

GLOBALIZATION OF AN AFRICAN LANGUAGE: TRUTH OR FICTION?

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Abstract

In the quest to do away with every influence of colonialism including language imperialism, following the independence of several African countries, particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa, debates arose about the possibility of the adoption of Swahili as a common language for Africa since it was the most widely-spoken African language at the time. However, even though this discourse continued for some time, it did not go beyond this stage. In contemporary times, discourse on the Swahili language has emerged again, but this time it centres on the question of globalization of the Swahili language. This recent development therefore is the motivation for this paper. We seek to bring to light paradoxes that emanate from the debate and quest for the globalization of the Swahili language against the background of challenges that face the language at the national, regional and continental levels and to make submissions as to whether the quest for the globalization of the Swahili language is not just an illusion.

1. Introduction

Following the independence of several African countries, particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa from the mid-nineteen fifties, debates arose about the possibility of the adoption of Swahili as a common language for Africa since it was the most widely-spoken African language at the time. The most notable propagators of this idea were the late Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, the first President of the Republic of Ghana, Professor Wole Soyinka, the Nobel Prize award-winning African writer, Professor Ayi Kwei Armah, author of the popular novel of the African Writers Series *The Beautiful ones are not yet Born* and Professor Ali Mazrui, a renowned Pan-Africanist, (Chimerah 2000, Mulokozi 2002). Though this discourse continued for some time, it did not go beyond the debate stage. Interestingly, in contemporary times, discourse on the Swahili language has emerged again, but this time it centres on the question of globalization and the Swahili language.

This emerging discourse on globalization and the Swahili language is the main motivation for this paper.

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The second section of the paper sets out the background and justification for the paper. In the next section we give an overview of the current state of the Swahili language globally, that is at the national, regional, continental and global levels. We then examine the challenges that face the language at each level and their implications and highlight the emerging paradoxes for the question of globalisation. Finally, we re-examine the question of globalization and the Swahili language and draw our conclusion.

2. Background and Justification

The term globalization has been defined as a 'new term that is used to describe an old process, the historical process that began with our human ancestors moving out of Africa to spread all over the globe' (Yale Global Online). This new term stems from the IMF, World Bank and World Trade Organization's effort at achieving a global economy where indeed, there is free economic, political and environmental intervention.

Tabb (2006) defines globalization as a 'comprehensive term for the emergence of a global society in which economic, political, environmental, and cultural events in one part of the world quickly come to have significance for people in other parts of the world.' He goes on to explain that 'Globalization is the result of advances in communication, transportation and information technologies.' Advances in these three areas have indeed turned the world into a global village.

The term globalization for sometime has been used mainly in the economic sense, and has become a popular subject of debate and discussion in the business world and among scholars of economics but the term also encompasses other aspects of life such as culture and language. Indeed in whatever sense that the term globalization is used, communication plays a vital role. In other words, globalization cannot be achieved without communication. It is also a fact that communication is effected through the medium of language in whatever forms it may take be it vocal, written or electronic. In effect, there cannot be globalization without language.

Some languages of the world already have been described or referred to as global or globalized. Typical of these is English. English is classified as such for various reasons, the most notable of which is the extent to which it is used globally. English is used globally in education, political administration and business. It is the major language that is used globally in publications including books, newspapers and magazines, on radio and television, in the movie and music industries. Although the Swahili language obviously cannot be equated with English there is no denial of its global presence. It would not be too far fetched to consider its

possible globalisation along at least a couple of the general lines along which English is, for example, in the area of education and radio broadcast. Therefore, it is not surprising that Swahili has begun to receive some attention in the discourse on globalisation.

In the literature two different views seem to have emerged as far as the globalisation of Swahili is concerned. On the one hand Swahili is seen basically as a language that possesses some qualities or characteristics that give it a high potential for globalisation (Moshi 2006, Mulokozi 2002), on the other hand Swahili is seen as having achieved globalisation to a limited extent (Kihore 2005).

