Dropping of Morphemes in the Glossing of Kiswahili Extended Verbs by Swahili Scholars

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Abstract

This paper exposes the negligence of some morphemes during the glossing of Kiswahili extended verbs by scholars of Kiswahili and the way it can be addressed. The glossing of Kiswahili verbs involves three levels of representations: word order and/or parsing level, the literal translation, and free translation level. However, it is observed that some morphemes that occur at the second level of glossing are neglected in the third level. For example, the verb pim-i-w-a 'be measured for' in Kiswahili is constituted by two bound morphemes. Moreover, it is the passive morpheme such as -w- in our example that would be represented at the semantic level, as the applicative -i- is dropped at the semantic free level. Following this observation, the present study tracked the glossing of Kiswahili extended verbs in four morphological publications to check how scholars of Kiswahili morphology gloss extended Kiswahili verbs at the interlineal and the free/semantic level of glossing. Using the Leipzig Glossing Rule and morpheme-by-morpheme correspondence as the framework of the analysis, the study eventually established a discrepancy between the second and the third row of glossing of Kiswahili extended verbs.Consequently, a correction of this error by which is currently passed on to students of Kiswahili linguistics all over the world.

Keywords: Kiswahili, Verbal Extensions, Agglutination, Glossing, Parsing

1.0 Introduction

Kiswahili verbal extension has been studied by several scholars of Kiswahili (Kihore, 2008, Lothi, 2002; Muhozi, 2000; Ngonyani, 2016). They have exposed, among other things, how Kiswahili extended verbs behave in their word order and canonical morphological structure. Some of these scholars (Ashton, 1944; Doke, 1943; Khamis, 2008) glossed their analysis of Kiswahili extended verbs, basically for non-native linguists. Be that as it may, we observed that these previous scholars would drop some constituent morphemes that are vivid at the literal level of glossing are dropped at the semantic level of representation during the glossing

Consequently, the current study thus took an academic obligation to shed light on the phenomenon and if possible to correct this error that has been passed on to students of linguistics all over the world. We detail the phenomenon in the subsequent part of this paper.[19]

2.0 Materials and Methods

This study collected data from four publications which were selected purposively namely: Lothi (2002), Muhozi (2000) andNgonyani (2016). These sources were read one by one and six relevant extracts were taken from the publications to demonstrate this old error in the parsing of Kiswahili extended verbs. The extracts were scrutinized to identify and demonstrate a mismatch between the literal and semantic levels of glossing

[19]*The following are abbreviations used in this paper:STAT= Stative, FV = Final Vowel,PASS= Passive, CAUS= Causative, Cf = cross reference, APPL- Applicative, SP =Subject Prefix agreement,SM = Subject maker, P = Preposition, TNS =Tense,OM = Object marker 1S = First singular person, PST = Pat tense, PERF = Perfective aspect.*

of the Swahili extended verbs. The analysis was guided by *Leipzig Glossing Rule* adapted from (Christian, 1982), which constitutes three levels of string representations. However, the phenomenon is exemplified below using Luganda language spoken in Uganda:

1. *Na -som -es-hw-a*
2. 1S-PST-read -CAUS-PASS-FV
   'I was made to read'

The data in 1 show three levels of glossing: one is word order, second is literal translation and the third is free translation level of glossing. This approach is the one that handles the paper in discussion.

3.0 The Results

This sub section exhibits the dropping of some morphemes during the glossing of Kiswahili extended verbs. The examples are drawn from four linguistic publications detailed in the methodology section. The first extract demonstrating the dropping in the glossing of Kiswahili extended verbs is from Ngonyani. The dropping is illustrated in (2) below[20]:

3. *I-ta-fany-i-w-a u-karabati*
   9SM-FT-do-APPL-PASS-FV 14-repair
   'will be repaired' (Ngonyani, 2016: 62).

