

Morphology-Pragmatics Interface: The Case of the Tanzanian Commercials in Swahili Newspapers

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Abstract

This work articulates the relationship between the choice of the vocabularies, their morphophonological modifications and the anticipated meanings in the language of commercial advertisements in Tanzanian Swahili newspapers. An eclectic approach that makes use of the *Textual Analysis Approach* and *Lexical Morphology Theory* brings into light important facts. For instance, apart from the use of standard Swahili, there is a good deal of English loan words which either undergo Swahilization morphologically or keep the original forms. Also, the intended meanings are captured by the intended audiences by, among others, the age and level of education of the newspapers' readers. The contribution herein is that there is a link between the designed morphology of the words and the interpretation captured, at least in the language of commercials.

Introduction¹

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The focus of this article is on the articulation of the relationship between the choice of the vocabularies, the morphological modifications of those vocabularies, and the anticipated interpretations in the language of commercial advertisements² in Tanzanian Swahili newspapers. The motivation for this research is two-fold. First, this analysis emanates from the idea that advertisement has reached a new dimension in incorporating and exploiting patterns of message transmission on certain products and services offered to the market (Beasley 1997). Also, advertisement has become the subject of an important multidisciplinary approach, scientific approach and on-going research (*Ibid*). The claimed innovations need to be analyzed. As it will be apparent in the discussion, the analysis of the commercials provided in this article confirms that commercial advertisement is a part of multimedia discourse which is realized not only in its linguistic code but also in other paralinguistic elements present in Swahili discourse.

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The existing literature about the analyses of the commercial advertisements in Tanzania brings us to the second motivation for this work. It is the works by Shartiely (2005), William (2007) and Higgins (2009) which have analyzed the commercial advertisements in the country. However, their researches are distinct from the present survey. Shartiely's data are based on Television Commercials and his focus is on gender, particularly the portrayal of an African woman in the television commercials. William analyzes the commercial advertisement through mobile phone technology and her focus is on the attitudes of the customers towards such a means of communication. Higgins studies the language of advertisements on billboards and in shops and bars scattered in urban and rural Tanzania. The present work, as opposed to the previous works, is a typical linguistic study as it focuses on the interface of the morphology and morphophonological adjustments of the words used in the advertisements and the subsequent pragmatics of such usage. Also, contrary to televisions, mobile phones and billboards which were analyzed in previous works, data in the present work come from commercial advertisements appearing in Swahili newspapers. It will be shown that the morphophonological modifications resemble the nativization of foreign words across Bantu languages but the interpretation of the message is quite varied.

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In order to be focused, this work explores the morphophonological and sociolinguistic aspects of the language of advertisement that capture the intended information and the customers' consciousness towards the given commodity. Since such an endeavour needs some time specification, and as data in Shartiely (2005) and Higgins (2009) last for 2007, then the newspapers scrutinized are those obtained within three years, i.e. they range from the 2008 to 2010 issues. Also, the morphophonological modifications analyzed are the English loan words and Swahili words.

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To achieve such purposes, this work is organized as follows: After the introduction, the survey of the literature on commercials in Tanzania is introduced immediately. The following section presents the data and data collection procedures. The section after that stipulates the theoretical background that guides the analysis of the data and the subsequent conclusions. Then the article proceeds to articulate the linguistic features that are obtained in the Swahili Commercial Advertisements. The findings from the survey of Tanzanians' interpretations of the commercials are provided in the section that follows. The conclusion is drawn at the end of this article.

Commercial Advertisement in Tanzania

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This section reviews the literature on commercial advertisement in Tanzania. We will drive the points home nicely by considering the purposes of communication through advertisement first and then moving to the literature review.

The Purpose of Commercial Advertisement

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In general, any openly sponsored offering of goods, services, or ideas through any medium of public communication is advertisement (Wells, Burnett & Moriarty 1998). Formerly, at its inception, advertising was merely an announcement; but the invention of printing in the world ushered modern advertising. The form of advertising elaborated here began to evolve with the advertising agency, working on a commission basis (*Ibid*). Today advertisements are available in the form of words in graphics modifications, coloured pictures, and the presence of photos (Shartiely 2005). As for commercial advertisements, all these features contribute towards compelling and attracting customers to buy items or use services promoted in the advertisements.

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According to Paul and Oslon (2005), three factors determine the customers' attitudes towards marketing of commodities. The cognitive factor that involves the accumulated knowledge in human minds is acquired in response to environment and stored in human memory folders. These dictate the conscious and unconscious part of the human experiences and encounters upon a given issue; say in our case, the commercial advertisements. The second one involves affections such as emotions, feelings and moods towards the environmental stimuli and events. There is influence of emotion to advertisement. The third factor is the conative which is the behaviour to act in a certain way about something.

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Therefore, with such factors at hand, multiplying the cognition from different domains of human activity along with technical and scientific innovations, the advertisement has become one of the most intense communication codes which are realized in the constant interaction between individuals wherever they are and the world at large (Beasley 1997). The purpose of this article is to demonstrate that the purposeful selection of the various gears employed in commercial advertisements in Swahili newspapers do borrow a good deal of socio-political, socio-economic and politico-economic principles and techniques which are available in the natural and non-natural Tanzanian environment.

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Moreover, we are aware that in order to derive the intentions of the commercial advertisers into the conscience of the customers, they simultaneously employ ethical mental and social mechanisms of communication that capture the cognition of the customers (Beasley 1997). Much of the linguistic ethics and sociolinguistic mechanisms available in Swahili advertisements will be explored in detail in this work.

