

## TEACHING OF SWAHILI AND AFRIKAANS IN COMPARISON WITH A SECOND LANGUAGE

Ramil Tagirovich Yuzmukhametov<sup>1</sup>, Aida Rinasovna Fattakhova<sup>2</sup>, Aleksandr Igorevich Lazarev<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Kazan Federal University, Institute of International Relations, History and Oriental Studies, e-mail: ramil.yuzmukhametov@mail.ru, tel. 89534903367

<sup>2</sup>Kazan Federal University, Institute of International Relations, History and Oriental Studies

<sup>3</sup>Kazan Federal University, Institute of International Relations, History and Oriental Studies

### ABSTRACT

The topicality of introducing of simultaneous learning of several languages is conditioned by the development of the international contacts in the economic, diplomatic, scientific and educational spheres, which in turn dictates the need to develop new approaches to the teaching of foreign languages. With the simultaneous teaching of several languages, the most effective method is a comparative method. This method is based on a study and description of a language through its system comparison with another language. It helps to clarify its specificity and allows a deeper understanding of the linguistic regularities of a studied language, as well as contributes to the comprehension of national and cultural information, and the formation of linguistic and cultural competence in students. This method gives motivation to research and self-education. In this article the practical solutions for using of the comparative method are given for the following pairs of languages: Swahili-Arabic, and Afrikaans-German.

**Keywords:** education, comparative method, Swahili, Arabic, Afrikaans, German, phonetics, grammar, vocabulary.

### INTRODUCTION

In 2014, at Kazan University for the first time groups specializing in the study of African languages, Swahili and Afrikaans, were opened. The educational program includes the simultaneous study of other foreign languages: Swahili was paired with Arabic, and Afrikaans - with German. When choosing methods of teaching, the teachers were guided by the experience of the scientists of the Institute of Asian and African Countries of Moscow State University (prof. N. Gromova, ass. prof. M. Urb), who laid the foundation for the teaching of African languages at Kazan University. The educational and methodological literature, donated by the Department of African Studies of IAAC MSU, as well as teaching textbooks and dictionaries compiled by prof. N. Gromova, N. Petrenko [Gromova, 2004, 2008, 2012] and M. Urb [Urb, 2010, 2013] which are being used at Moscow and St. Petersburg universities, made it possible to study the languages of Africa according to a common pattern and to be on the same wavelength as the Afrikanistics centers of Russia. At the same time, paying tribute to the traditions of the Kazan University, where the origins of the comparative studies have been laid since the first days of its existence in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, a comparative method was used in teaching of African languages.

L. Anokhina includes two components in the comparative study of languages, the first one is 'a theoretical component' (close to the typology and in contact with the anthropology and cultural studies), and the second one is called 'a practical component' that focuses on the teaching of foreign languages [Zuroff, 2012]. In this article, we consider some practical solutions applied by the teachers of the Kazan University within the framework of the comparative studies.

### METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

In accordance with the problem of our study when considering the theoretical and practical issues related to its specific aspects, the methods of linguistic description and comparative linguistics served as an

important theoretical and methodological base for our researches. In addition to these methods in this work the methods and principles of research of the domestic and foreign scientists-linguists were considered.

## RESULTS

### I. Swahili and Arabic

Training the phonetics. At the phonological level, the Arabic language is characterized by a developed system of consonant phonemes. Such consonant phonemes as post-dental emphatic consonants [ʂ], [d], [t] and [z]; fricative consonants [d], [h], [h], [h], [g]; uvular [q], glottal [ʔ] (hamza); guttural sound [ʕ] ('ayn) are not present at Swahili. When borrowing Arabic loanwords these sounds may interfere with swahilian consonantism and vocalism [Ohotina, 1978]. For example, explosive consonant sound [ʕ] ('ayn) is transferred to a vowel [a]: *arab.* عبد 'abada → *swahili* - abudu 'to pray', as well as fricative sounds such as ح [h], خ [h] and ه [h] are transmitted like **h** in Swahili. Compare:

*arab.* حدث **ḥ**addatha → *swahili* - hadithia 'to talk';

*arab.* خدم **ḥ**adama → *swahili* - hudumu 'to serve';

*arab.* هاجم **h**ājama → *swahili* - hujumu 'to attack'.

It cannot be said that all Arabic consonants that are absent in this African language are subject to interference, e.g. an emphatic consonant ض [d], an interdental consonant ث [th] and a deep - guttural consonant sound غ [g] are borrowed by the language-recipient and are transmitted through the combination of letters: ض [d] → **dh**, ث [th] → **th**, and غ [g] → **gh**. For example:

*arab.* ضر **ḍ**āra → *swahili* - dhuru 'to damage';

*arab.* ورث **ṯ**arīṯa → *swahili* - rithi 'to inherit';

*arab.* غرق **ḡ**ariqa → *swahili* - ghariki 'to be flooded'.

