

How to Study Language Ideologies on the Basis of Digitally-mediated Texts from the *Greater Swahili Area*

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Abstract

The idea of a 'right' or 'wrong' way of using language is closely linked to ideology and power. Digitally-mediated texts from the Swahili-speaking area will serve as an example of a stimulating resource for the study of language ideologies and related topics. On the basis of texts produced by governments and citizens of the Comorian and mainland Swahili-speaking areas, this article shows how the language practices of governments and citizens differ in terms of language choice when it comes to digitally-mediated texts. A brief illustration of these practices, based on texts from governments and community forums from the Swahili-speaking mainland (Kenya and Tanzania), and from the Comoro Islands, provides an insight into speech communities' perceptions of language as a norm.

Introduction

VOICE¹ (Vienna-Oxford International Corpus of English), an international project hosted by the Department of English at the University of Vienna, offers a structured collection of language data from a wide range of English varieties spoken all over the world. The collection of data is based on the following assumption:

“In the early 21st century, English in the world finds itself in an ‘unstable equilibrium’: On the one hand, the majority of the world's English users are not native speakers of the language, but use it as an additional language, as a convenient means for communicative interactions that cannot be conducted in their mother tongues. On the other hand, linguistic descriptions have as

¹ <https://www.univie.ac.at/voice/> (18.03.2016)

yet predominantly been focusing on English as it is spoken and written by its native speakers.”

The VOICE team not only includes different English varieties, but also clearly underlines that most of the world’s English users are non-native speakers. A comparable situation can be observed in terms of Swahili. Most Swahili speakers use Swahili as a second or third language, or as a language of wider communication (*lingua franca*). Mugane (2015) assumes that Swahili is “primarily a second language for close to 100 million speakers”, and further argues that Swahili “appears to be the only language boasting more than 100 million speakers that has more second-language speakers than native ones”. In addition, he points to the fact that “for every native speaker of Swahili, there are about one hundred non native speakers!”² The role of the language as “an additional language, as a convenient means for communicative interactions that cannot be conducted in their mother tongues”, which VOICE mentions in relation to English, is also true for Swahili, which has always served as a *lingua franca*. Njubi (2009: 106) also points out that Swahili has become the most widely spoken African language in Africa and the African Diaspora.

I will therefore proceed based on the assumption that Swahili speakers (not just those from the alleged core area) have an impact on the development of the language. Similar to the statement on English quoted above, I postulate for Swahili,

- 1) that the majority of the world’s Swahili users are not part of those who have been classified as Swahili speakers up to now, and
- 2) that linguistic descriptions of Swahili so far have focused on Swahili spoken and written by an alleged core group.

Although Swahili experts until now have not provided a complete linguistic basis for a standardisation authoritative for the Swahili-speaking East and Central African regions (as occurred, for instance, for German in Austria

² To compare, Mugane (2015) refers to English and French, stating that, “both have approximately one native speaker for each non native speaker”, while Spanish “has about five native speakers for every person who speaks it as a second language.”

and Germany), some elitist speakers³ strongly believe in ‘true Swahili’, which is not congruent with the actual language varieties used by most of the speakers. Instead of distinguishing between ‘standard’ and ‘deviant’ varieties of Swahili, I shall use the term *Greater Swahili* to refer to all varieties used in Africa and the African Diaspora. Greater Swahili therefore stands for a new, global approach.

The Internet is expanding and providing new varieties of discourse for analysis, calling for recognition as a resource for research and teaching (Herring 2007: 26). Therefore, the following portrays the actual language use on the Internet and the language choice(s) for digitally-mediated texts of the respective *writing and reading communities*⁴ from the Swahili-speaking mainland area (Tanzania and Kenya) and the Comoro Islands. My choice of Tanzania and Kenya is based on the fact that these two nation states are usually mentioned as the core areas of Swahili. The Comoro Islands serve as an additional example, as speakers often take Swahili as a point of reference when it comes to the attribution of value to their languages (Waldburger 2015). Likewise, the Swahili-speaking areas in DR Congo, especially the speech community in Lubumbashi, could be included.⁵ Since it is not always possible to determine where and by whom the texts in forums have been produced, the idea of Greater Swahili users applies. Based on a corpus

³ Njubi (2009: 125) quotes the renowned Kiswahili scholar and poet Sheikh Ahmed Nabhani, who is afraid that if one – which means the conservative elitists – doesn’t take care, one day everybody will learn Swahili outside the core area: “At a recent Swahili cultural festival in Lamu [...] a renowned Kiswahili scholar and poet Sheikh Ahmed Nabhani warned that the centre for learning Kiswahili was shifting from East Africa to the Diaspora. “If we are not careful, we might end up sending our own children to study Kiswahili in the US, Sheikh Nabhani warned.” (Njubi 2009: 125 quoting an article from Daily Nation, Nairobi, 8 November 2001)

⁴ I use the term *writing and reading community* referring to the sociolinguistic core concept of *speech community*, which usually focuses on a social analysis based on linguistic criteria. *Speech community* commonly refers to a group sharing linguistic characteristics. As in this paper the linguistic characteristics are in written forms, the community shares the ability to read and write the language(s), but not necessarily the ability to actually speak the language(s). The idea of a *speech community* and *writing and reading community* is based on an idealised perception, a conceptualisation of speakers as individuals behaving equally within a group. For a comprehensive overview of the differing definitions discussed by scholars from varying disciplines, see e.g. Patrick (2003).

⁵ I refrain from including Lubumbashi in this paper, as I do not have any first-hand interviews with speakers from the area of Lubumbashi covering speakers’ points of reference of valuing their variety. For a discussion of speakers’ perceptions of their Swahili variety, see e.g. Kahola/Kakudji/KalabaMutabusha (2008) and Waldburger (2016).

of texts from governments and community forums, differing perceptions of language norms will be illustrated. The aim of this endeavour is to discuss an issue that is connected to questions of how to treat and analyse a 'text' in its broadest sense when the language(s) used by the writing and reading communities lacks standardisation, while still portraying the users' perceptions of language norms. Linked to that is the assumption that digitally-mediated texts can serve – precisely because they are not following the 'right' or 'wrong' norms – as a resource with which to analyse current trends of language use and language ideologies. Hence, these textual resources also reveal the knowledge and thoughts of a specific writing and reading community at a given time.

