



Research Article

Investigating Weekday Naming in Safwa, Malila, Ndali, and Nyiha Languages: A Morphophonological Study

Pendo Mwashota* 

Mkwawa University College of Education, University of Dar es Salaam, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania

Abstract

This study investigates weekday naming systems in the Safwa, Malila, Ndali, and Nyiha languages spoken in the Mbeya and Songwe Regions of Tanzania, focusing on their morphophonological structures and semantic organization. The main objective was to examine how weekday names are formed, how phonological variation occurs across the four languages, and how meaning is preserved despite structural differences. The study was guided by Generative Morphophonology Theory and Lexical Semantics Theory, which explain the interaction between word formation, sound patterns, and meaning. A qualitative research design was employed. Data were collected from Mbeya District, Ileje District, and Mbozi District, covering eight villages: Simambwe, Shibolya, Ilembo Usafwa, Italazya, Iyunga, Shitete, Sigamba, Nsongwimantanji, Isongole, Itumba, Mbebe, Idiwili, Ilomba, Iyula, Izyila, Iwiji, Ndola, and Igamba. The study involved 50 individual informants and 20 participants in focus group discussions, selected through purposive and snowball sampling. Documentary review was also used. Participants were mainly aged between 40 and 80 years. Data were analyzed thematically. Findings reveal that weekday names in the four languages follow a systematic morphological pattern characterized by prefixation (Lwa-, Pa-, Pach-, Pabh-) and numeral-based roots. Phonological variation such as /b/, /bh/, and /ch/ alternations was observed across languages. Despite these structural differences, semantic meaning remains stable, with weekdays consistently reflecting a numerical sequence equivalent to Swahili (Jumatatu to Jumapili). The study concludes that weekday naming in these languages is a product of structured morphophonological processes combined with stable lexical semantics. It contributes to the documentation of under-researched temporal naming systems in Bantu languages and highlights the interaction between language structure and meaning.

Keywords

Weekday Naming, Morphophonology, Bantu Languages, Lexical Semantics, Phonological Variation

1. Introduction

Language is a fundamental tool for expressing cultural identity, worldview, and social organization. In many African societies, naming systems especially personal names, place names, and temporal expressions—carry deep linguistic and cultural meanings. Recent linguistic scholarship has shown that naming practices in Bantu languages are not arbitrary but

are systematically shaped by morphological and phonological processes that reflect social experiences, history, and belief systems [1, 2]. In African linguistics, significant attention has been given to onomastics (the study of names), particularly personal and place names. For example, studies in Tanzania

*Correspondence: Pendo Mwashota (pmwashota@gmail.com)

Received: 25 May 2026; Accepted: 22 June 2026; Published: 29 September 2026



Copyright: © The Author(s), 2026. Published by Science Publishing Group. This is an **Open Access** article, distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>), which permits unrestricted use, distribution and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.

have shown that names in Bantu languages often encode morphological structures such as noun class prefixes, affixation, compounding, and reduplication, which reflect both grammatical rules and cultural meanings [9, 14]. Similarly, research on Ndali personal names demonstrates that names exhibit monomorphemic, dimorphemic, and polymorphemic structures, revealing how morphological processes encode identity and social meaning within the community [16].

In addition, studies on related Bantu languages in the Nyasa-Tanganyika corridor, including Ndali, Nyiha, Malila, and Nyakyusa, indicate strong linguistic relationships characterized by shared lexical and morphological features, although phonological and morphological innovations also distinguish them [19]. These languages are widely spoken in southern Tanzania, particularly in Mbeya and Songwe regions, where multilingual contact influences linguistic change and variation.

Despite extensive studies on personal names and lexical morphology in Bantu languages, limited attention has been given to weekday naming systems in indigenous Tanzanian languages. In many African societies, time reckoning systems (including days, weeks, and seasons) are culturally grounded and linguistically structured. However, modern weekday systems are often influenced by colonial languages such as English and Swahili, leading to language shift, borrowing, and hybridization. This raises important questions about how indigenous languages such as Safwa, Malila, Ndali, and Nyiha structure weekday names and the extent to which these names reflect native morphophonological systems.

Previous studies on Bantu languages show that morphological processes such as affixation, compounding, and phonological alternation are central in name formation [9, 14, 20]. However, weekday naming remains underexplored compared to personal names, plant names, and place names [20]. This creates a gap in understanding how temporal vocabulary is structured in morphologically rich Bantu languages. Furthermore, the Safwa, Malila, Ndali, and Nyiha languages—spoken across Mbeya District, Ileje District, and Mbozi District—are part of a closely related linguistic cluster in the Nyasa-Tanganyika corridor. These languages share grammatical features such as noun class systems and agglutinative morphology, but they also exhibit differences in phonological realization and lexical innovation due to geographical separation and language contact [19].