The study and comparison of the phonetic systems of Swahili and the Arabic language positively affected the understanding of their phonetics structure. So, in most cases, students could determine whether a word is borrowed in Swahili through a phonetic form. When working with texts in Swahili the students were asked to identify Arabic loanwords. Initially, performing this task, the students were finding Arabic lexical units whether through the uncharacteristic sounds for Swahili or through the markers for loanwords, for example, verbs were defined by their final position **-e, -i, -u**. With the gradual increase of the remembered Arabic words, the borrowings in Swahili were recognized according to the semantic meaning of lexical units.

At the same time, it is necessary to note certain difficulties arising in the process of parallel study of Swahili and the Arabic languages. Thus, at the initial stage of training, it was not easy for students to pronounce the Arabic sounds uncharacteristic for their native language and Swahili. There was confusion in the stress of syllables: in Swahili - on the penultimate syllable and in Arabic - mostly on the third syllable from the end of word, or on the second syllable from the end of word, if it is long. For example: *swahili* fahámu - *arab.* fáhama 'to understand'; *swahili* safári - *arab.* sáfar 'journey'; *swahili* faída - *arab.* fá'ida 'benefit' and others.

2. *Training of the lexicon.* The vocabulary of Swahili includes an impressive amount of Arabic borrowings represented by *significant words* (noun, verb, adjective, numeral) and *service words*. For example, kitabu -

from *arabic*. kitāb ‘book’, -hesabu - from *arabic*. ḥasaba ‘to consider’ misri - from *arabic*. miṣrī ‘Egyptian’, sitini - from *arabic*. sittuna ‘sixty’, walakini - from *Arabic*. walakin ‘but’, etc. T.Shadeberg (Netherlands) in its study cites statistical data of words of the Arabic origin: religious lexica (47.5%) and legal lexica (41.1%) as the most numerous in comparison with the words of other thematic groups, ranging from 5.8% to 40,6% of all words in Swahili [Fattakhova, 2015].

The presence of a large number of words of the Arabic origin in Swahili has a positive effect on the speed of learning the difference-structured languages by the students, and is of great importance for understanding the essence of linguistic borrowing as a result of communication between representatives of different ethnic and linguistic groups.

It was also interesting for students to see the semantic development of the borrowed words, in particular cases when an Arabic lexeme, penetrating into Swahili, loses its connection with the original semantics of the word and acquires a different meaning. For example, the word *biashara* ‘commerce, commerce, business’ is formed through the combining of Arabic words: باع [bā‘a] ‘to trade’, ‘sell’ and شري [sharā] ‘buy’, in literal translation ‘I sold-bought.’ These words didn’t rooted at Swahili as separate lexical units. Word combining, as a way of making new words is not applicable in the Arabic language. For the meaning of ‘trade’ the Arabs use the word *tijāra*, which also penetrated into Swahili, but already in a new meaning -*tijara* ‘profit, income, benefit’.

When memorizing the words of Swahili and Arabic, students noted the difficulty in associating of some loanwords with the original words in the original languages, Russian, Tatar, and English, and according to some respondents’ answers, there was a total absence of obvious associations. So, in Swahili, there is a large number of the words of the ‘class of things’ marked with *ki-* prefix in the singular form and with *vi-* prefix in plural. At the same words with the *ki-* prefix may be to some extent similar in sound: e.g. kipande ‘part’, kipungu ‘eagle’, kipindi ‘gap’, kipingo ‘bracelet’, etc.

3. *Teaching grammar*. The work on comparing the morphology and syntax of the languages was conducted seldom and unsystematically. This is due to a number of reasons: the lack of appropriate comparative works on the languages (Swahili and Arabic); preferring a practical approach to mastering the grammatical material, in accordance with the themes and situations of communication; the uneven distribution of time to study of the grammatical structure of both languages, etc. According to the curriculum, Arabic is studied only one lesson per week, so the mastering of the Swahili grammatical material was much more advanced than the mastering of the Arabic language. In this connection, the morphological and syntactic coincidences and differences were considered exclusively during the lessons of Arabic, which was a good opportunity for the students to revise the previously studied training material on Swahili. Here are some examples of using the comparative studies in the grammar of both languages.

