

References

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J.J. Viljoen and T.K. Kamupingene. *Otjiherero woordeboek dictionary embo romambo*, 1983, xix + 197 pp. ISBN 0 86848 195 5. Windhoek: Gamsberg Publishers. Price R18,00 + VAT.

"The difference between a glossary and a dictionary is that a glossary is a mere wordlist with renderings in a target language, while a dictionary provides more information than just the renderings, viz. morphological, syntactic and phonological information, next to examples of syntactic and idiomatic / figurative usage, or possibly even etymological and cultural information." (Haacke, forthcoming)

According to this distinction, the first Otjiherero glossary was published by H. Hahn in 1849. The additional specialized glossaries that should be mentioned here are the *Herero-Taalkunde. Terminologielys* (1976) and *Herero-Rekenkunde. Terminologielys*.

As far as dictionaries are concerned, the only dictionaries available in Otjiherero are the *English-Herero Dictionary* (1883) by F.W. Kolbe, the *Herero-German dictionary (Wörterbuch und kurzgefasste Grammatik des Otjiherero)*, 1886) by H. Brincker and a *German-Herero dictionary (Deutsch-Herero Wörterbuch)*, 1917) by J. Irle.

In addition to the above mentioned older dictionaries, Rev. and Mrs R. Gestwicki in the seventies compiled a short bilingual glossary (English-Herero)

and J.J. Viljoen and T.K. Kamupingene compiled a short trilingual modern dictionary. This is the dictionary in focus for review.

As is evident from the preceding paragraphs, most of the above mentioned dictionaries have been compiled by missionaries. These dictionaries have drawbacks. Most of them are inaccessible to the Herero speakers, mainly because in most cases German serves as the target language. Most Herero do not have a working knowledge of German. Secondly, most of these dictionaries are written in different orthographies that are outdated. A further drawback is the fact that these dictionaries are out of print.

These drawbacks show that there is a need for a modern comprehensive dictionary.

Under these circumstances we should be satisfied with the *Otjiherero Dictionary* by J.J. Viljoen and T.K. Kamupingene (1983).

This dictionary consists of five sections, viz. (a) a guide to pronunciation, (b) short guidelines on grammar and how to use the dictionary, (c) an Otjiherero-Afrikaans-English Dictionary, (d) an Afrikaans-Otjiherero Dictionary, and (e) an English-Otjiherero Dictionary.

(a) Pronunciation

The section on pronunciation is meant to serve non-Herero speakers to master the sounds of Otjiherero by providing English and Afrikaans equivalents.

(b) Short linguistic explanations and guidelines how to use the dictionary

This section gives a concise introduction to the parts of speech with paradigms of class prefixes and their concords. It furthermore serves as a guideline how to use the dictionary.

This section is repeated in each of the three respective languages, jointly comprising some eighteen pages.

(c) Otjiherero-Afrikaans-English Dictionary

In this trilingual section of approximately 3440 entries, the catchwords are in Otjiherero while their renderings are in Afrikaans followed by their equivalent in English.

(d) Afrikaans-Otjiherero Dictionary

In this bilingual section of 56 pages, we find approximately 3530 Afrikaans catchwords followed by their Otjiherero equivalent.

(e) English-Otjiherero Dictionary

In this last bilingual section of approximately similar entries and length (56 pages), there are English catchwords with their Otjiherero equivalent.

According to the above criteria, the Afrikaans-Otjiherero and English-Otjiherero sections in particular are glossaries rather than dictionaries, as they provide no supportive information in addition to the renderings.

This dictionary has the following advantages:

- It includes modernisms (modern terms).
- The standard orthography is used throughout.
- The plural forms of nouns are provided.

This dictionary is a good attempt, but it is not free from shortcomings concomitant with trilingualism; catering for different target users; or alphabetical arrangement of catchwords irrespective of derivation etc.

A trilingual dictionary is difficult to compile because concentration gets lost among the three languages. Sometimes the cross-references among the languages are not explicit, for instance *oNDUWOMBE* = *os* (Afr.) / *ox* (Eng.). This catchword is further contextualised as *OZONDUWOMBE ZETEMBA* = *trekrosse* (Afr.) / *draught oxen* (Eng.). In the Afrikaans and English sections, *trekrosse* and *draught oxen* would be better equated with both *ozonane* and *ozoNDUWOMBE ZETEMBA* in Otjiherero, because these oxen are not only used for pulling carriages or carts. They are also used for sledges, ploughing etc.

The alphabetical arrangement of catchwords in this dictionary is done according to the first letter of the root or stem of the catchword, as the case may be. This leads to a situation that when insertions such as the negation marker *-ha-* appear between the nominal class prefix and the stem, the catchword is listed under this insertion, e.g. *omuHATJIWA* "ignorant person" occurs under *H* instead of under *T*, where the other derivations of the root *-tjiw-* or *-tjiv-* would occur.

By alphabetizing according to the full stem, the dictionary partially loses the advantage of having all derivations of one root together. The present dictionary opts for a compromise by neither alphabetizing according to the roots (which is linguistically most informative, albeit demanding), nor by the first letter (most user-friendly, but uninformative), but by alphabetizing nouns according to the full stems irrespective of class prefixes.

One would expect to find *orumuinyo* under *I*, because *orumu-* is a compound prefix (a combination of two prefixes), but in this dictionary it is arranged under *M* and it is misspelt as *oruMWINYO*. It is not clear whether this arrangement is meant to assist the user, or whether it is due to a wrong analysis of the word.

Adjectives with prenasalised initial consonants (as for class 9/10) are cross-referenced to their original initial letter of the root or stem. This is in contradiction with prenasalised derived nouns which occur under the assimilated letter, e.g. *oNDUNGIRO*, which is derived from the stem *-tunga*, or *oNDUMBUKIRO* from *-tumbuka*.

The arrangement according to the initial letter of the root / stem is only effective for users with linguistic background, because they are able to analyze the words before searching for them in the dictionary.

In this dictionary only few catchwords are contextualised. When a word is not contextualised, the user finds it difficult to use it with confidence in its appropriate context.

Some renderings are deficient if not unreliable, for instance *oNGUZU* is translated with "barrenness", but it can be used as an attributive qualifier or adverb meaning "almost bare". The word category to which a catchword belongs, is not indicated. Therefore the user will not necessarily know whether it is e.g. an adverb, adjective, ideophone etc.

Another example is *oNGWAVI* "place where four lower teeth have been extracted". *Ongwavi* actually refers to the four lower teeth which should be extracted.

This dictionary suffers from deficient overall coverage (as some words are not adequately covered), e.g. *omuRUMENDU* means "man" or "husband". In this dictionary it is translated with "man" only. Another example is *RURUMA* which is translated only with "jump", while it is contextualised with "fan" which is not given as an alternative to "jump".

"Word", "book" and "place where animals sleep" are given as equivalents of *eMBO*. The first two renderings are correct, but the last alternative should be given as an alternative to *eWOMBO* (derived from *-womba*), which is mostly pronounced as *eombo* (see *eWOMBO* and *WOMBA* on page 75 in this dictionary).

The entry *oNGANGA* is translated with "doctor" and "guinea-fowl", but *oNGURA* is listed as two entries. In Otjiherero "doctor" and "guinea-fowl", "dusk" and "mockery" are tonologically differentiated. Even if a dictionary never marks tones, tonologically different catchwords should be entered separately.

In conclusion, in the sense of the definition of a dictionary, this dictionary is more of a glossary than a dictionary despite the occasional contextualization. There is still an urgent need for a good comprehensive dictionary, be it bilingual or monolingual.

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