In this context, investigating weekday naming systems from a morphophonological perspective becomes essential. Such a study contributes to understanding how sound patterns (phonology) and word formation processes (morphology) interact in constructing temporal vocabulary. It also helps document indigenous knowledge systems before they are further eroded by dominant languages. Therefore, this study is situated within the broader field of Bantu linguistics, onomastics, and morphophonology, aiming to analyze how Safwa, Malila, Ndali, and Nyiha languages structure weekday names and how these structures reflect underlying morphological and phonological processes.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Introduction to the Study and Scholarly Context

This research article examines the weekday naming systems in the Safwa, Malila, Ndali, and Nyiha languages spoken in the Mbeya and Songwe Regions of Tanzania, with specific attention to their morphophonological structures and semantic organisation. The study investigates how these Bantu languages form weekday names, how phonological difference occurs in the researched four languages, and how meaning is conserved in spite of structural transformations. The study is guided by Generative Morphophonology Theory [5] and Lexical Semantics Theory [7, 13], which provide corresponding frameworks for accommodating the interface between word formation, sound patterns, and meaning in temporal vocabulary.

Studies on Bantu languages has broadly documented the methodical nature of naming practices, representing that names are not arbitrary but are formed by organised morphological and phonological processes that reflect cultural experiences, history, and belief systems [1, 2]. Most of the studies in African linguistics have shown that names in Bantu languages often interpret complex morphological structures such as noun class prefixes, affixation, compounding, and reduplication, which reflect both grammatical rules and cultural meanings [9, 14]. For example, research on Ndali personal names reveals that names exhibit monomorphemic, dimorphemic, and polymorphemic structures, demonstrating how morphological processes convert identity and social meaning within the community [16]. Also investigations on related Bantu languages in the Nyasa Tanganyika corridor, including Ndali, Nyiha, Malila, and Nyakyusa, specify strong linguistic relationships characterised by shared lexical and morphological features, although phonological and morphological novelties also differentiate them [19]. Despite this rich body of research on personal names and lexical morphology, inadequate attention has been given to weekday naming systems in ethnic Tanzanian languages. This gap is very significant because time estimate systems, including days, weeks, and seasons, are culturally deal with linguistically structured in many African societies. However, modern weekday systems are often influenced by dominant languages such as Swahili and English, leading to language shift, borrowing, and hybridisation [22]. Therefore, this study addresses a critical gap by documenting and analysing how Safwa, Malila, Ndali, and Nyiha structure weekday names and the extent to which these names reflect native morphophonological systems.

2.2. Morphological Formation of Weekday Names

The first objective of this study was to study how weekday names are formed morphologically in Safwa, Malila, Ndali,

and Nyiha. The findings show that weekday naming in these languages follows a systematic morphological pattern characterised by prefixation and numeral-based roots, representing that these naming systems are incorporated into the broader grammatical structure of Bantu languages. This objective is crucial because it gives to understanding how temporal vocabulary is structured in morphologically rich Bantu languages and helps document indigenous knowledge systems that are increasingly threatened by language shift.

The significance of this objective stick on its contribution to Bantu linguistics particularly in documenting under-researched temporal naming systems. Aforementioned studies have shown that morphological processes such as affixation, compounding, and phonological interchange are central in name realisation across Bantu languages [9, 14, 20]. However, weekday naming has remained underexplored related to personal names, plant names, and place names [20]. This study addresses this gap by indicating that weekday names in Safwa, Malila, Ndali, and Nyiha are grammatically preserved as nouns rather than simple lexical labels, with prefixes such as Lwa-, Pa-, Pach-, and Pabh- functioning as nominal markers consistent with Bantu noun class systems [9]. The presence of these prefixes reveals that weekday names follow regular morphological principles found in Bantu noun formation, where prefixes give both grammatical meaning and structural identity to the word. This finding line up with Generative Morphophonology Theory [5], which clarifies that words are first formed at an abstract underlying level through morphological processes before being transformed into surface phonological forms.