The Literature Review

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The story of advertisement in Tanzania is available in Shartiel (2005: 110-111). The period before trade liberalization witnessed the use of radio, newspapers and billboards for advertisement. Since 1995 television commercials have taken over a great deal of commercial advertisement in Tanzania (*Ibid*). On his findings, he claims that commercial advertisements on televisions are gender biased and that this kind of bias is societal in the sense that it is constructed by the members of the given society. Also, he involves the analysis of linguistic features like, the use of nouns, possessive pronouns, adjectives, nominalization, and voice that are employed in commercials and he concludes that all the linguistic features have gender implications (*Op.Cit.*: 113-119). For example, he claims that in the television commercials, male characters use words of emphasis and possession whereas females use words of common knowledge. At the end he concludes that male characters use more authoritative language than female characters who use the language that expresses the state of affairs, lack of knowledge and surprise.

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Another researcher, William (2007), investigated the use of mobile phone technology in advertising various commodities in Tanzania. Although such mobile advertisements lack the role of graphics, colours and photos, they are still useful in manipulating the customers' consciousness towards a given commodity (*Ibid*: 60-66). In her study she found that four out of five of her Tanzanian respondents did experience mobile advertisement in Tanzania and this indicates that it is one of the means of commercial advertisement in the country. She claims that more than half of her respondents demonstrated the usefulness of the mobile advertisement and they revealed positive attitudes towards mobile advertisements. Also, she found that mobile advertisements have both cognitive and affective influence on the behavioural intentions towards attitudes on mobile advertisements (*Op.Cit.*: 81-82). From a linguistic stand point, this work has pitfalls as the nature of the language used in these advertisements is not analyzed.

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Higgins (2009: 119-142) presents the nativization of global English words and culture into the East African Swahili language and culture through various ways, namely the newspaper journalism, annual beauty pageants for young women, the hip hop music of the youth, and advertisements. Focusing on the language of the commercial advertisement, i.e. in the domain of product production, she found that the following categories of advertisements exist: (i) monolingual advertisements whereby there are the Swahili-only and English-only adverts and (ii) multilingual advertisements with code-mixing of standard English, standard Swahili and Street Swahili as well as localized English adverts. As opposed to the present study, she claims that the three categories are found on notice boards of shops and mobile phone companies in rural and urban areas in Tanzania.

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From the literature it becomes apparent that the language of commercial advertisement in Swahili newspapers has not received attention. This work strives to uncover the linguistic features, morphophonological and pragmatic, which do exist in these adverts.

The Data for this Work

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In this work several Swahili newspapers were scrutinized and commercial advertisements were analyzed. In total 138 commercial advertisements were collected and analyzed to find out the morphophonological and stylistic features available in these advertisements that lead to pragmatic purposes of the adverts. The results, as presented and discussed in the following sections of this article, are revealing.

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The advertisers differ from country to country. For example, in the United States of America, the groups of the food marketers, marketers of drugs, cosmetics, tobacco, and soaps, the automobiles, electronic appliances, and oil products are the huge advertisers (Beasley 1997). In my observation, and as indicated by data, the appearance of the commercials in the Swahili newspapers vary from company to company (and brand to brand). The summary of the total tokens of appearance of the commodities in the commercials is provided in (1) below.

(1) *Tokens of the appearance of commercials in Swahili newspapers*

Brand	Type of item/service advertised	Tokens in Swahili newspapers
Zain, Tigo, Zantel Vodacom	Mobile phone service providers	45
Mwananchi	Newspapers	21
Ijumaa wikienda		
CRDB ³ , ACB	Banks	12
Coca-Cola	Soft drinks	12
Sayona		
Yamaha, Bajaj ZongSheng	Motorbikes	12
Super Ngwee	Herbal/Locally made medicine	09
Ngetwa		
Twiga	Building materials	09

KLM/Kenya Airway	Air Travel	06
Pona element		
Salama, Dume Mzalendo,	Condoms	06
Mseto		
Oryx gas	Domestic tools	03
TCC	Cigarettes	03
Total		138

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From our data, the real picture captured in (1) above tells the following facts: The leading advertiser is the mobile phone providing companies operating in Tanzania, namely Zain, Tigo, Vodacom, and Zantel. The second leading advertised items include newspapers like *Ijumaa Wikienda*, *Mzalendo*, *Mseto*, and *Mwananchi*. Banks like CRDB and ACB, soft drinks companies like Coca-Cola Tanzania, and automobiles like Bajaj and Yamaha motorbikes make the third leading advertising companies. The other companies include the herbal/locally made medicine that treats various diseases, for example Super Ngwee and Ngetwa and building materials for example Twiga cement. At the end of the list, we have condoms like Salama and Dume and domestic tools like Oryx gas.

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As we hinted above, in Tanzania the main purpose of commercial advertisement is to promote businesses through making the commodities advertised available and known to the public (Shartiely 2005). And usually the intended market is vividly and directly attached to the advertisements (Higgins 2009). Such purposes are obvious in the commercial advertisements in the Swahili newspapers presented in this work. The targets of the commercial advertisements presented here could well be captured in (2) below.

