

The sociolinguistic, semantic and morphological characteristics of personal names in Southern Chasu.

Miriam Juma.

Master of Arts (Linguistics)

University of Dar es Salaam, College of Humanities, 2018.

Naming a place, a thing or a person is a universal characteristic of human beings. However, the criteria to assign a specific name differ among communities. This study reports on sociolinguistic, semantic and morphological characteristics of personal names in Southern Chasu (Kimakasa-papa variety) spoken in North Eastern part of Tanzania. Specifically it described the naming process; identified meaning of personal names; and analysed morphological characteristics of the names. The study was enlightened by the Semantic Theory (Referential Theory of Meaning) which associates the meaning of words with the external world. This study used a qualitative approach. Data were collected in three villages in Mabilioni ward through interview and documentary review. They were analysed by using interpretative approach. It has been found that naming in Southern Chasu reveals the relationship that exists between language and socio-cultural contexts. Children were given two names: one chosen by a midwife randomly and the other by parents referring either to grand parents "names or associating the birth with the environment circumstance like prenatal incidents, flora, fauna that caused historical events, historical events, meals, place, objects or other beliefs. The names were formed by words from Chasu, a few from Swahili, Chagga, and English while Hebrew contributed to the element „Eli“ affixed to stems from Chasu and other languages. It is recommended that a similar study be done to Northern Chasu in order to have a complete picture of the whole Chasu speaking community.