Mechanisms of Structural Borrowing in Chimalaba

Author(s)
Mreta Abel Yamwaka, Amani Hamisi

Abstract
The paper aims to describe mechanisms through which various structural items were borrowed from Kiswahili into Chimalaba. It is an attempt to illustrate how various linguistic constraints seem to determine the borrowing of structural features in a given language contact situation. The primary data for this paper, are based on the research project by Amani (2010) on the Influence of Kiswahili in Chimalaba. There are, approximately 16 structural items borrowed from Kiswahili into Chimalaba as listed in Amani (2010: 58). The main focus is on whether the cases of structural borrowing identified are the result of direct or indirect borrowing and in displaying either of the two, what linguistic constraints are typically at work. Structural borrowing in Chimalaba reveals that Chimalaba has put a stiff resistance to direct structural borrowing, as there are only three items out of 16 structural items that have been directly borrowed from Kiswahili. This has also been possible only in the relevant sub-parts that seem to be more or less similar between Kiswahili and Chimalaba. Most of structural features in Chimalaba have been indirectly borrowed through lexical transfer, constraints of language system and blending. This paper therefore presents indirect and direct structural borrowing and the mechanisms of borrowing used in each category.