GENEALOGICAL PERSPECTIVE OF THE LULUHYIA DIALECTS' LEXICOSYNTACTIC SIMILARITIES

David Wafula Lwangale[1] (Egerton University),

Dr. Phyllis J. Bartoo[2] (Egerton University)

Prof. James K. Mutiti[3] (Pwani University)

Abstract

The syntactic similarity of given languages may be used as evidence of their genealogical relatedness. This paper focuses on the lexicosyntactic similarities inherent across the Luluhyia dialects as evidence of their common origin. Despite the principle of language universals as advanced by Naom Chomsky leading to universal grammar (UG), not all languages of the world ascribe to the same syntactic structure. The findings of the study presented in this paper show that the Luluhyia dialects have the same syntactic structure as a result of the similarities of their lexical items. Such syntactic similarities across the Luluhyia dialects are an indicator of a once linguistically and anthropologically unified community whose origin was undisputedly one. The Luluhyia dialects use basically the same words only differing in pronunciation, stress placement and vowel length. In most cases, the distinction between the Luluhyia dialects cannot be detected by non-native speakers of the dialects. The variations are mostly suprasegmental in nature. However, the relatedness of the Luluhyia dialects is overtly displayed prompting a genealogical connection.

Key words: genealogical, syntactic, dialect, lexicosyntactic

Background to the Study

The Luhyia community appears to be linguistically united but politically disintegrated. From this paper's own point of view the Luluhyia dialect speakers have no common agenda in the political arena. The Luhyia community is second in population in Kenya but has for many years failed to elect a key political figure as a result of disunity among them evident during every election year. For example, sociologically, the Lulogooli speakers and Lubukusu speakers see themselves as distinct groups from the rest of the dialects. In fact, Luloogoli

speakers claim to be Maragoli people but not part of Luhyia community. The Maragoli are seen as full of pride by other dialect speakers; they prestigiously hold themselves. The Lubukusu speakers suspiciously look at their neighbouring Luwanga speakers. The Bukusu suspicion of the Wanga dates back to the time of Mumia Nabongo, the then Wanga Kingdom king, when he collaborated with the white man and brought in colonization. Furthermore, the king's servants corruptly took away the Bukusu properties in his name. Since then, there is mistrust between the two communities. The Marama, Marachi, Khayo and Samia are closely associated to the Luo people; they can therefore, comfortably politically work with the Nyanza people. The Kabras people look at the Bukusu as sociologically Gishu or Masaba. The Tachoni on the other hand feel to have links with the Sabaot of Mt. Elgon. However, majority of the Nyala, Kabras, Tachoni, Khayo and the Batura people have been assimilated by the Babukusu and speak Lubukusu dialect. Perhaps, the Luluhyia communities can be linguistically united through a study showing that they are genealogically related. This may end up fostering a strong unit penetrating through the political bedrock of disunity evident among the Luhyia communities. Such a move can be achieved through the analysis of the syntactic similarity of the Luluhyia dialects.

Literature Review

Song, (2011) notes that syntactically, "some languages split verbs into an auxiliary and an infinitive or participle, and put the subject and/or object between them. He points out the example of German ("Ich *habe* einen Fuchs im Wald *gesehen*" - *"I have a fox in-the woods seen"), Dutch ("Hans *vermoedde* dat Jan Marie *zag leren zwemmen*" - *"Hans suspected that Jan Marie saw teach swim") and Welsh ("*Mae*'r gwirio sillafu wedi'i *gwblhau*" - *"Is the checking spelling after its to complete"). In this case, linguists base the typology on the non-analytic tenses (those sentences in which the verb is not split) or on the position of the auxiliary. German is thus SVO in main clauses and Welsh is VSO (and preposition phrases would go after the infinitive)".

Many typologists (for example, Bisang (2001), Comrie (1999) and Croft (2002)) classify both German and Dutch as V2 languages, because the verb invariantly occurs as the subsequent or second element of an entire clause.