- (2) (a) Commodities for well-to-do families include CRDB bank and Oryx gas providers and Twiga cement
- (b) Commodities for middle-class families include motorbikes, Mzalendo and Mwananchi newspapers, Akiba Commercial bank
- (c) Commodities for low-class families include Ijumaa Wikienda newspapers, Coca-Cola and Sayona drinks

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The commercial advertisements analyzed, as obvious in other commercials (Turner 1973, Shartiely 2005), divide into two. The first one involves the hard sell style which employs the use of straightforward sentences that describe the item or service promoted and then urge the customers to buy the commodity or use such service. In our data, much of the commercial advertisements that promote herbal medicines and newspapers use this method. An example of a hard sell is given in a box below.

(3) An example of ‘Hard Sell Style’ in Swahili newspapers



‘Lit: DINGU EXTRA, The natural tablet HIV/AIDS medicine, it cures completely for six days. People don’t believe but after use they believe. Contacts:’

Source: Nipashe, 24th September 2009

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In the text above, we find that a traditional herbal medicine is promoted using the hard sell style. The use of straightforward sentences that describe the ability of the medicine to cure completely and that after use you will believe indicate that the advertisers urge customers to use it. As common in this style of advertisement, we see that there are neither glamorous words nor pictures involved.

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The second type of commercial advertisements in Swahili newspapers involve the soft sell style which involves the use of mixed language of the glamorous constructions that describe the item or service fascinatingly and straightforward sentences that describe the item or service promoted. However, both language styles urge the customer to buy it. An added feature to soft sell style is the use of photos of beautiful ladies particularly beauty models and famous people (Shartiely 2005: 110), coloured items like cars, and flowers which touch the consciousness of the customers softly and indirectly. In our data, much of the commercial advertisements that promote mobile phone service providers, building materials, and bank services are advertised this way.

Theoretical Approach

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The data in this work are approached from two angles, namely the morphology and pragmatics. As a result, from a distance, it seems that two issues are articulated in this work, namely the morphophonological characteristics of the texts in the commercials in Swahili newspapers and the resulting meanings of the messages communicated to the intended audience. But in reality, their relationship in delivering intended messages is scrutinized. To arrive at a better understanding of the situation, two theoretical orientations underlie the analysis of the data in this work: The *Textual Analysis Approach* and the *Lexical Morphology Theory*.

Textual Analysis Approach

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The language in the texts obtained from the commercial advertisements is approached with the *Textual Analysis Approach* (George & Yule 1983). In this approach, various texts are scrutinized and the features resulting from such texts are explicitly pin-pointed. To deliver the purpose, within discourse analysis, the Textual Analysis Approach provides the best results in regard to the pragmatic nature of the textual arrangement and ordering of the text itself. In the commercial advertisements in the Swahili newspapers, the texts are analyzed in regard to two important stylistic issues presented in (4) below.

(4) *Two Basic Elements Analyzed through the Textual Analysis Approach*

- a) The tenor of discourse, specifically the members of the Tanzanian community such commercials intend to capture. It is argued in this work that texts reveal the classes of teenagers and elderly age groups in both formal and informal settings.
- b) The field of discourse, specifically the brand that the commercials promote plays, according to the data, a significant role in the choice of vocabulary, type of sell (hard or soft), and the language style employed. We should note right away that the data demonstrate that a herbal medicine is advertised differently from a mobile phone network.

Lexical Morphology Theory

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The second theoretical approach makes use of the *Lexical Morphology Theory* as stipulated in Katamba and Stonham (2006). This area of morphology examines the link between morphology and phonology when analyzing the internal structure of the word. The central motivation for this approach is that there is a relationship between the way words are formed and the manner of pronunciation of those words. This tendency pushed phonologists and morphologists in the seventies and eighties to establish that the morphology part of the grammar of the natural language is organized in a series of hierarchical strata (Katamba & Stonham 2006: 89). As for the lexical morphology theory, we need to describe an entire morphological system through arbitrarily-ordered positions which are expected since we typically expect morphology to be layered – that is, what is considered normal is for affixes to attach to stems of words which, in turn, form stems of words that new affixes can attach to. The ordering relations among morphemes found in the complex and structured morphological systems described for natural languages do conform to the predictions of the lexical morphology theory (*Ibid*).

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The concern of this work from lexical morphology theory is on both the lexical and post-lexical rules. The concerns of the theory could be captured in the observations summarized in (5) below.

(5) *Issues from lexical morphology theory*

- a) As for lexical rules, we observe the morphophonological modification of the borrowed words used in commercials, like **wiki** ‘week’ and **sementi** ‘cement’ and the way they capture the intended audience.
- b) As for post lexical rules, we employ the principles governing the morphology of words across word-boundaries. We will see in this work that words are modified morphophonologically at both lexical and post-lexical levels and the resulting entities carry some pragmatic functions rather than morphological requirements, as in **babkubwa** ‘great thing’.

The Analysis Itself

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This section provides the analysis of the commercial advertisements in Swahili newspapers. Two analyses are provided: One, the analysis of the linguistic features in Swahili commercial advertisements and the intended message and two, the analysis of the structure of the words used and the subsequent pragmatics.

The Linguistic Features in Swahili Commercial Advertisements

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In this section we discuss, apart from other features, the issues of code-switching and code-mixing. To set the discussion into the proper track, we define code-switching as the alternating of two or more languages in the same conversation, usually within the same conversational turn, or within the same sentence or within the same sentence of the turn as it is common in speakers from bilingual and multilingual societies (Myers-Scotton 1993; Kamwangamalu 2000). In our case, we take the switching between English and Swahili across sentences found in the Swahili newspapers as the benchmark for code switching.

