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Cultural Hegemony? The Example of Language Use in International Development Cooperation in Tanzania/East Africa

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Conventions on the use of linguistic varieties are not "solid social facts", but themselves "stakes in and outcomes of struggle between social forces"[1]

Aid, dependency and language use in Tanzania

The United Republic of Tanzania is one of the poorest countries in the world, ranking 159 (of 179) in the UNDPs Human Development Report 2007-08, with a per capita GDP of 744 US$ only. [2] Tanzania is a country that is highly dependent on foreign aid. In 2004, it received $ 1,75 bn in net ODA, making it the third largest recipient in Africa in absolute terms.[3] In 2004, ODA accounted for over 16% of the GNI [4], and was equivalent to about 40% of government expenditure.).[5] More than 50 official donor agencies operate in Tanzania, the largest donors being IDA, UK and the EC. In recent years, Tanzania has been highlighted as a role-model of a country executing efficient recipient country policy, especially in the context of the Paris Declaration which stresses country ownership as well as donor alignment and harmonization. In Tanzanias early post-colonial history, concepts of African Socialism (Ujamaa) and self-reliance played an important role, with social justice and popular participation remaining important parts of political discourse to date. Part of Tanzania's quest for self-determination is the linguistic policy of the country. The most remarkable aspect of the linguistic situation in Tanzania is the strong position of Swahili, which is

[1] Norman Fairclough, 'Critical Discourse Analysis', *The Critical Study of Language* (London: Longman, 1995), p. 248.
[2] (www.hdr.undp.org)
[3] G.Harrison and S.Mulley, *Tanzania: a case of recipient leadership in the aid system?*(Oxford: Global Economic Governance Programme, 2006), p. 4.
[4] Net ODA / GNI (Gross National Income) 14,5% http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/24/21/1882894.gif
[5] Harrison and Mulley, op. cit. in note 3, p.4; www.oecd.org/dac.

an official language spoken by more than 90% of the population.[6] Most other Sub-Saharan African countries rely on ex-colonial languages for communication at the national level, languages that often only 5-20% of the population are familiar with. In Tanzania, although English continues to be a prestigious language of secondary and higher education, professionalism and international communication, Swahili is the primary language of interaction at the national level, being firmly established in such domains as basic education, administration, political debate and a significant part of development communication. The functions of the remaining more than 120 African languages of Tanzania are usually described as being restricted to the domain of the home, village, local informal contexts and cultural performances.

Data collection and research questions

The data for the empirical analysis of this study was collected in Western Tanzania (Mara Region) and Zanzibar between 1994 and 2001. Throughout the research, which focused on organizational and communicative patterns in two agricultural development programs, the Sustainable Rural Agriculture Programme (SRAP) in Western Tanzania and in the Rice Cultivation Mechanization Programme (RCMP)[7] in Zanzibar, more than 90 people were interviewed and over 30 planning meetings were attended and recorded.[8] Methodologically, the study relied on open interviews and critical discourse analysis.

The focus of this paper is on cultural hegemony in the form of linguistic dominance and asymmetry. For the purpose of this paper, text passages from meetings and interviews that were relevant to the following questions were selected and analysed.

1. How does the presence of foreign experts influence language use in the Tanzanian development organisations?
2. How is the hegemonic position of English negotiated in everyday language use?
3. Does current language usage affect bottom-up transparency and accountability in development work?

Before engaging with these questions, a short outline of the socio-linguistic situation of Tanzania as well as the challenges of language use in development co-operation will be presented.

Linguistic hegemony: English and Swahili in post-colonial Tanzania

In the anti-colonial struggle of the 1950s, Swahili came to symbolize the unity of Africans vis à vis British colonial rule. It is assumed that roughly 120 African languages are spoken in present-day Tanzania. For the Post-

[6] Zaline Roy-Campbell, 'Globalisation, language and education: a comparative study of the United States and Tanzania', *International Review of Education* (Vol. 47,No. 3-4, 2001), p. 272.

[7] The names of the programmes and persons interviewed were changed to ensure individual anonymity.

[8] Research was made possible through a grant of the Austrian Science Fund.

Independence government, the promotion of Swahili was part of its agenda of emphasizing nation building rather than multiple ethnic identities. The use of Swahili was extended to include internal administration, the courts, primary education and politics. Several institutions were founded to support the use of Swahili in new social and political domains: The Institute of Kiswahili Research (1964), the Tanzania Publishing House the National Swahili Council (1967), the Department of Kiswahili (1970) at the University of Dar-es-Salaam.[9] These institutions were to enhance language development, mainly through terminological expansion, but also through linguistic and literary research and publications. In 1967, Swahili was adopted as the official language of government; the use of Swahili in all public contexts became part of the official socialist ideology of 'Ujamaa'.[10] In 1968, the government declared its policy of 'Education for Self-Reliance'. Swahili was introduced as a language of instruction throughout primary school. At the same time, promoting access to primary education became an important objective, with levels of primary school enrolment rising to 93% of the age cohort towards the end of the 1970s. In 1969, a plan was adopted to introduce Swahili as language of instruction in secondary and tertiary education. However, only the subject of 'Politics' (Siasa) was taught in Swahili in secondary schools. In the following years, manuscripts for school textbooks for other subjects were prepared in Swahili. Rhetorical commitment to Swahili continued, but the planned shift of the language of instruction in secondary schools was not realized.