Moshi (2006) advocates the consideration of Swahili as one of the globalised world languages. She outlines the qualities that Swahili possesses that constitute potentials for globalization as the international recognition and status it has acquired over the years. She argues that the label 'globalized' should not be based on the size of population a language serves but rather on the functions it performs and the recipients of those functions. Based on her own definition of what a globalised language is she classifies Swahili as globalized on the grounds that Swahili's presence is felt globally in the media (radio), ICT and academia.

Mulokozi (2002) discusses the possible globalisation of the Swahili language against the background of its achievements as an international language. He suggests positive steps that ought to be taken in order to achieve this. Kihore (2005) on the other hand centres his argument on the globalisation of the teaching of Swahili. He explains that, so far efforts towards the globalisation of Swahili have been spearheaded by the main implementers of the process of globalisation (i.e. the developed world). He points out the importance of Swahili speaking countries taking up the challenge of ensuring the globalisation of the teaching of Swahili through their own efforts.

Kihore like Mulokozi sees Swahili as having achieved globalisation as far as the teaching of Swahili is concerned, but his misgivings about the issue is that Swahili has been able to achieve this status mainly through the efforts of the super powers rather than the Swahili speaking countries. He argues that granted that globalisation has been described in some quarters as another form of colonisation, it is imperative that the needed steps are taken to ensure the reversal of roles and that the Swahili people themselves take over the task of ensuring further globalisation of the Swahili language by addressing and resolving the challenges that face Swahili speaking countries (and therefore hinders their efforts) such as inadequate ICT facilities, non existence of governmental and legal policies to back efforts of Swahili promoting institutions and the misconceptions and prejudices of the Swahili people that are detrimental to the efforts to achieve globalisation of the language.

In the light of the above views on the globalization of Swahili we re-examine the question of globalisation of Swahili against the background of the challenges that face it and their emerging paradoxes.

3. An Overview of the Current State of the Swahili Language in Africa and Beyond

3.1 Tanzania

In Tanzania the Swahili language has been the most important language for several decades. According to the 2002 population and housing census the population of Tanzania was about 34.5 million. The UN estimate of 2005 was 38.4 million. An estimated 90-96% of Tanzania's population are said to speak the Swahili language proficiently either as a first or second Language (Mulokozi 2002, Rubagumya 1991). In fact for a greater percentage of the people, Swahili is their second language. However, there is a growing population of people who use Swahili as a first language most often as a result of their being brought up in urban centres. Swahili is used as the language of communication in all social, cultural, economic, political and administrative discourses on a daily basis and this has been so for many decades.

Swahili was declared the national and official language, shortly after Independence. As a national language it is accepted by all and sundry and serves as a unifying force among Tanzanians. Kiswahili's role as the official language of Tanzania is manifest in the socio-economic, political, and administrative settings. Over 20 newspapers are published in Swahili including those on sports and entertainment while only a few are published in English. There are several radio and television stations and again most of them broadcast in Swahili. Regarding the film industry, for a long time the local film industry was non-existent in Tanzania and this led to the influx of Western and later Nigerian films. The reason for this was that under President Nyerere's rule, Tanzania did not have a national television company. However, presently the film industry is fast growing, and becoming popular. Swahili is the language used in these films, although it is often times code-mixed with English.

So far Tanzania is the only country in Africa that has Swahili as both National and Official language and it has remained so for decades since the 1960s. As far back as 1962 that is shortly after attaining independence Swahili was also established by the ruling government (Tanganyika National Union) as the medium of instruction at the primary school level. Kiswahili remains the medium of instruction in all public primary schools. At the secondary school level, medium

of instruction changes to English and Swahili becomes a compulsory subject, and at the tertiary level it is offered as an optional subject.

