

Bilingualism and Speech Behaviour in Shambaa Communities of the Tanga Region, Tanzania¹

Kirsten Kuelker

Chuo Kikuu cha Mainz, Ujerumani

Abstract

Nearly all speech communities in Africa are bi- or even multilingual. Based on a comparative study of rural and urban Shambaa people in Tanga Region in Tanzania, the paper describes how bi- or multilingualism functions in reality today. The speech behaviour and attitudes of Shambaa and Swahili speakers are analysed, including their language competence and language use in domains like family, working place, governmental structures, religion among others. Describing prevalent attitudes towards both, the local language Shambaa and the national language Swahili, conclusions are drawn on how far stable bilingualism is established in Shambaa speech communities today, and notable trends and tendencies.

Ikisiri

Tabia za utumiaji lugha ya kikabila na lugha nyingine kwa Washambaa wa Tanzania Karibu watu wote wa makabila mbalimbali ya kiasia wanatumia lugha zaidi ya moja. Kutokana na uchunguzi uliofanyika kuhusu kabila la Washambaa wanaoishi mkoani Tanga, vijijini na mjini, imebainika jinsi gani lugha mbalimbali zinavyotumika katika maisha ya kila siku. Tabia za kutumia lugha ya kishambaa na ya kiswahili zimechunguzwa pamoja na uwezo wa watu katika utumiaji wa lugha hizo na jumua mbalimbali kama kwa mfano familia, makazini, ofisi za serikali na umati wa kidini. Inaelezwa kwamba watu wanapendelea lugha zote mbili, lugha ya kikabila ya kishambaa na lugha ya kitaifa ya kiswahili na imeonekana kuwa ni misingi gani ambayo inafanya kwamba lugha zote mbili zinatumika kwa pamoja na Washambaa na vile vile maelekeo na maendeleo gani yameonekana mpaka hivi leo.

Introduction

The knowledge of Swahili has increased enormously in Tanzania since its independence. This is mainly due to a language policy that favoured the spread of Swahili throughout Tanzania, and that also favoured the development of Swahili as the national language. Recent surveys estimate that this language shift has already induced 22 % of the Tanzanian population to speak Swahili as the first language (Ngonyani 1995:81). This infers that Swahili is now not only the mother tongue for many people on the Islands and along the

¹This paper is a resume of my master thesis "Bilingualismus und Sprachverhalten bei den Shambaa in laendlichen und urbanen Gebieten der Tanga-Region in Tansania", which was submitted to the University of Mainz in 2002.

coast (the native lands of the Swahili), but also up-country. Accordingly, Ngonyani (1995:86) considers Swahili to be a *supra-ethnic language*. Swahili is increasingly considered an interethnic means of communication, and continues to take over domains previously reserved for local languages.

Several questions arise from this phenomenon, such as the impact of this development on the local languages, and whether speech behaviour changes within the ethnic groups. Equally interesting is not only how the spread of Swahili is recognised, but also what status and prestige it holds within other language communities. Moreover, there is concern as to how bilingualism functions in practice, and whether the domains, to which the languages are assigned, are strictly separated. Whether the speakers' use of language is arbitrary and independent of profession, age, domains and language situations is also worthy of consideration, as is the extent to which differences between the speech behaviour of speakers in urban and rural setting are visible. Finally, the impact of language attitude on real speech behaviour warrants additional attention.

To address such questions, the speech behaviour and attitude of the speakers in a bilingual community have been appraised using the Shambaa ethnic group in the Tanga Region as a study population. The detailed objective of the study was to determine the impact of Swahili on the attitude to speech and use of local languages, and to gain a deeper insight into the speaker's point of view with regard to both Swahili and the local native language, Shambaa. Furthermore, the study sought to examine trends and to answer the question of whether a stabilised bilingualism exists. Lastly, the study aimed to identify whether a language shift sufficient to cause the disappearance of Shambaa exists.

The theory of bilingualism and language shift

Two languages are said to be in contact, if the same individual uses them alternately. This alternate use of two languages is called bilingualism, and the subjects involved are termed bilinguals (Weinreich 1977:15). In order to analyse language contact situations, we have to investigate the socio-cultural speech setting, function of the languages, language loyalty, duration of language contact and the phenomena of language shift and language death.

Bilingualism can be differentiated into two forms: individual bilingualism, which concerns single speakers because of their own biography, and social bilingualism, which covers larger speech communities. Ferguson (1959)

introduced the term diglossia to describe social bilingualism in speech communities. The definition describes a stable language situation with a primarily regional type, the L (low) variety, and an overlapping type, the H (high) variety. L represents the mother tongue and constitutes an informal medium of conversation within the family, not restricted by institutional control. H represents the written language that holds high prestige and is the medium of instruction and mass media. Consequently, we can conclude, that diglossia describes a situation in which two languages (or dialects), spoken in one speech community, were distinguished according to their function and use.