In data 2, the first line is a word level/or and parsing. In this glossing, the level is well written. The second level is literal

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translation level, which is also well refined. However, in the third level, the meaning given reflects the free and only one bound morpheme (the passive morpheme). That is, the applicative morpheme, which is evident in the word level /-i-/is not reflected in the semantic level of glossing-*ta-fany-i-w-a u-karabati* would mean *'it will be repaired for'* – to reflect both applicative -*i*- and applicative-*n*-.The second extract exhibiting dropping is drawn from page 62 where semantics miss glossing at the third level of interpretations: The dropping is illustrated in Data 3 below:

3. U-me-m-zal-ish-i-a dungudungu
You-PF-1OM-give.birth-CAUS-APPL-FV1.deformed person
'You have created a monster (in his mind)'
(Ngonyani, 2016: 63).

The data indicates that both the word level and literal translation level are well demarcated through the use of hyphens and other markers of categories and functions. At the semantic level of glossing, the meaning of this item has been given as *umemzalishia dungudungu* (you have created a monster (in his mind)', which does not reflect the two mentioned bound morphemes. That is, only morpheme -*i*- and morpheme -*an*-is semantically represented in this glossing. For that matter, the missing morpheme in the free translation tier is the causative */-ish-/,* which would bring the meaning as in 'he/she has caused to give birth for'. The third misrepresentation was in the simultaneously ordered of stative and applicative morphemes. In this example, misrepresentation

was done by dropping the first strata. The Data in 4 illustrates the dropping of morphemes in the glossing of the constructions:

4. Pambanohilo li-ta-fany-ik-i-a Arusha
5.contest5.that5SM-FT-do-STAT-APPL-FV Arusha
'The contest will take place in Arusha.'(Ngonyani, 2016: 64).

In example 4, two bound morphemes are ordered in a single root: stative and applicative. They are well demarcated at the literal translation level of parsing through the use of hyphens and the markers of categories and functions. However, at the third level – free translation level – the meaning given reflects only the applicative bound morpheme. That is, the causative bound morpheme is hidden in the semantic representation. *'Pambano hilo litafanyikia Arusha'* would be semantically represented as*there is a possibility that contest to take place in Arusha*. This is the form which reflects stative and applicative morphemes at the semantic tier of glossing. The experience shows that Ngonyani (2016) leaves the first morpheme's sense and takes the second semantics of the given morpheme. Two more cases were extracted from *Seidl* and *Dimitriadis*. The first case was the co-occurrences of causative and stative bound morphemes. In their analysis, a misrepresentation of bound morphemes at the semantic level of glossing is observed as the data in 4 illustrates:

5. Som -esh -ek -a
Study-CAUS-STAT-FV
'Be taught/teachable'.

In data 5, it is observed that two bound morphemes at the word level/parsing level namely: causative *-esh-* and stative *-ek-*. The data is well demarcated at the second level of glossing, which is literal translation level. However, the meaning given at the third level does not reflect the two bound morphemes shown at the first and second levels. That is only stative morphemes represented in the meaning given translation 'teachable'. The correct semantic glossing of *som-esh-ek-a* would be 'make teachable/cause the state of being taught'. It is this semantic representation which will accommodate the two bound morphemes: causative (causee) and stative (state of being). The second example was taken from Seidl and Dimitriadis (n.d) was the dropping of reciprocal morphemes at the free translation level of glossing. Data5exposes the phenomenon:

6. *Maji-ya- me -gand -am –an-a*
Water-SM-PERF-coagulate-ST-REC-FV
'The water is adhered/stuck.

In data 6, the first and the second level of this glossing is demarcated admissibly. However, the third level only reflects the static morpheme, and drops the reciprocal morpheme. For complete representation of all constituent bound morphemes at the third level, the free translation of '*gand-am-an*-a would mean: *'stuck to each other'.* Therefore, the complete third level representation would 'water is stuck to each other'. The third example of dropping was observed in page 21 of Seidl and Dimitriadis. In this case, three bound morphemes were misrepresented at the free translation level as demonstrated by Data 7:

7. Wa-li-som-esh-an-a SM-Past-teach-STAT-REC-FV
'They were taught together' (Seidl and Dimitriadis, n.d p. 21).

Data 7 shows two bound morphemes on the root *som-* 'read' The morphemes are causative *-esh-* and reciprocal *-an-*. The sentence *walisomeshana* and its literal translation levels of glossing, the bound morphemes are represented. At the third level of glossing (free translation level) only reciprocal bound morpheme occurs. However, causative and stative bound morphemes are left. The derived verb *someshana* would be represented as 'they made to read each other'. Further, item9from (Kihore *al.*, 2008) reveals the same fault in the parsing of Kiswahili extended verbs:

*8. Kop-esh -e -w–*a
*b*orrow-CAUS -PPL-PASS-V
'Be made to borrow' (Kihore, 2008: 129).

In Data 8, the verb *kopa* 'borrow' is attached with three bound morphemes namely: causative, *esh–*, applicative *–e– and passive –w–*. However, at the semantic level of glossing, not all the bound morphemes are represented. We see the merger of two morphemes at this level –causative and passive morphemes. We also see the dropping of passive morpheme. A representative free translation at the semantic level, following morpheme-by-morpheme rule of glossing would be 'be made to borrow on behave of'. This shows that each morph has its own semantics following the final level of free translation. The other case of dropping was observed from (Muhozi, 2000: 30). Swahili verb *waka* 'burn' whose stem is *wa-*, that is to say the

stem *wa-* in pertinent to verb derivation is often used with stative *–k-*,which is inactivated or latend morpheme, as in *wa-(ka)* 'burnable/able to burn'. Therefore, the stringed morphemes are stative and passive according to him as it is shown in 9 data below:

9. *Wa-sh-i-w-a*
Burn-CAUS-APPL-PASS-FV
'Be burnt for'.

In Data 9, it is witnessed that the construction is composed of three morphemes but the free translation level shows only two morphemes as in passive and applicative. This shows that the causative */-sh-/* is hidden. Therefore, this kind of dropping at the free translation level can be shown as *wa-sh-i-w-a* which means 'be made to burn for', thus, each morpheme among the three indicates its own semantics at the semantic translation level of analysis. The second extract case from Muhozi (2000) is seen in the extension of the verb *iga,* which means 'imitate' his analysis has ignored the ordering of applicative passive morpheme as if is ungrammatical or absent in its lexicon. The data in 10 below illustrates the phenomenon:

10. *Ig-iw-a*
Imitate-FV
'Be imitated' (Muhozi, 2000: 43).

Data10 shows that the passive morpheme *–iw–* has been attached to the verb iga, which means imitate to form *igiwa* be imitated for. In the second level of analysis the applicative and passive have been merged, which should not be the case. The

third level of the extended-*i*-*w*-*w*ould be ‘’be imitated for/with’. This shows that two morphemes namely: applicative and passive have been ordered together simultaneously in a single verb *iga*, and each morpheme has its own semantics despite the generalization of meaning which has been operationalized by Swahili writers and the speakers as it has been shown elsewhere in this paper. The other case was extracted from Lothi (2002). In his data, a good picture of miss representation of glossing rule at the free translation level of semantic representations was extracted data in 11 below indicate the scholar’s presentation:

11. *Chukua >chukuliwa* ‘take away’ (Lothi, 2002: 21).

The data in 18 has weakness in respect to glossing rule system, though as it may, our concentration is on the free translation level which has also been miss represented at length. Thus, the meaning given does not represent the ordered morphemes. This can be re-corrected by applying our approach of Leipzig glossing rule approach as it can be shown in data 12.

12. *Chuku-li-w-a*
Take-APPL-PASS-FV
‘Be taken for’.

The data in 12 shows the basic verb *chukua* ‘take’ has been stringed with two morphemes namely: applicative -*li*- and passive -*w*-. The second level also has followed similar number of words represented at the morphological parsing level. This renders us to free translation level in which the meaning reflects the two morphemes presented at the word level. Thus, passive

is represented by *be* while applicative is represented by *fo*r in English semantic level.

