

# REVIEWS

***Studia Africana. Papers in Honour of Sergio Baldi***  
**(Topics in Interdisciplinary African Studies 46)**  
**edited by Gian Claudio Batic, Rudolf Leger.**  
**Köln: Rüdiger Köppe Verlag 2017, 169 pp.**  
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The book is a collection of articles written in honor of prof. Sergio Baldi, “an exceptional authority in the field of African languages and linguistics” (p. 9). The languages of the chapters included in the volume are English and French. The main part of the book is preceded by a short Foreword (p. 9) and a list of publications by Sergio Baldi (p. 11-17). The articles are arranged according to alphabetical order by contributors’ last name. The articles are rather short, oscillating from six to thirteen pages, excluding references. The topics are as diversified as the research interests of professor Baldi and comprise lexicography, lexical semantics, language typology, historical linguistics, phonology, literature (written and oral), and culture.

Out of thirteen papers presented in the volume, the majority concern language and linguistics. Within these language-oriented papers, four focus on presenting raw language data with the commentary sections reduced to a minimum. Such is the paper by Rudolf Leger “Superstitious beliefs among the Kupto”, where the short introduction of Kupto language spoken in Nigeria and the notion of superstitions are followed by a list of fifty three Kupto superstitions translated into English and deprived of any commentary or concluding remarks. Two articles that concern historical linguistics are quite difficult to follow for those who are not familiar with the specific conventions concerning the abbreviations, notation system, and the way of presenting data characteristic for the field. Anna Belova in “Lexique culturel en Afrique nord-orientale (termes de “l’or” et ses espèces)” shows various terms for ‘gold’ used in East-North Africa, starting from the most ancient Egyptian *nb(w)* and ending on the most recent Arabic *dahab*- which slowly replaces the ancient terms in the modern languages spoken in North

Africa. As claimed by the author, the spread of the terms reflects historical situation and cultural contacts between the people who were not necessarily each-other's neighbors. In "More links between Chadic, Cushitic, and Omotic (animal names)" Olga Stolbova presents the lists of 23 lexical cognates limited to animal names. The article is almost deprived of comments and seems to be devoted to the specialists interested in historical linguistics. The last article focused on presenting language data is "Origin and development of bird names in Kxoe (Kalahari Khoe): Some preliminary thoughts" by Rainer Vossen. The author lists and classifies the names of birds in Kalahari Khoe spoken in Namibia and Botswana. He divides the presentation into several sections: inherited names (names reconstructible for Proto-Khoe), onomatopoeic forms, borrowings from neighboring Bantu languages, descriptive or periphrastic names, lexical innovations, and undetermined origin.

Other papers concerning linguistic topics have more descriptive nature. Herman Jungraithmayr in "Seven precious findings in Chadic after 60 years of research: *Eine Blütenlese*" shares his personal experience in discovering certain features of Chadic languages such as passive voice in Tangale, subjunctive mood in Mokilko or attributing gender system to verbal categories (imperfective and perfective) in Gadang. The paper is vividly written with the description of author's memories of how and when the particular discovery took place.

Aliyu Mu'azu in "The interference of the first language over second language: A case of some phonological processes among Ebira speaking Hausa" focuses on presenting a process of elision which takes place when the speakers of Ebira (Niger-Congo language) speak Hausa (Afroasiatic language). The phenomenon is illustrated by the examples showing processes of deglottalization, vowel lengthening and merger. Unfortunately, the presentation of the language data uses unclear system of notation, lacks morphological glosses and contains numerous typos (e.g. on p. 87 *io* instead of *zo*, *me* instead of *mai*), making it useful only for those who know Hausa as the Hausa orthographic system was used to note the pronunciation of Hausa language spoken by Ebira. Another weak point of the paper is the lack of a slightest note of how and where the presented data were obtained.

Flavia Aiello and Maddalena Toscano in their paper "On some Swahili ICT terms" discuss the newly created words related to Information and Communication Technology (ICT), such as *password*, *website*, *web*, and *internet*, grounding them in the historical and social context. The authors draw attention to the strong cultural connotation of the newly coined term *nywila* 'password' derived from the historical term: *nywinywila* used for password during the Majimaji war

against the Germans. They also show, by providing various statistic data, that some terms developed by the linguists and language experts were either neglected or contested by the native speakers of Swahili. The paper contains a proposal of a new etymology for the word *tovuti* 'site, website'. Authors claim it developed from Arabic word *tabuti* 'Arch of the Covenant'.

In his paper "Of direction, will, and intention: An analysis of the Hausa *nufa*" Gian Claudio Batic undertakes an analysis of the Hausa verb *nufa* 'head towards the place, intend to mean something' suggesting that this semantic extension of the verb is triggered by the metaphor: "Intend to mean something is head towards a place". The paper would be more complete if the author decided to ground the phenomenon within the common semantic change of the verb 'to go' which is used cross-linguistically to state intentions, make offers and promises (Traugott 1989: 40), e.g. English *I'm gonna* or compare it with a common grammaticalization pattern from the verb 'to go' to the future tense marker (Givón 1973).

Another paper devoted to the Hausa language is written by Nina Pawlak "Measuring the content of happiness: Semantic notions coded in the Hausa word *lafiya*". The author claims that each culture developed a specific attitude towards the concept of 'happiness' and this attitude is visible in the lexicon of a given language, as well as in the language use. The Hausa data investigated by Pawlak show that there are several lexical terms conveying the concept of happiness. However, the emphasis is put on a frequently used term *lafiya*, which literally means '(good) health' and renders many positive meanings connected with the state of happiness, such as: 'good mood, peace, safety, nature'. It is claimed that the semantic prototype of this term refers to *harmony (balance)*, which is an important Hausa value determining the feeling of being happy.