In multilingual communities there are language displacements that can lead to language decay, language shift or language death. It is not possible to predict a language shift exactly. To gain insight into the language situation in a bilingual speech community, it is necessary to observe some related and overlapping factors that influence the socio-linguistic context of language acquisition, the communicative function of each language, and communicative capacity.

Sasse mentioned three phenomena in his "Theory of language death" (Sasse 1992:7-30), which are relevant for studies on language death. Firstly, there are extra-linguistic factors (cultural, sociological, ethno-historical, economical), which he named External Setting (ES). Secondly, he coined the term Speech Behaviour (SB) to describe the regular use of varieties in a certain speech community. SB is connected with social parameters such as loyalty, attitudes, political and social conditions, and is therefore also related to ES. Thirdly, there are structural phenomena, the so-called Structural Consequences (SC), which describe changes in phonology, morphology, syntax and lexicon of the recessive language. Language attitudes are important and powerful factors in promoting or retarding the use of languages leading to partial or total language displacement or language maintenance.

Multilingualism and language shift in Tanzania

About 30 years ago, Abdulaziz-Mkilifi characterised the language situation in Tanzania as triglossia. Firstly, he described the existence of the vernacular or local mother tongue, spoken throughout the ethnic group. Secondly, Swahili comprised both national and official language, and is the lingua franca. Thirdly, English was determined as the predominant official language of higher learning and commercial business (Abdulaziz-Mkilifi 1972:197-213). Since this characterisation, the situation has changed such that Swahili now occupies the first place. Fasold (1984) defines the language situation

in Tanzania as a double overlapping diglossia, an intersection between two diglossia situations. In the first situation, Swahili and the local languages are involved, in the second Swahili and English. According to his model, Swahili is thus involved in two diglossia systems, an L variety in relation to English and an H variety in relation to the local languages. Mekacha (1993b:7) criticised this approach by emphasising that English has no communicative status for most Tanzanians.

According to Batibo (1992) the rise of Swahili as a national language is the most important factor causing the disappearance of languages. This is primarily because Swahili, as a modern lingua franca, already claimed a very high prestige. Nevertheless he describes some tendencies that could retard the trend or even stop it in future. He initially observed an increasing regional awareness among interethnic groups. Subsequently, he refers to the political development during the last 15 years such as decentralisation of the regions and districts and the liberalisation of the national economy. These developments link people more strongly to their regions and favour a greater ethnic identity, which results in an increased identity with local languages. (Batibo 1992:94). Mekacha criticised the approach of Batibo and other authors who argue that Swahili would drive out the other local languages (Mekacha 1993a:101-116). In his opinion, the language communities in Tanzania have a very positive attitude towards Swahili, with emphasis on speaking Swahili without necessarily adopting the Swahili culture.

Methodology

Field studies were conducted in 2001 in two Shambaa speech communities of the Tanga Region, which is home to 445.000 Shambaa speakers (Besha 1989:1). The study was focussed on two areas, the district capital Lushoto defined an urban setting, and a village called Tewe, located in the Muheza District bordering the Lushoto and Korogwe Districts, represented a rural setting. The fieldwork was conducted to determine the state of bilingualism of the population. Because urban settings frequently set trends for future developments, it was important not to confine this study solely to a rural setting, but also to include an urban setting. A total of about 200 people were interviewed with regard to their language attitudes. Respondents were interviewed to determine language acquisition patterns, language competence and subsequent language behaviour. The interviews focussed firstly on interviewee self-assessment regarding Swahili and Shambaa. Additionally questions were posed on the language competence of parents and children. Furthermore, the use of both languages in different domains and the attitude towards them was also assessed. Questions concerning the

identity, prestige and status of the languages were aimed at determining to what extent bilingualism is already manifest in the Shambaa community.

Two questionnaires comprising 75 questions were created. An overview including examples of the most important questions is given in the following figure:

Linguistic repertoire and patterns of language acquisition

Which languages do you speak?

Which languages do your parents speak?

Which languages do your children speak?

How do you rate your own knowledge/the knowledge of your parents/children of Shambaa/Swahili?

Which other local languages do you know?

How old were you when you started learning Swahili?

Language use patterns

Domains of family, neighbourhood, work, administration, religion, leisure activities

Which language do you use when speaking to your father/mother/grandfather/grandmother/elder brother/elder sister/spouse?

