FACULTY OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCE

DEPARTMENT OF LANGUAGES

A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF PHONOLOGICAL VARIATIONS IN TONGA VARIETIES: A CASE OF DHOMBE AND TONGA SPOKEN IN NDOLA

BY

HONDO MKHULULI

L0141673T SUPERVISOR: MR P. DUBE

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF LANGUAGES OF LUPANE STATE UNIVERSITY IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR A BACHELOR OF ARTS HONOURS DEGREE IN APPLIED LANGUAGES STUDIES

MAY 2018
ABSTRACT

The research discusses phonological variations in the ChiTonga language as spoken in Binga (Ndola) and Hwange (Dete) area. It also analyzed the possible causes of phonological differences in the two varieties. The study contributes towards the documentation of previously marginalized languages. The study also provides some of the phonemic inventory in line with what was gathered through the guideline of the lexical items of the Swadesh list. A qualitative approach was used in gathering and examining the phonemes of the Tonga varieties. The researcher noted that linguistic studies on the Tonga language have been extensible carried out in Zambia. Limited studies on the Tonga language have been carried out in Zimbabwe. The theoretical tools that were employed in this study include the tenets of the family tree model and the comparative method. The family tree model assumes that languages that share a great number of cognates originated from one proto language. The researcher selected some lexical items from the Swadesh list to present and illustrate phonological variations in Dhombe and ChiTonga. The Tonga language variations were established and analyzed through the use of the comparative and family tree model an attempt is made to account for the phonological variations. It was found out that language varieties of Tonga vary as a result of segment loss, simplification or assimilation processes such as plosivisation, fricativisation, voicing and valorization. These phonological processes do not affect both speech communities of the same language that are geographically separated. That is at certain instances either of the two sister varieties of language returns the proto sound while the other submits to phonological changes. The construction of the possible proto Tonga sounds was done through employing certain tenets of the comparative linguistic method.