Other languages display varied freedom in their constituent order which present a problem for their classification within the subject–verb–object schema. The definition of a basic

constituent order type in this case, generally involves looking at frequency of different types in declarative affirmative main clauses in pragmatically neutral contexts, preferably with only old referents. Thus, for instance, Song, (2011) observes that Russian is widely considered an SVO language, as this is the most frequent constituent order under such conditions—all sorts of variations are possible, though, and occur in texts. Furthermore, in many inflected languages, such as Russian, Latin, and Greek, departures from the default word-orders are permissible but usually imply a shift in focus, an emphasis on the final element, or some special context. In the poetry of these languages, the word order may also shift freely to meet metrical demands. Additionally, freedom of word order may vary within the same language—for example, formal, literary, or archaizing varieties may have different, stricter, or more lenient constituent-order structures than an informal spoken variety of the same language. On the other hand, when there is no clear preference under the described conditions, the language is considered to have flexible constituent order.

Additionally, another problem is that in languages without living speech communities, such as Latin, Hellenic Greek, and Old Church Slavonic, linguists have only written evidence, perhaps written in a poetic, formalizing, or archaic style that mischaracterizes the actual daily use of the language. The foregoing review indicates that language classification may be typological based on their syntactic structures. Similarly, the syntactic structure based on lexical items as constituents may be used to genealogically establish the relatedness of languages. This is relevant to what is focused on in this paper, the lexicosyntactic similarity of the Luluhyia dialects as an indicator of their genealogical relatedness.

Intensive studies by Angogo (1983), Kasaya (1992), Wamalwa (1996), Lidonde (1978), Mutonyi (1986), Makila (1978), Muhindi (1981), Ochwaya (1992), Were (1967), Simiyu (2000) and Lwangale (2007) were done concerning Luluhyia dialects but none considered lexicosyntactic similarities. There is mutual intelligibility cutting across the Luluhyia dialects. No research had shown that the intelligibility of Luluhyia dialects is attributed to a common origin or proto-language. Consequently, the existing literature showed that genealogical reconstruction of a proto-language for all Luluhyia dialects had not been done based on lexicosyntactic similarities. It was, therefore, necessary for a study to be undertaken to genealogically establish the lexicosyntactic similarities of the Luluhyia dialects. Such a study as this provides new knowledge in historical linguistics as far as providing causes for linguistic changes in Luluhyia dialects and as far as their variations are concerned and

politically provide a linguistic bond to Luhyia political elusive unity.

Methodology

The study used purposive and sow ball sampling techniques in sampling its respondents. The study targeted elderly people in every Luluhyia sub-nation. Snow balling sampling techniques was helpful in reaching the elderly members of the Luluhyia sub-nations for data. Interview schedules were used in data collection. Tape recording of the interviews conducted was done and this enabled the researchers to have ample time during data analysis. Data analysis was thematically done.

Findings

The study further sought to find out the similarity of the Luluhyia dialects at syntactic level. This was done by subjecting the respondents to specific sentences. The first sentence was that "I am going home". Reponses from some of the Luluhyia dialects are presented in table (a).

Table (a): Luluhyia Dialects Translation for "I am going Home"

Dialects	Translation.
Lubukusu	Khenja engo
Luwanga	Etsia ingo
Lusamia	Nje engo
Lumarachi	Nja mudala
Lunyala B	Nja ingo
Lutachoni	Nachichanga ingo
Lukabras	Natsitsa ingo
Lunyala K	Enja ingo
Lutsotso	Tsitsa ingo
Lukisa	Tsitsa ingo
Lwisukha	Enza ingo
Lunyore	Nzitsa ingo

Source: Field Data (2016)

Table (a) indicates that the Luluhyia dialects have the subject and the verb joined. Hence "I am going" is translated as "khenja" by the Lubukusu speakers. "Tsitsa" used by Lutsotso and Lukisa speakers. The Luwanga speakers use "etsia". The Lusamia and Lumarachi speakers use "nje" and "nja" respectively.

The phrase "I am going" is referred to as "natsitsa" in Lukabras as the Abatachoni say "nachichanga". The Lunyore dialect speakers say "nzitsa". The Lwisukha speakers say "enza". The last word in the sentence "I am going home" was of more interest in the study. The word home is referred to by similar words. The Lubukusu speakers refer to home as "engo". The word "engo" is also used by the Lusamia speakers to refer to home. Similarly, the Luwanga, Lunyala B, Lutachoni, Lukabras, Lunyala K, Lutsotso, Lukisa, Lwisukha and Lunyore refer to home as "ingo". Therefore "ingo" and "engo" must have come from a single word which can be termed proto-word; indicating the genealogical relatedness of the Luluhyia dialects. However, the Lumarachi spakers refer to home as "mudala" which was seemingly borrowed from the Dholuo language word for home "dala".