Which language do you use when speaking to a neighbour who is of your parent's/grandparent's/your own/your children's/grandchildren's age?

Which language(s) do you use at your working place?

Which language(s) do you use at marketplace or at the village shop?

Which language(s) do you use when praying?

Which language(s) do you use when speaking to a official in his office/at political meetings/ in health centres/ at police station?

Which language(s) do you use when participating in a traditional cultural event/in game, dance or sports activities?

Language attitudes

How would you want to identify yourself?

Would you consider a person to be Shambaa if s/he cannot speak Shambaa?

Do you consider persons who don't speak Swahili to be uncivilized and persons who speak fluently Swahili to be civilized and educated?

With whom do you associate Swahili?

Do you think the use of Swahili facilitated inter-ethnic understanding/results in a communication breakdown/with elderly people would be disrespectful/makes people abandon their ethnic culture?

Which language do you consider to be necessary for your life?

Which languages should your children and grandchildren master?
Would you support moves to make Shambaa as a subject or medium of teaching in school?
Would you support moves to make Shambaa the language of government business in this area?

Results

Individual linguistic capacities

People in rural areas are often polyglots. The majority of subjects interviewed in Tewe spoke Shambaa as well as Swahili, and 20 % of them spoke 3 languages (more men than women were able to speak another local language). Only one 25 year old woman told us that she spoke Swahili exclusively, and 6 other women (all older than 55) spoke only Shambaa. An overwhelming majority (92,2%) in Tewe were fluent in Shambaa. Those who rated their Shambaa knowledge as merely fair or not good, were younger than 30.

All the subjects interviewed considered language skills in Swahili to be very good. Those who admitted to speaking Swahili moderately well or poorly were aged 55 and over.

In general, about one quarter of the subjects interviewed (more men than women) had mastery over another local language. Most of them spoke Taita, others were able to communicate in Bondei, Pare, Rundi, Kamba, Makonde, or Digo. It should be noted that more men (36,8%) than women (15,7%) had knowledge of or skill in other local languages. This might be because men are more likely to marry women of other ethnicities. Furthermore, men also meet members of other ethnicities more frequently because they are more involved in business and other social activities, and they are more mobile. Moreover, it was clear that people aged over 40 mastered more local languages than people in younger age groups.

In Lushoto, nobody spoke Swahili alone, and very few (about 5 %) only spoke Shambaa. Most spoke both languages but only a few were able to master Swahili, Shambaa and a other local language. Although the overwhelming majority of people in Lushoto spokes Shambaa, their Shambaa skills were less manifest than in Tewe. About 80% admitted very good language skills in Shambaa. In Tewe, this percentage was over 90%. The remaining 20 % people with lesser skills in Shambaa were aged between 18 and 38, and had at least 7 years of formal education.

To summarise, Shambaa language skills in urban settings were less prominent in younger age groups with formal education than up-country. The percentage of people possessing very good language skills in Swahili was about 90%. Most people with skills in Swahili rated as fair or poorer, were aged 50 years or more, and had received either no or very limited formal education. Only very few people were able to speak other languages. Only 10 % (more men than women) had mastered Pare, and were all older than 40.

Additional local languages were more frequently spoken in rural settings than in towns. Only minimal Swahili skills could be observed in old women from rural settings, who had received little or no schooling. In younger age groups, nearly everybody spoke Swahili. Swahili nearly reached first language status in these age groups, indicating that the speakers had learnt Swahili earlier than Shambaa.

Table 1: Language competence of Shambaa (SH) and Swahili (SW) in Tewe and Lushoto

Tewe

Age	Total	Very good		Good		Not good	
		SW	SH	SW	SH	SW	SH
15-25	21	21	15	0	6	0	1
26-35	23	23	22	0	1	0	0
36-49	22	21	22	1	0	0	0
50-64	18	15	18	2	0	1	0
>65	17	10	17	3	0	4	0

Lushoto

Age	Total	Very good		Good		Not good	
		SW	SH	SW	SH	SW	SH
15-25	20	20	11	0	9	0	0
26-35	37	36	29	1	8	0	0
36-49	25	21	23	3	2	1	0
50-64	15	10	14	3	1	2	0
>65	3	1	3	0	0	2	0

The acquisition of Swahili

There are two ways to learn a second language. The formal way begins with a systematic introduction, which normally takes place in schools, and an informal way, through which the language is learnt together with peers in early childhood. Half of the respondents in Tewe had already learnt Swahili as very young children, meaning that Swahili was the first language. At the

same time, they learnt Shambaa. Others learnt Swahili a little later at the age of 4 to 5. As such, it can be said that more than half of the interviewees already spoke Swahili before attending school. For these people, Swahili was the first or second language, which they learnt informally in natural speaking situations without any formal training patterns. Other subjects only learnt Swahili at school, some even later. For them, Swahili was a foreign language learnt in formal settings. In Lushoto, the figures differed only slightly. Here only 15% learnt Swahili in their early childhood, but about 30 % at the age of 4 to 5. These people learnt Swahili and Shambaa in parallel. Only 7 % started to learn Swahili even later, at the age of 10-15, and 3% at the age of 15.