Over the years several agencies and commissions have been set up by the government to see to the promotion of the Swahili language. Of these the most active and productive has been the Institute of Kiswahili Research (IKR), a research institute based in the Kiswahili Department of the University of Dar es Salaam. It was established in 1970. The institute which is made up of various sections, such as the literature section, lexicography section and linguistics section, has made an unqualified contribution towards the development of the Swahili language, amongst its achievements are, the periodic publication of list of vocabulary covering various areas spanning literary terms to technological and scientific terms and the publication of text books in Swahili in various disciplines and for all academic levels (Kiswahili 2005)

3.2 East Africa

Next to Tanzania, Kenya has the largest population of native Swahili speakers in East Africa. In Kenya, Swahili is the first language of the natives of Mombasa a coastal town. It is also a lingua franca along with English in the urban centres. In the city of Nairobi both Swahili and English are used in most public and private institutions. In religious settings where the medium of communication is English most often interpretation into Swahili is offered.

In Kenya, the official language is English and the national language is Kiswahili. In education, Swahili is a compulsory subject at the primary and secondary levels and optional at the tertiary levels. At the tertiary level Swahili is offered at both undergraduate and graduate levels. The national radio and television company, Kenya Broadcasting Corporation in addition to English, has Swahili slots. One newspaper *Taifa Leo* (The Nation Today) is the only state-owned newspaper published in Swahili.

Kiswahili is quite wide spread in the Democratic Republic (DR) of Congo; it is spoken as a first language in provinces in North and South of the country and the eastern part of Upper Zaire by an estimated population of 9.1 million which is 27.49% of the population (Mputubwele 2003: 274). It is one of the four languages declared as National Languages in DR Congo. Radio Kinshasa and Voice of Congo broadcast some of their programmes in Swahili.

In Uganda, Swahili has been and continues to be one of the Lingua Franca in its urban centres and in the military. Presently, Swahili's presence is also felt in Rwanda and Burundi, it is spoken by a growing population. The state broadcasting companies have television and radio slots for Swahili medium programmes.

Indeed, the East Africa community has adopted Swahili as one of its working languages, and in all the other countries bordering Tanzania, that is Sudan, Zambia, Mozambique and the Comoro Island there is a limited use of Swahili.

3.3 The Rest of Africa

In the rest of Africa, Kiswahili is unknown to a lot of people. A yearly survey I undertake in my level 100 (first year) class indicates that less than 5% of the students know about the Swahili language and even fewer of them are able to tell where it is spoken. This is indicative of the extent to which people outside East Africa are oblivious of the Swahili language. Outside East Africa that is in the rest of Africa, Swahili at best would be found to be a subject offered at the tertiary level in a few Universities. Here in Ghana Swahili is taught in only two institutions, the University of Ghana and the SOS International School at Tema in Accra.

In Nigeria Swahili is offered by the University of Ibadan and the University of Port Harcourt. Also the Voice of Nigeria has a Swahili service which has daily slots. Swahili is also studied in Egypt and Libya. It is evident that outside East Africa the presence of Swahili is not very visible; at best Kiswahili can be estimated to be studied by a few thousand students in the rest of Africa.

The decision to adopt Swahili as one of the working languages of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) (now African Union, AU) was taken in 1986 (CM/1352 (XLIV)) but it was not implemented. The first four working languages of the OAU were English, French, Arabic and Portuguese. Although within the AU Swahili has been maintained as the fifth working language it has not been implemented.

3.4 State of Swahili in the Diaspora

Interestingly, Swahili has a much stronger presence in the developed world especially in Europe and America. In these parts of the world the presence of Swahili is not felt in the number of speakers per say but in several other ways. First of all the teaching and study of Swahili is very popular.

Because the American population is linguistically diverse, over the years as part of encouraging the study of minority and foreign languages, the federal government gives financial support for the teaching of such languages. Swahili has had an attraction for especially students of African descent who tend to identify with it. Several other African languages are taught in America but Swahili seems to be the most popular with students. It is taught in over 100 tertiary institutions. Swahili is also taught at the high school level. According to Online Resources (Digests 1996) 24 high schools in 14 states are involved in the teaching of Swahili.

Almost all the universities that offer Swahili have websites where a lot of learning resources are made available with varying levels of accessibility.

In Europe it is taught in universities in Britain, Germany, and Austria. In the Scandinavia Swahili is taught in Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, and Finland. In Asia it is taught in India, China and Japan. In the above countries a lot of researches on Swahili have been undertaken since the colonial period and many more are underway. Most of the world's international broadcasting companies have a Swahili service. BBC, VOA, Radio Moscow etc., and there is abundant information on Swahili on virtually every website on the internet.