For students of the Swahili language, for example, it would be highly efficient to work through texts from governments, as well as web forums, to analyse if and how these written texts are "deviant" from the postulated Standard Swahili. "Deviation" though, can be analysed through different lenses. From a systemic linguistic perspective, the discussion could focus on the right or wrong spelling, morphologically differing realisations of tense, aspect and mood, variation in class agreement, the variety of lexemes, which are sometimes closely linked to a specific geographical location, etc. Another lens is the sociolinguistic perspective, whereby "deviation" is perceived as linguistic diversity, and is analysed, for example, with the question of what effect that specific language use has on society, in our case the readers. Linked to this are questions of language and identity in terms of multilingual societies. Not only is the language choice itself fluid and flexible among a plurilingual digital community, but the identities that are constructed might be also.

I write from the perspective of a *digital immigrant*⁶ and I argue that digitally-mediated texts should be seen as an insightful resource for sociolinguistic research and teaching.

⁶With *digital immigrant*, I am referring to the definition by Prensky (2001: 1): "Our students today are all 'native speakers' of the digital language of computers, video games and the Internet. So what does that make the rest of us? Those of us who were not born into the digital world but have, at some later point in our lives, become fascinated by and adopted many or most aspects of the new technology are, and always will be compared to them, Digital Immigrants."

From computer-mediated discourse to digitally-mediated texts

Computer-mediated communication (CMC) and computer-mediated discourse (CMD) caught the interest of linguists in the 1980s (for a detailed overview, see Herring 2002, 2007). While CMC covers “text-based human-human interaction mediated by networked computers”, CMD focuses on “online language and language use” (Herring 2007: 1). Herring (2007) provides an overview of the discussion of these conceptual frameworks, such as the question of how to treat the modalities of language, namely speech and writing. Weblogs, for instance, exhibit features of orality, but are still produced by typing on a keyboard. For analytical purposes, I adapt the concept of CMC and CDM respectively: firstly, I refer to computer-mediated *texts* as my data. The selected texts do fulfil the criteria of a text as defined by Halliday and Hassan (1976: 1): “The word TEXT is used in linguistics to refer to any passage, spoken or written, of whatever length, that does form a unified whole.” Also, according to probably the most discussed model postulated by Beaugrande and Dressler (1981), the texts of the data do fulfil the seven criteria of constituting communicative texts⁷. Secondly, I refer to *digitally-mediated* texts to cover different kinds of text genres on the internet. For example, online forums provide texts that are produced to be read online, but this is not necessarily the case for websites. Whilst on the surface level there might be texts designedly written for the website (digitally-born), texts linked via the surface level to levels beneath the surface are often not, they are simply digitalised texts. In my data, for example, the text of the Tanzanian Constitution or the government’s gazette, are texts that were not written for the Internet⁸. The term digitally-mediated therefore allows these texts to be included in the discussion. Hence, the mentioned adaptations (from computer-mediated communication/discourse to digitally-mediated texts) explain the choice of focus: digitally-mediated texts, which are accessible online but have not necessarily been written for an exclusive online use.

⁷ The criteria will not be discussed in detail here as the focus of this paper is not to weigh up the pros and cons of text-linguistic criteria.

⁸ This will be discussed in more detail further below.

Two players of the digital community are relevant for this paper. On the one hand the governments themselves (group A), who are responsible for language policy decisions and their implementation, and on the other hand the citizens of the respective countries, who use the Internet either as a source of information and/or to comment on various topics in forums (group B).

Regarding texts from group A (government websites), we can assume that they represent the *most highly regulated* text genre, as these texts are addressed to a wide and anonymous audience. Sebba (2002, 2013) uses the term *most highly regulated* to refer to categories of texts that strongly adhere to the ideology of the standard language.⁹ In addition, these texts are produced by players who are responsible for macro language policy¹⁰ decisions. From a linguistic perspective, texts from group B are characterised by few(er) conventions in terms of language choice and usage. The analysis of these texts contributes significantly to the identification and description of the perspectives of social groups and their attitudes towards languages.

Baldauf (2006) emphasises that *local agents* (congruent with group B in this paper) either conform to or resist the top-down language policies as they adapt their language use to their own needs:

“[...] micro planning refers to cases where businesses, institutions, groups or individuals hold agency and create what can be recognised as a language policy and plan to utilise and develop their language resources; one that is not directly the result of some larger macro policy, but is *a response to their own needs, their own 'language problems', their own requirement for language management.*” (Baldauf 2006: 155, my emphasis)

⁹ For a discussion of Sebba, see also Gafaranga (2015).

¹⁰ For a definition of language policies and their implementation, see e.g. Baldauf (2006: 149): “Language policies are bodies of ideas, laws, regulations, rules and practices intended to achieve some planned language change (Kaplan & Baldauf 1997: 3). Language policy may be realised in very formal (overt) language planning documents and pronouncements (e.g. constitutions, legislation, policy statements, educational directives) which can be either symbolic or substantive in form, in informal statements of intent (i.e. in the discourse of language, politics and society), or may be left unstated (covert). While the distinction between language policy (the plan) and language planning (plan implementation) is an important one for users, the two terms have frequently been used interchangeably in the literature.”

In the following section, a comparison of group A (the three governments of Kenya, Tanzania and the Union of the Comoro Islands) and their group B members (citizens that use the Internet), will demonstrate how group B members conform to their language use to fulfil communicative aims under the given language planning setting. As stated earlier, governments (or government text producers) can be expected to follow the nation's language conventions. I will therefore begin by discussing a number of key points from the language policies of Tanzania, Kenya and the Comoro Islands against the backdrop of writing practices within these multilingual societies.

The language policies of Tanzania, Kenya and the Comoro Island and implications on writing and reading practices

At the societal level, Tanzania recognises Swahili and English as its official languages¹¹, while at the individual level, Tanzanians' plurilingual competences form a continuum from monolingualism in any of Tanzania's other languages (V¹²), including Swahili, to bilingualism in V and Swahili, or to trilingualism in V, Swahili and English. Therefore, diverse plurilingual competences exist among speakers. This is equally the case in Kenya, where English and Swahili are the official languages, whilst individuals show a diverse range of plurilingual competences.

On the educational level – in a nutshell¹³ – Tanzania applies Swahili and English, while Kenya follows the L1¹⁴, English and Swahili principle. As a consequence of the countries' respective language policies for education, children in both countries acquire writing practice predominantly in English and Swahili.

¹¹ For a historical overview of colonial Swahili language planning, refer to Fabian (1986), who offers a critical account of sociolinguistic processes.

