Negotiating Authority between Family Members at Work in Iringa, Tanzania: Analysis of Multilingual Practices in an Interaction

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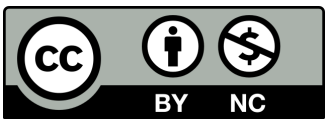
Abstract

This article focuses on a single interaction taking place in a tree nursery located in a village of the Iringa Region in Tanzania. In a country which built its unity around one language, Swahili, this article intends to show how code-switching between the local language (Hehe) and the national language (Swahili) is crucial in everyday practices. Through the analysis of an interaction between family members assuming the roles of boss and employees I show how code-switching is used to achieve the delicate task of discussing work efficiency and compensation in this particular context. Through this specific example, this article aims to underline the importance of the local language in the multilingual practices of speakers from Iringa, Tanzania.

Keywords: multilingual practices, language ideologies, Tanzania, Hehe, Swahili



About the author

Nathaniel Gernez's research focuses on the social implications of multilingual practices in East Africa, especially in Tanzania and Kenya. After finishing his PhD thesis in Anthropology at Université Paris Nanterre (Title: *National language and plurilingualism in Tanzania: an ethnography of the practices among the Hehe of Iringa*), Dr Gernez did a post-doctoral year at the African Studies Centre in Leiden, using a comparative approach to study multilingual practices in Tanzania and Kenya. Currently, Dr Gernez is a junior researcher at Laboratoire d'Ethnologie et de Sociologie Comparative and a temporary lecturer at Université de Bordeaux, where he teaches Linguistic Anthropology.

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1 Introduction

Tanzania is a country where almost 150 languages are spoken (Languages of Tanzania Project 2009), but where linguistic policies since the Independence have promoted one African language, Swahili, as the medium of national unity. Like the large majority of these languages, Swahili belongs to the Bantu linguistic family. It emerged on the East African coast and it has been lexically influenced by many centuries of contact between African populations and business travelers from the Arabian Peninsula, India and even China (Massamba 2002, 24). The use of Swahili spread from the coast to the interior of the continent from the beginning of the 19th century, via the caravan trade, mainly through territories that are now part of Tanzania. Swahili was the language used by the coastal traders along these long-distance trade routes and thus started to become a *lingua franca* (Iliffe 1984, 40–52).

When the colonial powers reached East Africa, Swahili was seen as a major asset because of its use as a *lingua franca* in a region of great linguistic diversity (Whiteley 1956, 343). Consequently, the Germans and the British tried to promote the usage and learning of this language. In 1930, the Inter-Territorial Language Committee was created. One of its achievements was the standardization of Swahili through the choice of Unguja's dialect as a standard, agreeing on the Latin alphabet for the spelling of Swahili, and organizing its diffusion (Crozon 1996; Blommaert 1999; Ricard 2009).

After independence in 1961, J.K. Nyerere, as first president of the United Republic of Tanzania, was concerned about the creation of a national unity built on the enhancement of a "New African Culture". In this "nonaligned" socialist political perspective (*Ujamaa*), Swahili as a non-ethnic language, and as an African language in opposition to English, was considered a means of expressing this "New Culture" as well as a medium to promote its diffusion (Harries 1969). Hence, Swahili was promoted as a national language and a language planning policy was implemented, leading to the use of Swahili as a language of instruction in primary schools, in the Parliament, and in all government offices and parastatals (Kiango 2005, 160).

This language planning policy was an undeniable success, probably one of the best achievements of the post-independence period in Tanzania, becoming an emblem for the country. Nowadays one can frequently hear the following affirmation: "In Tanzania 90% of the population speak Swahili". This sentence has been repeatedly used to present the claim that almost everybody speaks Swahili in Tanzania. Yet the assertion is a typical example of what Irvine and Gal (2000) describe with the concept of "erasure": a simplification of "the sociolinguistic field" that "renders some persons or activities invisible. Facts that are inconsistent with the ideological scheme either go unnoticed or get explained away" (Irvine and Gal 2000, 38). This focus on the widespread use of Swahili often silences the fact that there are many other languages in Tanzania (around 150) that are spoken, sometimes as first languages, concomitantly with Swahili. The figure of 90% is not the result of a survey, as a matter of fact: it is only an estimate (Abdulaziz 1971, 171). This estimate is used to illustrate the idea that almost everybody speaks Swahili in Tanzania except maybe a few people at the geographical or social margins: some very old illiterate people, some unreachable villages or some rural Maasai. As pointed out by Irvine and Gal (2000), facts that do not fit this ideological scheme, like daily examples of the persistence of local languages, are "explained away" by immediately associating them with this remaining 10%: distant villages, communication with elders, for traditional purposes or otherwise, as languages inevitably bound to disappear.