To summarise, about half of the interviewees in Tewe and in Lushoto had already learnt Swahili already by school age. In these cases, Swahili was not a foreign language, but the first or the second language learnt concurrently with Shambaa. It must also be noted that there was an age factor: the older the interviewee, the later they learnt Swahili. 80 % of people in Tewe reported that their parents were Swahili speakers, who had mastered Swahili, and 60 % used this language to communicate with others.. In Lushoto, 90% reported that their parents were Swahili speakers, but only 53 % were characterised as very good speakers and 22% possessed good skills. 57% of the parents communicated in Swahili.

To conclude, the majority of people in Tewe and in Lushoto the majority were both Shambaa and Swahili speakers, and have developed high language skills in both tongues. Although figures differed slightly between Lushoto and Tewe, Swahili competence was generally higher in the town, whereas Shambaa competence was predominant in the rural setting. There were no significant differences with regard to the linguistic repertoire, however.

Speech behaviour in rural and urban settings

The differences with respect to speech behaviour were dependent on various factors: age, sex, education, ethnic group, social involvement and the status of the language. It is crucial to assess more details regarding speech behaviour in different age groups, because this allows the determination of to what extent the whole speech community is characterised by a stable language shift, or if different processes of language shift have already started. The age of the speakers is frequently decisive for language choice.

It is very interesting to observe the degree to which language attitudes differ between urban and rural settings. Swahili is frequently used in towns as

a means of interethnic communication because, here, different ethnicities use Swahili as the lingua franca. Furthermore, people with a higher school education are more likely to live in towns where Swahili is used mainly in the work place. It is also probable that Swahili is held in higher regard by those groups with higher levels of education. According to Fishman (1975:128), urban people tend more and rural people less to language displacement, because the latter are more conservative and isolated. Sometimes, however, the reverse appears true because increasing awareness of ethnic affiliation can also be an urban phenomena. In general, urban people have always been driving forces, which also holds true for speech behaviour, regardless of whether the discussion is about language maintenance, revival, displacement or shift.

Speech behaviour in the different domains

In the area studied, a three part linguistic repertoire was observed. Speakers selected either Shambaa or Swahili, using both languages in different conversations or alternatively in the same conversation. Inhabitants between 15 and 90 year of age were interviewed. More than 57% of those in Lushoto had a 7-year school education, 29% between 8-12 years; only 5 % had 1-6 school years and 9% no school education at all. In Tewe, about 44% went to school for 7 years; 26% had no school education (7 times more women than men), 27% 1-6 years and only 3% had 8-12 school years (no women). Most people in Tewe were farmers. There were also tailors, two teachers, and three businessmen. In Lushoto, almost half of the interviewees were farmers, and one third businessmen. Furthermore, a few nurses, craftsmen, waiters, drivers and unskilled workers were interviewed.

In order to find out which language is used in particular situations, it is necessary to observe the speech behaviour in the different domains. The following domains were studied.

Family

Within the family, the local language was dominant. The use of Swahili declined with the age. Older people communicated in Shambaa, where there was no difference between men and women. Most of the interviewees in both Tewe and Lushoto spoke only Shambaa with their grandparents. In Tewe, however, three quarter still spoke only Shambaa with their parents, whereas just about 40 % exclusively spoke the local language with their parents in Lushoto. Language use between elder brothers and sisters was also different in the two study areas. In talking to elder brothers and sisters, more than 50 % spoke Shambaa in Tewe, but only 27% in Lushoto. Again,

we observed remarkable differences between the age groups, where younger people spoke more Swahili with siblings. In both regions, the use of Swahili between spouses increased, especially amongst younger people. With respect to language knowledge and childhood language, we can state that most of them spoke both Shambaa and Swahili. Children of younger parents (below 40 years), however, spoke less Shambaa and preferred Swahili.