The Luluhyia dialects' expression's of the clause "mother is sick" is presented in table (b).

Table (b): Luluhyia Dialects' Expression For "Mother is sick"

Dialect	Expression
Lubukusu	Mayi alwala
Lukhayo	Mama alwala
Lumarachi	Mama mulwae
Lunyala B	Mama alwala
Lutachoni	Mayi mulwalae
Lukabras	Mama mulwale
Lunyala K	Mayi mulwae
Lutsotso	Mama mulwale
Lukisa	Mama mulwale
Lwidakho	Mama alwala
Lwisukha	Mama alwala
Lunyore	Mama mulwaye

Source: Field Data (2016)

Data in table (b) indicate that the word "sick" has similar word forms in Luluhyia dialects as expressed in "mother is sick". The Lubukusus speakers refer to "mother is sick" as "mayi alwala". In this expression "alwala" is translated to mean "is sick". Similarly, the word "alwala" is used by Lukhayo, Lunyala B, Lwidakho and Lwisukha dialect speakers to refer to "is sick". The Lukabras speakers refer to "is sick" as "mulwale". The same expression is used by the Lutsotso, Lukisa and the Lutachoni dialect speakers. The term "mulwaye" for "is sick" is used by the Lunyore dialect speakers. The Lunyala K and the Lumarachi dialects speakers refer to "is sick" as "mulwae".

The Luluhyia dialects use basically the same words only differing in pronunciation, stress placement and vowel length. In most cases, the distinction between the Luluhyia dialects cannot be detected by non-native speakers of the dialects. The variations are mostly suprasegmental in nature. However, the relatedness of the Luluhyia dialects is overtly displayed prompting a genealogical connection.

The Luluhyia dialects' expressions of "I ate fish yesterday" are presented in table (c).

Table (c): Luluhyia Dialect Expression For "I ate fish yesterday".

Dialect	Expression
Lubukusu	a) Nalile eng'eni likoloba
	b) Likoloba nalile eng'eni
Luwanga	a) Ndalile eng'eni mungolofe
	b) Mungolofe ndalile eng'eni
Lukhayo	a) Nalile eng'eni ekulo
	b) Ekulo nalile eng'eni
Lusamia	a) Nalile eng'eni ekulo
	b) Ekulo nalile eng'eni
Lunyala B	a) Ndalire eng'eni ekulo
	b) Ekulo ndalire eng'eni

Lutachoni	a)	Ndile eng'eni mungolobe
	b)	Mungolobe ndile neg'eni
Lukabras	a)	Ndile eng'eni mungolobe
	b)	Mungolobe ndile neg'eni
Lunyala K	a)	Naliye eng'eni mungolobe
	b)	Mungolobe naliye eng'eni
Lutsotso	a)	Ndalile enyeni mukoloba
	b)	Mukoloba ndalile enyeni
Lukisa	a)	Ndalile eng'eni mukoloba
	b)	Mukoloba ndalile eng'eni
Lunyore	a)	Naliye esuchi lwabeye
	b)	Lwabeye naliye esuchi

Source: Field Data (2016)

The English sentence; "I ate fish yesterday" consists of subject+verb+object+adverb (SVOA). However, the structure may be changed so that the sentence begins with an adverb as in, "Yesterday, I ate fish". The two structures of the sentence "I ate fish yesterday", are exhibited in the Luluhyia dialects under (a) and (b) parts of table (c). For example, the Lubukusu expression for "I ate fish yesterday" is "Nalile eng'eni likoloba" which can be restructured as "Likoloba nalile eng'eni" for "Yesterday, I ate fish". This is exhibited across the Luluhyia dialects featured in table (c). It is also noticeable that in the Luluhyia dialects, the subject and the verb can be combined into one word as in the Lubukusu "nalile" (I ate), Lukhayo "nalile" (I ate), Luwanga "ndalile" (I ate) and Lunyala K "naliye" (I ate).

From the collected data it is evident that the Luluhyia dialects words for "I ate": "nalile", "ndalile", "naliye", "ndile" and " ndalire" are all derived from a common proto-word. This once again supports the presumption that there existed a proto- language for Luluhyia dialects. The similarity in the expressions for "I ate" across the Luluhyia dialects is an

indication that the dialects are historically related in a genetic sense descending from a common family.

