft project with its East African backing.

#### 4. Conclusion

To sum up – SW has made substantial progress in corpus development in recent years. This is both the result of formal and informal language promotion and term coinage. In particular the development of ICT terminology is a fascinating area of study both from a linguistic and socio-linguistic perspective. Moreover, the dynamic growth of SW and the latter's penetration into domains that were a stronghold of English in science and technology makes SW protagonists optimistic about the future. This language has become an attractive candidate for investments such as evidenced in ICT business that will certainly bear fruits in future in terms of profits. The recent corpus development teaches also SW antagonists a lesson – although it is possible to block the introduction of SW as the medium of instruction and learning beyond primary schools, it is impossible to stop its advance in domains which are not controlled by the state apparatus.

<sup>20</sup> For details see [www.translate.org.za](http://www.translate.org.za). e.g. of Nov. 14, 2004, 1:38.

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