Bearing this linguistic ideology and its historical and political roots in mind, it is important to consider the actual concrete practices of Tanzanian speakers. In order to do so, I chose to

adopt an ethnographic approach to study people's multilingual practices in different villages of the Iringa Region. This rural area is located in the southern highlands of the country. In addition to Swahili, the majority of Iringa's population speak a local language called Hehe (or Kihehe). It is a language quite distinct from Swahili, although it also belongs to the Bantu family. Hehe is classified as G.62 according to Guthrie's classification and is part of the Bena-Kinga group (Guthrie 1948). According to the Languages of Tanzania Project (2009, 2), Hehe is spoken by an estimated 740,113 people, which makes it the ninth language of the country in terms of number of speakers. In this paper, I will focus on an interaction that took place in the village of Lulanzi. It is located at about 50km south-east of Iringa town, in the Udzungwa mountains, near the department capital of Kilolo. According to the speakers, the variety of Hehe that they speak is called "Kidzungwa". This name is acknowledged by Madumulla (1995, 9) as a dialect which is part of the larger group of Hehe spoken in the mountains. More recent research from Haonga (2013, 38) shows that there are two main dialects of Hehe: Hehe of the mountains and Hehe of the valleys. Hence, in Lulanzi, the majority of the people speak Hehe of the mountains, which they call "Kidzungwa", as their first language. The second local language, in terms of the number of speakers is Bena, and there are also a few speakers of Kinga, Gogo, Ngoni, Chagga, and Nyakyusa.

The data presented in this paper are drawn from my unpublished PhD thesis in anthropology (Gernez 2017). The analysis presented here goes further, discussing approaches to code-switching and multilingual practices. The methodology used for this research combines classical ethnography with tools and notions from linguistic anthropology: a long time spent in the field (almost 2 years), participant observation of daily life, interviews, audio and video recordings of interactions, and life narrations. The participants agreed orally to be recorded and they understood my research interests in their multilingual practices. They also agreed that the data collected could be used for scientific purposes. My research was conducted with a Tanzanian research permit from the Commission for Science and Technology (COSTECH). Even though the participants gave me their consent, it is my duty to preserve their privacy and personal data. For this reason, speakers are anonymized. I also tried to reduce as much as possible any other identifying details.

I will focus here on a single interaction from everyday life, where family members are working together. I chose this interaction from my corpus because it displays a variety of speech events, starting with informal talk then shifting to authority negotiation and finally concluding in an agreement about lunch. In the analysis of this interaction, I will use notions from discourse analysis on code-switching (Gardner-Chloros, Charles and Cheshire 2000) combined with the concept of indexicality and indexical order (Silverstein 1976, 2003; Blommaert 2007) drawn from semiotic and linguistic anthropology.

This article investigates the significance of code-switching and language choice in a particular interaction where family members are working together, taking at times the roles of boss and employees. Through this interaction I wish to discuss approaches to code-switching and to highlight the importance of indexicality as a concept that ties together the micro-level of an interaction or a speech event and the macrosociological context. I also wish to call for more research on multilingual practices in the Tanzanian context.

The interaction and its context, a tree nursery in Lulanzi, will first be presented, followed by an analysis of the different uses of code-switching during this interaction. This will lead to a discussion of the theoretical literature on code-switching and its social implications.

2 The interaction and its context

2.1 Context: a family business

The tree nursery where I conducted my observations is located in a mountain village at more than 1500m above sea level. A dirt road and several buses connect it with the surrounding villages and Iringa town. It cannot be considered as an especially isolated village. A lot of crops and fruits are harvested in this area and sold in Iringa town's market. Moreover, the altitude and the climate allow for the planting of trees, notably pines, whose timber is highly valued for the production of furniture. Philbert, the owner of the tree nursery and my host, is very much involved in growing and selling pines, avocado trees, and also, on a smaller scale, apple trees.