¹² V = Vernacular languages.

¹³ A wide range of literature focuses on language planning and education in Tanzania and Kenya.

¹⁴ L1 is language of instruction only in pre-school and lower primary.

	Mainland Swahili-speaking areas		Comoro Islands
	Tanzania	Kenya	
Writing and reading communities	Mainly Tanzanians	Mainly Kenyans	“Comorians” People from Grande Comore, Mohéli and Anjouan (Union of the Comoros) and Mayotte (French overseas department) / and all those that make up the diaspora
Language policy/ Official languages	Swahili English	Swahili English	Union of the Comoros: “Comorian”(not standardised!), French, Arabic Mayotte (France): French
Plurilingual repertoires (individual level)	Swahili Other V ¹⁵ English Arabic (Coast) – religious context	English Swahili Other V Arabic (Coast) - religious context	“Comorian” (ShiKomori), 4 varieties (1/island): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ShiNgazidja / Grande Comore • ShiMwali / Mohéli • ShiNdzواني/ Anjouan • ShiMaore / Mayotte Swahili French Arabic ShiBushi (Malgasy)
Education	Swahili, English	L1, English, Swahili	French, Arabic script
Writing practice	Latin script: Swahili, English	Latin script: Swahili, English	Latin script: French, “Comorian” Arabic script: Arabic, “Comorian”

Table 1: Overview, by the author

Article 1 of the constitution¹⁶ of the Union of the Comoro Islands (the text is only available in French) stipulates that: “Les langues officielles sont le

¹⁵ V = Vernacular languages.

¹⁶ http://www.beit-salam.km/article.php3?id_article=34 (31.12.2014)

Shikomor, langue nationale, le Français et l'Arabe."¹⁷ On an institutional level, *Comorian* is presented as a single language and is defined as the national language, along with French and Arabic, the other official languages. The fourth island of the archipelago, Mayotte, is a French overseas department. As the island politically forms part of France, French is therefore the only official language. On an institutional level, *Comorian* is one language, while speakers themselves (and also many linguists) commonly use *Comorian* as a generic term, and refer to ShiNgazidja (of Grande Comore), ShiMwali (of Mohéli), ShiNdzuanani (from Anjouan) and ShiMaore (from Mayotte) as island-specific varieties. These varieties differ to a greater or lesser extent in terms of lexicon and grammar. On the individual level of the speaker, the Comorians also present a diverse spectrum of plurilingualism. Besides the island-specific Comorian variety, the plurilingual repertoire may include French, Arabic and sometimes Swahili. An additional language, mainly in Mayotte, is ShiBushu, a variety of Malagasy that was introduced by migrants. ShiBushu is spoken in approximately one third of all villages in Mayotte. In pre-schools, French and the Comorian varieties are used, whereas in primary schools, French is the sole language of instruction. In addition, most children learn the Arabic script as many of them attend Qur'anic school before they start primary school. As a result, the first contact with writing a language is very often using the Arabic script. As there is no standardisation of Comorian or any Comorian variety, *Comorian* is one language of the plurilingual repertoire of the speech community, but due to the lack of writing practice, these varieties are mainly used for oral communication. The data corpus for the analysis in the following section consists of texts that have been written by members of the respective writing communities. Members have a plurilingual repertoire at their disposal, but their respective repertoires differ from each other.

¹⁷ "The official languages are Comorian, the national language, French and Arabic." [own translation]

Language practices and digitally-mediated texts

Digitally-mediated texts naturally rely on the language practices of text producers. Language practices are subject to users' languages of alphabetisation and social conventions concerning the use of a specific language in the respective community (Androutsopoulos 2015: 188). Therefore, the language(s) chosen for digital communication reflects the users' choice for this written text genre only, the language the users might write but not necessarily speak the best.

Referring to plurilingual competences in Rwandan multimedia blogs, Gafaranga (2015: 89) states that, if face-to-face negotiations are impossible, "there is no guarantee that meaning will be understood as meant and that functions such as explanation and clarification will be served as intended." What is absent in comparison to spoken language are the contextualisation hints (Gumperz 1982): "[I]n the absence of familiar visual and aural cues, [...] computer-mediated discourse relies on what can be encoded with a keyboard and mouse." (Androutsopoulos 2015: 189) Hence, readers rely on code-centred contextualisation cues (Georgakopoulou 1997: 158).

As stated previously, readers and writers in the digital space who are from Tanzania, Kenya and the Comoro Islands are usually plurilingual. When it comes to text production, monolingualism is usually the norm, "where texts are produced bilingually, for example for official purposes, this in practice always means that two (or more) separate monolingual texts are created". (Sebba 2002: 3) Yet when there is a reason to assume that recipients would be able to understand more than one language in a single text, the monolingual norm is rarely transgressed, although there is no permissive norm that actually specifies that a single language should be used (Sebba 2002: 4).

Government websites

Government websites are intended for a general and anonymous public. Hence, the ideology of using a standard language is obvious¹⁸. These texts are usually the *most highly regulated* on two levels: spelling and language choice.

Whereby linguistic standardisation has successfully occurred for French and English, this has not been achieved for Swahili, Comorian and Arabic. Nevertheless, it is important to keep in mind that language standardisation is always a political issue. The idea of actually reducing varying language forms to a single standard form is only an attempt to gain and/or retain control of the definition of norms. Although there is no generally accepted linguistic description of Standard Swahili, the term itself is extensively used for a normalisation based on definitions by political lobbyists, who mainly follow cultural or historical guidelines and not linguistic criteria¹⁹. The concept of Standard Swahili is usually maintained by reference to

¹⁸ Even when texts originate from multiple authors, they are professionally edited and do not usually reveal individuals' language use.