It is also seen that words for fish in the Luluhyia dialects are "eng'eni" and "enyeni" for most of the dialects. For example; Lubukusu, Luwanga, Lumarachi, Lusamia, Lunyala B and Lukisa refer to fish as "eng'eni". The Lukabras and Lutsotso dialect speakers refer to fish as "enyeni". The two words for fish "eng'eni" and "enyeni" are closely related and must have derived from a common ancestor word. This is a further illustration of the genealogical relatedness of the Luluhyia dialects.

Luluhyia dialects' words for yesterday are related as shown in table (c). The Lubukusu dialect speakers call yesterday "likoloba". The Luwanga speakers call yesterday "mungolofe" and the Lutachoni, Lukabras and Lunyala K speakers call it "mungolobe". "Ekulo" is the word for yesterday used by the Lukhayo, Lusamia and Lunyala B speakers. The Lutsotso and Lukisa speakers refer to "yesterday" as "mukoloba" as the Lunyore dialect speakers call it "lwabeye".

Quite related was also the Luluhyia dialects' translation for the English sentence "My cow has horns". Responses to this sentence are presented in table (d).

Table (d): Luluhyia Dialects' Translation for "My cow has horns".

Dialect	Translation
Lubukusu	Ekhafu yange eli ne chinjika
Luwamga	Ing'ombe yanje ili ni tsinzika
Lukhayo	Ing'ombe yange ilikho chinjika
Lusamia	Eng'ombe yanje eli ne njika
Lumarachi	Ing'ombe yanje ali ne tsinzika
Lunyala B	Ing'ombe yanje ili ne chinjika
Lutachoni	Eng'ombe yanje yi nende chinjika
Lukabras	Eng'ombe yanje ili ne tsinzika
Lunyala K	Eng'ombe yanje eli ne njika
Lutsotso	Ing'ombe yanje ibeli ne tsinzika
Lukisa	Eng'ombe yanje ili ne tsinzika
Lwisukha	Eng'ombe yanje abe nende chinzika
Lunyore	Ing'ombe yanje ili nende chinjika.

Source: Field Data (2016)

The above data show that there is a close relationship across the Luluhyia dialects with respect to the translation of the sentence: "My cow has horns". The Luluhyia translation of the sentence "My cow has horns" indicates that the possessive pronoun used with the noun cow is merely the same across the dialects. The possessive pronoun "my" is "yange" for Lubukusu dialects speakers and "yanje" for the rest of the Luluhyia dialects. This is an indication that the original possessive root pronoun must have been "yanje" because it is still used by the majority of the Luluhyia dialects.

Another aspect worth mentioning in the above translations is the Luluhyia dialects' words for "horns". The study found out that the Lubukusu, Lunyala B, Lutachoni and Lunyore dialect speakers refer to "horns" as "chinjika". Similarly the Lusamia and Lunyala K dialects speakers refer to horns as "njika". Furthermore, Luwanga, Lumarachi, Lukabras, Lutsotso and Lukisa dialects speakers refer to horns as "tsinzika". The Lwisukha speakers refer to horns as "chinzika". This is an indication that the Luluhyia dialects' words for horns must have derived from a single ancestor word. Therefore, the likelihood of the Luluhyia dialects' genealogical relatedness is further supported by this finding.

Conclusion

This paper indicates that the Luluhyia dialects are syntactically and lexically related pointing out a possible genealogical relationship. The Luluhyia dialects lexicology and syntax are similar in many ways which are unusually coincidental. The plausible explanation of such similarity is largely genealogical.

References

Anderson, J. M. (1973) *Structural Aspects of Language Change,* Longman. London.

Angogo, R. M. (1983) *Unity in Diversity: A Linguistics Survey of Abaluhya of Western Kenya,* Nairobi, Afro Publishers.

Arnold, G. (1981) *Modern Kenya.* New York: Longman.

Anttila, R. (1989) *Historical and Comparative Linguistics,* Amsterdam, John Benjamins.

Baker, C. & Jones, S.P. (1998). *Encyclopaedia of Bilingualism and Bilingual Education.* England: Clevedon.

Beekes, S.P. (1995) *Comparative Indo-European Linguistics,* Amsterdam, John Benjamins.

Bisang, W. (2001). Aspects of typology and universals. Berlin: Akademie Verlag

Bynon, T. (1977) *Historical Linguistics,* Cambridge University Press.

