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Morphological and Semantic Idiosyncrasy; a Case Study of Mbusii and Lion De; Teketeke Radio Show

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Abstract: This study investigated morphological and semantic idiosyncrasies witnessed in *Teke-Teke Radio Show* presented by Mbusii and Lion De, a Radio Jambo, English cum Kiswahili prime time production. This study was informed by the observation of acute deviations from linguistic regularities in respect to the Kenyan lingo at the morphological and semantic levels by the two presenters and its fan base. These idiosyncrasies witnessed in the two presenters it was noted had permeated into the linguistic repertoire not only of their fan base but of some cadre of the general Kenyan populace, thus in some way this repertoire it notably was slowly turning into a sociolect of some kind. This study sought to illustrate linguistic idiosyncrasy as a phenomenon which is alive and very relevant in the Kenyan sociolinguistic geography, this study further sought to illustrate linguistic idiosyncrasy as precursor to language change at the level of a speech community, this was evidenced by the proliferation of the linguistic peculiarities observed in the show to general language use among some section of the Kenyan populace. The researcher purposely sampled over twenty peculiar lexical items and idiomatic expressions from the show and using a qualitative approach the researcher undertook a morphological and a semantic analysis of the items in order to document their deviations from the linguistic regularities. The research further made a survey of the presence of the aforesaid items in regular language use by its fan base and other Kenyans in regular talk, this was aimed at showing a link between linguistic idiosyncrasy and language change which is a universal property of human language. This study will therefore go a long way in giving evidence of morphological and semantic idiosyncrasies in language use and it will also cement the notion of idiosyncrasy as precursor of language change.

Keywords: idiosyncrasies, morphological, semantic, language

INTRODUCTION

According to *Idiosyncrasy- Morphology*, (2016), an idiosyncrasy is a property of words which cannot be derived by the rules of a language, it states that linguistic idiosyncrasy can be observed at the morphological level where a word deviates from all the rules permitting word permutation, at the semantic level, a word may have some unpredictable aspect in relation to everyday meaning of a word together with all its associated meanings.

According to the *Encyclopedia of Austin Spectrum Disorders* (2013), linguistic idiosyncrasy can be defined as a typical use of a standard word or a phrase to express a specific meaning which might not resonate in a manner usual to everyday language use.

In essence an idiosyncrasy can thus be defined as an unusual feature of a person, the term in linguistics

is used to express eccentricity or peculiarity in language use.

This study investigated morphological and semantic idiosyncrasies as observed in Lion De and Mbusii *Teke Teke Radio Show*, a prime time production of Radio Jambo which is quite popular among many Kenyans from various social cadres. This show is usually presented in a combination of code switching and code mixing with the presenters switching from English to Kiswahili and vice versa, more so the show allows for call in sessions from its fan base which is widespread across the country, this fan base is also portrays a picture of social diversity.

From observation, it was noted that the two presenters of the show derive and coin new words in a manner which deviate from normal linguistic practices, more so it was further observed that the two presenters used ordinary words but with a semantic deviation from

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the norm, this was done by the presenters in order to make references to unique Kenyan situations and also to resonate well with their fan base who show an easy grasp of the underlying meaning beneath the idiosyncrasies.

The use of these deviations it was also noted not only was a way creating humour but was also a very refreshing way of looking at ordinary situations away from the common mundane of everyday life, more importantly was that the two presenters have a background in performing arts and consequently their language choice was a way of exploiting their creative ability which in effect had spilled over to their over enthusiastic fan-base.

At the sociolinguistic level, initially it was thought that the ultimate goal of the lingo employed by the presenters of the show was meant to play the role of boundary marking and as a means to solidify group membership among many of its fans but on the flipside the linguistic artefacts have had a way of permeating into everyday language use among a Kenyans, a common example being the popular expression; “*hakuna mbrrrcha*,” a term equivalent to; “*all is cool*.”

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a qualitative research approach, according to Mahianyu, (2016), qualitative research is innovative as well as emergent and it is concerned with individuals and their opinions rather than with figures and numbers.

This study did a case study of Radio Jambo show; *Teketeke*, a prime time show hosted by Lion De and Mbusii as a model to illustrate the linguistic

phenomenon of idiosyncrasy at the levels of morphology and semantics.

This show was purposely selected due the unique register employed by two presenters and also due the wide fan base the show commands among a large section of the Kenyan populace.

The show was also purposely sampled due the fact that the show plays reggae music and thus the presenters tend to show a preference for Rastafarian lingo which in many cases portray a very huge deviation from everyday language use, this lingo it was noted had permeated to the everyday language use especially among Kenyan from the middle and the lower income groups in Kenya.

The researcher purposely sampled 20 items from the show and there after using a qualitative descriptive approach, the items were analysed in order to make a documentation of their morphological and semantic deviation which in turn would inform the concept of idiosyncrasy.

Furthermore the researcher listened to various call- in interactive sessions between the listeners of the programme and the presenters during the show in order to conduct a survey of the prevalence of the deviant items in their repertoire and from qualitative approach, observations were made.