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On the other hand, code mixing is the deliberate mixing of various linguistic units such as affixes, words, phrases and clauses from two (or more) languages within the same sentence, in the course of a single utterance, without an associated change in topic (Myers-Scotton 1993; Kamwangamalu 2000). Herein we capture the mixing of the morphemes and particles of English and/or Swahili within sentences found in the Swahili newspapers as another benchmark for the analysis of code mixing.

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The first feature that the commercial advertisements show is the usage of the standard Swahili. Such standard Swahili is available across the commercials in Swahili newspapers which divide into two, those newspapers which use glamorous ways to deliver a message, like Ijumaa Wikienda and Uwazi newspapers, and the hard news newspapers, like Uhuru, Majira and Mwananchi newspapers. Perhaps a few texts in (6) below will suffice to illustrate the point that the commercials use standard Swahili.

- (6) *Lulu Herbal Company*
Bidhaa zetu zinatengenezwa kwa mimea na matunda
'Our products are manufactured out of plants and fruits'

Kalulumula Herbal Medicine

Ni dawa pekee iliyojipatia umaarufu nchi za nje kwa kufanya kazi tatu kwa wakati mmoja.
'It is the only medicine which became famous outside the country because it has three functions at a time'

Twiga Cement

Najua msaada wao ni imara kama sementi yao
'I know their help is firm like their cement'

Twiga Cement

Imetengenezwa kwa hali ya juu pamoja na kuzingatia viwango vya kitaifa na kimataifa
'It is manufactured by high standards in accordance to national and international standards'

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Some features of the example sentences in (6) above could be listed here. One, the sentences used in the commercials are independent and complete sentences with both subject and predicates. Two, the Subject-Verb-Object (SVO) pattern which is the typical pattern in Bantu languages (Bearth 2003) is observed in these sentences. For instance, the first sentence in (6) above has SVA pattern while the second one follows the SVC pattern. Also, the choice of vocabulary shows the use of formal lexical items that could be used in standard Swahili.

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However, the story of the use of standard Swahili is reversed in the same commercial advertisements. This is well illustrated by the texts in (7) below.

- (7) *Tigo Mobile Phone Service Provider*
Tigo, mtandao bora popote ulipo
'Tigo, the best network wherever you are'

Akiba Commercial Bank

Mtoa huduma za kibenki aliyeidhinishwa
'The bank service provider who is authorized'

CRDB Bank

ATM karibu kabisa na unapoishi
'ATM which is very close to where you live' [Majira, 14th January 2010]

STA Travel Agency

Ofa kambambe kutoka Sta travel

‘The best offer from Sta Travel’

[Majira, 28th October 2008]

Cigarette Company

TCC, rasilimali ya Tanzania tangu 1961

TCC, the Tanzanian resource since 1961

[Mwanaspoti, 22-25 May 2008]

<31>

The texts in (7) show the use of incomplete sentences and/or phrases and dependent clauses in commercial advertisements in Swahili newspapers. For example, all the texts reveal the noun phrases that have no verbal part and clause like in a noun phrase.

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Another apparent feature in these commercial advertisements is the use of code-mixing between Swahili and English words. In a country like Tanzania where English and Swahili enjoy the prestigious positions in education, courts, and bureaucracy (Batibo 1995, 2005), the presence of the two languages in the commercials becomes inevitable. Perhaps texts in (8) will suffice to illustrate this point.

(8) *Tanzania Cigarette company*

Kampuni ya sigara Tanzania

Tanzania Cigarette Company

[Mwanaspoti,
22-25 May 2008]

Vodacom Mobile Phone service Provider

Cheka Time

‘Laughing time’

Tigo Mobile Phone service Provider

Droo ya wiki 10,000,000/- kuzawadiwa kwa washindi 10

Droo kubwa 20,000,000/- kuzawadiwa mshindi 1

‘A weekly draw, 10 winners will be awarded 10,000,000/-

A big draw, 1 winner will be awarded 20,000,000/-’

[Mwanaspoti,
13-16 May 2008]

<33>

In the first example code-switching is used because the first construction is typically English and the second one is completely Swahili. The second example is code-mixing because in the same phrase we have one Swahili and one English word. The last text contains modified English words used in Swahili adverts.

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The use of the glamorous words that fit well for the Tanzanian youth is common in the commercial advertisements in Swahili newspapers. The common glamorous words used in the five mobile phone service providers, namely Zain, Tigo, Vodacom and Zantel are captured in (9) below. These words appear in example texts in (10).

(9)	Jiachie	‘enjoy’	Zain
	Cheka	‘laugh’	Vodacom
	Jirushe	‘jump up’	Vodacom
	Chizika	‘become crazy/mad’	Zantel
	Mzuka	‘ghost’	Zantel
	Nipe Nikupe	‘give me I will give you’	Zantel
	Dezo Dezo	‘freely’	Zantel

- (10) **Dezo Dezo ni muda wa maongezi wa bure**
‘Dezo dezo is a free air time’ [Mwanaspoti, 17-20 June 2008]]

Jiachie! SMS mpaka basi
‘Enjoy, free SMS’ [Spoti Starehe, 25-27 September 2008]

Pata mshiko ukipokea simu
‘Get money when you take a call’ [Mwanaspoti, 16-19 September 2008]]

<35>

Moreover, in many commercial advertisements in Swahili newspapers, the use of the English syntax is apparent. We should better use one example. Analyzing the syntax of the Swahili noun phrase, we found that the common order of the elements is Noun>Determiner>Modifier whereby possessives and demonstratives are the determiners while numerals, adjectives and adverbs form the modifier category (Lusekelo 2009b). But there are several texts that observe the typical English word order, i.e. Determiner<Modifier<Noun (Quick *et. al.* 1985) in the commercial advertisements in Swahili newspapers. For example, the text in (11) below makes use of the order Modifier<Noun, i.e. Adj.<Noun. Also, we have another example in (12) which uses the English word order of Num<Noun.