Studying the verb forms of the Arabic verb gives students the opportunity to find the loanwords among the borrowings in Swahili, which contributes to a deeper understanding of the adaptive process of a foreign language. The most recognized Arabic verbs are the so-called V-th and X-th form-verbs, since they were least transformed in their phonetic images. Eg, V-th form - tafakari from *arab*. tafakkara ‘to reflect’, takabari from *arab*. takabbara ‘to be proud’, taahari from *arab*. ta’ahara ‘to be late’, etc.; X-th form - stahamili from *arab*. ’istahmala ‘to bear, endure’; -starehe from *arab*. ’istarāḥa ‘to have a rest’, etc.

When learning Swahili and Arabic in parallel, the students compare both languages with each other, and find differences and similarities at the linguistic and linguocultural level, as well as they draw parallels with other languages (English, Tatar), show their special interest in scientific research in comparative linguistics. All this contributes to the expansion of the outlook of the students, the acquisition of deeper knowledge in both languages, and self-education.

## II. Afrikaans and German

The next pair of languages, which we will discuss in this article, is Afrikaans and German.

Afrikaans is taught as a second foreign language alongside with German which is taught as a first foreign language. Both languages belong to the German group. In one of the issues of the almanac 'Under the Sky of My Africa', we have already written on some features of teaching of Afrikaans in parallel with German, and have noted the interference of two closely related languages at the initial stage of training [Yuzmuhametov, 2015]. Over time, such confusion in phonetics and vocabulary is overcome.

Speaking about the usefulness of the parallel study of two closely related (Germanic) languages, we can say the following: the grammar is more quickly acquired; there are no difficulties in learning the lexica; differences in pronunciation are eliminated; an understanding of the origin of words or phrases is better achieved, which in turn is an additional source of vocabulary replenishment in the parallel studied languages.

Let us consider a number of specific positive aspects of the parallel study of Afrikaans and German.

1. *The mastering of complex sentences.* In both languages, in the dependent clauses, predicates are placed at the end of the sentence, and in the beginning there is a *subordinating conjunction* or it is absent. In Afrikaans, the often encountered subordinating conjunctions are *dat, sodat, omdat, nadat, as, waaneer, waar, hoe, hoewel*, etc. In German, the subordinating conjunctions are *die, der, dem, das, den*, as well as *als, wenn, obwohl, dass, damit*, and others.

2. *Regular phonetic matching in Afrikaans and German.* A regular alternation of the sounds in the similar words has much help in the parallel studying of both languages, due to this the recognizability of words in the studied parallel languages increases. Thus, the German **sch** [sh] consonant corresponds **sc** [sk] in Afrikaans (e.g., *germ. schreiben* 'to write' is matching with *afr. skryf* 'to write'). German suffixes, such as **-keit (-keite)**, **-ich**, **-schaft** have phonetic equivalences in Afrikaans: **-heid (-hede)**, **-ig**, **-skap**. Many prefixes have full similarity, for example: **ge-**, **be-**, **ver-**, **er-**, **her-**; and some prefixes have alternating sounds, compare: *germ. ent-* and *afr. ont-*.

3. *Double negation in Afrikaans.* Unlike German, Afrikaans uses double negation in the *extended sentences*, and this distinction should immediately be drawn to the attention of students. Let's compare: *germ. Wir haben keine Theaterkarten für den Sonntag bestellt* (We did not book any tickets to the theater on a Sunday) and the same sentence in Afrikaans: *Ons het nie (geen) teaterkaartjies vir Sondag bestel nie*. Negative pronouns, which are often, involved in such constructions, in both languages, are similar, compare: *germ. niemand* 'no one' and *afr. niemand*, *germ. nichts* 'nothing' and *afr. niks*.

4. *The archaic forms of German cases in Afrikaans.* Despite the simplification of the case system, the Afrikaans language is still using in the modern language some 'frozen' forms of the genitive and dative such as *der/ter, ten, des*, which also makes sense to pay attention when parallel learning Afrikaans and German (e.g.: *afr. in die sweet des aanskyns* 'in the sweat of his brow').

5. *Conjugated forms of attributive adjectives in Afrikaans.* In German, attributive adjectives are combined in gender and case with the corresponding determinatives. In Afrikaans, although the nouns had lost their declensional and generic features, yet the vowel **-e** is preserved at the end of the attributive adjective before the noun. Such endings are attached mainly to the polysyllabic adjectives and some forms of monosyllabic adjectives (e.g. 'n *interessante boek* 'an interesting book').

## DISCUSSION

The Kazan Linguistic School (I. Boduen de Courtenay (1845-1929) [Boduen de Courtenay, 1963], V. Bogoroditsky (1857-1941) [Bogoroditsky, 1895, 1917], N. Krushewskiy (1851-1887), A. Anastasiev (1852-1919) etc.) showed to the world the ideas that were developed in the subsequent comparative-historical and typological studies at the Kazan University.

