Digital Archiving of Data from Undocumented Languages
Deo Ngonyani

Overview: This proposal seeks support for a postdoctoral fellow to collaborate with the mentor to (a) build a digital archive of language data collected from fieldwork including Dhaisu and Kisi and other East African languages; (b) co-author and co-present linguistics papers; and (c) write a grant proposal for Documenting Endangered Languages program of NSF.

Objectives: Support is sought for collaborative work to archive language material from the AAP supported fieldwork on Dhaisu (2017-2019), as well as materials I have collected on Ndendeule, Ngoni, Kisi, and Nyanja. Most of the primary materials are in notebooks, on CDs and hard drives as audio files. The materials include wordlists, personal narratives, folktales, songs, as well as elicited sentences and phrases. The project will involve inputting words, texts, and the analysis of each word on the FieldWorks. FieldWorks is a set of software tools created by the Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL) and is used in managing linguistic data. This popular set of tools archives linguistic data as well as cultural data. It enables the researcher to create a database for making dictionaries, interlinearization of texts and morphological analysis.

Activities: The mentor and the fellow will (a) build a digital archive of language data, (b) write a grant proposal for the Documenting Endangered Language program of NSF, (c) co-author papers, and (d) co-present at conferences such as the Annual Conference African Linguistics.

Significance: The collaboration with the mentee will expand our language documentation activities from three to four institutions with the ultimate goal of creating a sustainable partnership. With respect to transforming lives, the project seeks to preserve cultural material and cultural diversity through language materials. The primary data will be resources for language description, theoretical studies and comparative study of Bantu languages. The FieldWorks template facilitates the creation of dictionaries and the writing of sketch grammars. The archive will be a base for future documentation. The AAP supported project involved three institutions, Michigan State University, Tumaini University Dar es Salaam College in Tanzania and the US International University in Nairobi, Kenya. The collaboration with the mentee will expand our activities to another institution with the ultimate goal of creating a sustainable partnership.

Current Status of the Project: Already about 2500 words from Dhaisu have been input into FieldWorks and have been morphologically tagged. This was made possible by the College of Arts and Letters fund that was used to hire a student. Far more materials remain to be input from Dhaisu, Ndendeule, Kisi, and Nyanja.

The Mentee: Ideally, the fellow will be a linguist who is interested in general linguistics, language description, and linguistic theory. Since all interviews were conducted in Swahili, the fellow should also speak Swahili.
Teaching and Research Interests

Language Documentation, Language Description, Syntactic Theory, Comparative Bantu, Morphosyntax, Swahili Studies, Language in Africa, and Swahili language and Swahili literature

Education


1980 **Diploma in Education**, *Dar es Salaam College of National Education*.

Academic Appointments

2005 - present **Associate Professor**, Department of Linguistics and Germanic, Slavic, Asian and African Languages

2014 **Visiting Fulbright Scholar**, Department of Languages, Linguistics and Literature, Pwani University, Kenya.

1999-2005 **Assistant Professor**, Department of Linguistics and Germanic, Slavic, Asian and African Languages


1996-1998 **Visiting Lecturer**, African Studies Program, Indiana University, Bloomington

1991-1996 **Teaching Assistant**, Linguistics Department, University of California Los Angeles

1988-1991 **Assistant Lecturer**, Department of Foreign Languages and Linguistics, University of Dar es Salaam

1986-1988 **Tutorial Assistant**, Department of Linguistics and Languages, University of Dar es Salaam


Honors, Fellowships and Grants


2011-2013 MSU HARP grant, Documentation of Kimwera.


1985 The University of Dar es Salaam Convocation, Best Undergraduate Education Student

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**Publications**

**Monographs**


**Articles in Peer Reviewed Journals**


**Book Chapters**


**Working Papers**


**Conference Proceedings**


Forthcoming


Ngowa, Nancy and Deo Ngonyani. The Subjunctive Mood in Giryama and Tanzanian Nyanja, Studia Orientalia Electronica.


Under Review
Ngonyani, Deo. Bantu applicative constructions (entry for a Handbook of Bantu Languages).

Biersteker, Ann, Angelina Kioko Ngonyani, Deo and Josephat Rugemalira. Proto-Bantu reflexes in Dhaisu. 49ACAL Proceedings

Yan Cong and Ngonyani Deo A Causative in Disguise in Swahili. 49ACAL Proceedings

In Preparation
Ngonyani, Deo. A Sketch Grammar of Chinyanja of Tanzania. (monograph)
Kisanji, Joachim & Deo Ngonyani. Metonimia katika Methali za Kiswahili (Metonymy in Swahili proverbs- article)

Ngonyani, Deo. The Copula in Ndendeule (article)

Ngonyani, Deo. A Grammar of Kikisi (monograph)

Ngonyani, Deo. A Grammar of Kindendeule (monograph)

Ngonyani, Deo and Asmaha Heddi. Exploring Indigenous Knowledge Systems in the language class: riddles (article)

Presentations


2014  Riddling and Children’s Acquisition of Metaphors. Departmental Seminar, Pwani University, Department of Languages, Linguistics and Literature, March 24, 2014.


2010  Issues in the syntax of African languages. Graduate seminar conducted at the University of Dar es Salaam August 16-17, 2010.


1996 The morphosyntax of applicatives. Colloquium talk UCLA Linguistics Department, June 1996.


Service

Michigan State University
Director, Undergraduate Linguistics Program
Director, MSU Intensive Swahili Summer Program, Summer 2000.
Reviewer, MSU Intramural Research Grant Program, Fall 2000.
Reviewer for MSU RGP
Member, Advisory Committee of the Center for Advanced Studies in Development, 2002-2009; 2012-13
African Studies Advisory Committee 2011
African Studies Center FLAS reviewer
African Studies Student Union Advisor

Professional

Director, Summer Cooperative African Language Institute (national institute hosted by Michigan State University Summer 2002)
Program reviewer: Swahili Program, University of Michigan 2009-2010.
Program reviewer: Swahili Program, University of Iowa 2010.
Consulted for Ethnologue for languages of Southern Tanzania 2000.
Reviewer, Swahili Group Projects Abroad, 2001-2016
Director, Intensive Kiswahili Group Projects Abroad (GPA) in Tanzania 2008-2011
Treasurer, African Language Teachers Association 2004-06
Member, Editorial Board, UTAFITI: Interdisciplinary Journal of Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, University of Dar es Salaam, 2004 - 2017
Member, Editorial Board, Journal of Linguistics and Language in Education, University of Dar es Salaam 2013 - present
Board Member, Tanzania Studies Association 1999-2010
Professional Organizations
African Studies Association (ASA).
African Language Teachers Association (ALTA)
Tanzanian Studies Association (TSA)
Association of Contemporary African Linguistics (ACAL)
Global Association for the Promotion of Swahili (CHAUKIDU)

Other Activities
Swahili Court Interpreter, Eighth Judicial District Court, Las Vegas: 1995.
Swahili Court Interpreter, Los Angeles District Court, Los Angeles: 1995.
Swahili Translator, Executive Linguist Agency, P.O. Box 3616, Redondo Beach, CA 90277.
Court Interpreter, St John, MI 2013.

References
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