- (11) **Tumia familia condom**
V Adj N
‘Use family condom’

- (12) **1Ltr > Lita 1** [Nipashe, 26th November 2009]

<36>

Furthermore, the use of the pointing sentences whose subject is purposefully ellipted in order to capture every new customer is attested in the language of the commercials. Such sentences involve the selection of victorious verbal constructions as exemplified by the choice of the verb **shinda** ‘win’ in constructions from Swahili commercial advertisements as in (13) below.

- (13) **Jishindie TV, Simu ya Noki** ‘Win yourself a TV, Nokia Mobile phone’
Jishindie Kompyuta 20! ‘Win yourself 20 computers’
Ongea na ujishindie rewardz ‘Talk and win yourself rewards’
Shinda gari, muda umefika, nunua ‘Win a car, time is read, buy...’

<37>

In the commercials, the choice of Swahili adjectives of quality is common. Following Dixon (1982: 16-26, 34-37), in Bantu languages there are a few tokens of adjectives in Swahili which show semantic features: Dimension like **refu** ‘tall’ and **kubwa** ‘big’, physical property e.g. **bichi** ‘raw’ and **kavu** ‘dry’, colours like **nyeupe** ‘white’ and **nyeusi** ‘black’, value e.g. **zuri** ‘good’ and **baya** ‘bad’, age e.g. **zee** ‘old’ and speed **haraka** ‘quick’. In the commercial advertisements, the frequent use of the adjectives of value is common, as represented in (14) below.

- (14) **Tigo mtandao bora popote ulipo**
‘Tigo is a good network wherever you are’

kahawa bora toka 1963
‘The best coffee since 1963’

Zain ni babkuwa
‘Zain is very good’

<38>

Also, the use of possessive pronouns is common. Such pronouns show the possession of businesses by the customers (15).

- (15) **ACB, benki yako**
ACB, your bank

<39>

Some texts from commercials make use of figurative expressions

- (16) *Mwanahalisi newspaper* [Mwanahalisi, 6-12 January 2010]
Usikose gazeti dogo lenye mdomo mrefu
‘You should not miss a small gazette with a long mouth’

<40>

So far, we have seen that the language of commercials in Swahili newspapers is characterized of code-switching and code-mixing, the use of glamorous words, and the use of the English syntax. In what follows we present the morph-phonological modifications which capture pragmatics in the commercials.

The Morphological Approach to Commercial Advertisements The Modification of Morphology of English Words

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The morphophonological modification analyzed in this work involves the segmental adjustments that affect the segmental patterns together with the syllable structure of the English borrowed words and the original Swahili words. Basically Bantu languages have the syllable structure V, N, CV, CVC, CV(V), and VCV (Hyman 2003: 44). Following Mwitwa (2009), there are basically five syllable structures in Swahili, as in (17).

- | | | | | |
|------|---------|----------------|-----------|----------|
| (17) | V.V | oa | [o-a] | ‘marry’ |
| | CV.VC | kiti | [ki-ti] | ‘chair’ |
| | N.CV | nne | [n-ne] | ‘four’ |
| | CCV.CV | mwezi | [mwe-zi] | ‘month’ |
| | CV.CCCV | chungwa | [cu-ŋgwa] | ‘orange’ |

<42>

As for the adaptation of the Arabic loanwords into Swahili word structures, Mwita (*Ibid.*) presents the following repair mechanisms (18).

(18) <i>Repair process</i>	<i>Arabic word</i>	<i>Swahili word</i>	<i>English</i>
Vowel epenthesis	ahd	a.ha.di	promise
Consonant deletion	amm	a.mu	uncle
Cluster tolerance	unwan	a.nwa.ni	address
Feature change	waqt	wa.ka.ti	time

<43>

The analysis of the modification and nativization of the English words into Tanzanian Swahili appears in Higgins (2009). However, as stated above, her study focused on hip hop language and billboard advertisements. On hip hop, for instance, she claims that in Tanzania, three words are apparent in *Bongo Fleva* (Tanzanian Rap/Hip Hop Music): *sista* 'respected sister, nun', *sista du* 'hottie, beautiful town girl' [the meaning/etymology of *du* is unclear] and *(ma)demu* 'dame(s)'. She claims that the shapes of the words and the meanings have been slightly changed to fit local needs. However, I argue that such nativization is quite immature as it could hardly be equated to the situation in West African English (Lusekelo 2009a). The usage of the terms in East Africa is limited to the youth while in West Africa the localized terms are pervasive across age and social status.

<44>

The commercial advertisements show borrowing from English into Swahili. There is a good deal of the loan words which are modified into Swahili morphology and had been nativized (19).

(19)	redio	'radio'
	benki	'bank'
	sementi	'cement'

<45>

In Swahili newspapers, there are commercial advertisements that make use of the newly modified English words. The second group of words reflects the English words whose morphological changes get adopted to suit Swahili syllable structures. Perhaps we should illustrate this point with words in (20) below.