4. Challenges Facing the Swahili Language at Various Levels

4.1 National Level

As much as Swahili scholars especially Tanzanian scholars glory in the status of Swahili as a potential global language, the current state of affairs where the Swahili language is concerned at the national level raises a serious question about the future of the Swahili language especially at the national, continental and ultimately the global level. In this section, our task is to bring to light these challenges that in our opinion stand to pose serious threats to the quest for the globalization of the Swahili language.

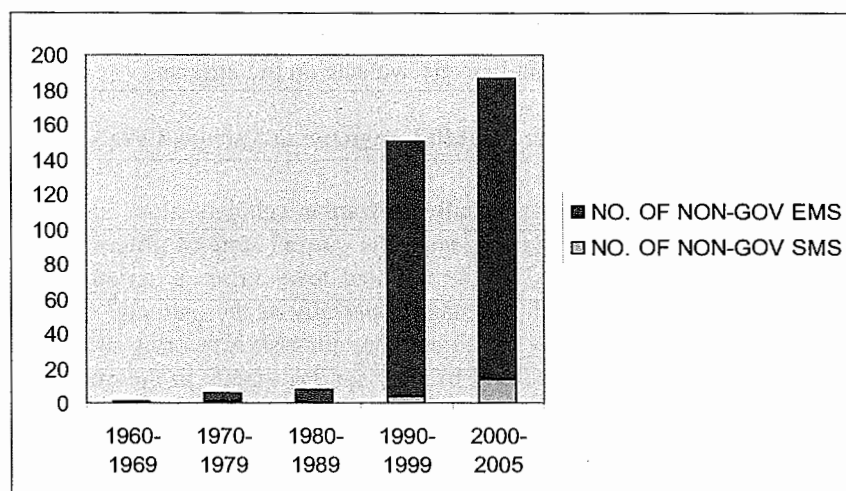
A few decades ago, in the years following the independence of Tanzania the average Tanzanian took pride in the Swahili language and did not pay any particular attention to his or her inability to communicate effectively in the English language, but today the average Tanzanian is very keen about the acquisition of the English language. Awareness of the English language as a superior language has dawned on Tanzanians today. One major area of challenge stems from the mushrooming of 'English medium schools' all over the country.

Shortly after independence, the ruling government gave a directive that Swahili should be the medium of instruction throughout the eight years of primary education, (Whitely 1969, Rwezaura 1993, Kiango 2005) and in reality this is so in all public schools.

For several years after independence that is up to 1969 there was only one English/international school in Tanzania, established in Dar-es-Salaam, purposely to cater for children of expatriates, and Tanzanians who had lived outside the country for a long time. This was the only school in which the medium of instruction was English for obvious reasons. However by December 2005 the number of English Medium schools had shot up to 334.¹ Most of these schools are non-government schools.

The following graph shows the breakdown of English Medium private primary schools established during particular periods as against Swahili Medium schools.²

Table 1: Non-Government primary schools: English Medium versus Swahili Medium



Of the 334 private, non-government primary schools only 19 of them have Swahili as a medium of instruction. From 1990 to 1999, 150 private schools were established and only 4 of them used Swahili as a medium of instruction. From January 2000 to December 2005, 186 schools were established and only 14 out of them use Swahili as the medium of instruction. This represents much less than 10% of the schools established within the period.

These English Medium schools are distributed all over the country with higher concentrations in urban centres such as Dar-es-Salaam Arusha. The data indicates that most of the English Medium schools (over 95%) were established from 1990 to 2005. There is every indication that many more English Medium schools will be established and at a much faster rate and the possibility that they may pose a threat to Swahili medium schools cannot be ruled out. Moreover, English Medium pre-school day care centres are also springing up in the country.

The picture painted above poses a great threat to the Swahili language although English medium schools represent a very small percentage of schools nationwide. Shortly after independence as part of the educational policy plan, Swahili was to

begin as medium of instruction in primary schools while efforts were to be put in the preparation of educational materials in Swahili towards a later switch from English as medium of instruction at the secondary level to Swahili and eventually to the tertiary level. However, no concrete steps were taken by governments to see to the implementation of the ultimate plan of education.