DISCUSSION

Upon data collection, analysis and interpretation, the findings of the research are tabulated below.

LINGUISTIC ITEM	ENGLISH GLOSS	MORPHOLOGICAL PROCESS	SEMANTIC DEVIATION
<i>kuhotloliwa</i>	To have a good time	Compounding and derivation	Gross deviation as there is no link between form and meaning. Purely new word with new meaning created.
<i>Mambo ni luahalala</i>	Things are okay	<i>Luahalala</i> , is a purely coined word with no etymological background	Gross deviation as this a purely new word with new sense
<i>Kemba kemba</i>	To see or check out	Word coinage	This purely new word coined and given a new sense.
<i>ungamwe</i>	Socially unacceptable behaviour	Pure coinage of a new word with no etymological background	This a complete new word with no traceable semantic background.
<i>Tortoise</i>	A beautiful lady	This is a borrowed word from English language	Gross semantic deviation noted, as the word is given a totally new sense
<i>Kumba tortoise</i>	Seduce a lady	Compounding , coinage and borrowing	The expression is a gross deviation since the compounding of the words does not resonate with any sense
<i>Nyahunyo</i>	Cane lashes	This is a term which has been borrowed from Sheng language	Gross deviation from the language of broadcast which is either

			English or Swahili.
<i>Kurugushu kuuuu!</i>	A shout by the DJs declaring being in charge of the airwaves	This word is created by the compounding of two onomatopoeic words drawn from the personal experiences of the broadcasters	New compound word completely deviant in terms of sense.
<i>locked</i>	To stay tuned to a radio station	This is a word which is borrowed from English language	Word semantically deviates from the literal sense of the word borrowed.
<i>ital.</i>	Being in a euphoric	This is a word borrowed from Rastafarian lingo	The sense of the foreign word directly transferred to regular use in a Kenyan situation
<i>vindialala</i>	An exclamation akin to English word - "wow!"	This word newly coined b A This is a word borrowed from Rastafarian lingo new word purely created but its origin is onomatopoeic.	A new word with new sense and neither can it be traced to English nor Kiswahili.
<i>Hakuna mbrrrcha</i>	No trouble(s)	Coinage, borrowing and compounding, the Swahili word, <i>hakuna</i> is borrowed and compounded with the purely coined word <i>mbrrrcha</i> .	Total semantic deviation noted, especially with the word <i>mbrrrcha</i> which is anew word with a new sense.
<i>Kameshika mbaya</i>	Very captivating or interesting especially in reference to the radio show.	Swahili words, <i>shika</i> and <i>mbaya</i> compounded.	A Loan translation of the elements would result in "catch badly," which is a semantic deviation from its contextual sense.
<i>Kuosha temple</i>	Meditation time	The Swahili word; <i>kuosha</i> and English <i>temple</i> are compounded which is a form of morphological deviation.	Complete semantic deviation for there is no correlation between the literal and the new sense of the compounded elements.
<i>Doki</i>	Doctor of medicine	The English word <i>doctor</i> has been clipped a nd used stylistically.	Clipped word is a semantic deviation from the actual referent, and to a non competent person tying the word to its actual meaning would be almost impossible.
<i>wagwan</i>	The equivalent of English; "What is going on."	This a term borrowed from Jamaican English contraction of the utterance; "What is going on. " Which is a complete deviation from the English language standard contractions.	Semantic deviation notes as the term is foreign and is used with a new sense difficult to interpret for a layman.
<i>Asapa</i>	Right here, right now.	This is a malapropism of the English contraction as soon as possible.	This is a complete semantic deviation for there is no sense correlation at all between the elements.
<i>Chapawax</i>	Working hard	The process is borrowing, malapropism and compounding. The Swahili word; <i>chapa</i> and English word which is malappropriated as <i>wax</i> are compounded.	Total semantic deviation as there is no correlation at all between the two compounded elements and their literal senses.
<i>furahidey</i>	Friday	The word Friday is mispronounced, through a process of vowel insertion.	Complete semantic deviation is noted in the sense that there is no sense correlations between the two referents.

CONCLUSION

From this study, it has been observed that language is a generally dynamic and an ever changing phenomenon open to manipulation in order to create a fresher outlook of life and to reflect some new cultural inclinations amongst its users.

Also of worth to be noted is the effect of individual linguistic idiosyncrasy in propagating and promoting development of new vocabulary and new senses in language.

Also evident are the many linguistic word creation techniques which are available to users of a language who may be in need to reflect their environment and express their experiences and thoughts in a new and a refreshing way.

It is also the presumption of this study that many of the idiosyncrasies encountered in this study are likely to seep into mainstream language use.

This study also advocates for a research on idiosyncrasies at other levels of linguistic analysis such as phonology and syntax and how such have an impact on mainstream language.

Finally this study advocates for a further study of the linguistic idiosyncrasies evidenced in public figures such as politicians and how they have a huge influence on mainstream language use.

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