¹⁹ In 1928, Kiunguja, the variety spoken in Stonetown/Zanzibar, had officially been declared Standard Swahili, winning over Kimvita, the variety from Mombasa; a political decision, as Zanzibar was the commercial centre of the Western Indian Ocean (Khamisi 1991: 207). The *Inter-Territorial Language Committee to the East African Dependencies*, founded in 1930, supported this decision. (Miehe 1991: 221) For Tanzania, Khamisi (1991: 207) explicitly refers to the political importance of Swahili: "Standardization of Swahili was in response to the Government's desire to have a medium for wider communications which was efficient as well as consistent in line with the latter's policy to use Swahili at some levels of administration and as a medium of instruction in primary schools." Rombi and Alexandre (1982: 18) – referring to language only – state that Standard Swahili is a term used for Swahili as a Lingua Franca "sous des formes souvent pidginisées", and that it is a sociolinguistic term for the language used by L1 Swahili speakers in Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda and Congo, but also by those from Southern Somalia, Northern Mozambique and the Comoro Islands. Other than Eastman, who refers to Swahili speakers from Tanzania, Zanzibar and Kenya only, Rombi and Alexandre include varieties from outside the core area. Still, they describe Standard Swahili as a sociolinguistic unit, while a linguistic definition of Standard Swahili is missing. The question of what Standard Swahili actually is remains unanswered. Miehe (1991: 221) states that the Swahili Committee promoted the use of a unified grammar: Steere's 'Swahili Exercises' revised by Canon Hellier, which was the orientation point for a long period. In 1981, the new Standard Swahili Dictionary (KAMUSI) was published by the University of Dar es Salaam. Kapinga's grammar was an accompanying publication. "This grammar [...] deviates in some points from the standard forms set up in 1934. Nevertheless, though submitted by the Taasisi ya Uchunguzi wa Kiswahili (Institute of Kiswahili Research, the fully authorized successor of the former Swahili Committee) and in spite of the claim made in the title, 'Kiswahili Sanifu', it seems that this grammar has not the same or a comparable standardizing authority as the 'old' standard grammar." (Miehe 1991: 222)

sociolinguistic features and follows the ideal of a person designated a real *Mswahili*²⁰.

The spelling, the standard of a language, only exists – among the languages relevant for this analysis – for English and French. Highly standardised languages leave few options in orthography, whereas this is not the case for non-standardised languages. The Swahili used on the government websites therefore reflects the perceptions of text producers with regards to norms for this highly regulated text genre.

The homepage of the Kenyan government²¹ is only available in English, there is no Swahili version, neither is there a single text available in any language other than English. Article 7 of the Kenyan Constitution of 2010²² states that: “The national language of the Republic is Kiswahili. [...] The official languages of the Republic are Kiswahili and English.” It therefore appears that the macro language policy of Kenya is not being implemented by those who are responsible for it. This is striking, as Article 120 explicitly states that: “The official languages of Parliament shall be Kiswahili, English and Kenyan Sign language, and the business of Parliament may be conducted in English, Kiswahili and Kenyan Sign language.”

The Tanzanian government website is available in Swahili and English. A button on the upper right corner allows the user to switch between the languages. Interestingly though, in the English version, there are texts (mainly under the “news”-category) that appear in Swahili only and are not accessible in English (Picture 1), whereas in the Swahili version all texts are in Swahili.

²⁰ *Mswahili* is the Swahili noun for a Swahili speaker or someone belonging to the original Swahili community. For a discussion of the definition of *Mswahili* and Swahili, see e.g. Eastman (1971) or Caplan (2013).

²¹ <http://presidency.go.ke/> (09.02.2016)

²² <http://www.kenyalaw.org:8181/exist/kenyalex/actview.xql?actid=Const2010> (09.02.2016)

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SWAHILI | ENGLISH

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Home > News > BIMA YA AFYA KWA WATU BINAFSI

BIMA YA AFYA KWA WATU BINAFSI
 Authors : NHIF
 Posted Date : 2015-05-11

BIMA YA AFYA KWA WATU BINAFSI

Mfuko wa taifa wa bima ya afya (hhif) sasa unasajili watu binafsi bila kuhusisha uhusiano wa mwajiri na mwajiriwa. Mwanachama atachangia mara moja kwa mwaka na atatibiwa yeye, mwenza wake na wategemezi halali wanne. Wote watakata huduma zote za afya katika hospitali zaidi ya 6000 nchi nzima.

HUDUMA BORA ZA MATIBABU NI HAKI YAKO NA NI DHAMANA YETUI!

Kwa maelezo zaidi, tembelea ofisi zetu zilzoko katika mikoa yote nchini au wasiliana na anuani ifuatayo;
 Mkurugenzi Mkuu, Mfuko wa Taifa wa Afya,
 S.L.P 11360, Dar es Salaam,
 Simu: +255 (0) 22 213 3964/ +255 (0) 22 213 3969

Government
 > Prominent leaders
 > Constitution
 > Directories
 > Parliament
 > Rules and Regulations
 > Government Gazette
 > Acts
 > Development Programmes
 > Policies
 > Employees
 > Facts and Figures
 > Defence and Security

Picture 1²³

MWAKA WA 96
TOLEO NA. 1
BEI SH. 1000/=

02 Januari, 2015

GAZETI
LA DAR ES SALAAM

JAMHURI YA MUUNGANO WA TANZANIA

Linatolewa kwa Idhini ya Serikali na Kuandikishwa Posta kama Gazeti

YALIYOMO

Taarifa ya Kawaida Uk.		Taarifa ya Kawaida Uk.	
Notice re Supplement	Na. 1 1	Ilani ya Kufutwa Jina la Mmiliki wa Kipande cha Ardhi	Na. 5 2
Kupotea kwa Hati za Kumiliki Ardhi	Na. 2-3 1/2	Deed Poll on the Change of Name.....	Na. 6 - 7 - 2-3
Kupotea kwa Leseni ya Makazi	Na. 4 2	Inventory of Unclaimed Properties	Na. 8 - 9 3-4

TAARIFA YA KAWAIDA NA. 1

Picture 2²⁴

²³ http://www.tanzania.go.tz/news/news_details/154 (21.02.2016)

²⁴ http://www.tanzania.go.tz/egov_uploads/documents/gazette_7_sw.pdf (21.02.2016)

Even the proposed new constitution is only available in Swahili²⁵. If one clicks for further details, the PDF version of the proposed constitution opens. There is also a link to the *Government gazette* (Picture 2), accessible as a PDF file, the latest issue was published in January 2015. The four-page gazette contains general announcements (*taarifa ya kawaida*).