(20) <i>Swahili words in commercials</i>	<i>Syllable structure</i>	<i>English source words</i>
figa	CV.CV	'figure'
ofa	V.CV	'offer'
kuponi	CV.CV.CV	'coupon'
trei	CCV.V	'tray'
kreti	CCV.CV	crate
championi	CV.CCGV.CV	champion
droo	CCV.V	'draw'
wiki	CV.CV	week
sementi	CV.CV.CCV	cement
nambari	CV.CCV.CV	'number'

<46>

Perhaps one example text will suffice to indicate the use of these words in the commercial advertisements in Tanzania.

(21) *Coca-Cola soft drinks*

Burudika... kasha rudisha chupa na kreti tupu

‘Enjoy... then return empty bottles and empty crates’ [Nipashe, 26th November 2009]

Oryx gas

Ofa hii itaendelea hadi Feb 28 2010

‘This offer will continue until 28th February 2010’ [Nipashe, 28th January 2010]

<47>

In these words we find that the syllable structures in (17) above are obtained. However, the word **championi** brings issues that need special attention. In orthographic representation, the word is represented as such but in pronunciation it reads as (22) below.

(22) **championi** [ca.mpyo.ni]

The adjacency of [i] and [o] compels the gliding of the vowel [i] to the glide [y] in speech. This means the syllable **-mpyo-** has three consonants on its onset and only one vowel on its coda.

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The syllabic and phonological modifications of the English borrowed words to suit the Bantu words and syllabic structures are also attested in the Tanzanian Bantu language Ndali where English words, like **supuni** ‘spoon’ and **isukulu** ‘school’ have undergone syllabic and phonetic adjustments to suit the Ndali patterns (Swilla 2000: 299-301).

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Some words used in the commercial advertisements demonstrate Bantu nominal patterns. For example, in (23) below we find that the plural noun class prefix **ma-** is attached to the loan word ‘sink’.

(23) **ma-sinki** ‘sinks’

<50>

Also, the borrowed words in (24) below demonstrate all the characteristic features of the compounded nouns. However, they are modified to suit Swahili patterns.

(24) **wikiendi** ‘week end’
wikienda ‘week end’
mwanaspoti ‘sportsman’
spotistarehe ‘sports enjoyment’

<51>

Nonetheless, some words still have English forms which receive segmental or syllabic adjustments (25).

(25)	rewardz	‘rewards’
	gerentii	‘guarantee’
	xtreme	‘extreme’
	x-tra	‘extra’

The sounds [z], [i:] and the syllable [Iks] have been adjusted to fit the language of the teenagers in Tanzania. The words **xtreme** and **x-tra** have been succinctly discussed in Higgins (2009). Briefly, even in my data, the respondents provide answers which point to the same answers discussed in Higgins. This confirms that Swahili speakers understand easily the meanings associated with the morphologically modified English words which are used in the commercial advertisements in Swahili newspapers.

<52>

Some English words are used as in (26).

(26)	Gindu extra
	Pona element
	Super Ng’wee
	cheka time
	Tembo card
	Flavoured Juice
	salamu za send off na birthday

<53>

Some abbreviations are used as in English. These words are used in Swahili even though they are English in reality (27). To illustrate this point, an example of the text is provided in (28).

(27)	ATM	Automatic cash withdrawal machine
	SMS	short messages

(28) *Zantel Mobile Phone Service provider*

Ongea kwa Tsh 1 kwa sekunde na ujipatie SMS za bure

‘Talk by Tsh 1 for a second and you will get free SMS’

[Mwananchi,
2nd Nov 2009]

<54>

In the domain of advertisement, Higgins (2009) found that words of English origin are used in East Africa with slightly modified spellings and meanings which show the shift from global English to localized English. Words like **za** > ‘the’, **fasta fasta** > ‘fast’ and **chapchap** ‘quickly’ are used locally and interpreted locally (*Ibid.*). The word **chap chap** is used even in commercials in newspapers. However, I argue that the word *chapchap* remains problematic since the etymology is not clear but it is noteworthy that the use of the word is apparently not restricted to East Africa and the word has many alike features with other onomatopoeic words in phonology, morphology and meaning and this suggests one source, i.e. onomatopoeic and not of English origin (Lusekelo 2009a).

<55>

On the repairing mechanisms, for the orthography, Swahili does not permit some sequences of the spelling and this compels orthographic adjustments. Also, the co-occurrence of some segments is disallowed. As a result the following mechanisms are employed.

(29) *The Loanwords Repairing Mechanisms*

Orthographic changes	figa	figure
	ofa	offer
Vowel deletion	kuponi	coupon
Consonant tolerance	trei	tray
	kreti	crate
	doo	draw
Vowel insertion (final)	wiki	week
	sementi	cement
	nambari	number
Gliding	champyoni	champion

<56>

To sum up, we have seen the English words used in the Swahili commercials found in Swahili newspapers. These loan words undergo morphological and phonological changes to suit the Swahili structures. Also, their forms are changed in order to suit the demands of sending the message to customers, which is the purpose of advertisement. Now we will have a close observation of the Swahili words used in the commercials.

The Modification of Morphology of Swahili Words

<57>

One of the intentions of this work is on the analysis of the link between morphological changes and the resulting meanings. Our data show that the morphology of some of the Swahili words used in the commercial advertisements involves post-lexical rules and the morphophonological operations therein. Katamba and Stonham (2006: 106-109) claim that post-lexical rules involve morphophonological modifications in the syntax of a language that occur across word-boundaries in the constructions and such changes are automatic as they involve spoken texts.