Philbert's tree nursery is a small piece of land on a terraced hillside located on his father's land. It is surrounded by bamboo trees (the sap from this variety of bamboo can be used as an alcoholic drink) and the land contains a water source. In order to sell the avocado trees during the first rains in December and January, Philbert has to prepare the small plastic bags that will be filled with soil. They will be later used to plant the avocado seeds. Filling these bags with soil is a tedious activity and is being undertaken by the speakers at the moment of recording. Since the workload increases every year, Philbert involves his eldest son Lupiana, and sometimes his own younger brother Edmond, who is in his thirties. Edmond is married and has three wives for whom he has already built two houses, and he is currently building the third one. He does not have a steady job. He survives by doing casual labour daily work on people's land, by driving a motorbike as a taxi, or, as here, by helping his brother. In addition to the help of his family, Philbert pays an employee who is in charge of watering the shrubs, and preparing and planting the future pines and avocado trees. People usually call him by a nickname which means "someone who is laughed at" in Hehe. This name points at his marginal status and the role of fool that he likes to play at times. To respect the comical meaning behind it, I decided to call him Jester in this paper. Even though he is over forty, he is not married, he does not have a house or land, and he lives mostly on day labour and the opportunities he can find here and there.

Philbert is in his forties. He was born in the village, but his father came from Njombe, a nearby region. His father's family speaks Bena, a Bantu language very closely related to Hehe. Because he spent several years with his family in Njombe, he is able to speak Bena. Being born and raised in a village of the Udzungwa mountains in Iringa, he fluently speaks the local language, which is the Hehe variety spoken in the mountains. As shown by Haonga (2013, 45), this dialect has also been in contact with neighbouring languages, Bena being one of them, and the influence of Bena is seen in the dialect. Philbert's education ended after completing primary school, where he learnt Swahili. While he speaks Swahili fluently, he does not speak English, apart from a very restricted number of words.

Edmond, Philbert's younger brother, is in his late thirties. He did not spend as much time in Njombe as his brother, and he does not speak Bena as well as Philbert. Like his brother, he speaks Hehe and Swahili, but in everyday interactions he predominantly uses Hehe. He also knows some English words.

Lupiana, Philbert's eldest son, is in his early twenties. His multilingual repertoire includes Hehe and Swahili. He does not speak Bena, but he went to the village secondary school and knows a bit more English than the others.

Jester is in his late forties. He is not related to Philbert, but he comes from Njombe. Sharing the same origin while in another region calls for solidarity, hence he is considered like a member of the family. Jester speaks Bena, Hehe, and Swahili. However, just before the

interaction below, he started claiming only to be able to speak Bena, while in fact he uses only one Bena word, and mostly uses Hehe and Swahili. His only difference from the others is that he pronounces as 'h' all the 'k' sounds in Hehe. For example, instead of saying *kuteleka* 'to cook', he says *huteleha*. Note that he does not make the same substitution when using Swahili.

2.2 Interaction: talking about what we are doing

In the interaction below, Edmond and Jester are sitting on both sides of a long line of small plastic bags that have already been filled. The clothing already indicates social differences: both Philbert and Edmond are wearing hats (often a symbol of respectability), while Jester is not wearing shoes, nor does he have a sweater. In this exchange, as in the rest of the recording, the primary speakers are Edmond and Jester. At first, they talk about how the plastic bags are counted and produced. Philbert joins the conversation later, making a comment about the amount of soil remaining. Throughout, Lupiana is mostly quiet: since he is Philbert's son, the people speaking here share the same authority over him as his father (they are his father's brothers). This implies that he should behave himself and avoid speaking too much. Moreover, he is only in his twenties and has just dropped out of school, so he may still be considered a child.

Their exchange is presented below and will be closely analyzed in the following sections. In the transcription, Hehe is represented in plain normal font, while Swahili is in bold and italic script, and English is in italics and underlined.

(1) Interaction between Edmond, Jester, Philbert, and Lupiana. Edmond and Jester are seated and they are working to fill small plastic bags with soil. Philbert is standing, talking on the phone, while Lupiana is shoveling the soil near Edmond and Jester.

[1] Edmond: Vidumula ***kwanza au*** witsilingila ***kwanza***?
'Are they cutting ***first or*** do you fill them ***first***?'

[2] Jester: Ah siwitsihingila wivalila taa.
'No you do not fill [them first], you count first.'

[3] Edmond: Wivalila ***kwanza***?
'You count ***first***?'

[4] Jester: Eh.
'Yes.'