Amongst the economic and political crisis of the mid-1980s, official policy eventually abandoned the plan, announcing a stronger role for English in 1984.[11] The Tanzanian government was keen on gaining international recognition, and the 'need for foreign aid went hand in hand with the renewed acceptability of English'.[12] Nevertheless, in recent years, the issue of having Swahili as a medium of secondary school instruction has appeared back on the agenda. In 1997, the government of Benjamin Mkapa once more declared its commitment to the long-term goal of having Swahili as a language of instruction at all levels of education.[13] However, no concrete steps have been taken in this regard. Mulokozi

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[9] Mugyabuso M. Mulokozi, 'Kiswahili as a national and international language'(Dar es Salaam: Institute of Kiswahili Research, 2002), p. 2, accessible at www.helsinki.fi/hum/aakkl/documents/Kiswahili.pdf (9/9/2008)

[10] Jan Blommaert, 'Language policy and national identity', in Ricento, Thomas (ed.), *An introduction to language policy: theory and method*, (Malden, Massachusetts: Blackwell, 2006), p. 247.

[11] Karsten Legère, 'Formal and informal development of the Swahili language: focus on Tanzania.' in Olaoba Arasanyin and Michael Pemberton (eds.), *Selected proceedings of the 36th Annual Conference of African Linguistics*, (Somerville, MA: Cascadilla Proceedings Project, 2006), p.177.

[12] Jan Blommaert, 'Codeswitching and the exclusivity of social identities: Some data from Campus Kiswahili', in Carol Eastman (ed.), *Codeswitching* (Clevedon: Multilingual Matters, 1992), p. 59.

[13] MEC (Ministry of Education and Culture Tanzania), *Sera ya Utamaduni* (Dar-es-Salaam: Ministry of Education and Culture, 1997), p. 19, http://www.tanzania.go.tz/policiesf.html 4/4/2008; Birgit Brock-Utne, *Language, democracy and education in Africa. Discussion paper 15* (Uppsala: Nordiska Afrikainstitutet, 2002), p. 28.

remarks that President Benjamin Mkapa 'cleverly evaded the language question by directing that the debate should continue. And so it continues!'[14].

The use of English as a language of secondary education puts students into an awkward situation. In recent years, several studies have shown that students' as well as teachers' knowledge of English was inadequate for effective learning to take place.[15] Many pupils fail because they do not comprehend classes. Research in Tanzanian classrooms shows that secondary school students do far better when the language of instruction is Swahili.[16] However, part of the problem is also related to the material conditions of learning. Classrooms with more than 100 students, lack of desks, textbooks and sanitary facilities characterize the majority of Tanzanian public schools and make educational achievements difficult to attain. While the engagement of the World Bank (2000-2005) has elevated primary school enrolment to 95% in 2005[17], improvements in quality still leave a lot to be desired.[18]

For a long-term perspective of the educational system in Tanzania, substantial improvements will have to be made in the teaching of both languages. Changing the medium of instruction to Swahili and at the same time supporting the teaching of English as a foreign language is an option favoured by linguists familiar with the situation.[19] The issue of having or not having a functioning 'language of instruction' matters not only to the educational system itself, but also to the country's social development. Education plays an important role in making information accessible. 'If formal education and other worthwhile information such as research findings were disseminated in languages that the majority of the people understood, this would go a long way towards educating and informing the general public and enable them to bring about their own development'.[20] Language policy in the educational sector affects other key domains. It is only when Swahili is introduced in secondary and higher education that it will also become relevant for high-level professional, scientific and administrative domains. The presentation of a Swahili version of Microsoft's text processing programmes in 2005 is only one of many examples that show that with a professional approach, the alleged lexical limitations of Swahili can easily be overcome.

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[14] Mulokozi, op. cit. in note 9, p. 2.

[15] Brock-Utne, op.cit. in note 13, p. 27.

[16] Halima Mohammed Mwinsheikhe, 'Using Kiswahili as a medium of instruction in science teaching in Tanzanian secondary schools', in Birgit Brock-Utne, Zubeida Desai and Martha Qorro (eds.), *Language of instruction in Tanzania and South Africa*, (Dar es Salaam: E & D Publishers, 2003), pp. 129-148, p. 143.

[17] Harrison and Mulley, op. cit. in note 4, p. 4.

[18] Thomas Siebold, *European community aid to Tanzania*, (Bruxelles: CIDSE and CARITAS Europe 2006), p. 4.

[19] Martha Qorro, 'Unlocking Language Forts: The Language of Instruction in Post Primary Education in Africa with Special Reference to Tanzania', in Birgit Brock-Utne, Zubeida Desai and Martha Qorro (eds), *Language of instruction in Tanzania and South Africa*, (Dar es Salaam: E & D Publishers, 2003), p. 188.