<58>

Data from commercial advertisements in Swahili newspapers demonstrate such post-lexical rules. Perhaps the text with the word **babkubwa** will suffice to illustrate this point.

(30) **babkubwa** ‘great thing’ [Mwananchi, 25th May 2008]

In (30) above we find that two lexical entries, **babu** ‘old’ and **kubwa** ‘big’ do co-occur. In the Swahili morphology, we cannot get a single lexical entity with the combination ***babukubwa**. However, the two lexical entities can occur in combination in some Street Swahili to represent a very huge achievement. The selection, therefore, of the co-

occurrence of the two entities is pragmatically driven, i.e. as from the commercial advertisement, to pinpoint that using Zain mobile phone services equals joining the world of very influential, prosperous and modern members of the world.

<59>

Also, we learn a morphophonological rule from (30) above. The tradition is that scrutinizing the morphology of Swahili, as applies in other Bantu languages (Nurse and Philippson 2003), indicates that the nominal words like nouns and adjectives in the language end in the closed syllables, i.e. syllables with vowel finals. In **babkubwa** above we find that this lexical principal is violated in post-lexical rules. This seems possible because the four syllable entity seems to be reduced into three syllables in spoken discourse, as shown in (31) below.

(31) **ba-bu ku-bwa** > **bab-ku-bwa**

In analyzing the expression **babkubwa** above, we find that the first syllable would have the shape **bab-**. But Swahili does not permit syllables ending in codas with consonants, therefore, the plausible analysis and conclusion is that we still keep the four syllable entity even though we automatically articulate the second syllable without a vowel.

The Survey on the Adverts in Swahili Newspapers

<60>

The textual analysis approach and morphophonological interpretation of the data was possible at the working desk but for the interpretations of the language of commercials, the discussions with the readers of the Swahili newspapers became inevitable. Their attitudes, emotions, feelings and understanding of the texts need to be expressed by themselves. To arrive at the conclusion, the survey was conducted. Therefore, the purpose of this survey is to get the insights of the readers of the Swahili newspapers on the language of advertisement and the subsequent interpretations of the constructions therein.

<61>

The kind of research provided in this work is an expanded replica of the survey conducted by Higgins (2009: 137-144). However, apart from interviews with residents of Dar es Salaam city and Iringa town in Higgins, the present survey expanded the spectrum as it employed mobile phone interviews to mobile phone users scattered throughout the country. In total, I contacted 25 mobile phone users, one from Dodoma town, three from Tukuyu in Mbeya region, six from Lushoto in Tanga region, and fifteen in Dar es Salaam. Secondly, face-to-face interviews with rural dwellers in Rungwe and Lushoto districts were conducted, and six interviewees were approached. Small focus group discussions in Lushoto and Dar es Salaam were held. All these in fact, helped to capture interpretations and ideas from both rural and urban Tanzanians. Thirdly, the commercial expressions have been increased in number to include glamorous Swahili expressions, typical English loan words, as well as figurative expressions. Fourthly, in contrast to Higgins' work, the sample⁴ in this study divides into groups discussed in the following paragraphs. Although it is a purposeful sample in the lines of Kothari (1985), I would argue basing on these facts, therefore, that this sample is more representative and the findings in this work are more revealing.

<62>

In the survey, three groups of respondents were approached through small group discussions and informal but guided interviews. Specifically, the groups are realized by their levels of education, as in (32) below. The rationale for such groupings is that the sources of data are Swahili newspapers and the respondents' education determines the capacity to read the newspapers. The ages of the respondents divide into the youth aged between 18 and 25, middle aged people whose ages ranged from 26 to 45, and then the elderly whose age is 46 and above.

(32)	Highly educated group [Bachelor degree and above]	18
	Middle class education [Form Four to Diploma level]	08
	Less educated respondents [Primary education]	04
	Total Respondents	30

<63>

A sample of selected segments of the commercial advertisements was presented to respondents for discussion and the findings are revealing. The summary is captured in (33) below.

(33) *Responses from Discussants and Interviewees*⁵

Text	Meanings/ Interpretations	No. of Respondent
Pata mshiko ukipokea simu	get addition air time	4
Cheka Time!	reduced cost then more air time	8
Jiachie! SMS mpaka basi	reduced cost then more air time	6
	continue sending messages	2
Jirushe!	reduced cost then more air time	8
Dezo Dezo na Zantel	reduced cost then more air time	2
	glamorous ways of writing	2
	truth/transparence	2
	habari nyingi sana 'more information'	2
Chizika na Zantel	reduced cost then more air time	4
Ofa hii itaendelea hadi Feb 28, 2010	kama zawadi 'like a gift'	2
	short time free service	2
	reduced cost	2
	promotion	2
Sasa kidole gumba kinaongea	cheap message	4
	normal use of fingers	2

<64>

The first data collection technique employed in the survey was through a blank mobile phone message. This means the technique of sending a mobile phone message full of the commercial expressions and requested respondents to assign, at the first glance, meanings to the expressions. The findings of this part of the survey are revealing. I would better present the fact that through telephone interviews, even respondents who claim that they are unaware of the meanings of the expressions in (33) above give one response which

points to the fact that all these are associated with the promotion of the commodities and services. For example, three highly educated and two middle educated respondents said explicitly that these expressions were associated with the promotions by the mobile phone service providers, particularly Tigo, Vodacom and Zain. Nonetheless, two highly educated and two middle educated respondents said they did not understand the requirements of the question in the message. With this technique, respondents were not required to re-reply hence there was no need to re-explain their enquiring messages.