[5] Edmond: Ah ah ino, sii**kunja** de kangi de ***kwa hiyo*** akufivalila hela
'Ah ah, but doesn't he ***fold*** them like this and like this, ***so*** he counts [at the same time]'

[6] Jester: ***Yani*** edena ***si amekata kama hapa?*** adumwe, adumwe, adumwe swe ivanga ***hunanihii***… ivanga uhuvalila fifihe ***mia moja*** swe igega iwhin gitsa.
'***That is***, in fact, ***he cut like this didn't he?*** he cut, cut, cut, then he starts ***to what***… he starts to count, when he reaches a ***hundred*** he takes them and inserts them [he makes a bundle].'

[7] Edmond: Ah ah ***kwa hiyo*** fivalilwa ***kwanza***. *Ok*! ***nilikuwa sijajua*** *man*!
'Ah ah ***so*** they are counted ***first***. *Ok*! ***I didn't know*** *man*!'

Philbert, who has finished his phone call, looks at them and says:

[8] Philbert: ***Ina maana udongo umekua mwingi mno?***
'***It means there is too much soil?***'

[9] Edmond: ***Ndiyo maana yake.***
'***That is what it means.***'

[10] Jester: Tupibaniha denila.
'We continue anyway.'

[11] Edmond: Ko nye tusogwe!
'But we are progressing well!'

[12] Jester: Ne mbwene lwe tulye fingamba ulo lwiva haki, lehe tuvihage huhuno
'Me I have noticed that the time we ate sweet potatoes it was better, let us put them here.'

[13] Philbert: Eh ***maana hapo*** wiva ufumbike, winywa lulenga ***unaendelea na kazi. Kuliko kutembea hapa mbaka ukafike kule.***
'Yes ***because here*** you put them under the fire, you drink water ***and you continue to work. Instead of walking until you reach there*** [Philbert's house].'

[14] Jester: Wifiha wiwona atiye umwene "ndina ***hesabu*** ya huteleha? kaa! Mtele hage!" Ino apo uhitumbo lubanihe ***kabisa*** ! ye ***bora*** pefihikala fingamba baha.
'You get there and she [Philbert's wife] tells you "Did I expect to cook? No! cook yourselves!" Now the stomach ***totally*** tightens! It is ***better*** to have the sweet potatoes here.'

3 Data analysis

3.1 Code-switching, loanwords and reiteration

At the beginning of the interaction in (1) (lines [1]–[7]), we see that Edmond and Jester are speaking mostly in Hehe, with some loans from Swahili such as *kwanza* 'first', *kwa hiyo* 'so', and *yani* 'that is'. In Iringa, the use of connectors borrowed from Swahili is very common and widespread. As shown by Matras (1998) and through crosslinguistic studies (Matras and Sakel 2007), connectors are "the grammatical category that is by far the most susceptible to borrowing" (Matras 2007, 54). Moreover, variation in the use of connectors is not due to the prestige of the dominant language or the lack of an equivalent in the other language (Matras 1998).

Jester is definitely the one who is speaking the most in Hehe. His longest use of Swahili is in sentence [6], translated into English as: '**In fact** it is like this, **he cut like this, didn't he**, he cut, cut, cut, then he started to… **what**… he started to count.' It should be added that in this sentence Jester also makes a particular use of prosody. The speech rate is slow at first in Swahili, with many logical markers. Then, concomitantly with the switch to Hehe, the speech rate accelerates with the repetition of the verb 'to cut' (*adumwe, adumwe, adumwe*) in the past tense.

Gardner-Chloros, Charles and Cheshire (2000) have shown that code-switching can be used for similar purposes to other stylistic changes in monolingual speech, for instance: asides, quotation, but-clauses and reiteration. Here, in (1) [6], the code-switching works as a reiteration device: Jester is explaining the same action in both Swahili and Hehe. Regarding reiteration, these same authors argued that its "functions may also include, among others, providing clarification, adding a further nuance, foregrounding or emphasis, being a floor- holding or -retrieving device and repair" (Gardner-Chloros, Charles and Cheshire 2000, 1318). Here it does not seem to be used for floor-holding (Jester does not continue speaking much after that) nor as a repair or retrieving device. Its function seems to be to provide clarification and emphasis, hence working as a "further focusing device" (Gardner-Chloros, Charles and Cheshire 2000, 1319). However, while explaining the same action, Jester is not reiterating his explanation in the same way. The code-switching used concomitantly with a change of pace also underlines a change in the strategy used to explain. The first part of the sentence, at a slow pace and mostly in Swahili, displays many features of a composed explanation through the use of logical markers translated as 'that is', 'in fact', 'like this', 'didn't he'. Switching to Hehe and to a quicker pace, Jester turns to an iconic representation of the task of cutting bags. The quick repetition of the verb 'cut', without manual gestures (he is using his hands to fill the bags while he speaks), allows him to mimic the task of cutting the bags rapidly and over some time. In addition, it should be noted that code-switching here does not rely on the indexicality of languages nor on broader social implications; rather, it is used to reinforce the contrast created by the change of prosody and of explanatory movement.