Table 2: Swahili and Shambaa use in the domain family (in %)

Conversation with ...	Tewe			Lushoto		
	SW	SH	SW+SH	SW	SH	SW+SH
Father	8,4	75,9	15,7	0,0	42,0	58,0
Mother	8,9	81,0	10,1	0,0	43,0	57,0
Grandfather	6,8	83,8	9,4	0,0	93,5	6,5
Grandmother	6,8	85,1	8,1	0,0	95,7	4,3
Elder brother	18,4	55,1	26,5	2,0	27,0	71,0
Elder sister	19,6	56,7	23,7	1,0	27,0	72,0
Spouse	27,5	43,1	26,4	25,0	16,0	59,0

Neighbourhood

The speech behaviour in the neighbourhood was similar to language use in the family, but it made a difference whether the neighbours were Shambaa or from another tribe (most in Tewe are Taita). Almost half of the interviewees spoke both languages with their neighbours, depending on the situation. In Tewe, more people spoke Shambaa with their neighbours than in Lushoto. The older the speaker, the more often they used Shambaa. With neighbours in the same age group, the older spoke Shambaa, and the younger used both languages or preferred Swahili. Most of the interviewees from Tewe spoke Swahili with children or grandchildren, but both languages were used in Lushoto. People spoke Swahili exclusively with strangers in both Tewe and Lushoto, independent of age. When the precise ethnicity of interlocutors was unclear, they were addressed in Swahili, even if in a Shambaa environment or setting. Only when the speaker was sure that a stranger also belongs to the Shambaa tribe, did they revert to Shambaa.

In general, speech behaviour within the family and neighbourhood was similar, with no significant differences between urban and rural settings.

Work

Speech behaviour in the work place depended on kind of work undertaken. Working situations involving family members (field work etc.) the use of

Shambaa was apparent, although younger people spoke mostly Swahili. Work situations in public settings usually saw the use of Swahili, predominantly because this represents areas where people of different ethnic groups work together. Interestingly, speech behaviour in Tewe was a little different in this respect, because although half of the people used Swahili at the work place, nearly all of them were farmers. Only about one-third spoke Shambaa. In Lushoto, however, the use of Swahili, Shambaa or both was equally distributed.

Market place and village shops

The majority of people in Tewe spoke Swahili at the market and in shops. Only very elderly people, in particular women, used Shambaa. The situation was different in Lushoto. At the market about 50% spoke only Swahili, whereas the remaining 50% used Swahili and Shambaa interchangeably. In village shops, about two-thirds of people spoke Swahili and one-third used both languages. In particular, elderly people, mainly women, spoke Shambaa, whereas younger people preferred Swahili.

Religious life

Tewe is in an Islamic environment. About 76% of men reported that they prayed in Arabic, the remaining 24% in Swahili. Most women (57%) prayed in Swahili, 33% in Arabic and 10% in Shambaa. In Lushoto, which is influenced mainly by Christian communities, about half of both men and women use Swahili, less than one third Arabic (more men than women) and only a few Shambaa. One quarter used both languages. Conversations with church leaders, or with friends on religious topics, Swahili was mainly used in both Tewe and Lushoto. Only few people used Shambaa. With the exception of Arabic, it can be said that Swahili was the predominant language with respect to religion, even in Christian communities. Only the elderly women of the countryside used Shambaa.

Leisure activities

Communication between peers occur during cultural events. The choice of language depended upon the conversation partner, and the patterns were similar to those of the family and neighbourhood domains. Regarding leisure activities, the speech behaviour of people depended strongly upon the kind of events in which people participated. During traditional feasts, nearly all people in Lushoto and Tewe reverted to Shambaa. During sporting events, such as football games, or at discotheques etc., about half of people in Tewe used Swahili, one third Shambaa and the rest used both languages. In the

town, the picture was remarkably different. Here only few (2%) spoke Swahili alone, but most (73%) used Shambaa and 25% used both languages. In this particular, mainly women at these types of events spoke Shambaa. In this case, there was a significant difference with respect to speech behaviour between urban and rural peoples, which was contrary to our expectations. One reason could be that those events often take place in larger villages. The nearest larger municipality to Tewe is Maramba, which belongs to the Muheza district, and is home predominantly to the Bondei people. Thus during events in Maramba, Swahili is used as an interethnic means of communication. Clearly, people of different ethnic groups also sometimes meet during such events in Lushoto, but here it is likely that Shambaa people adhere more closely to each other.

Administration setting

As expected, a clear predominance of Swahili was seen in administrative environments. In situations such as conversations with public service personnel, political meetings, trials, in health centres or hospitals, or in police stations, nearly all respondents reported a preference for communicating in Swahili, in either Tewe or Lushoto. Consequently, the national language is clearly predominant in both urban and rural settings with respect to the public life of the Shambaa. Rarely, people switched languages, an easy task in conversations among Shambaa.