[20] Ibid., p. 192.

Language and development

The particular sociolinguistic situation in Tanzania, as delineated above, creates specific opportunities and challenges for development communication. Without a doubt, the fact that one language is understood by more than 90% of the population constitutes an exceptional achievement by a language policy committed to broad popular participation in social, economic and political domains. However, Tanzania's co-operation partners have shown limited concern about the linguistic challenges of carrying out development work in a multilingual society. The problem of bias against African languages is unfortunately not limited to nations where the systematic deprivation in social and cultural domains has led to a biased perception of potentials. It is also widespread in development organizations and networks where professionals would have ample opportunity to acquire more balanced information on linguistic and cultural conditions. However, in most aid agencies there is little sensitivity or consideration of the pressures that lead to decisions such as the one to continue the use of English as a language of education for official use. As a result, 'education donors in Africa have mostly worked to strengthen ex-colonial languages.[21] Development practice during the 1960s and 1970s, with modernization's emphasis on human capital and education, continued the colonial practices of providing specialized and technical knowledge in European languages. For example, the textbooks given to African students were originally created in Europe for European students. However, the practice of supplying inadequate Eurocentric textbooks did not cease with the end of the colonial era. In Tanzania, in its initial years after 1986, the English Language Teaching Support Project ELTSP provided textbooks produced in Britain for British students which were irrelevant to the Tanzanian context, but had been supplied for free. At a later stage, books authored by Tanzanians were also used, but again, the economic interests of the donor nation took precedence: Printing was assigned to British publishers instead of Tanzanian publishers. [22]

Many development experts regard the use of English in former British colonies as neutral or even beneficial. 'There is a failure to problematize the notion of choice, and therefore an assumption that individuals and countries are somehow free of economic, political and ideological constraints when they apparently freely opt for English'.[23] Development planners are often not aware of the problematic nature of asymmetric linguistic situations and do not inform themselves about policy measures that could help participants overcome language barriers. 'Development researchers, including those specialising in education, seldom focus on language issues'.[24] If language is addressed at all, it is usually relegated to the process of implementation rather than considered in long-term planning.[25]

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[21] Brock-Utne op.cit. in note 13, p. 34.

[22] Ibid., p. 36.

[23] A. Pennycook, *The cultural politics of English as an international language* (London: Longman, 1994), p. 12.

[24] Robert Philippson, 'English for globalisation or for the world's people?' *International Review of Education* (Vol. 47, No. 3-4, 2001), p. 187.

[25] Clinton Robinson, *Language use in rural development: an African perspective* (Berlin – New York: Mouton de Gruyter, 1996), p. 30.

The assistance of interpreters is taken for granted, but their work is not considered worthy of much attention or support. As Thomas Bearth and Diomandé Fan have pointed out, the translation process itself poses numerous problems for development work. It reinforces perceived social and cultural asymmetry, as development messages inevitably originate from outside language. It dichotomizes the processing of inferences, because listeners are forced to follow the translator's interpretation of the original message. It carries an anti-dialogical bias, as the activity of translation inevitably takes control of the agenda and hinders free negotiation of topics. Finally, it imposes constraints on utterability and face regulation. Critique or discussion of past negative experience with development organizations are likely to be avoided, as they carry a risk for those uttering them.[26] Western experts are often ignorant of both the implications of complex linguistic situations and the languages involved. In many cases, they hide their incompetence behind a set of stereotypical negative attitudes that tend to take the shape of pseudo-academic arguments – many of which bear striking similarity to those used in colonial discourse more than half a century ago. These include, for example, anachronistic concerns about the alleged purity or impurity of languages and speculations about mysterious structural or lexical deficiencies in possibly all languages that are not part of the Western European school curricula. In addition to resulting from ignorance, the donors' arguments are also often motivated by tangible national interests. While there is no substantial lobby behind African languages, European languages continue to be promoted through respective donor nations. For example, funding for the English Language Teaching Support Project ELTSP was granted by the British government on the condition that English would be retained as a language of instruction in secondary schools. [27]

The continued dominance of ex-colonial languages is particularly worrying when considered from the perspective of democratization and popular participation.[28] As Birgit Brock-Utne points out, donors appear to be preoccupied with good governance and decentralisation but choose to ignore the fact that 'some 90% of the people of Africa have no knowledge of the official language of their country, even though it is presumed to be the vehicle of communication between the government and its citizens'.[29] As a matter of fact, these are also the same languages donors use when communicating with the political leadership of African countries, a practice that has kept development co-operation intransparent to the majority of the population.

Recent structural changes in development co-operation include an increase in programme aid and budget support that coincides with a respective decline of project-based technical co-operation. Direct co-operation with recipient countries' governments is in most cases based on nationally developed Poverty

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[26] Thomas Bearth and Diomandé Fan, 'The local language – a neglected resource for sustainable development', in Ernest W.B. Hess-Lüttich (ed.), *Eco-Semiotics. Umwelt- und Entwicklungskommunikation* (Tübingen/Basel: Francke, 2006), p. 280.