GAZETI LA JAMHURI YA MUUNGANO WA TANZANIA							02 Januari, 2015	
TAARIFA YA KAWAIDA NA. 9								
INVENTORY OF UNCLAIMED PROPERTY					POLICE FORM 12			
INVENTORY No:					DISTRICT KINONDONI			
From : PÒLISI WAZO HILL To MAHAKAMA YA MWANZAO KAWE								
L and F: No.	Date	Description	Estimated Value		Finder's Name and Address	Remarks as to Condition	Magistrate's Orders	
			Tshs.	Cts				
LP.4/2014 PB/8208/2014	29/10/2014	17. T.V. aina ya Sony na Deck			VUSTINO J MGONJA OC CIA (L)	Chakavu	Ziharibiwe 19/11/2014	
		18. T.V. Sing Sung			KAWE DAR ES SALAAM	Chakavu		
		19. Radio Sabufa Spika moja				Chakavu		
		20. Bati za Mgongo Mpana 12					Zinafaa Kutumika	Ziuzwze 19/11/2014
		21. Plaud 29					Nzima	
		22. Sin Board 7						
		23. Bajaji haina Namba ya Bluu Chassis No. MD6MIPK6D4B83900					Zinafaa Kutumika	

.....
Officer Incharge - Police Station
Mkuu wa Upelelezi Wilaya ya Kawe DSM

Picture 3²⁶

On the front page of the gazette, the index of the announcements is given either in Swahili or English. With the exception of no. 1 and no. 8, the language chosen in the index (*yaliyomo*) corresponds to the language chosen for the text of the announcement itself. The dominant language used in the gazette is Swahili (announcements no. 2, no. 3, no. 4 and no. 5). Announcements no. 6 and no. 7 are in English, whilst announcements no. 1 and no. 8 are in a mixed language choice of Swahili and English. The mixed texts are announced in English. Swahili is, for example, the choice in no. 1,

²⁵ http://www.tanzania.go.tz/egov_uploads/documents/KATIBA_INAYOPENDEKEZWA_sw_%281%29_en.pdf (21.02.2016)

²⁶ http://www.tanzania.go.tz/egov_uploads/documents/gazette_7_sw.pdf (21.02.2016)

where some regulations concerning taxes for markets, natural water resources, health services, etc. are announced. No. 2 and no. 3 inform (also in Swahili) of the loss of documents for land property, while no. 4 (Swahili) announces the loss of a residence permit and no. 5 (Swahili) announces the cancellation of a land title. All these announcements therefore contain important legal information. However, the same can be said of no. 6 and no. 7, where English was chosen, in both cases a deed poll on the change of name. The gazette also has a section on lost items (Inventory of Unclaimed Properties), which are announcements no. 8 and no. 9 (Picture 3).

<p>TAARIFA YA KAWAIDA NA. 1</p> <p>Notice is hereby Given that Sheria Ndogo and Kanuni as set out below have been issued and are published in Subsidiary Legislation Supplement No. 1 Dated 02nd January, 2015 to this number of the <i>Gazette</i>:-</p> <p>Sheria Ndogo za (Ushuru wa Masoko) za Halmashauri ya Wilaya ya Tunduru, 2014 (Tangazo la Serikali Na. 1 la Mwaka 2015).</p> <p>Sheria Ndogo za (Ushuru wa Maliasili na Vyanzo vya Maji) za Halmashauri ya Wilaya ya Tunduru, 2014 (Tangazo la Serikali Na. 2 la Mwaka 2015).</p> <p>Sheria Ndogo za (Ada na Ushuru) za Halmashauri ya Wilaya ya Tunduru, 2014 (Tangazo la Serikali Na. 3 la Mwaka 2015).</p> <p>Hati Rasmi (Uanzishaji wa Bodi ya Huduma za Afya) ya Halmashauri ya Wilaya ya Tunduru, 2014 (Tangazo la Serikali Na. 4 la Mwaka 2015).</p>	<p>Kanuni za Kudumu za Halmashauri ya Wilaya ya Manispaa ya Singida, 2014 (Tangazo la Serikali Na. 5 la Mwaka 2015).</p> <p>Kanuni za Kudumu za Halmashauri ya Wilaya ya Mbeya, 2014 (Tangazo la Serikali Na. 6 la Mwaka 2015).</p> <hr/> <p>TAARIFA YA KAWAIDA NA. 2</p> <p>KUPOTEA KWA HATI YA KUMILIKI ARDHI <i>Sheria ya Uandikishaji wa Ardhi</i> (Sura 334)</p> <p><i>Hati Nambari: 38890</i> <i>Ardhi: Kiwanja Na. 1330 LO Na 81651, Kitulu 'G'</i> TUGETA JIINI DAR ES SALAAM.</p> <p>TAARIFA IMETOLEWA kwamba Hati ya kumiliki ardhi iliyotajwa hapo juu imepotea na ninakusudia kutoa Hati mpya badala yake iwapo hakuna kipingamizi kwa muda</p>
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Picture 4²⁷

It is remarkable that the table and its categories are in English, but the language chosen for the description of the unclaimed property is Swahili (for example, *T.V. aina ya Sony na Deck* 'television, type Sony and Deck' or the description of an electronic device as *chukavu*, 'old'). The mixing of languages in one text does not follow the widespread monolingual norm. As previously mentioned, this is especially the case for texts produced by governmental authorities (see Sebba 2002: 3). The mixed language usage for the announcement of the unclaimed property might be based on an older

²⁷ http://www.tanzania.go.tz/egov_uploads/documents/gazette_7_sw.pdf (21.02.2016)

template that is still in use²⁸. Mixed language also appears in announcement no. 1. The introductory sentence is in English, where as the regulations themselves, are listed in Swahili (Picture 4). Unlike the mixed use of language for the unclaimed property, where at least one language was chosen for the box of the table, announcement no. 1 is a striking example of plurilingual usage within one text and within the most highly regulated text genre, as there is no contextualisation hint explaining why this legally relevant information is transmitted in a mix of languages.

In summary, the Tanzanian government homepage, as well as texts linked to it, tends to favour the use of Swahili in a text genre belonging to the most highly regulated category. In addition, a mix of languages is also used at times.

Considering the primary function of the government websites to inform their citizens, we can observe that in the case of Kenya, only readers that have English in their repertoire will be able to access the information. In terms of Tanzania, we can conclude that government information is available in Swahili and English, but below the main surface level, certain texts are only accessible in Swahili or – in few cases – as mixed texts in English and Swahili.

The choice of a language is not only a question of a writer's aim to communicate successfully. It also reflects the symbolic function writers attribute to a language and the members of the respective (writing and reading) community. For the text producers of the Kenyan government website, it seems that Swahili is not favoured for digitally-mediated texts, even though Swahili is an official language of the country.