Since 2014 the range of taught languages at the Kazan University began to expand at the expense of the African and Indo-Aryan languages, which required the development of teaching methods, as well as the development of appropriate textbooks and dictionaries. In this article we described the use of practical solutions when carrying out the comparative studies on the Arabic and Swahili, Afrikaans and German languages, which possesses novelty and are introduced to the academic community. So, we can mention the articles by R. Yuzmukhametov [Yuzmukhametov, 2016] and A. Fattakhova [Fattakhova, 2014, 2015], in which the authors highlighted the aforementioned issues from a linguistic point of view.

## CONCLUSION

By the end of the twentieth century, many of the traditional problems of linguistics, on the background of the emergence of new paradigms of the scientific knowledge, appear in a new light. Thus, the decision of a number of problems in the Comparative Linguistics is prospective in the context of the anthropocentric approach, through the lens of cultural studies, primarily in order to identify the general and specific points in the mentality of the two contacting peoples.

It appears very promising to conduct comparative researches and implementation of their results in the learning process in order to implement the practical learning objectives, such as: increasing interest in the study of languages; activation of lingvo-regional aspect of teaching, which helps to comprehension of a national cultural information and formation of a lingvo-regional competence for the students; motivation for research activities and self-education.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The results of the study will be useful for further developments in the field of teaching of both unrelated and closely related languages, as well as when studying various sections of linguistics, such as phonetics, grammar, lexicography, ethnolinguistics, etc.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The work is performed according to the Russian Government Program of Competitive Growth of Kazan Federal University.

## REFERENCES

- Gromova, N.V., Petrenko N.T. (2004). 'Uchebnik yazyka suahili'. – M.: Gumanitarij. – 516 s.
- Gromova, N.V. (2008). 'Suahili-russkij frazeologicheskij slovar'. – M.: Klyuch-S. – 276 s.
- Gromova, N.V., Myachina, E.N., Petrenko, N.T. (2012). 'Suahili-russkij slovar'. – M.: Klyuch-S. – 716 s.
- Urb, M.R. (2010). 'Uchebnoe posobie po lingvostranovedeniyu. Yazyk afrikaans'. – M.: Klyuch-S. – 284 s.
- Urb, M.R. (2013). 'Hrestomatiya yazyka afrikaans'. – M.: Klyuch-S. – 308 s.
- Zurov, A.M. (2012). 'Sopostavitel'nyj metod v izuchenii i prepodavanii inostrannyh yazykov'. *Vestnik Nizhegorodskogo universiteta im. N.I. Lobachevskogo*, № 1(2). – S. 369-373.
- Ohotina, N.V. (1978). 'O fonetike i grammatike arabskikh zaimstvovaniy v suahili'. *Problemy fonetiki, morfologii i sintaksisa afrikanskih yazykov*. – M., Izd-vo Mosk. un-ta. – S. 32 -50.
- Fattakhova, A., Mingazova, N. (2015). 'Arabic Loanwords in Tatar and Swahili: Morphological Assimilation'. *Journal of Sustainable Development*, Vol. 8, No. 4, Special Issue: 302-308.
- Fattahova, A.R., Yuzmukhametov, R.T. (2015). 'Nachalo polozheniya: pervyj opyt prepodavaniya afrikanskih yazykov v Kazanskom universitete'. *Pod nebom Afriki moej. Istoriya, kul'tura, yazyki*

*narodov Afriki*. Vyp. 7 / Kaf. Afrikanistiki In-ta stran Azii i Afriki MGU, Centr afrikan. Issledovaniy In-ta vseobshchej istorii Ros. akad. Nauk. – Moskva: Klyuch – S. – S.84 – 91.

Boduehn de Kurteneh I.A. (1963). 'Izbrannye trudy po obshchemu yazykoznaniyu'. Tom II. – M.: Izd-vo nauk SSSR. – 392 s.

Bogorodickij, V.A. (1895). 'Iz chtenij po sravnitel'noj grammatike indoevropskih yazykov'. Vyp. 1, 2. – Varshava: tip. Varshavsk. ucheb. okr.

Yuzmuhametov R.T. (2016). 'Leksicheskaya omonimiya v yazyke afrikaans'. *Vestnik Chuvashskogo Universiteta*, Vypusk 2. – Cheboksary: izd-vo Chuvashskij gosudarstvennyj universitet im. I.N. Ul'yanova. – S. 255-259.

Fattahova, A.R. (2014). 'Otkloneniya pri adaptacii arabskih zaimstvovaniy v yazyke suahili'. *Vestnik chuvashskogo universiteta*. – № 4. – S. 186-190.