Table 3: Swahili and Shambaa use in administrative settings (in %)

Conversation in	Tewe			Lushoto		
	SW	SH	SW+SH	SW	SH	SW+SH
Gov. office	97,1	2,0	1,0	99,0	0,0	1,0
Pol. meeting	97,1	2,0	1,0	94,0	2,0	4,0
Court	98,0	2,0	0,0	100,0	0,0	0,0
Health centre	98,0	2,0	0,0	100,0	0,0	0,0
Police station	97,1	2,9	0,0	100,0	0,0	0,0

Subjective attitude towards the languages

Language loyalty can prevent languages disappearing or it can lead to a kind of language revival, especially when speech is not only used as a means of communication, but also considered a symbol of identity. The relationship of language attitude to everyday speech behaviour was investigated by posing various questions about how individuals perceived the meaning of both languages, and their opinions on this traditional, ethnical and national means of identification. We were also interested gaining insight into the

attitudes which these respondents manifest towards their local language and the national language. A correlation exists between language attitude and the degree to which speakers maintain language loyalty. As such, we also aimed to discover whether there is a kind of competition between Swahili and Shambaa that could lead to a language change.

Identity

Answers to questions concerning sense of identity clearly showed that about 65% of the respondents in Tewe considered themselves Tanzanians as well as Shambaa. One quarter saw themselves solely Tanzanian, most of which were younger than 30. Only few considered themselves Shambaa, the majority of these were women. In Lushoto, nearly all interviewed people considered themselves Tanzanian as well as Shambaa. Only very few defined themselves as either Shambaa or Tanzanian. Accordingly, the overwhelming majority accepted a double identity and did not consider national and ethnical identities to be mutually exclusive.

Table 4: Identity (in %)

Identity	Tewe	Lushoto
Shambaa	8,8	6,0
Tanzanian	24,5	6,0
Both	65,7	88,0

Attitudes toward Shambaa

Nearly all people interviewed considered Shambaa as their native language, even those unable to speak it. To questions about the meaning of Shambaa, the overwhelming majority in Tewe and Lushoto answered that this language is important for them, because it is their native language and the language of their ancestors. They considered Shambaa as a symbol for their culture, and as a language existing since the dawn of time. The attitude in regarding Shambaa was determined by the ethnical identity, tradition, descent and culture. Only some women in Tewe considered Shambaa to be relatively unimportant. These were young women between the ages of 20 and 25, who never really mastered Shambaa and whose parents belonged to different ethnicities.

The issue of whether a Shambaa subject can be considered Shambaa without speaking the language was refuted by nearly half of people in Tewe. These respondents considered the use of the language to be most important.

One third, however, considered individuals to belong to the tribe, even if they could speak the language. Most of the respondents in Tewe as well as in Lushoto reported that the Shambaa language was better equipped to handle Shambaa culture and tradition. It is interesting to note that half of the respondents in Lushoto wished Shambaa would become the subject or medium of instruction. Most of the people in Tewe, however, were not in favour of such a proposal. They were likely concerned about the chances of better and higher education for their children, should Shambaa be used in school.

In both places, the majority would not support efforts to make Shambaa the language of government business. The few, who voted for this idea, were elderly people. Most interviewees wanted Shambaa to be protected in the informal, but not formal domains. Even the knowledge that the mother tongue could be lost, they still did not want to risk losing the advantages brought to them by Swahili. (See table 6)

Attitudes toward Swahili

Almost all of the respondents considered Swahili to be important because it is their national language. Half of the people, however, denied the statement that non-Swahili speakers are considered uncivilised or old-fashioned, and those who master Swahili, educated and cultured. For most people, Swahili has the status of a common language, and not only used by a small elite. Considering the number of Swahili speakers, this is not so surprising.

Table 5: Association of Swahili (in %)

SW is language of ...	Tewe	Lushoto
All Tanzanians	98,0	97,0
Coastal people	2,0	3,0

All interviewees in both Tewe and Lushoto associated Swahili with the whole Tanzanian population, not only with coastal people. They did not link Swahili with a special culture (of the Swahili people), but rather regard Swahili as the language of a supra-ethnic culture associated with high prestige and status. Because of its functional rank and status, Swahili plays a neutral and integrative role. For the majority, Swahili is a means of interethnic communication, and people believed that it strengthened national identity and facilitated inter-ethnic understanding. Regarding the influence of Swahili on communication and culture in the Shambaa

community, differences between rural and urban areas became evident. Most of the interviewees in Lushoto did not fear that Swahili would result in a communication breakdown in their community. They also did not believe the use of Swahili with the elderly to be disrespectful or that it makes people abandon their ethnic culture. Thus, the spread of Swahili did not cause negative feelings in urban settings. In Tewe, however, there were more respondents concerned that Swahili could potentially lead to a breakdown of communication in Shambaa, or feared that using Swahili with the elderly would be disrespectful. One quarter considered Swahili to encourage people abandon their ethnic culture. Here, we observed more a higher degree of doubt, in particular among older people, that Swahili could negatively influence the Shambaa culture. Most people in Lushoto, as well as in Tewe, considered both languages to be necessary for daily life. Some young people, however, thought Swahili was the most important language for them. Most people wanted their children and grandchildren to master both languages. In summary, we can conclude that some people, particularly in Tewe, feared a negative influence of Swahili, but could still appreciate that knowledge of Swahili is important and necessary for themselves and their descents, in order to be part of the modern and educated world.

