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The Interjection in Siswati: A Corpus-based Study

Mathupsa Mini (Mini.Mathunjwa@nwu.ac.za) & Respect Mlambo (Respect. Mlambo@nwu.ac.za)

South African Centre for Digital Language Resources (SADiLaR), North-West University

(Physical)

Abstract

The interjection is a part of speech in Siswati that is occasionally used in discourse. The aim of this paper is to analyse pragmatically and syntactically Siswati interjections used in literary works. Convenience sampling was used to gather interjections from both Siswati drama and short stories books. These were interjections used in specific contexts. A functional approach was adopted in analysing the interjections, and they were classified into themes. The study found that interjections can either stand alone or be part of a sentence construction. They are often found at the beginning of a sentence. It has also been established that speakers tend to use interjections for various purposes. Most interjections are used to express an individual's senti-ments or as a reaction to a specific issue. This study is a contribution to the body of knowledge on interjections in Siswati.

Keywords: Interjection, Siswati, Pragmatics, Syntax, Literary work

The verb *-weza* in and out of Swahili (SYNTAX)

Rasmus Bernander (University of Gothenburg)

Gilles-Maurice de Schryver (Ghent University & University of Pretoria)

Maud Devos (Royal Museum for Central Africa & Ghent University)

Ponsiano Kanijo (Mkwawa University College of Education)

rasmusbernander@gmail.com, maud.devos@africamuseum.be, GillesMaurice.

deSchryver@ugent.be,   kanijo2008@gmail.com,   rasmus.bernander@sprak.
gu.se

(Physical)

Recent years have witnessed a growing body of work on the expression of modality in Eastern Bantu languages, with a particular interest in auxiliaries marking possibility. However, little has been said about contact-induced change with regard to this linguistic category, despite the fact that modality is a category highly susceptible to transfer cross-linguistically (cf. Matras 2007). This seems to hold true also for the East African region, with the presence of externally transferred matter such as the modal verbs *-(i)dima* from Maasai into several north-eastern Bantu languages and Portuguese *poder* in several Mozambican languages (Bernander et al. 2022), or the spread of the Swahili possibility adverbs to different local languages in East Africa (Bernander 2023).

Another instance of such "Swahilization" within the possibility domain involves the modal auxiliary verb *-weza* 'can'. Assumed to originate from Arabic 'ezz 'power', 'azza 'be power-ful' (Sacleux 1939: 1022; Nurse & Hinnebusch 1993: 294), it has spread further inland from

coastal Swahili to other Swahili varieties, e.g. Bunia Swahili (Nassenstein & Dimmendaal 2019) or Maa Swahili (Drolc 1999), and to other local languages in East Africa, with attestations in Makwe, Kami, Bena, Digo, Nyamwezi and Matengo (Bernander et al. 2022).

This study examines this two-staged transfer and the integration of -weza into Swahili and its further spread to other Swahili varieties and Swahilized local varieties.

To achieve this aim, we employ a large chronologically and geographically diversified Swahili text corpus, where we account for the formal and functional adaptations and expansions *of -weza* within the modal domain of possibility in Swahili and its varieties. Hence, we expose the semantic evolution of *-weza* into expressing different flavors (dynamic, deontic, epistemic) of possibility – i.e., from objective statements of physical abilities (dynamic) to subjectively conveyed statements on either the permission (deontic) or the possibilities (epistemic) of a proposition, while we also address the formal indicia of the grammaticalization of *-weza* into an auxiliary.

Drawing on a broad set of comparative data, we then continue to explore the structural and semantic integration of *-weza* in other East African local languages. For instance, in Matengo *-weza* has been adapted to *-hwesa* and in Makwe different flavors of possibility are expressed with distinct auxiliary constructions involving *-weza*.

In addition, we consider the development of the alternative de-transitivized construction *-wez-ekan-a*, consisting of the combination of two valency-decreasing suffixes. We also show that -weza has been manipulated in other ways, e.g. in Bunia Swahili, where the negative "stem" -wezi is used as a negative modal verb, without explicit negation, adhering to a cross-linguistically frequent pattern where possibility verbs form lexically idiosyncratic negatives (Veselinova 2013). Interestingly, in Shangaji, this stem is used too, albeit with an affirmative reading.

We also address those instances where *-weza* has not been enrolled as a possibility marker at all. Thus, in the Swahili dialect Makunduchi, a different verb, **-goma** (< 'refuse, strike'), seems to have filled the functional role played elsewhere by *-weza*.

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The Morphological Patterns of Integrating Loanwords and Calques into EkeGusii: A Case of Language Endangerment through Reconstruction (Morphology)

Beatrice K.C.Oluoge (PhD Student in LLL-UNISA)

School of Education and Social Sciences

Turkana University College

A Constituent College of Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology

P.O BOX 69-30500-Lodwar

beatriceoluoge@gmail.com

+254 725263770

(Physical)

Abstract

This study provides insights into the way the vowel and the consonant sound units pattern during the morphological integration of loanwords and calques into Ekegusii. The study also provides insights on how morphological processes of integrating loanwords and calques satisfy the phonological constraint of the language. Syllables that do not meet the syllable structural requirement of the language have to be repaired in order to conform. In integrating the loanwords and calques into EkeGusii, the word formation rules of the language are followed. This puts grammatical well formedness at the center of morphological integration of loanwords and calques into Ekegusii. Data is collected from a sample population of 359 bilingual EkeGusii speakers. Findings show that integrating the verb and VP into Ekegusii is characterized by embedding the light verb to the main verb. Ekegusii tense which is a morphological process falls within the tripartite division of present, past and future. Loanwords and calques getting into Ekegusii are integrated into the tense pattern of Ekegusii dichotomy. Aspectual morphemes in Ekegusii are attached at the beginning of the main verb and calques getting into the language follow the same structure. However, grammatical borrowing in some sense incorporates foreign rules. The recipient language gets enriched while at the same time part of its lexicon is rendered obsolete in a case of contact induced language change which ends up reconstructing EkeGusii.

Data collection is carried out sequentially starting with the interview schedule, questionnaire, focus group and research Assistant/informers. Data analysis scheme is developed to fit into both quantitative and qualitative data collected and its ppropriateness in the morphological patterns of integration of loanwords and calques into EkeGusii. A data base application is developed to store loanwords and calques and kept open to receive more in future.

Key Words: Calques, Contact Induced Language Change, Language Reconstruction, Loan-