3.2 Repair through irony and a humoristic use of English

This sequence comes to an end with Edmond's conclusion in Swahili and in English (1) [7]: *Ok!* ***nilikuwa sijajua*** *man!* '*Ok*! ***I didn't know*** *man*!' That turn of phrase, pronounced with a hint of Afro-American accent, finishing with *man!*, has been popularized in Tanzania by a comedian called Sharobaro. He used to embody the character of a young man who had come back to Tanzania after having lived for a time in the United States. As a proof of his life abroad, he is always displaying in an exaggerated way all the symbols of prestige tied to western life and to the Hip-Hop culture: oversized sports clothes, a Yankees cap and a band-aid on the cheek – a mimicry of the singer Nelly. The comical effect was produced by the discrepancy between his attitudes, his use of some English words, his utmost care for his clothes and his cleanliness, and the setting: the daily life of a Tanzanian village. He also popularized, through films and songs, the use of *man!* at the end of Swahili sentences, for example: *kamata mwizi man!* which means 'catch the thief man!'. Here, what is comic is the juxtaposition of a local practice expressed in Swahili, the crowd running to catch and often beat a man accused of stealing, and an English word indexing youth speech from abroad. This catchphrase *man!* became iconic of the character and the contrast he is emphasizing. So, when Edmond uses this catchphrase, he is referring to the persona of Sharobaro in order to acknowledge, with some irony, that he does not know

how his brother proceeds with the bags. At the same time, he is presenting himself as someone as disconnected with everyday village life as Sharobaro. It allows him to ironically downplay the fact that he does not really understand how his brother operates to cut and count the bags. Through this joke, he tries to repair the negative image he has given by revealing that he does not understand how his brother cuts and counts the bags. Using a language of prestige and a line referring to a character coming from abroad, Edmond tries, with some irony, to present to his advantage his ignorance of his brother's work: it is not a lack of involvement or interest, it is because he is too distracted by so many more prestigious and cool activities in better places that he has forgotten what his brother is doing.

3.3 'Is there too much soil?' A veiled criticism

After this playful ironic conclusion, Philbert, who has finished his phone call, joins in the discussion and starts with a sentence entirely in Swahili [8]: *ina maana udongo umekuwa mwingi mno?* 'it means there is too much soil?' This question seems to summarize what he has just noticed, having quickly observed his employee's work. However, this is not just an innocent question about the amount of soil remaining, it contains a hint of reproach regarding the quality of the work done up to this point. Philbert bought the soil according to his predictions of production. If there remains too much soil, either he made a mistake in his prediction, or the bags have not been filled with enough soil. In the Tanzanian setting direct opposition is often perceived as a lack of respect and is very frequently avoided. Translating the meaning of this question in a less literal way, one could say: "Did I buy too much soil, or haven't you filled the bags properly?" However, all the marks of agency displayed here were erased in Philbert's utterance. There is no first- or second-person pronominal prefix, just *udongo* 'soil' as the subject of the verb 'to be' in the resultative form. The resultative underlines here that what is in focus is the amount of soil remaining considering the work that has already been done. Although avoiding any direct confrontation, this sentence implies an accusation, pointed out by the preliminary use of the locution *ina maana* 'it means', which in an interrogative sentence asks for an explanation. Any personal implication is thus erased from what is said, making even more salient the use of Swahili at this particular moment, where Philbert puts himself in a position of authority to talk as a boss to his employees about their work.

Edmond's reaction [9] shows that he has fully understood what is implied by Philbert; he confirms, in Swahili too, *ndio maana yake* 'That's what it means', 'of course': if there is too much soil remaining it is because there was too much soil to begin with; that is, it is Philbert's mistake. The exclamative form of this very quick and definitive assertion suggests that Edmond refuses to take the blame. The use of Swahili reinforces the challenge to Philbert's position of authority initiated by this language choice. Using the same language, he is putting himself in an equal position with Philbert, reducing the asymmetry that Philbert has attempted to produce. Being Philbert's younger brother, among the three employees he is also in the best position to defend their interests and challenge his brother/boss. Once again, the opposition is expressed without any mark of agency, in a nominal sentence, literally 'yes its meaning'.