Table 6: Attitudes toward Swahili and Shambaa (in %)

Attitudes	Tewe			Lushoto		
	Yes	No	Don't know	Yes	No	Don't know
To consider a non-SH speaker as SH	29,4	44,1	26,5	10,0	29,0	61,0
SW facilitated inter-ethnic understanding	93,1	3,9	2,9	98,0	0,0	2,0
SW results a communication breakdown	39,2	45,1	15,7	1,0	97,0	2,0
SW-use with elderly people is disrespectful	40,2	56,9	2,9	4,0	95,0	1,0
SW-use makes people abandon their local culture	24,5	69,6	5,9	2,0	98,0	0,0
SH as medium or subject of instruction	18,6	77,5	3,9	49,0	50,0	1,0
SH as official language in this area	12,7	86,3	1,0	15,0	85,0	0,0

Summary

To date, many people speak Shambaa, and this language is unlikely to disappear in the near future. However, a language shift is to be expected because of increasing urbanisation due to education, and the prestige of Swahili mainly among young people. If this trend continues, it could lead even to language death. The district capital, Lushoto, is a centre and meeting point for many people coming from several parts of the country. This clearly explains why Swahili is used as the dominant language. In addition, Swahili has a strong impact on education, administration and mass media, even in remote areas.

During the last decades, a shift of the role and rank of the Shambaa took place because of the close contact to Swahili. This shift can be observed even in different domains. There are different attitudes regarding both languages. People considering language as an instrument of interethnic communication, mobility, power and authority, and as an expression of national self determination normally have a very positive attitudes towards Swahili and more negative ones towards Shambaa. Those however, for which language is a symbol of ethnical identity, consider Shambaa to be more important. The attitude regarding languages depends mainly upon age, sex, education and geographical setting. It is important to note, however, that a speaker's change in attitude does not accompany a simultaneous change in speech behaviour.

This study demonstrates that the Shambaa speech community is meanwhile a stable bilingual speech community. A shift to Swahili did occur, and is still underway, in rural and urban areas. Most of the rural respondents spoke Shambaa, particular the elderly. In town, however, the Shambaa competence has declined slowly, particular among younger people. Local languages was preferentially spoken in rural areas, but even in this setting, Shambaa skills declined in the younger age groups. Almost all people spoke Swahili, and was used more by the young than the old. Elderly women without school education in rural areas had less Swahili competence in rural areas, whereas Swahili was already the dominant language for younger people. In both communities, half of the interviewees had already started to learn Swahili already at pre-school age, the younger respondents earlier than the older. The study findings allow us to deduce that Shambaa was spoken in domains like family and neighbourhood, whereas Swahili was used in domains like work, and religious or administrative settings. Swahili was also spoken in Shambaa domains, but Shambaa was not found in domains reserved for Swahili.

With respect to ethnical identity, there was a clear admission of a double identity. Most of the interviewees considered themselves both Shambaa and Tanzanian. Swahili was not seen merely as the language of coastal people, but of all Tanzanians. The overall attitude towards Swahili was positive, although there was some fear in Tewe that Swahili could override out the local culture. For the majority, Shambaa was important, but not essential in determining ethnic identity. In contrast, Shambaa was necessary to cope better with the oral traditions of the Shambaa community, although almost nobody wanted a change of the current language policy.

Comparison of speech behaviours in Lushoto and in Tewe, demonstrated several similarities in many domains. Swahili was more often spoken in town, but there was still a great adherence to Shambaa and the wish to protect it. As the ancestral language, it was considered to be very important. Transmitting Shambaa to children and grandchildren was a particular desire, not reflected in the real speech behaviour.

According to age groups of the bilingual speech community, we could see differences in language use and language competence. For the elderly, the matrix language is Shambaa. Middle aged people had a stable competence in both languages, whereas Swahili was the matrix language for the youngest. The trend leans more and more to Swahili. The young Shambaa spoke more Swahili than Shambaa, and many never learnt Shambaa correctly, rendering them unable to teach it their descents. If this trend were to continue, a language shift would be possible. At the time of this study, a state of stable bilingualism exists, which is accepted by the people. Both languages exist side by side in equilibrium, that can be defined as a co-existence of Swahili and Shambaa.