[27] Z. Roy-Campbell, *Empowerment through language: The Tanzanian experience and beyond,* (Trenton NJ: Africa World Press, 2001), p. 153.

[28] Ali Mazrui and Alamin Mazrui, *The power of Babel – language and governance in the African experience* (Oxford: James Currey, 1998), p. 99.

[29] Brock-Utne op.cit. in note 13, p. 17.

Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs). The Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness of 2005, an initiative by the DAC/OECD committed to the achievement of the Millenium goals, addressed past inequalities and structural problems inherent to asymmetric donor-recipient relations. It emphasized ownership, alignment, harmonisation, managing for results and mutual accountability. 'Ownership' relates to political leadership of recipient countries in the co-operation process. The call for 'alignment' demands that donors should adapt their development efforts to recipient countries' priorities as expressed, for example, in national strategies and budgets. 'Harmonisation' relates to development cooperation procedures in planning, implementation, disbursement mechanisms and evaluation; it primarily aims at lowering transaction costs for recipient countries. 'Managing for results' explicitly mentions enhancing recipient countries capacities to plan and monitor towards meaningful outcomes. Finally, 'mutual accountability' includes both recipient and donors. There is no doubt that the implications of the Paris Declaration are manifold, and particularly non-governmental actors and critics have voiced their doubts about its possible scope. Nevertheless, it is also obvious that at least some efforts were made to enhance recipient countries' position in complementary ways. For the objectives of the Paris Declaration to succeed, functioning participatory and democratic decision-making processes in recipient countries are essential.

The linguistic perspective is again illustrative of how participation of civil society organisations is conceived. In a critical assessment of PRSP processes in various parts of the world, Eberlei claims that the PRSP of Mozambique was available in English only, although the official language of the country is Portuguese.[30] This made it virtually impossible for most of the country's NGOs to take part in the PRSP process. In Tanzania, NGO participation in the first PRSP was widely criticised as unsatisfactory by NGO representatives. Tanzanias second PRSPs document (MKUKUTA in Swahili) was made accessible in Swahili and English. Additionally, versions in popular English and popular Swahili were made available and may be downloaded from the Ministry of Planning, Economy and Empowerment.[31] However, of the many papers and reports presented around the implementation of MKUKUTA, most exist in English only, with only a few documents available in Swahili, too. This obviously reflects the continuing asymmetric language use in high-level development-related communication in Tanzania: Even if international donors are only one group among the stakeholders addressed by the papers, these are almost by default produced in English. When documents exist in Swahili, this is usually due to an extra effort where a translation is made in order to allow the general public access to some selected key documents. Obviously there is awareness of the importance of the language factor in participatory development undertakings, and this has created some dynamics and progress. However, developments are still far away from equitable representation of the two languages.

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[30] Walter Eberlei, *Fighting poverty without empowering the poor?* (Berlin and Bonn: VENRO (Verband Entwicklungspolitik deutscher Nichtregierungsorganisationen)), p. 7, accessible at http://www.prsp-watch.de/index.php?page=publikationen/2015-newsletter.php, 9/9/2008.

[31] The United Republic of Tanzania, *National Strategy for Growth and Reduction of Poverty* (Dar-es-Salaam: Prime Ministers Office, 2005), available at http://www.povertymonitoring.go.tz/Outputs_strategy.asp#, 9/9/2008.

Inequality and hegemonic language use in development projects

Languages use in aid networks follows hierarchies. Thus, it is presently rather unthinkable for Tanzanian development NGOs to forward applications or reports written in Swahili to donors and Northern aid agencies. Northern donors and development organizations usually accommodate the fact that they might need to use a language of wider communication rather than their own national language – a development that has been promoted by processes of integration among donors such as those co-ordinated by DAC-OECD. But this disposition seems strictly limited to *European* languages of wider communication. Tanzanian development NGOs co-operating with foreign partners have to forward all relevant documents in English. This, however, means that beneficiaries have no opportunity to review information which is passed on about them, or to obtain information on those parts of the aid network beyond the national framework. Again, their knowledge depends entirely on Tanzanian aid workers' willingness to share information with them. Additionally, even Tanzanian aid workers' knowledge about the organizational structures, objectives and self-image of their Northern counterparts often remains fragmentary, as information on the up-to-date state of policies and relationships between the ministry, donor agency and possibly development organization of the Northern co-operation country may not be accessible even in the English language. At times, Northern partners may consciously prefer to remain secretive about some issues, and use the linguistic cleavage to keep matters obscure. More often, however, the intrinsic bias is not consciously enhanced, but simply taken for granted. Northern aid workers gain experience by travelling and meeting partners from various backgrounds, whom they visit, support, monitor and evaluate. Their Southern counterparts have far less opportunity to travel in their jobs, and when these visit their Northern counterparts, they are rarely invited to assess their performance. Their lack of knowledge about the entirety of the aid system is in turn often an impediment to their gaining status as development experts, being typical of a situation where linguistic obstacles and donor-recipient inequality are closely intertwined.