By contrast, Jester, who is more clearly subordinate, does not challenge Philbert [10]. He only states, using Hehe this time, that they continue their work anyway. Neither acknowledging the fact that they did not fill the bags properly, nor disputing it, he proposes to look ahead to the work remaining. Accepting Philbert's authority, he neutralizes the conflict, allowing Edmond also to return to Hehe by stating that they have progressed well already. A way of maintaining his point while toning it down.

3.4 Agreeing to eat sweet potatoes here or going for a real meal: a negotiation of wage and working time

In order to avoid conflict, Jester changes the subject. Using Hehe, he suggests cooking some sweet potatoes here instead of going back to Philbert's home to eat. Philbert now comes in for the second time to back this suggestion. Interaction (1) line [13]:

[13] Philbert: Eh ***maana hapo*** wiva ufumbike, winywa lulenga ***unaendelea na kazi. Kuliko kutembea hapa mbaka ukafike kule.***
'Yes ***because here*** you put them under the fire, you drink water ***and you continue to work. Instead of walking until you reach there*** [Philbert's house].'

Philbert clearly prefers having his employees eat at their workplace and get back to work quickly, rather than having them climb up the hill to his house and maybe calling it a day. In order to further convince Jester, Edmond, and Lupiana without showing too much interest in the process, Philbert uses the singular second person to describe the actions during the meal: a way to fade his implication in the offering of eating sweet potatoes. Describing the lunch time, he switches from Swahili to Hehe using a slower prosody, emphasizing certain vowels that I have underlined in the following quotation: *Wiva ufumbike winywa lulenga* 'you put them under the fire you drink water'. It allows him to imply that the lunch will be relaxing and pleasant, that they will be able to take their time and relax, compared to the walking and climbing they would do if they chose to go back to his house. The use of code-switching within this sentence also creates a dichotomy between the lunch mentioned in Hehe and the work mentioned in Swahili. The switch back to Swahili occurs exactly when Philbert says that they will go back to work: *winywa lulenga* ***unaendelea na kazi***. 'you drink water ***you continue to work***'. This dichotomy entails a certain linguistic ideology, that differs slightly from the dominant one presented in Section 1 (introduction). The desired action is pointed out by the use of Hehe, while the unwanted choice is expressed in Swahili. Here Hehe is associated with a relaxing, informal context, and with the friendly conversation during the meal, while Swahili is associated with work, as well as with the effort and loss of time if they choose to climb up to the house for lunch.

To understand fully what is at stake here, we should consider that in Iringa, a meal is composed of either rice or ugali (a maize paste) completed with a side of vegetables, beans, meat in sauce or fish. Potatoes and sweet potatoes are mostly used as a snack or for breakfast. They are not perceived as a proper meal. Moreover, in this context of work, the meal is an important part of the employer's payment. It is expected that the employer will provide a meal and give a small amount of money at the end of the day. So, in addition to a negotiation of working time, behind this talk about sweet potatoes there is also a negotiation of the wage. By offering to eat sweet potatoes at his workplace, we can make the assumption that Jester is trying to compensate for the mistake pointed out by Philbert just before, although it is also possible that he is voluntarily agreeing to reduce the quality of the meal (going for a snack) with the intention of negotiating a higher amount in cash afterwards.

Jester's agreement to eat sweet potatoes is also formulated with a comment about Philbert's wife, assuming that she will refuse to cook for them. This could be seen as banter, a way of justifying his choice by jokingly criticizing Philbert's wife. On the other hand, we could also ask ourselves if in this particular context of work on the land, Philbert's wife is really bound to cook for them.

4 Discussion: the social implications of code-switching

In this section, I will present and discuss the theoretical debate on the social implications of code-switching with regards to the interaction analyzed above. I will consider various takes on code-switching, starting with Gumperz and Blom's (1972) "situational/metaphorical" model, then considering the debate regarding the markedness model and its outcome. I will then consider indexicality as an effective concept to apprehend code-switching in this interaction.