The website of the government of the Comorian Union is in French only²⁹. The two other official languages, Arabic and "Comorian", are disregarded. One could argue that due to the lack of a standardised "Comorian", a text following highly regulated norms would be difficult to write without favouring a certain island-specific variety. Also, Arabic is not used. Generally, the non-French readers have not been taken into consideration

²⁸ This is a hypothesis for which I was not (yet) able to get any evidence.

²⁹ <http://www.beit-salam.km> (27.02.2016)

with regards to the Comorian government's website. An implicit message is also sent by the government that French is a major language and should be learnt by all, therefore there is no need for an alternative language on the website. The same holds true for Kenya, where English is in fact the language one has to know in order to read the government's digitally-mediated texts. However, in Tanzania, Swahili is the language that allows the reader of digitally-mediated texts published by the government to access the full range of information (e.g. the proposed new constitution, which is only available in Swahili). In addition, the government demands the flexibility of the reader to be able to switch between English and Swahili, as demonstrated by texts in the gazette.

The next section focuses on group B texts, those written by literate citizens using the Internet to comment, announce or ask for information in web forums. The corpus of analysed texts consists of longer text passages that are written for an anonymous readership and therefore do not include answers to, for example, a question or statement. As stated earlier, writers do not necessarily write in the languages in which they have the highest general proficiency, but rather choose those languages in which they have writing practice.

Web forums

"A web discussion forum is a mode of public, asynchronous computer-mediated communication." (Döring 2003, cit. in Androutsopoulos 2006: 531) Out of the many existing forums, I chose *Jamii forums*³⁰ as an example for Tanzania and Kenya, a platform based in Dar es Salaam in Tanzania³¹. My choice was motivated by the platform's description that contents are user-generated³². This platform provides discussions on many topics, including a special forum for Kenyans and issues specific to Kenya. As the Kenyan forum is intensively used, it seems likely that many Kenyans use this forum too. Even though texts in forums are written by a specific author (unlike the

³⁰ <http://www.jamiiforums.com> (27.02.2016)

³¹ "We have our offices in Dar es Salaam but we still work virtually."
<http://www.jamiiforums.com> (10.05.2015)

³² "Jamii Forums is a 'User Generated Content' site; anyone can register (MUST) and comment or start a new topic. You are always welcome!" <http://www.jamiiforums.com> (28.04.2016)

anonymous government websites), the author still remains anonymous, even though, in most cases, they use an alias. It cannot be detected whether the author is Tanzanian or Kenyan or from somewhere else. Only the context and self-ascriptions might provide evidence of their socio-cultural or national background. What group A and group B texts share therefore is that they are both written by anonymous authors for an anonymous audience. Nevertheless, group B text producers may provide some evidence of their socio-cultural background, and as they are individuals, they might also reveal language attitudes in a more obvious way. Ivkovic and Lotherington (2009: 19) state that in the linguistic cyberspace, the choice of language functions as an identity marker. Based on this idea, namely that language choice marks identity, and the assumption that group B texts are less highly regulated, I looked at the writer's language choice to see if group B texts displayed more "fluid and flexible" language practices³³ in comparison to group A texts.

On the surface level *Jamii forums* provides an index of the various discussion topics (see Picture 5 for a view of part of the homepage).



Picture 5³⁴

³³ For a discussion of different concepts on bi- and multilingualism, see Androutsopoulos (2015: 186ff.). She discusses the terms *metrolingualism* (aims to examine how language users manipulate the resources they have at their disposal, which is a concept that goes away from analysing switches and the mixing of distinct codes), *translanguaging* (a cover term that includes the full range of linguistic performances of multilingual language users) and *polylingualism* (a type of multilingual practice and a normative expectation, the polylingualism norm suggests that language users employ whichever linguistic features are at their disposal to achieve their communicative aims).

³⁴ <http://www.jamiiforums.com/> (03.03.2016)

The titles of the topics in the forum are either in English or Swahili, but the explanatory text below does not always follow the language choice in the title. *Biashara, Uchumi na Ujasiriamali* (business, economy and entrepreneurship) is announced in Swahili, but the short introductory comment below is in English. *Kilimo, Ufugaji na Uvuvi* (agriculture, animal husbandry and fishing) is further explained in Swahili, while the third topic, *Nafasi za Kazi na Tenda* (work and tender opportunities) begins in Swahili but then switches to English. The forum *Nafasi za Kazi na Tenda* currently³⁵ contains two different types of contributions: job announcements and requests for work. Most of the texts are written in Swahili only, while many loan words for technical terms are in English. In some cases, users reply or comment on the announcements. Often, the language used in replies and comments displays flexible and fluid language choices. See, for instance, the Swahili comment a woman adds to her own job request: *Habari za asubuhi ndugu zangu bado natafuta cjapat. I need your help.* (Good morning my friends, I am still searching, I have not yet got [it]. I need your help.) She starts in Swahili, then uses *cjapat* (sijapata 'I did not yet get') in Swahili by using the homophone abbreviation *c* for *si*, before she continues in English. In the forum *Kilimo, Ufugaji na Uvuvi* (agriculture, animal husbandry and fishing), for example, both an enquiry for a *shamba* (field) for cultivation and a question regarding a specific chicken farming issue are written in Swahili. Again, in the replies, the texts reveal a flexible choice of language use, with Swahili being the preferred choice.

To sum up, under the various topics of *Jamii forums*, there is a huge collection of texts that correspond to the prototypical multilingual text, employing both Swahili and English alternatively. Most studies so far have focused on "[t]he prototypical 'spoken multilingual text' [...] a conversation that involves language alternation, and under the heading of 'conversational code-switching' [...]. By contrast, other types of multilingual genres, including those that straddle the boundaries between speech and writing, have tended to receive much less attention from researchers." (Sebba 2012: 98) Several different models have been developed to describe the change of language in conversation from a formal linguistic position, as well as sociolinguistic models to explain the function of

³⁵ 03.03.2016

language changes often described as Code Switching. In order to analyse the examples, I consider neither the approach of dominating and dominated codes, nor the approach of the sociolinguistic function of switches to be relevant, as the written examples do not provide— as mentioned earlier — any contextualisation hints. I therefore follow Matras' (2009) idea of a plurilingual mode, where speakers switch between codes and use those lingual resources in the way they consider useful for successful communication.

