

Taasisi ya Taaluma za Kiswahili (TATAKI). *Kamusi ya Kiswahili Sanifu*. Third Edition. 2013, xvi + 687 pp. ISBN 978-019-573820-9. Nairobi: Oxford University Press. Price: Kshs. 840.00 (Kenyan Shilling).

A monolingual dictionary is compiled to cater for the speakers of a particular language. The need for this kind of dictionary emanates from the wider use of the language concerned and introduction of new words into that language which may give problem to the speakers. The importance of a dictionary also increases when the language is rendered into writing with different texts expressing various fields of knowledge through it. This scenario may confuse several speakers of that language who may have inadequate vocabulary to enable them understand the meaning of words in different texts. This is the scenario which encountered the Kiswahili speakers when the *Kiswahili-Kiswahili dictionary* was compiled by Fredrick Johnson (1935). By 1970 it was realized that Johnson's dictionary had some inadequacies because it could not cope with the faster development of Kiswahili. A new dictionary had to be compiled and published in 1981 by The Institute of Swahili Research — *Taasisi ya Uchunguzi wa Kiswahili (TUKI)* to cater for this paucity.

A decade later, the *TUKI* (1981) also faced challenges of embracing the new developments in Kiswahili, hence a need for another dictionary to cater for these challenges arose. *Kamusi ya Kiswahili Sanifu* (2013) henceforth KKS third edition is a product of up-to-date linguistic research done by several Kiswahili scholars from diversified fields in Kiswahili scholarship. These scholars as recommended by Cowie (1983: 135) have carefully synchronized pedagogical consideration with linguistic factors in the design of KKS. This is a general dictionary in which the lexicographers have made information maximally explicit in the text and especially through exemplification. The front matter of KKS has a list of lexicographers who have participated in different panels in the development of KKS since 1964–2012; preface written by Dr. Aldin Mutembei which underscores the need for this current edition. The introduction section informs the user about new entries such as etymology of words, some verb extensions, sense relations, noun classification through morphological, syntactic and semantic approaches, pronunciation and International Phonetic Association (IPA) alphabet which were not covered in earlier editions. KKS contains more than 285,000 headwords, of which 25,000 are synonyms and verb extensions, 2000 new headwords not existing in the previous editions and more than 1150 attractive pictures and drawings.

The section on the guide to the user (x-xvi) has a summary of Kiswahili grammar and an illustration on how to use KKS. The summary of Kiswahili grammar in KKS shows grammatical elements of Kiswahili which may confuse a user if not explained properly. Such elements as illustrated through KKS are:

- i. Components of word such affixes, compound words;
- ii. Word categories such as noun, adjectives, verbs, adverbs, demonstratives etc;

- iii. Grammatical agreements;
- iv. Grammatical functions such as noun classes, types of verbs: transitive and intransitive, tense, mood;
- v. Verb extensions;
- vi. Punctuation marks.

Headwords have been entered from page 1 to 656 of KKS. The entry has been done alphabetically. Every entry of a headword has been followed by grammatical information which includes phonological and syntactic information. The information on scope and stylistics with reference to a particular headword has also been given. After information on grammar, KKS gives an explanation on meaning of every headword followed by examples on how that headword can be used in the composition of various sentences in different contexts. KKS has also shown a standard orthography/spelling wherever there is one headword with different spelling. For example:

ilimradi/ilimradi/ pia **alimradi**/alimradi/ ku kwa masharti kwamba;
iwapo, mradi.
angalau/angalau/ pia **angaa**/anga:/, **angalao**/angalao/ ku neno litumikalokueleza jambo hilo bora zaidi; **walau, falau.**

These examples show that the orthography preceded by the word *pia* is not a standard one but is used in different context.

KKS depicts several grammatical information such as the word category in which the headword follows into, noun class, case, verb extension etc. KKS has used abbreviations to capture this information in Kiswahili: kt (kitenzi-verb), kl (kielezi-adverb), kv. (kivumishi-adjective), kw (kiwakilishi-pronoun), ku (kiunganshi-conjunction), nm (nomino-noun), ele (elekezi-transitive), sie (sielekezi-intransitive) etc. This information is found in the front matter of KKS.

The verb structure has been distinguished in KKS by separating the radical from affixes by a dot as illustrated by the following example from KKS: *pembu.a, pen.a, pend.a, shak.a, shajilish.a*, etc. The problem with this format of verb extension is that naïve speakers of Kiswahili may follow it to for some verb extensions which are not desirable in Kiswahili as observed by Mdee (2010: 80).

One aspect of language elaboration which is quite interesting in KKS is the inclusion of very recent vocabulary in Kiswahili as its headwords. These vocabularies reflect recent trends in scientific, economic and social development in human society. Such vocabularies are: *tuktuk, tishu, intraneti*, etc. There is also a section dealing with synonyms which is from page 647 to 656. This section is also arranged alphabetically. KKS has come up with colored pictorial presentation of internal parts of human body, attires, and types of fish and other marine creatures, animals and insects, varieties of trees and crops,

horticultural produce, musical instruments, war weapons, tools of different trades such as carpentry, masonry, parts of motorized engines all presented from page 657 to 672. Furthermore, there is some note on grammar again from page 673 to 675. KKS has done a good job by presenting a list of names of countries and nationality in English and a translation of the same in Kiswahili from page 676 to 680. Finally KKS has given a very detailed presentation on grammar from page 681 to 687.

In my considered opinion this is a very good dictionary for any person who would like to learn Kiswahili and also Kiswahili experts.

References

- Cowie, A.P. 1983. *English Dictionaries for the Foreign Learner*. Hartmann, R.R.K. 1983. *Lexicography: Principles and Practice*: 135-152. London/New York: Academic Press.
- Johnson, F. 1935. *Kamusi ya Kiswahili, yaani Kitabu cha Maneno ya Kiswahili (Swahili Dictionary, i.e. a Swahili Wordbook)*. London: Sheldon Press.
- Mdee, J.S. 2010. *Nadharia na Historia ya Leksikografia*. Dar es Salaam: Oxford University Press.
- TUKI (Taasisi ya Uchunguzi wa Kiswahili). 1981. *Kamusi ya Kiswahili Sanifu*. Dar es Salaam: Oxford University Press and Institute of Kiswahili Research.

Stephen Oluoch
Department of Languages
Kisii University-Kenya-East Africa
Kenya
(yahuma1973@yahoo.com)