During the mid 1980's there was a push from individuals to get the government to implement this plan, as the organs and agencies that were commissioned by the government to see to the preparation of materials and the working out of the change-over plan had completed the task. The government has been hesitant in implementing the use of Swahili at the secondary level as medium of instruction. However, it has not been bold to declare abandonment of this plan. Without the support of government, little can be done to defend the position of Swahili in Tanzania. Kiango (2005) states that:

'In 1982, the presidential Commission on Education recommended a gradual shift of the medium of instruction in secondary schools from English to Swahili to begin from 1985 and to be completed by the year 1992.'

To date this is yet to be implemented and somehow, the impression that one gets is that Tanzanians' view of the Swahili language has changed over the last few decades, now value is placed on the English language; they see the acquisition of English as very crucial to their future, and to their participating in the global world and economy.

The apparent reason for the dramatic rise in the number of private English Medium schools and government's reluctance to implement language policy plan concerning Swahili will be discussed later in the paper.

The Institute of Kiswahili Research (IKR), based in the University of Dar-es-Salaam is one of the few institutions charged with the promotion of standard Swahili, and although it has achieved much in terms of publication of a wide range of materials including, dictionaries, vocabulary lists, literature books, grammar books, Swahili text books for all levels, even within Tanzania most people are not aware of its existence. A survey conducted by a member of the IKR itself indicated this (Nchimbi 2005). In the survey people of various professions and students were asked about their knowledge about the importance and contributions of the IKR to the growth and development of the Swahili language. The responses indicated that most of the ordinary people in Tanzania have no idea at all about the IKR (Ibid).

The other Swahili promoting agencies have been the Directorate of Culture and National Language and the National Swahili Council which was established in 1969.

The current trend in Tanzania where there is a desired shift to English medium at the primary level has the potential of shaking the very foundation upon which the future of Swahili in the country rests. The country may be heading for a major crisis where the future of Swahili is concerned. The hope of seeing Swahili used as the medium of instruction at the secondary and tertiary level and in the high court remains in question. Rubagumya's (1991:68) statement that *'the success of Swahili is very often exaggerated'* remains valid today. It seems there is a deliberate decision not to acknowledge the problem.

4.2 Regional Level

Although Swahili is used in varying degrees in the countries bordering Tanzania, at the regional level (i.e. East Africa) there are no policies concerning the use of Swahili language. This is because each country in the Region has a different language policy, obviously tailored to suit its particular linguistic needs. Also some of them do not have clear language policies. Although the language and education policies in the other East African countries such as, Kenya, Uganda, D.R. Congo, Rwanda and Burundi at one time or the other make mention of the Swahili language, more often than not effort has not been made to see to their implementation. Typical of this is the case of Uganda. In 1973 under the government of Idi Amin, Swahili was declared (in speech only) as the national language of Uganda but this was neither documented nor implemented. Again in 2002 the Minister for Education announced that the teaching of Swahili in public schools would begin in 2003; however, this had not been implemented as at 2005 (Mukama 2005).

There is also a lack of commitment to the selling of Swahili to the rest of Africa. Efforts at seeing to the promotion and consolidation of Swahili beyond Tanzania have been very minimal in our opinion, contrary to Kiango's view (2005).

4.3 Continental Level

Beyond East Africa, the influence of the Swahili language in the rest of Africa is very minimal and the major challenge facing the Swahili language at this level is that, again there is no one organization that brings Swahili teaching institutions outside the East African region together or promotes the language. As mentioned above comparatively very few institutions in Africa teach Swahili. The greatest challenge then is to see Swahili promoted and its position consolidated in the whole of Africa.

