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Linguistic diversity in Kilimanjaro Bantu languages: focusing on cross-linguistically uncommon features



Mt. Kilimanjaro seen from Uru-Shimbwe (Daisuke Shinagawa, October 2023, Uru-Shimbwe, Moshi District, Kilimanjaro Region, Tanzania).

This presentation explores various aspects of linguistic variation found in the Kilimanjaro Bantu languages (KB) spoken in the outskirts surrounding the highest mountain in Africa. Consisting of around 20 distinct varieties, most of which are traditionally classified as regional dialects of the Chaga language, KB exhibits a considerable range of variation at practically all levels of linguistic subcomponents. Based on data collected through my fieldwork, which I have been conducting for more than 20 years, I will present group-internal linguistic diversity, especially focusing on cross-linguistically rare features. Furthermore, I will discuss how these findings contribute to expanding our knowledge on the structural diversity of the Bantu languages as a whole, which in turn shed new light on typological mechanisms as well as diachronic processes that explain the synchronic variation of present-day Bantu languages.

Daisuke Shinagawa is an associate professor at the Research Institute for Languages and Cultures of Asia and Africa, Tokyo University of Foreign Studies. He has been carrying out field linguistic research on Kilimanjaro Bantu languages for more than 20 years to investigate internal variation of the language group from a cross-Bantu typological perspective. His interest also covers structural variation of Swahili as a language of wider communication in a vast area of East and Central Africa. His publications include: Swahili forum 26 - special issue on variation in Swahili (edited with Nico Nassenstein), Descriptive materials of morphosyntactic microvariation in Bantu (edited with Yuko Abe).

Weitere Informationen: www.ifeas.uni-mainz.de