Schiffman (2005: 1) points out that, on the one hand, the individual's linguistic repertoire is variable, and on the other, their proficiency in the codes differs. He assumes that speakers never master all codes equally. Therefore, each individual repertoire is different compared to another person's repertoire, not only in terms of competence but also in terms of the domain that can be covered in a specific code. Schiffman (2005) highlights two essential elements of competence: active and passive competence, respectively. To differentiate between active and passive competence is essential for this analysis, as writers display their active competence in writing, while they expect the reader's passive (reading) competence to decode their message.

Browsing through the forum, one also discovers a section for *Jukwaa la Lugha* (language platform). In the majority of cases, writers post their messages in Swahili only, and the contributions cover several topics of Swahili and other languages, questions of terms, origins of lexemes, etc. Topics concerning Swahili are without exception discussed in Swahili, and in addition, in a form of Swahili that is very close to the form considered as standard by elitist voices. It is not surprising that Swahili is the preferred language choice in a forum dedicated to this language, and we should therefore not expect language mixing.

An assessment of the Kenyan forums shows that all titles of the discussion forums are in English, but many of the posted texts are written in Swahili. It seems that writers act in a rather flexible fashion. An interesting topic is introduced to the Kenyan forum by a member with the title "Should Tanzania and Kenya merge?", written in English. The writer might be Tanzanian as they express the opinion that one of the benefits of such a

merger would be that “Kenyans may learn to speak Swahili safi³⁶”. With this statement, the writer reveals that they assume that the “others” (the Kenyans) do not speak proper Swahili. This definition of the others’ Swahili does not match the own perception of the norm; “deviation” therefore serves as a criterion of difference.

If one looks at the many and rather emotional replies to the controversial question, one can observe that some texts are written in English, some in Swahili and some are mixed texts, regardless of whether they are written by an assumed Kenyan or Tanzanian.

I was unable to find a web forum that was clearly based on the Comoro Islands. Online forums dedicated to Comorian topics are usually located abroad, many of them in France. The Comorian Diaspora is large³⁷, therefore members are likely to be very active in terms of digital communication. French was the predominant choice of language in all consulted forums. As stated earlier, literate Comorians, regardless of whether they live on the islands or abroad, have writing practice in French and possibly Arabic, but the Comorian varieties are predominantly used for oral communication. Nevertheless, Comorian varieties are used in some texts, even though the vast majority are a mix of languages, mainly French and Comorian varieties.

yahoo France has a forum called *HABARI: liste de diffusion des COMORES*³⁸, a group that currently has 748 members, of whom many, if not most, do not live on the Comoro Islands. I came across the following text in this forum, which shows a mixed language choice (Picture 6).

³⁶ safi = proper

³⁷ “Pourtant, ce micro-Etat de 600 000 habitants [...] a une communauté en France équivalent à un sixième de sa population.” (Direche-Slimani/Le Houérou 2002: 18)

³⁸ <https://fr.groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/habari/conversations/messages> (03.03.2016)

Le peuple comorien, dans un tout petit archipel des Comores remerciera un jour la voie qui permette tant d'expressions des justes huit cents à recevoir sans se comprendre de la liberté d'expressions d'aimer son pays, sa nature, son peuple sa nation sa patrie. J'aime où je suis, mais j'aime autant plus où je suis née et marcha à quatre pattes avant d'être debout. C'est de cela mon amour à accorder aux autres. La France qui touche ma souffrance me touche, l'archipel des Comores qui touche ma souffrance me touche.

Nous vous laissons, sans vous laissez »noyo »NTSI ZAMHA MBI !des déclarations de bons nous aurions vu et entendu.

Oh historiens qui cherchaient la faille, dans les villages sont venus, avec d'abord les punis en marchant à plat ventre »yesha itsa wazi,sha ndongo »Oh ô bo wa trotro !

Yeza handani nde ma shishio, ils ont cherché où il ne valait pas »mbada »la mdru wu djuwa ou qui savent qui règnent.

Quant ont nos grandes mères ont été percées aux oreilles, pour des « madjasi » et les nez pour des épines, les femmes ne s'étaient déjà appropriée.

Parlons en, ou parlement comoriens ?Nde yeza bise !Pourant, il y a yeza kotsi !

Applaudissement, lo » kuhuru »shikomor »shi ya mba hohé ko mfa wume yeka ntsi ndaye.

Les comoriens doivent comprendre :oh parents comment ont fait-ils pour habiller femme avec les premières robes et mzilisa transparente dans toute le village.

Je connais les comoriens .UN MARIAGE AVEC JUSTE UN MADJILIS n »a rien et son habit, c'est un bouchouti, de cela se passe n'importe quel jour.

Des nobles des noblesses « Ye wa watsu baki,wafu »Mdjo yenga, la première fois que ce jeune a osé s'approcher comment une viande rouge partager, il se souviendrait à vie ?

Sauf quant t'es élu je ferais le meilleurs de ces noirs pour être compris peuples, à la Mercie des peuples blancs

La paix, la raison ce sont des mots difficiles où chacun l'entende à sa façon sans opprimer les peuples.

Vous avez la liberté, le monde est en une, ici libre expression à Mlendien ,yewa aboujazari,ni hu pve ndrabo !

Yeka moussa mliza,

Narende yatobe,adama hayaleya !

Nde za yi ntsi ,ADAM NA HAWA?NAME MDJI ?TOUT LE MONDE A MARQUE

Picture 6³⁹

The writer shares their approach to life, using not only French but also ShiNgazidja, the Comorian variety from Grande Comore. Texts are also, though rarely, written in a Comorian variety only.

Another web forum from the Comorian writing and reading community published a longer statement written by a government representative. Mohamed Bacar Dossar, the former minister of finance for the Union of the Comoro Islands, wrote a counter statement after one writer in a web forum accused the president at the time (Ahmed Abdallah Mohamed Sambi) of foolish behaviour. Dossar wrote a longer statement, of which the last paragraph is as follows:

”Comme le dit le proverbe comorien: ‘Uengo mdru katso dzina bi’. Alors Monsieur Cheikh Abdel Kader de Londres, dans votre article vous vous défendez de ne pas être motivé par haine. Mais la démonstration est faite du contraire. En fait, mon analyse est que vous nous haïssez, pas par ce que vous supposez que nous avons fait, mais bien par ce que nous sommes. En effet, nous sommes peut-être différents de vous (ou vous le ressentez comme

³⁹ Underlining of ShiNgazidja by the author.

tel) et c'est peut-être cela qui vous motive. Nous ne pouvons pas être tous pareils, mais nous sommes tous des comoriens. Admettre cela, ça s'appelle de la tolérance, ça permet de continuer à vivre ensemble malgré nos différences."⁴⁰