<65>

In the face-to-face interviews, respondents provided answers given in the column of meanings/interpretations in (33) above. Despite age and education differences, respondents claimed equally that the mobile phone oriented expressions like **cheka time**, **jiachie**, **jirushe** and **mshiko** were associated with the reduced costs of the mobile phone services as well as provision of additional air-time as provided by the companies, namely Vodacom, Tigo and Zain in Tanzania. This response tallies with the response obtained through mobile phone messages. Since the replies tally, then this points towards the fact that the interpretations of the messages presented through the modified words in commercials are possible and the readers of the newspapers are capable of understanding the glamorous words easily.

<66>

Three figurative sentences were provided to face-to-face interviewees (34). The responses were revealing in that the meanings were well interpreted.

- (34) (a) **Pata mshiko ukipokea simu**
(b) **Sasa kidole gumba kinaongea**
(c) **Usikose gazeti lako lenye mdomo mpana**

For (34a), four respondents, three highly educated and two less educated claimed that the sentence means ‘get additional air time’. Secondly, for (34b) three highly educated people claimed it means ‘the cheap message’ and two less educated people claimed that it means ‘cheap messages’. One highly educated person said this is ‘a common use of fingers’. Lastly, (34c) received two highly educated people saying it is for ‘the glamorous ways of writing’, two less educated people claimed it is for the ‘truth and transparenance available in such kind of newspapers’, and two highly educated people claimed that it involves ‘a good deal of news’.

<67>

The findings obtained in mobile sources as well as face-to-face interviews collate with the discussion obtained in the small focus group discussions. The discussants are aware of the meanings associated with both English words and modified Swahili words. Their interpretations, however, depend highly on the usage of the commodities and services advertised. It means since they use the promoted items and services, then the advertisements are easily interpreted.

<68>

Therefore, we would argue that the choice of vocabularies and the modification of the morphology of the vocabularies have a close link to the intention of the commercials, i.e. deliver advertisements to the public. We also find that the public is aware of these intentions.

Summary and Conclusion

<69>

The focus of this work was on the articulation of the interface of the morphophonology and pragmatics attested in commercials in Swahili newspapers. In this article, we observed that the appearance of the commercials in the Swahili newspapers vary from company to company (and brand to brand). The leading advertisers are the mobile phone companies operating in Tanzania, the second leading advertised items include herbal/locally made medicine that treats various diseases, and the third leading advertised commodities include automobiles and motorbikes as well as condoms. Two phases of the borrowed words are demonstrated by the language of commercial advertisement in Swahili newspapers. The first one is that some English words are totally nativized into Swahili culture and language of advertisement, e.g. **wiki** 'week', **ofa** 'offer' and **wikiendi** 'week end'. There are words which still maintain the English word structures, **cheka time** 'laughing time'. As for the survey, we found that despite the age and education differences, the readers of Swahili newspapers easily interpret the selected vocabularies and constructions in the commercials.

<70>

The conclusion here is that the choice of vocabularies in commercials is glamorous enough to capture the consciousness of the customers and then attract more consumption of the commodities and services promoted. This is further strengthened by the morpho-phonological modifications that the English and Swahili words receive in order to capture the market.

Sources of Data

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Mwananchi newspaper, Mwananchi Communications Ltd, Dar es Salaam

Mwanahalisi newspaper, Mwanahalisi Printech Company Ltd.

Mwanaspoti newspaper, Mwananchi Communications Ltd, Dar es Salaam.

Nipashe newspaper, The Guradian Limited, Dar es Salaam

Uhuru newspaper, Tanzania Printers Limited, Dar es Salaam

Uwazi newspaper, Global Publishers Limited, Dar es Salaam

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¹ Thanks are due to my discussants for raising insightful comments which helped to shape this article. Also, I thank the reviewer of the *Afrikanistik Online* journal for constructive comments. Nonetheless, I personally shoulder the remaining shortfalls.

² The analysis of the language of commercial advertisement started in 2008 when I was preparing two works on Swahili using data from newspapers: *The Structure of the Swahili Noun Phrase and Expression of Motion Events in Swahili*. Another motivation for writing this work came from the discussions with my university students during the running of the *Stylistics* course at Sebastian Kolowa University College of Tumaini University. I am grateful to my students for insightful comments and hot discussions.

³ CRDB is an abbreviation for Cooperative and Rural Development Bank which formerly, particularly before trade liberalization from 1995, was geared to cater for the financial aids and services to cooperative unions and rural oriented projects scattered throughout Tanzania during Socialism era. After trade liberalization, the cooperative union collapsed in the country and the bank was transformed to cater for commercial financial services. Today the name CRDB is kept but it provides micro- and macro-financial services in the country.

ACB stands for Akiba Commercial Bank, a privately owned bank in Tanzania.

⁴ Several interviewees, respondents and discussants were involved in this work. These include my colleagues in the office, my students, residents of Dar es Salaam, Dodoma, Tukuyu in Mbeya region and Lushoto in Tanga region. I am grateful for their airtime, time and insightful comments.

⁵ During the survey, my respondents produced answers provided in. Some of the constructions were ungrammatical while others answered in Swahili. We provide the English glosses for the Swahili responses. Some of the responses are presented as they are. For example, we got 'addition', but we would suggest 'additional' here.