Gumperz and Blom (1972) is considered as a turning point in the study of code-switching: the use of two or more languages between sentences or within the same sentence is no longer considered as a lack of proficiency but as a creative way of talking that has its purpose and needs to be mastered, like other pragmatic strategies. The authors oppose "metaphorical" and "situational" code-switching. While in the former the change of language is used as a "metaphor" to allude to another social relationship, the latter produces a change in the definition of the speech event (Gumperz and Blom 1972, 424).

Yet the boundaries between "situational" and "metaphorical" are rather blurry. For example, in the interaction at hand, when Philbert asks about the amount of soil [8], it could be tempting to say that it is an instance of "situational code-switching". The switch to Swahili by Philbert clearly signifies a change in the definition of the speech event. It is no longer small talk between family members. Philbert's question should be understood as a comment from the boss to his employees on their work. If we consider it as a situational change, then Edmond follows this change by expressing his opposition in Swahili, while Jester subtly brings back the interaction to an informal family exchange, by using Hehe and therefore defusing the conflict between the brothers. However, there is also a "metaphorical" use of languages in this particular setting. Switching to Swahili to impose authority is not a neutral choice, mainly because it is a dominant language of higher social status and national significance than Hehe.

The problematic distinction between situational and metaphorical code-switching led Myers-Scotton (1993) to establish another model for the analysis of code-switching: the markedness model. This, in turn, led to a debate between Myers-Scotton's position and the discourse analysis approach, developed and followed by researchers like Peter Auer (1998), and Michael Meeuwis and Jan Blommaert (1994). Myers-Scotton's (1993) markedness model is supposed to work universally, although it is built on observations in Kenya and Zambia. She proposes that everyone possesses an inner metric of markedness that allows one to know in each context what is the unmarked code (the one that is expected, neutral) and what is (or are) the marked codes, the latter being codes that differ from what is usually expected, used in order to redefine the set of rights and obligations in the interaction. This approach deeply ties languages to their macrosocial representations: language hierarchies, indexicality, values. As pointed out by Gardner-Chloros (2009, 69) the switches between languages are explained according to a "maxim" (inspired by Grice's (1989) conversational maxims): "Negotiate a change in the expected social distance holding between participants" (Myers-Scotton 1993, 62). Code-switching is then considered as a tool to negotiate distance or solidarity, used by speakers to change the footing of the conversation to one's advantage (Goffman 1981). In interaction (1), the markedness model can account for Philbert's use of Swahili in [8] as a marked choice allowing him to change the set of rights and obligations towards a boss-employees relationship. However it fails to take into consideration switches that do not imply a change in footing, for instance Jester's [6] use of *adumwe, adumwe, adumwe* 'he cut,cut,cut', or Edmund's sentence [7] *nilikuwa sijajua man!* 'I didn't know man!' discussed in Sections 3.1 and 3.2.

This model has inspired researchers as much as it has been criticized. Meeuwis and Blommaert (1994) point out Myers-Scotton's universal claim of an inner metric of markedness, her way of systematically analyzing code-switching as socially motivated, and her dismissal of the ethnographic specificities of the contexts of such interactions. For instance, Myers-Scotton (1993, viii) explains that "the urban origin of most of the examples has no special effect on the social motivations which apply; it simply happens that examples of codeswitching are more easily found in urban populations". On the contrary, the discourse analysis approach (Auer 1998) considers code-switching and its implications only within the interaction frame. The meaning behind code-switching must be sought in the turn-by-turn analysis of discourse sequences and the internal logic of the interaction analyzed.

Drawing from this debate, studies on code-switching have developed a more nuanced approach to the phenomenon, acknowledging the macro-sociolinguistic implications of code-switching, but also stressing the fact that it is not its only use nor the only way to interpret it. In many cases, code-switching's implications can be found within the conversation boundaries underlining a new conversational move (Wei 2005). The notion of medium-switching (Gafaranga 2007), drawing from Myers-Scotton's category of code-switching as an unmarked choice, as well as Auer's analysis of code-switching and preference for same language talk, accounts for situations where the use of two languages can be considered as the base medium. Other studies showed that code-switching creates interactional and rhetorical effects, that can be found, though expressed differently, in monolingual speeches: "asides, quotations, reiterations, and 'but' clauses" (Gardner-Chloros, Charles and Cheshire 2000) or contrasts in loudness, pace, and pitch (Woolard 1988; Zentella 1997).

These considerations have paved the road to a more current approach to a multilingual practices-based criticism of named languages as historical and political constructs (Makoni and Pennycook 2007; Otheguy, Garcia and Reid 2015), and the concepts of translanguaging (Garcia and Wei 2014) and multilingual repertoires (Lüpke and Storch 2013).