In the following, five excerpts from qualitative interviews and recorded staff meetings will be presented to illustrate salient problems pertaining to language use in the implementation of development programs. Outcomes from the extensive analysis from the complete text corpus will be provided together with the analysis of the selected passages.

1. How does the presence of foreign experts influence language use in the Tanzanian development organisations?

The following quotations were taken from interviews with Tanzanian senior professionals of a governmental agricultural programme. They mostly worked at high level management tasks and were asked about language use at their workplace. As English was the language they had received their education in, and Swahili was their official working language, it was expected that both languages would play some role in workplace interaction.

Example 1.1. "At work I mix ... Swahili and at times English"

An agricultural engineer at RCMP used the notion of 'mixing' the two languages to describe the parallel use of Swahili and English. Furthermore, several development workers stated that language choice depended on the communicative situation and the interactive partner.

'At work I use two languages, I mix [...] Swahili and at times English, because often when you work you deal with some foreigners, for example at the project we had technical assistance from England. So, some don't know Swahili, so we speak English with them. And writing reports, we mix Swahili and English reports. So we mix, depending on whom you talk with and where.' (Mr. M Vuai, agricultural engineer, RCMP).

As will be seen in the analysis of text passages from meetings, what is described as 'mixing' here mostly consists of Swahili-English codeswitching, whereby Swahili constitutes the dominant matrix language with and English is occasionally embedded, mostly in the form of single-lexeme switches. This was in fact the common way of retaining Swahili as an official language, while also giving prominence to English, a language enjoying considerable status as it stands for higher education, science and technology.

The agricultural engineer interviewed here also mentioned that in the past, they had worked with British experts who did not know English and that it was usual for him to speak English with foreigners who did not know Swahili.

Example 1.2-1.3.. When they were here, the language was English only

The presence of foreign development workers as a decisive factor influencing language choice was also mentioned by other RCMP team members interviewed.

"The official working language here is Swahili, but as we work with foreigners here sometimes we use English. (Mr. O Ramadhani, Assistant Manager, RCMP).

"Right now, since these foreign experts from the technical assistance, those who came from England, left, we do not use English. When they were here, the language was English only, in the meetings, up to the meetings we used English." (Mr. L Musa, Accountant, RCMP).

The British experts who were present during the initial phase of the project relied exclusively on English and their Tanzanian counterparts in the management section were expected to speak English with them, as well as help out with translations when this was required. After the departure of the British development workers the language of meetings was again changed to Swahili. However, reports prepared for foreign donors were produced in English. Also, the language of meetings changed back to English during the occasional visits of foreign partners.

While English was promoted in higher education and training, there were no measures to promote Swahili in high-level technical or managerial contexts. Zanzibar is one of the home areas of the Swahili people, and all development workers interviewed at RCMP stated that it was their first language.

Example 1.4.: "When I find it difficult, I change to English"

In Tanzania, foreign development workers and volunteers who interact with people at grass–root level usually have to learn at least basic Swahili. Considering that in most other African countries, development workers do not undertake to learn any of the relevant African languages, this is already an achievement in itself. As Swahili facilitates contact to more than 90% of the population, many foreigners make quite an effort and show enthusiasm towards the language. At the same time, however, their attitude often reflects or even reinforces the existing hierarchy of languages. In the words of an foreign agricultural adviser of the SRAP program.

"Here in M. I mainly speak two languages, that is Swahili, which I mainly use in the villages, I speak only Swahili in the villages, and I use English and Swahili at the level of the Diocese. [...] In the office we mainly speak Swahili, when I find it difficult, I change to English" (Mr. R. Fischer, Agricultural Advisor, SRAP).

In contrast to the British technical advisors at RCMP mentioned above, this agricultural advisor from Austria worked at grass-root level with villagers and had learnt Swahili in preparation for his job. As is not unusual for foreign aid workers, the organization employing him had arranged for a Swahili course at the beginning of his work period in Tanzania. Fischer actually spent a lot of time with the farmers on the fields, and he was able to communicate his ideas without an interpreter. Despite all the readiness he shows about adapting to the linguistic situation, his statements were not free from a common bias European and US-American expatriates tend to have about Swahili and its communicative potential. On the one hand, he admitted that his Swahili competence was limited, as he said that he switched to English when he encountered difficulties in expressing himself. On the other hand, he implied that he knew enough Swahili to discuss all relevant issues in the village in Swahili. One possible conclusion would be that in rural or informal contexts, the language does not need to be much elaborated, and that the expression of more sophisticated ideas in urban or professional contexts would adequately be done by switching to English. But such assumptions, which are commonly voiced by many European or North American speakers of Swahili, may actually be a misunderstanding. For Tanzanian professionals, switching from Swahili to English usually constitutes one of several options, and the incidence of switches varies with audience and context. In contrast, in the case of foreign learners, code-switches to English are mostly triggered by their limited competence in Swahili. Yet this practise is popularly attributed to the lexical limitations of the language rather than of the individual speaker. Historical and political contingencies of language use are taken as unchangeable. So although foreign learners of Swahili, especially those working in development co-operation, often express a positive attitude towards strengthening the position of Swahili or minority languages, they are rarely aware of underlying social and cultural hierarchies created and maintained by engaging in prevalent patterns of language use: Swahili is unrivalled at grass-root interaction, while at the level of organisation and management, English remains an option that can always be resorted to.