Georg Ziegelmeyer in the paper "On the idiomacity of Kanuri *bu* 'eat' and *ya* 'drink': A case of calquing from Hausa?" touches upon an interesting topic of great similarity between the metaphorical extensions of consumption verbs 'eat' and 'drink' in Kanuri and Hausa. In both languages the extensions go along a basic semantic cut: 'eat' => overcoming = [+ control] versus 'drink' => undergoing = [-control]. Ziegelmeyer not only presents a rich linguistic material comparing the two languages, but also tries to explain the semantic similarities between the languages which are not genetically related. According to the author, there are two possible explanations: similarities between metaphorical extensions of the consumption verbs found in several African languages and contact-induced transfer of metaphorical extensions from Hausa to Kanuri.

Apart from the papers devoted to linguistics, the volume contains a few papers related to literature and culture. One of them is the contribution by Mariusz

Kraśniewski "The revolution in Hausa music: Hip-hop, the *arewa* chapter" that touches upon a fascinating issue of contemporary hip-hop music in northern Nigeria which is a mixture of rap music imported from the United States and a dominant trend in Hausa pop music – *nanaye* style of singing – taken straight from the Bollywood movies. This specific combination of music styles is further globalized by using Hausa and English language in lyrics. The author discusses various barriers to introducing gangsta-style music in the conservative, Muslim society of the Nigerian North, such as the actions undertaken by the Censorship Board as well as the dissent of the religious leaders and the government authorities. He admits that due to several obstacles the revolution in Hausa music was "not a shocking therapy, but rather a 'translation' of the foreign cultural product for the local market" (p. 67).

Henry Tourneux and Hadidja Konaï in "Les formules d'ouverture et de clôture des contes peuls du Diamaré (Cameroun)" discuss the issue of opening and closing formulas used in storytelling. The study is mainly based on Fulfulde tales collected and edited by Paul K. Eguchi in 1970 and 1980. When it comes to opening formulas, they are fairly obvious and consists of phrases such as: 'here it is', 'this is, this will be', 'this is a fairy tale', 'small fairy tale' or the religious formulas taken from Arabic. The closing parts are much more enigmatic and difficult to understand without having access to some culturally conditioned activities, such as preparing the meat in a pot digged into the ground and covered with clay. The name of the dish produced in the pot (*takkaande* in Fulfulde) gave rise to the closing formula sometimes strengthened by the use of the ideophone *mulus* or a phrase referring to chicken's or hare's droppings. The authors draw attention to various associations between preparing and eating a meal and telling the story in order to justify the use of such closing formulas.

Stanisław Piłaszewicz's paper is focused on a poem written by Alaji Umaru at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The poem presents the life and works of a man called Musa, who was operating in 1904-1905 on the Gold Coast territory and proclaimed himself a Mahdi. Piłaszewicz shows a broader perspective of the Mahdi's movements connecting it with the tensions and stresses present in the societies of the colonial times. Another aspect of the poem shown in the paper is the personal engagement of the poet for whom Musa is somehow a rival, an opponent who attracts the attention of the people. Therefore, Alhaji Umaru presents himself as a defender of truth, while Musa is described as a liar known of charlatan practices.

In a nutshell, the papers presented in the book represent a broad variety of topics concerning the languages, culture, literature, and society of the whole African

continent. Such a diversity is commonly accepted in volumes published as *Festschriften*, which are not expected to have neither monographic nor very insightful character. However, at least to my belief, the content should be presented in a reader-friendly manner which would present contributors' research to a broader audience. Shaping the volume in a way that would present the scattered topics in an organized and comprehensive manner is the editors' responsibility. The editors of this volume decided to limit their role to composing a few paragraphs presenting the biographical note of prof. Baldi and compiling the list of his publications. They did not interfere neither in the way of presenting the topics by particular authors, nor in unifying the formal side of the book. The book does not contain any cross references, the system of presenting language data and morphological glosses differ from one paper to another. The volume does not contain an index which would direct the reader at least to the languages mentioned in the book. It is also quite difficult to understand why the editors did not eliminate the long-forgotten terminology, abandoned in the field of African studies long time ago, like Semito-chamitic (p. 49), Hamitosemitic phylum (p. 53) or did not correct the obvious mistakes "Ebira belongs to the Kwa sub-group of the Niger Congo family" (p. 85) present in particular papers.

Givón, T. 1973. "The Time-Axis Phenomenon", *Language* 49(4). 890-925.

Traugott, E. C. 1989. "On the Rise of Epistemic Meanings in English: An Example of Subjectification in Semantic Change", *Language* 65(1). 31-55.

*Izabela Will*

**O.-M. Ndimele, M. Ahmad & H.M. Yakasai (eds.).**  
***Language, Literature and Culture in a Multilingual Society. A Festschrift for Abubakar Rasheed. Vol. I-II.***  
 Linguistic Edition 105-106, Muenchen: Lincom GmbH  
 2016, 1122 pp.

This monumental two-volume publication was firstly released as one-volume book in Nigeria in 2013. It is a collection of 77 papers addressing various issues in linguistics which were presented in 2011 during the 24<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference of the Linguistic Association of Nigeria (CLAN) at Bayero University and Ni'ima Hotel in Kano. Thanks to the efforts of the Association's members, the event brought together the linguists from the northern, mostly Hausa-speaking region