Charles, J. (1993) *Historical Linguistic: Problem and Perspective,* Longman, UK.

Comrie, B. (1999) *Language Universals and Linguistic Typology: Syntax and Morphology,* Oxford, Basil Blackwell.

Croft, W. (2002). Typology and universals. Cambridge: Cambridge UP. 2nd ed.

Curtin, Petal (1988) *African History,* Longman, London.

Crystal, D. (1987) *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of language,* Cambridge University Press, UK.

Dixon, M. W. (1997) *The Life and Death of Languages,* Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

Giles, H., Bourhis, R.Y & Taylor, D.M. (1977). *Towards a Theory of Language in Ethnic Group Relations.* New York: Academia Press.

Gordon Jr., R.G. (Ed.), 2005. Ethnologue: Languages of the World, 15th ed. SIL International, Dallas, TX. Online version: <http://www.ethnologue.com/>.

Heine, Bernd & Tania Kuteva. 2005. *Language Contact and Grammatical Change.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Hudson, R. A. (1980) *Sociolinguistics,* University of Cambridge Press, U.S.A.

Jully W. R. (1992) *A History of the African People,* East African Educational Publishers, Nairobi, Kenya

Kasaya, Z. S. (1992), *Luloogoli, Wanga and Lubukusu, dialects of Luyia. A study of the major Phonological Processes,* Unpublished MA Thesis University of Nairobi.

Kirsten, M. (1991) *The Linguistic Encyclopedia,* Routedge, London.

Kweya, D. (2011) *Narrative as a Process of Re-negotiating Ethnic Identities among Abanyole of Western Kenya,* Unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Witwatersrand.

Labov, W. (1994) *Principals of Linguistic Change: Internal Factors,* Oxford, Blackwell.

Lidonde, A. M. (1978) *A Generative Phonology of Lwitakho. MA Thesis University of Nairobi.*

Lwangale, D.W. (2007) *Genealogical Reconstruction of Lubukusu, Lumasaba and Lugisu,* Unpublished M.A. Thesis, Egerton University.

Mutonyi, N (1986) A *Morphological study of the affixation of Lubkusu,* *MA Thesis* Kenyatta University.

Makila F. E. (1978) *An outline History of the Babukusu.*: Kenya Literature Bureau, Nairobi.

Mark, D.(2012) *The Indo_European and Historical Linguistics* London, Cambridge

University Press.

Marlo M.R. (2007) *The Verbal Tonology of Lumarachi and Lunyala: Two Dialects of Luhyia,* Unpublished PhD Dissertation, University of Michigan.

Muhindi, D. (1981) *A Phonological Contrastive Study of English and Kimarangoli Dialects and its Implication for the Teaching of English*, MEd. Thesis, University of Nairobi.

Milroy, J. (1992) *Linguistic Variation and Change,* London, Blackwell

Myers-Scotton, C., M. (2002). *Contact Linguistics: Bilingual Encounters and Grammatical Outcomes.* New York. Oxford.

Ochwaya, Y. E. (1992) *The Influence of English on the Phonological Features of Lunyala*, M Phil. Thesis Moi University.

Patton, M.Q (2002) *Qualitative Research & Evaluation Methods,* New York, SAGE Publications

Salzmann, Z. (1993) *Language, Culture, and Society: An Introduction to Linguistic Anthropology*, West view Press, Inc. USA.

Samuels, M.L. (1972) *Linguistic Evolution*, London, Cambridge University Press.

Simiyu H. N (2000) *Dependency Phonology Theory and its Implication in Lubukusu: A Non-Linear Approach*, M Phil. Thesis: Moi University.

Terry, C. (1978) *An Introduction to Historical Linguistics,* Oxford University Press, New Zealand.

Trask, R. L. (2001), *Dictionary of Historical and Comparative Linguistics*, London, Fitzroy Dearborn

Trudgil, P. (1974) *Sociolinguistics: An Introduction to Language and Society*. Penguin Group, London.

Wamalwa, J. M. (1996). *A study of Tone and Length in Lubukusu and Luloogoli Dialects of Luluyia,* Unpublished M.A thesis, Egerton University.

Were, G.S (1967) A *History of the AbaLuhyia of Western Kenya.* East African Publishing House, Unafric, Nairobi.