2. How is the hegemonic position of English negotiated in everyday language use?

Turning back to the language use of Tanzanian development workers, this section focuses on code-switching and its implications in development related communication. The practise of shifting between to languages is interpreted here as an in many ways symbolic of the asymmetric relations underlying aid cooperation.

Example 2.1.: "we know that in conversation it just happens that we insert some words in English"

As shown above, Tanzanian development workers are aware of their code-switching habits. Mr. Ramadhani, assistant manager of RCMP, described the practise rather accurately:

"If we are amongst ourselves, we do not use English. Except that we know that in conversation it just happens that we insert some words in English.* (Mr. O Ramadhani, Assistant Manager, RCMP).

Evidence from planning meetings illustrate a pattern of language use that negotiates the contradictory situation of having English as a language of higher education and technology as well as remaining committed to using Swahili as a working language. Mr. Salum, the manager of the RCMP programme, did this by frequently switching to English for single lexemes. The following example, which contains an English expression in about every other line, was typical for his language use in team meetings.

Salum: Ni sahihi / hilo wazo zuri / hasa Mferejini kule / zile ***plot*** ndogondogo / ni vizuri kidogo kuendelea na hizi ***trial*** / ni ***testing*** tu ya majembe / nafikiri bora kufanya hivyo / nani Z. kuliko kuendelea na kupanda / kitu muhimu zaidi ni kujua / ni kupata taarifa kuhusu uzuri wa jembe katika kutenda ile kazi yenyewe / tusiende katika suala la kupanda na kuna mambo ambayo huko hii ***team*** iliyopo haiwezi kufanya lolote zaidi / kwa hiyo twende hapa hapa kwenye mambo yetu ya ku***test*** jembe, wakati, xxx nini ***time,*** pengine hata wakati wa kulima una umuhimu wake kwa upande wa jembe / ukiangalia ***moisture content*** ya ardhi yenyewe kwa nyakati tofauti inawezekana kuna tofauti /	**Salum:** This is correct / that is a good idea / especially there in Mferejini / these rather small *plots* / it is good to continue these *trials* / it is just *testing* the ploughs / I think it is best to do that / who Z. instead of continuing to plant / it is more important to know / to get information concerning the quality of the plough in doing the job itself / we should not go into the issue of planting while there are things that this *team* there can do nothing much about / so lets go right here into our affairs of *test*ing ploughs / the time xxx what, *time*, maybe even the time (timing) of digging is of importance for the plough / if you look at the *moisture content* of the soil at different times it can be different /
Nakusudia kusema kwamba / bora tuendelee na hii **testing** kama tulivyoiandaa mwanzo, tusiende kwenye kupanda / jengine, kulikuwa na mambo matatu muhimu hapa / habari ya mbegu hasa kwa Pemba, haya mawasiliano na bara bora tuyafanye mapema mapema, kwa sababu kama tutafanikiwa ku-	I mean to say that it is best to continue with this *testing* of ploughs / lets not go into planting / otherwise, there were three important things here / the issue of seeds especially for Pemba / it is better to have this communication with the mainland rather early / because if we manage to obtain seed / for

* Interviews originally conducted in Swahili and translated by the author.

pata mbegu basi, kwa ajili ya Pemba ni **source** hiyo tu, kwa sababu hawa jamaa wanavuna kuanzia **August,** sasa hatujui utaratibu wao na upi wa kuuza lakini, kwa kuwa tushawasiliana mwanzo, kwamba tutakuwa na haja kubwa ya mbegu huenda pengine wakakubali kutupatia **between August September**, kwa Pemba itakuwa hatujachelewa / kidogo **at least** tutawahi / M21 RMP:8	Pemba there is only this *source* / because these people harvest starting from *August*, now we don't know their plan and which one to sell / but because we have already communicated in the beginning / that we will require large amounts of seeds / maybe its possible that they will agree to provide us *between August September* / for Pemba we will not be late / somehow, *at least*, we will be in time /

It should be noted that Swahili terms are for all the English expressions occurring in this passage are in everyday use. While code-switching has been described as a typical feature of workplace interaction in Tanzania, the extent to which individual speakers engage into it varies greatly. Code-switching of the above type is based on the speaker's fluency in both Swahili and English, and one of its main aspects is the emphasis on the in-group identity of those who are able to share in the exchange. In many of the passages analyzed, however, instances of codeswitching clustered around technical terms and professional language. Even for first language speakers the result may mean that they acquire a certain specialized vocabulary in English rather than Swahili.