4.0 Discussion

The problem of dropping of morphemes' meaning draws attention to this paper. When a morpheme's meaning is hidden, it triggers confusion in linguistics interpretations. This problem of dropping of some morphemes in glossing of verbs is displayed also to other Bantu languages including Citumbuka (Chavula, 2016). Citumbuka is the language spoken in Northern region of Malawi and also in the Lundazi district of Zambia. The data in Citumbuka illustrates semantic negligence in 13 below:

13.a) Timb-an-il-an-a pa
Hit -REC-APPL-REC-field
'Hit each other at the farm''

b) ŵa-ka-phik-isk-il-an-a
2.SM-PST-cook-CAUS-APPL-REC-FV
'They cooked for each other (Chavura, 2016: 208-209).

The data in 13(a) shows that there are three ordered morphemes together namely: reciprocal, applicative and reciprocal. The semantics of the sentence does not reflect the sum of its parts as it is in other lexical words. That is to say, the meaning shows only single reciprocal and applicative while there are two reciprocal bound morphemes of which the semantic glossing would be 'hit for each other on behalf of else body'. Such meaning would show no dropped bound morpheme. In 13b) we observe also three morphemes namely: causative *-isk-*,

applicative -*il*- and reciprocal -*an*-, in the data, morphological parsing at level one and literal translation has no problem, the problem is level three being it a free translation level, here the translation has dropped the causative sense despite its presence. Here, the free translation would be 'the caused to cook for each other', this means that causative, applicative and reciprocal bound morphemes would have shown each one's semantic senses. The same dropping of bound morphemes in the glossing of free translation level is also observed in Shona language, the language spoken in Zimbabwe, we observe double causative morphemes whose meaning is one, the data in 14 below illustrates:

14. Musikana a- donh- es- es- a Tinotendapoto ye-mvura Girl 3SG (I) -fall- CAUS- CAUS- FV Tinotenda pot - POSS- water
'The girl made Tinotenda drops the water pot' (Wechsler, n.d: 22).

The data in 14 indicates that there are also double causative morphemes of the same realization but the semantics of them are not all presented rather than presenting one causative morpheme. A correct free translation would be 'the girl made Tinotenda to cause some body to drop the water pot'. This means that each of the two causative bound morphemes has meaning. Similarly, in Tshiluba language (Cocch, 2008), each of the two causative bound morphemes has a sense, as shown in item in 15:

15. Mukaji u-sumb -ish -ish -a muana mkanda
Woman -1 buy-CAUS-CAUS-FV-boy-book
'The woman makes someone makes the boy buy the book' (Cocch, 2008: 80).

In 15 example, Baker's data shows that each causative bound morpheme has its own sense; to him in Chichewa language has multiple causative suffixes is somewhat hard to process and understand, but with some thought is judged to be grammatical.

We underscore that similar cases of the error occurs in Shepardson, (1986), Kimenyi (1980) and Horton, 1949 to mention just but a few. The occurrence of the error is proof that the available literatures on Swahili verbal extension representation mislead the budding scholars of Kiswahili. Booth (2003) argues that the research problem is motivated not by palpable unhappiness but incomplete knowledge or flawed understanding, thus we can solve by changing the world but by understanding it. It is along this inspiration that this study has revealed the error and demonstrated the fitting semantic representation of the constituents of Kiswahili verbal extensions. The findings of the study also apply to other Bantu languages with a problem of morpheme -by- morpheme representation at free translation level of glossing.

5.0 Conclusion and Recommendations

This paper focused on the dropping of Kiswahili verbal morphemes at the level of free translation during the glossing of Kiswahili extended verbs. The paper exposed misleading fault in the semantic representation of the constituents of the extended verbs in the third level of glossing and proposed an alternative representation of such misrepresented items. The alert given by the present paper will inform scholars of Kiswahili, especially at the Universities and research institutions to attend to this crystallizing error in Kiswahili morphological parsing. The paper sees Kiswahili as becoming a

SADC a global communicative tool, which means that studies on all of its aspects should be standard and scientific.

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