5. The Emerging Paradoxes

From the above exposition, it is evident that Swahili has made strides as a taught foreign language since it is taught at some level of the educational ladder worldwide. In fact, over the last decade or so more and more academic institutions, especially, institutions at the tertiary level have taken steps to include Swahili in their curricular. The paradox then is that while Swahili is increasingly receiving global recognition and acceptance, Tanzanians are turning away from the language. The average Tanzanian today places a premium on the English language and believes that it must be acquired at all costs. This turn away from Swahili is evident in the number of English Medium Schools mushrooming all over the country.

Several reasons may account for this gradual disinterest in the Swahili language particularly as a medium of instruction. However, in our opinion globalization is the main cause. It is evident that in this era of globalization, the English language occupies a central position. The retreat from the policy of *Ujamaa* (Socialism) could also be a factor to the drive towards English and westernization.

Under *Ujamaa*, Tanzania was sheltered from the western world, but after the decline of *Ujamaa* in 1985, the move towards a more liberal economy which had been forestalled for so long was very swift, with Tanzania eventually succumbing to the World Bank and IMF structural adjustment policies (Maxon 1994: 258) and in time Tanzania opened up to the global economy and with it its vices one of which is the sudden awareness of the power of English. With the opening up of the Tanzanian economy, many foreign investors flooded the country, and proficiency in the English language undoubtedly became a requirement for employment into certain positions.

Paradoxically, although the switch from English to Swahili medium at the secondary school level as a long term educational plan on the Tanzanian educational calendar is long overdue according to the records, there is reluctance on the side of government and policy makers to see to the implementation of this plan. The Tanzania National website gives information about educational reforms but makes no mention of the plan to change the medium of instruction at secondary level to Swahili. There seems to be no apparent reason why the changeover has not been effected.

What then is to account for this reluctance of government to endorse and implement the changeover to Swahili?

There seems to be two diverging opinions where this issue is concerned; one group is of the opinion that the policy of switching to Swahili medium will be the best for Tanzanian students and for that matter Tanzania as a country. The

other group believes that English must remain as the medium of instruction indefinitely.

Apart from the apparent pressure on government to maintain the English medium, part of the reason is that some of the people who are supposed to implement this policy are the very ones whose children would be found in private English Medium Schools. Of course parents who have paid dearly for their children to attend English medium schools at the primary level would not want them to switch to Swahili medium after all that effort?

Paradoxically, some apparent promoters of the Swahili language and the elite in society send their children to English medium pre-schools and primary schools. Some go as far as sending their children abroad to acquire English medium education. In short Swahili is a victim of globalization; globalization is one of the major vices that wars against it.

At the regional level although it is true that Swahili is gaining more grounds as the regional lingua franca, this has been due to natural evolutions such as population growth. No major efforts have been made to ensure the consolidation of Kiswahili in the region. The hope has been expressed that when the relatively newly formed East African Community which intends to have a common market and currency becomes fully operational its resolution to adopt Swahili as one of its official languages in its parliament will boost the use of the Swahili language further in East Africa Kiango (2005). Although this may be true, it may also act as an incentive for the acquisition of English by Tanzanians so that they may be able to compete with their Kenyan and Uganda counterparts who would be relatively more proficient in English.

In our opinion the OAU now AU, could have played a much stronger role in promoting the Kiswahili language. The report of the UNESCO funded international Conference on language policies in Africa held in 1997 in Zimbabwe states that at this conference, African governments agreed to reactivate previous commitments made through the 1986 Language Plan of Action for Africa to make Swahili one of the working languages of the OAU. It is a fact that although Swahili has been adopted as the 5th working language of the OAU, it was never implemented. Again the AU which was established in 2002, confirmed Swahili as its 5th working language, but again that this had not gone past the adoption stage was made evident at the 2004 AU summit where, the President of Mozambique is said to have caused a stir when unexpectedly he decided to address the summit in Swahili. The AU of course was totally unprepared for this. Paradoxically no East African leader has addressed the summit in Swahili subsequent to this incident.

One would have thought that East African leaders would have taken a clue from this incident and insisted on using the Swahili language at subsequent summits, but nothing of the sort has happened.

Finally, it is paradoxical that efforts at ensuring that Swahili an African language thrives and is globally accessible are being championed mainly by foreign institutions.