References

- Abdulaziz-Mkilifi, M.H. 1972. 'Triglossia and Swahili-English. Bilingualism in Tanzania', in: *Language in Society* 1:197-213.
- Batibo, Hermann M. 2000. 'The Linguistic Situation of Tanzania', in: Kahigi, Kihore and Mous (eds.) 2000:5-17.
- Batibo, Hermann 1992. 'The fate of ethnic languages in Tanzania', in: Brenzinger, M. (ed.) 1992:85-97.
- Besha, Ruth Mfumbwa 1989. *A Study of Tense and Aspect in Shambala*. Berlin: Dietrich Reimer Verlag.
- Brenzinger, Matthias (ed.) 1998. *Endangered Languages in Africa*. Köln: Rüdiger Köppe Verlag.

- Brenzinger, Matthias (ed.) 1992. *Language Death. Factual and Theoretical Explorations with Special Reference to East Africa*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Brenzinger, Matthias 1992a. ‚Patterns of Language Shift in East Africa‘, in: Herbert, R. (ed.) 1992:287-303.
- Dorian, Nancy C. (ed.) 1989. *Investigating Obsolescence. Studies in Language Contraction and death*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Dorian, Nancy C. 1981. *Language Death. The Life Cycle of a Scottish Gaelic Dialect*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Eastman, Carol M. 1992. ‚Sociolinguistics in Africa: Language Planning‘, in Herbert, R.K. (ed.) 1992:95-113.
- Edwards, John 1985. *Language, Society and Identity*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
- Fasold, Ralph 1984. *Sociolinguistics of Society*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
- Ferguson, C.A. 1959. ‚Diglossia‘, in: *Word* 15 (1959):325-340
- Feierman, Steven 1974. *The Shambaa Kingdom. A History*. The University of Wisconsin Press.
- Fishman, Joshua A. 1975. *Soziologie der Sprache. Eine interdisziplinäre sozialwissenschaftliche Betrachtung der Sprache in der Gesellschaft*. Muenchen: Max Hueber Verlag.
- Fishman, Joshua A. (ed.) 1978. *Advances in the Study of Societal Multilingualism*. The Hague/Paris/New York: Mouton Publishers.
- Herbert, Robert K. (ed.) 1992. *Language and Society in Africa. The Theory and Practice of Sociolinguistics*. Cape Town: Witswatersrand University Press.
- Kahigi, Kulikoyela, Yared Kihore and Maarten Mous (eds.) 2000. *Lugha za Tanzania. Languages of Tanzania. Studies dedicated to the Memory of prof. Clement Maganga*. Research School CNWS, Leiden University.
- Legère, Karsten 1992. ‚Language shift in Tanzania‘, in: Brenzinger, M (ed.) 1992:99-115.
- Lowenberg, Peter H. (ed.) 1988. *Language Spread and Language Policy: Issues, Implications, and Case Studies*. Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press. (Georgetown University Round Table on Languages and Linguistics 1987).
- Mekacha, Rugatiri D.K. 1993a. ‚Language death: Conceptions and misconceptions‘, in: *Journal of Pragmatics* 21 (1993):101-116
- Mekacha, Rugatiri D.K. 1993b. *The Sociolinguistic Impact of Swahili on Ethnic Community Languages in Tanzania: A Case Study of Ekinata*. Bayreuth African Studies.
- Msanjila, Y.P. 1994. ‚Who uses Swahili in Tanzania Rural Areas? A case study of Magodi village in Tanga Region‘, in: *Afrikanistische Arbeitspapiere* 39 (1994):81-92.

- Ngonyani, Deo 1995. 'Language Shift and National Identity in Tanzania', in: *Ufahamu* 23, 2, 1995:69-92.
- O'Barr, William 1971. 'Multilingualism in a Rural Tanzania Village', in: *Anthropological Linguistics*, Vol. 13, No. 6:289-300.
- Polomé, Edgar C. and C.P. Hill (eds.) 1980. *Language in Tanzania*. Oxford University Press.
- Robins, Robert H. and Eugenius M. Uhlenbeck (eds.) 1991. *Endangered Languages*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Sasse, Hans-Jürgen 1992. 'Theory of language death', in: Brenzinger, M (ed.) 1992:7-29.
- Thomason, Sarah G. 2001. *Language Contact*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
- Weinreich, Uriel 1977. *Languages in Contact*. New York: Findings and Problems.