Example 2.2.: "there are Swahili words for these, I will give you all the terms"

For speakers competent in two languages, codeswitching does not constitute a problem of comprehension. However, the asymmetric use of English technical terms mentioned above may cause difficulties in interaction in other contexts. In the following passage, a social worker from the SRAP program explained the parts a sewing machine to a group of women peasant farmers. SRAP was situated in North-Western Tanzania, which means that development workers had one of Tanzanias 120 minority languages as first language. Swahili was their language of (seven year) primary education and everyday interaction at workplace; development workers, just as other professionals, usually had a quasi L1 competence of the language. Nevertheless, as secondary and higher education as well as professional training was in English, part of their professional vocabulary may be more expanded in English rather than in Swahili. In the following example, Ms. Msemwa, the social worker, was lost for words as she tried to explain the parts of a sewing machine in Swahili. In the process, she repeatedly had difficulties to accurately name the parts of the machine, as she was more familiar with the English terms. With increasing nervousness, she tried to find explanatory paraphrases in Swahili, which were however at least partly incomprehensible to the audience.

Msemwa: ninajaribu kueleza / ngoja / baadaye nitawapa majina yake / hicho ni kifaa kinachoongoza uzi kuingia kwenye sindano / uzi unakaa hapa / hii inaitwa nini kwa Kiingereza inaitwa ni **spool pins** / lakini ina Kiswahili chake / ni kama ka xx, kau **xxx pin** kadogo / kama	**Msemwa:** I am trying to explain / wait / later I will give you its names / this here is the device that leads the thread to enter the needle / the thread stays here / what is this called, in English it is called *spool pins* / but there is a Swahili word for this / it is like as small *pin* / like

sehemu / kuna jina nitawapa majina bado sijui Kiswahili chake vizuri / (anacheka) nilijifunza kwa Kiingereza lakini kipo Kiswahili chake nitawapa majina yote / halafu hapa / hapa ni sehemu ya / kuna kifaa fulani kinaingia hapa / kinaitwa **bob-bin** / sasa kile kifaa kinachoingia hapa kinakuwa na uzi mdogo / M15- SRAP:4[32]	a part / it has a name I will give you the names I don't yet know its Swahili words well / (she laughs) I learnt it in English but there are Swahili words for these / I will give you all the terms / then here / here is the part of / a certain utensil enters here / it is called *bobbin* / now the utensil that enters here has the small thread /

Realizing that her audience could not follow her switches to English, the development worker blamed her ignorance and offered an explanation, saying that she had had her instruction on sewing machines in English and therefore was not familiar with the Swahili terms. She pointed out that the Swahili terminology definitely existed, and that she was going find out and provide it.

This example illustrates how the dominance of English in the educational sphere creates problems for Tanzanian development workers, despite the fact that most of them effectively speak Swahili as their first language. The development worker was very much aware that the group of peasant farmers she worked with would regard her use of English as arrogant and offensive. As she apologized, the group members took it with irony: ignorance on the part of the teacher came as a relief to the learners who were struggling to grasp new information.

Ultimately, however, the underlying message of English as the superior medium of technical knowledge was once more reinforced. The example thus points back to the problem of relying on a foreign language as language of instruction and technical innovation.

3. Does current language usage affect bottom-up transparency and accountability?

Finally, it should be noted that the use of English or Swahili-English code-switching gives development workers an opportunity to speak about peasant farmers without them being able to participate. Of course, language is not the only issue at stake here. Prevailing patterns of organisational communication in development co-operation mean that development workers plan and report activities with peasant farmers participating in a limited part of the process at best. However, our findings suggest that prevailing patterns of language use interlink with and reinforce hierarchies of exclusion. Thus, even if peasant farmers' representatives were invited to participate in high-level planning meetings or the reviewing of reports, language would in many instances constitute an exclusionary factor. Likewise, even if development workers would completely abstain from the use of English as well as code-switching to English, organisational routines would in many cases continue to exclude peasant farmers from access to critical information as well as decision-making processes.

The following examples draw attention to the fact to the extent to which planning processes are determined by outside expectations. They also emphasize that while peasant's voices are often quoted in rural development work, they are usually selected and edited in the process. Linguistic hegemony cannot be separated from the many other asymmetries in the aid system, many of which manifest itself discursively.

Example 3.1. "we offered our services in response to the needs of the peasants themselves"

The following passage is taken from a staff meeting in which a draft of a yearly report was discussed. It illustrates how development workers feel obliged to refer to and quote peasant farmers opinions.

Ramadhani (assistant manager): (reading out the yearly report) [...] In order to make sure that we offered our services in response to the **needs of the peasants themselves** / we conducted regular meetings with the **leaders** of the **peasant farmers' communities** / last time the leaders of R. met with the leaders of the farmers communities in order to **assess the work of the last season** as follows *(an enumeration of groups, places and dates of meetings follows)* / (M20 RRDP:1-4)*

In this introductory passage of the report, reference was made to several terms that are constituent of participatory development discourse. This included the mentioning of the "needs of the farmers themselves", the "farmers' communities" and their leaders. Again, the mere quotation of these terms carried important implications, including the assumption that farmers necessarily formed communities, and that their needs could summarily be learnt through meeting their leaders. The discourse of participatory development shaped strategies of programme representation in significant ways: both in the documentation of achievements and in the legitimisation of organizational decisions, reference to the allegedly "authentic" voice of the beneficiary seemed essential. "reflecting on last season's work" alludes to expectations on the beneficiaries' role in appraising and evaluating programme achievements and demonstrates the extent to which participatory approaches have been internalized: Assessment, in this understanding, is no longer the prerogative of the experts, but supposedly based on the opinion of the beneficiaries themselves.