6. Re-examining the Question of Globalization and Swahili

Having discussed the current state of Swahili, the challenges facing it and the emerging paradoxes we now return to the question of globalization.

In the introduction we pointed out that two main arguments seem to have emerged in connection with the globalisation of Swahili; namely, that on the one hand it is said to possess potentials for globalisation (Moshi 2006, Mulokozi 2002) and on the other hand it is said to have achieved globalisation in the Academia. To what the extent then can the language be said to be globalised and what conclusions can be drawn thereby?

As indicated already, as an academic discipline and foreign language Swahili is offered on a global scale. Although in Africa, that is continentally where the Swahili should have been more widespread, very few institutions offer Swahili of course besides East Africa. In America Swahili is estimated to be taught in over a hundred colleges and universities. In America, Swahili is also taught at the high school level. According to an online resource, Digests (1996), Swahili is taught in 24 high schools.

In terms of ICT, the Swahili language has had a great impact globally. Today through the internet Swahili is readily accessible to all in every corner of the globe as long as internet is available. So much information on the Swahili language is accessible from the internet right from vocabulary lists to lessons in grammar. Most of the universities that offer Swahili in the developed world have websites that make available learning materials and research findings (Kihore 2005, Mulokozi 2002, Moshi 2006).

It is even possible to conduct searches in Swahili at some major web sites such as Google. At bbcswahili.com, a web site of the BBC, world news is made available in Swahili both in print and audio. In 2004, Microsoft launched a Swahili version of Microsoft Window software in Nairobi Kenya.

In terms of radio broadcast, all the major international radio stations do have slots for Swahili broadcast, varying in time allocation. This ensures that Swahili natives wherever they are can benefit from these Swahili programmes. Learners of the language also benefit greatly from these.

Looking at achievements of the Swahili language in the above areas it can be said to have achieved globalization not only in the area of the teaching of Swahili but also in the area of ICT and global broadcast. Nonetheless, in terms of global usage of Swahili as first, second, or even third language, Swahili is very far from achieving globalization. Although thousands of people may be learning Swahili or may have learnt Swahili relatively very few of them may actually use it on a regular basis. It cannot be compared with other global languages like English or even Spanish.

According to Mulokozi (2002) Swahili is estimated to be spoken by about a hundred million people. This figure may, currently, well exceed a hundred million. Simple population growth could easily account for this. As far as global dimensions are concerned Swahili is very much confined to Central and East Africa and their environs, and a hundred million is just a drop in a global population of over eight billion.

7. Conclusion

Taking the definition of globalisation by Tabb (2006) and others into consideration, Swahili can be considered to be globalised to the extent that it has, in the past, and still has a more or less global significance.

However, we believe that if the needed steps are not taken to resolve the above paradoxes and to ensure the growth of the Swahili language at the national, regional and continental levels, the quest for the globalization of the Swahili language in the true sense of the word would remain but an illusion; the language would be limited to the classroom, ICT and the international media that are out of Africa's control anyway.

The quest for globalization in a fuller sense of the word will not be achievable in so far as the position of Swahili in Tanzania which is the main seat of Swahili in East and Central Africa remains threatened by government's reluctance to implement pro-Swahili policies and English Medium Schools are left to take over Swahili Medium Schools and Swahili remains confined to Eastern and Central Africa as a lingua franca and efforts are not made by all stake holders to ensure the consolidation of Swahili in the rest of Africa in terms of Second Language or even Third Language Acquisition. In the area of teaching for instance in addition to Europe and America, native Kiswahili scholars could also help to strengthen the teaching of Kiswahili in the rest of Africa.

Swahili may seem to be achieving globalization in a restricted sense of the word, but at the same time, the very foundation of Swahili in Tanzania in particular

and East Africa in general is being threatened by the very nature of globalization and therefore concrete measures need to be taken to ensure that Swahili achieves globalization in a much fuller sense of the word than it has presently.

NOTES

1. The source of information on English medium schools is the Tanzania National Website. www.moe.tz/pdf/regips.pdf
2. EMS stands for English Medium School and SMS for Swahili Medium School.

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