

MTAGUSANO NA MAAFIKIANO YA LUGHA: UCHUNGUZI KIFANI WA LUGHA ZA KIKAMBA NA KITHARAKA

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Abstract

Language change is inevitable, continuous and natural. Languages are constantly changing and there are various reasons as to why languages change. Some of the factors that lead to language change are language contact and language accommodation. Language contact is a crucial factor that plays a role in language change. Language contact refers to a scenario where two or more languages are in contact. Whenever people who speak different languages come into contact, there is a natural inclination to seek ways to minimize communication barriers. For instance, in language contact, people tend to compromise between their forms of language use through language accommodation. This process of language accommodation occurs when individuals adopt commonly selected linguistic elements from the other language they are in contact with so as to ease communication. The paper discusses language contact between Mwingi dialect of Kikamba (LAKIMWI) and Kithara. The paper postulates that when speakers of Mwingi dialect are in contact with the speakers of Kithara, both speakers try to speak in a way that conforms less to their own language and more to the language they believe their interlocutor speaks. In this way they accommodate their partner. The paper shows that there has been widespread and intense language contact and language accommodation among the speakers of Mwingi dialect of Kikamba and speakers of Kitharaka language over the years that have led to language variation and change of the two languages. However, the present paper analyses change of the Mwingi dialect of Kikamba in order to show how this contact has contributed to the variation between LAKIMWI (Lahaja ya Kikamba ya Mwingi) and other Kikamba dialects.

1.0 Utangulizi

Nchini Kenya kuna uchangamano wa tamaduni na lugha mbalimbali. Kwa mtazamo wa kiisimujamii ni nchi ya wingilugha ambapo lugha ya Kiingereza ni lugha rasmi na Kiswahili ni lugha rasmi na pia lugha ya taifa. Aidha, lugha za asili hutambulika katika katiba na huzungumzwa popote miongoni mwa wanajamiilugha husika. Kulingana na Alvanoudi (2017) lugha zinapokutana kuna hali tatu zinazoweza kutokea: udumishaji lugha; ubadilikaji wa lugha na uundaji wa lugha. Makala haya yanajikita katika ubadilikaji wa lugha. Bybee, (2015) anaeleza kwamba kubadilika kwa lugha ni hali ya kawaida. Aidha, anaendelea kudai kwamba hakuna uchanganuzi wowote wa lugha unaoweza kuwa kamilifu pasipokushughulikia ubadilikaji wa lugha. Mchakato wa kubadilika kwa lugha ambao haujakamilika huacha athari ya tofauti za lugha husika. Tofauti hizi zinaweza kudhihirika katika viwango vya fonolojia, mofolojia na leksika. Lahaja inaweza kubadilika kwa mwelekeo wa mwachano au makutano na lugha nyingine (Auer. 2005).

Tafiti zilizofanywa kuhusu lahaja ya LAKIMU (Maundu, 1980; Mutiga, 2002; Mathooko, 2004 na Ngesu, 2004) zinadhahirisha kwamba lahaja hii imetagusana na lugha ya Kitharaka kwa muda mrefu. Aidha, wanazuoni hawa wanakubaliana