The statement is written in French until the beginning of the last paragraph, where Dossar uses a proverb in ShiNgazidja: *Uengo mdru katso dzina bi* ('That person that despises you has a bad record'). The mixing of languages in this case does have, unlike the earlier examples, a quite clear function: using this discursive level with a proverb activates established and accepted frames, so that the statement cannot be tackled.⁴¹

Digitally-mediated texts – between highly regulated and fluid and flexible

For the most highly regulated text genre in a plurilingual setting, the government websites of Tanzania, Kenya and the Union of the Comoro islands, it can be observed that the influence of the macro language policy can be detected with regards to the orthography of a language, but not in terms of the choice of the language. Although the Tanzanian government uses Swahili and English for the homepage and the texts linked to it beneath the surface level, and it sometimes mixes languages for texts such as the government gazette, this is not the case for Kenya and the Comoro Islands, where English and French respectively are the only languages offered by the government. In Kenya and on the Comoro Islands, not all official languages are appreciated enough on a government level to find their way onto government websites.

⁴⁰ <http://www.comores-actualites.com/actualites-comores/mohamed-bacar-dossar-les-comores-humiliees-par-qui/> (03.03.2016) "As the Comorian proverb says: that person that despises you has a bad record. Well, Mr Cheikh Abdel Kader de Londres, in your article you defend yourself by saying that you are not driven by hate. But the opposite is proved to be true. In fact, my analysis is that you hate us, not because of what you assume that we did, but rather because of who we are. We might be different from you (or you think we are) and maybe that is what is pushing you. We can't all be the same, but we are all Comorians. Accept it, this is what is known as tolerance, it allows us to continue living together despite our differences." [own translation]

⁴¹ I discussed this proverb with two ShiNgazidja speakers. Both of them explained that Dossar did not use the proverb with the 'correct' spelling. Two 'correct' versions were presented: *wuyego mdru kamtso dzina bi* and *E uyengo mdru yé katso dzina bi*. What is considered to be 'right' or 'wrong' by community members seems to depend on their own writing experience in the variety, which is due to the lack of standardisation of ShiNgazidja. For details, see Waldburger (2015, chapter 8).

Group B writers are much more fluid and flexible when it comes to the choice of language, spelling and orthography. Their texts belong to a non-regulated text genre within a plurilingual setting. In this context, group B members do respond to their own needs and do not limit themselves as government text producers do, but they are restricted by the writing practice they are able to acquire during education, which is by nature, regulated by macro policy decisions.

	Group A (government texts)			Group B (individuals, web forums)		
	Most highly regulated			Fluid and flexible		
	Tanzania	Kenya	Comoro Islands	Tanzania	Kenya	Comoro Islands
Languages chosen	Swahili English	English	French	Swahili English	Swahili English	French "Comorian"
Multilingual texts	Yes (e.g. government gazette)	-	-	Yes	Yes	Yes
Non-used linguistic resources ⁴²	V	Swahili V	Comorian Arabic	V	V	Arabic

Table 2, Summary; by the author

The prototypical multilingual text is a conversation that involves language alternation under the heading of conversational code-switching. I would therefore also like to point out that these digitally-mediated texts provide the possibility of a discussion on how to treat written language mixing. As Sebba (2012: 99) points out:

“We could [...] extend the scope of the term code-switching to such text types while preserving the requirement that to be called ‘code-switching’ a change of language must be ‘locally meaningful’, functioning as a contextualization cue for the

⁴² Group A: defined by language policy, Group B: flexible.

reader”, argues Sebba, but he cautions that “ there is no text-internal or text-external way of establishing that ‘participants’ actually have these interpretations, as there might be in a conversational interaction.” (Sebba 2012: 99)

If there are no contextualisation cues, writers are forced to adapt to the potential reader. In our case, writers and readers are plurilingual, and as members of group B, they are highly fluid and flexible. Hence, group B’s digitally-mediated texts are relatively free from normative constraints, regarding grammar as well as language choice, and writers can practise multilingualism (Sebba 2013: 100, cit. in Gafaranga 2015: 94). The question of whether it is code-switching with dominating or dominated codes therefore becomes obsolete. Instead it seems relevant to discuss the chances of digitally-mediated text resources against the backdrop of language policies: which players, with which power to control or resist policies, choose which languages at a given time and under given circumstances.

Conclusion

A few samples of digitally-mediated texts were picked out of an endless store of resources that are accessible online. For this paper, government websites and texts from web forums were chosen in order to put two players of the digital community in focus, those responsible for language policy decisions and their implementation, and citizens of the respective countries. Starting from the premise that different text genres demand or allow different approaches as far as the acceptance of and compliance with grammatical rules and language standards are concerned, it was observed that governments do follow their alleged norms when it comes to orthography, but not when it comes to language choice. On the contrary, the digitally-mediated texts of the governments of Kenya and the Comoro Islands are not consistent with their own language policy rules. The texts of the Kenyan government are only available in English, while those of the government of the Comoro Islands are only in French. In both cases, one (Swahili for Kenya) or two (Arabic and Comorian for the Comoro Islands)

official languages are not held in as high esteem as the governments officially promote. For the Tanzanian government's texts it can be observed that Swahili is used more prominently than English, which according to the law should get the same level of appreciation. Assuming that citizens of the respective countries are less obliged to stick to highly regulated text norms, it can be observed that writers tend to adapt the language choice to their own needs and most of all to their own writing practice (and their expectations of which language will be understood by the readers – usually excluding vernaculars).

The digitally-mediated text examples have been examined with a focus on language policy-related factors to illustrate that they can serve as a resource to analyse current perceptions of language ideologies. In addition, these texts provide an insightful resource to explore many other language-related aspects. As digitally-mediated texts are highly up-to-date, they provide linguistic resources that depict the language use of the text producers with a finger on the pulse of the time. Incorporating these texts into research or teaching results in a corpus of highly diverse data. Firstly, from a linguistic perspective, one topic that needs closer attention is the concept of “highly regulated language” against the backdrop of languages that have not been standardised, and language norms that allow plurilingual language use. Secondly, from a sociolinguistic perspective, the diverse linguistic implementation of texts within one language cluster proves to be the refutation of claims of alleged ‘right’ or ‘wrong’ ways of using language. Finally, digitally-mediated texts also call for a discourse analytical approach, which examines the knowledge and thoughts of a specific time on the basis of specific texts.

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