Another way to overcome the opposition between a macrosociological explanation and a sequential one (or an explanation tied to the particular use of one's idiolect) can be found in the notion of indexicality (Silverstein 1976) and indexical orders (Blommaert 2007; Silverstein 2003). Inherited from Peirce's (1998) seminal work in semiotics, an index is a sign which acquires its meaning from the context while creating it at the same time. Hence, focusing on indexicality allows us to hold together the external social context and the internal speech event. It does so by linking "speech to the wider system of social life" (Silverstein 1976, 53). Philbert, when using Swahili in interaction (1) [8], indexes in his speech a position of authority linked to Swahili's status as the official language. It is the language spoken in formal settings and in dominant positions: the teacher at school, the priest in church, the doctor in the hospital, the deputy in the parliament, and clerks in administration. Using Swahili allows Philbert to take a stance of authority, to talk like a boss, implying by this new stance a change in the speech event. The use of Swahili by Edmond to answer his brother, rather than being a simple continuation of Philbert's linguistic choice (as could happen in a more relaxed setting), highlights his resistance to Philbert's authority and criticism. By using this language indexing authority when answering, he positions himself on the same level, trying to reduce the asymmetry initiated by his brother's language change. Jester, for his part, uses Hehe, accepting Philbert's position of authority and defusing the conflict.

Behind the rather trivial appearance of the interaction sampled in (1), many sensitive questions that could bring conflict and disagreement are being negotiated: the quality of the work done, the time and place for lunch, and the food as part of the wage. Facing these issues,

the speakers progress cautiously, erasing any mark of agency from their sentences or removing their own involvement from the offer they put forward. Hence the crucial role of language choices in attempting to impose, oppose, or agree on the work conditions. For Philbert, the indexicality of Swahili clearly participates in a coercive strategy to be accepted as a boss and to make his employees behave as he wants them to: filling the bags properly and eating quickly at their workplace so they can be more productive. However, Hehe can also be an asset when offering them a relaxing moment around the fire at lunch time. Edmond uses Swahili to protest against his brother's implicit blame, but, after that, he becomes surprisingly quiet, maybe temporarily disappointed by his attempted challenge that did not really succeed. As for Jester, he mostly uses Hehe, but most importantly, being in a dependent position, he does not use Swahili for its indexicality as a language of higher prestige.

5 Conclusion

This everyday life interaction between family members illustrates how the assertion that "90% of the population speaks Swahili" can be an oversimplification of more complex and interesting multilingual situations. Rather than using only one language (why would they do so?), mastery of both Swahili and Hehe is needed to skillfully use the changes of rhythm, prosody, and indexicality between languages in order to impose oneself, contest authority, avoid direct conflict, diffuse opposition, or turn the conversation to one's advantage. Focusing on multilingual practices also leads to questions about the ethnographer's language choice when conducting research. In anthropology, we are used to conducting long-term fieldwork in order to access different discourses through evolving relationships with our interlocutors. We are also told we should learn our interlocutors' language, but which one? Being aware of how languages can be marked according to context is complementary to spending a long time in the field when analyzing the relevance and implications of what people are sharing with us. To use only Swahili, as if it were a neutral language, is to miss the fact that in most situations Swahili is marked as a language of education, authority, administration, and urban life. At the same time, using only Hehe could be perceived as really awkward or even intimidating, because in everyday talk people usually switch between Hehe and Swahili.

Hence, through this paper, I would like to emphasize the need to take into consideration concrete multilingual practices in Tanzania. Because of the country's history, linguistic policies, and scientific organization, local languages and Swahili are either considered as being in competition or are studied on different levels: BAKITA (National Kiswahili Council) and TATAKI (Institute of Kiswahili Studies), on the one hand, are focusing on the spread, development, and history of Swahili, while the University of Dar es Salaam's Department of Foreign Languages and Linguistics, on the other hand, is looking at establishing grammars and dictionaries for local languages. The problem is, a study focusing on the spread and the mastery of Swahili, conducted in Swahili in the same Iringa village, would have concluded that most of the people speak Swahili. A study focusing on Hehe in the same location would have found plenty of data to establish a corpus, a grammar, or a dictionary in Hehe. To understand the reality of people's practices and attitudes toward languages, more research should be done in Tanzania, putting aside dominant linguistic ideologies and taking into consideration the concrete use of languages in everyday talk.

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