One must, however, bear in mind that, of the multi-faceted and possibly contradictory voices of the beneficiaries, only few were taken up and discussed in staff meetings or reports. Inconsistencies in the opinions discussed in meetings at the grass-roots level were often edited and streamlined into uniform standpoints, approved by the consensus of staff members. In the above mentioned staff meeting, part of the farmers comments were denounced as illogical and unfounded by a staff member, and some of them were subsequently elided from the report. One could sum up the process as one in which staff members constructed subaltern voices through selection. In a further step, those to be included in reports were then translated into English, which made inaccessible to inspection from farmers.

Example 3.2. "that is not an objective for one week"

Finally, analysis of planning meetings also shows that donors do not only require that reports are in English, but also, that certain routines are followed in planning and reporting. Knowledge and use of English is in many cases closely connected to the ability of fitting experiences of project implementation into current categories of development planning. Example 3.2. shows how in a SRAP team meeting, Fischer, the agricultural advisor, monitors the contribution of Msemwa, a younger colleague to fit the hierarchy of objectives typical of development planning instruments.

Msemwa: we have another objective for M. that is to stabilise the women co-operation in M. through frequently and close working together

Fischer: can you say that again?

Msemwa: to stabilise the women co-operation in Chumwi through frequently and close working together

Fischer: ya / ya / but that is not an objective for one week / e:!

....

Msemwa: I failed completely to have specific activities in the group / maybe to make them co-operate first / then, they then plan another work +++

In discussing their weekly plans and reports, the development workers of the team rephrase the outcome of a peasant farmers' group meeting. The fact that the group was not prepared to undertake a programme-related activity is accommodated by a redefinition of objectives. As a result of the discussion, Msemwa, sums up coming together as process of enhancing 'co-operation among the women'. Fischer assists her by pointing to the hierarchy of objectives typical for the logframe and other planning tools commonly used in development projects. In this example, filtering and editing of field notes coincided with a change in languages, as reporting to donors required the use of English.

Conclusion

1. The first question posed concerned the influence of foreign experts on language use in the Tanzanian development organisations. Evidence from interviews and discourse analysis suggests that the presence of foreign development workers with long-term contracts influences development networks at various levels of implementation. Those foreigners who work at the 'grass roots' level are encouraged to learn Swahili in order to interact with project beneficiaries. However, many of them resort to English in staff meetings, reporting and similar professional contexts. Their Tanzanian colleagues are expected to shift to English, even if they would otherwise use Swahili.

The majority of foreign development workers working at higher levels are not required to adapt to their linguistic environment. Instead, Tanzanians are expected to accommodate the needs of (mostly European or North-American) colleagues, whether this means switching to English or acting as interpreters for them. Tanzania has gone a long way toward establishing Swahili, an African language in a number of formal working domains. Yet Western development workers, who operate in English all over former 'anglophone' Africa, expect to do

the same in Tanzania, where English still has the status of an official language. This raises the question of whether a postcolonial 'recipient state' has any other option than to comply with such expectations. Development experts are a substantial part of the aid industry in which the donors, and not the recipients, determine modes of implementation. The resulting linguistic practise in development networks reinforces a diglossic situation in which English emerges as the language of progress and development, while remains Swahili is primarily regarded as a means communicate in popular contexts.

2. The second question was concerned how Tanzanian development workers negotiated the hegemonic position of English in everyday language use. Language use in the Tanzanian educational system means that at present, secondary and higher education are available only in English. As a result, technical innovation and professional knowledge is primarily accessible in English only.

The use of English in high-level organizational domains in development co-operation reinforces the notion of English as the language of development and progress. Consequently, a unique opportunity of making higher levels of development management transparent and accessible to popular participation is lost. Although the development sector could serve as a model in this respect, Swahili is not promoted at the higher levels of development management. While staff members are supported in improving their competence in English, no comparable input is given to facilitate the use of Swahili in high-level domains. This in turn has problematic repercussions on the educational sector, as students and their parents can only be motivated to learn a language they experience as functional in important domains.

3. The third question that was approached in this paper asked whether the fact that reports and program documents need to be submitted in English affected bottom-up transparency and accountability.

Evidence from team meetings show that the increasing popularity of participatory approaches has created a need to take into account the voice and preferences of beneficiaries. Examples from this research suggest that peasant farmers' voices are in most cases edited and selectively represented by development workers. The fact that English is used in final reports and high level meetings makes representations of this kind inaccessible to program beneficiaries. Code choice in development programmes works to maintain hierarchies: By preserving English in a high-level position, management units and teams effectively prevent beneficiaries from having access to flows of information and decision-making. The adoption of participatory principles through development organizations has not affected these practices.

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