Methodologically this objective was addressed over a qualitative research design [6] employing semi-structured interviews with 50 individual informants and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) involving 20 participants, selected through purposive and snowball sampling techniques [3, 18]. Data of this study were collected from eight villages across Mbeya District, Ileje District, and Mbozi District, including Simambwe, Shibolya, Ilembo Usafwa, Italazya, Iyunga, Shitete, Sigamba, Nsongwimantanji, Isongole, Itumba, Mbebe, Idiwili, Ilomba, Iyula, Izyila, Iwiji, Ndola, and Igamba. Informants were mainly aged between 40 and 80 years, as this age group is more likely to retain and preserve indigenous linguistic knowledge. The study also used documentary review of existing linguistic materials to validate primary data [3]. Thematic analysis was employed to identify forms in morphological structures [4], revealing consistent prefixation patterns across the languages.

Further arguments supporting this objective comprise of the observation that the variation among the prefixes Pa-, Pach-, and Pabh- can be enlightened through phonological processes such as assimilation, strengthening, and consonant modification, reflecting how closely morphology and phonology interact in Bantu languages [9, 19]. This interaction demonstrates that the underlying grammatical prefix remains functionally

similar even when its phonetic realisation changes across dialects, illustrating the systematic nature of morphological formation in these languages.

2.3. Phonological Variation Across Languages

The second objective of this study was to examine how phonological variation occurs across Safwa, Malila, Ndali, and Nyiha in the formation of weekday names. The findings disclose systematic consonant alternations, particularly involving the consonant /b/, which undergoes gradual alteration in different phonological environments, with perceived patterns including transformations such as /b/ → [bh] → [ch]. This objective is very significant because it demonstrates that phonological variations are not arbitrary but result from predictable processes such as assimilation, aspiration, consonant weakening, deletion, and affrication, which apply after morphological formation has taken place [5, 21].

The significance of this objective deceits in its contribution to understanding phonological processes in associated with Bantu languages and demonstrating how dialectal variation operates within a shared linguistic system. Aforementioned research on Bantu languages in the Nyasa-Tanganyika corridor has revealed that these languages share grammatical features such as noun class systems and agglutinative morphology, but also exhibit dissimilarities in phonological realisation and lexical innovation due to geographical separation and language contact [19]. This study extends this understanding by showing that phonological variation in weekday names follows predictable patterns. For example, examples such as Lwabhili → Pachibhili and Pabhuhili → Pachibhili reveal how phonological processes operate after morphological elements have already been combined, modifying the original consonant /b/ through aspiration and affrication [5, 21].

Methodologically, this objective was addressed through the similar qualitative research design [6], with particular attention to recording and analysing pronunciation differences across different speakers and communities. Focus Group Discussions were especially appreciated in this regard, as they provided an interactive stage where participants could compare and contrast linguistic forms, clarify pronunciation differences, and approve or correct interpretations [11, 15]. This collaborative setting encouraged participants to reflect on similarities and differences across the languages, making it easier to identify recurring phonological patterns. The data were analyzed thematically [4], with coding of linguistic patterns related to phonological variation, leading to the identification of systematic consonant alternations and dialectal pronunciation tendencies.

Other supportive arguments in this objective include the application of Generative Morphophonology Theory [5], which enlightens that phonological differences are rule-governed operations that apply to underlying forms [8]. The alternations recognized in this study, including voicing and aspiration pro-

cesses, consonant weakening, and affrication, provide indication that phonological processes play a significant role in shaping linguistic variation within Bantu languages. This supports the theoretical position that surface forms are derived through ordered phonological rules acting on underlying forms [5, 21]. The findings also establish that dialect-specific phonological adjustment contributes to the variation observed among speakers and regions, reflecting how speakers adapt pronunciation to fit the phonological system of a particular dialect or speech community.

2.4. Semantic Preservation Despite Structural Differences

The third objective of this study was to study how meaning is preserved despite structural differences in weekday names across Safwa, Malila, Ndali, and Nyiha. The findings disclose that even with phonological and morphological variation, the semantic meaning of weekday names remains reliable across all four languages, with each language conserving the same conceptual gathering of the week as found in Swahili (Jumatatu to Jumapili). This objective is significant since it demonstrates that semantic structures tend to remain more stable than lexical forms, endorsing that meaning can remain constant even when lexical forms differ considerably between languages [7, 13].

The significance of this objective lies in its influence to Lexical Semantics Theory [7, 13] and its demonstration of how vocabulary is organized within semantic fields associated with time and temporal reference. The findings reveal that weekday names in these languages are strongly influenced by a numerical semantic system, especially for weekdays two to five (Tuesday to Friday), where lexical roots correspond to numbers such as "two," "three," "four," and "five." This shows that speakers hypothesize time through an ordered numerical order in which each day derives meaning from its position within the progression of the week, imitating a cognitive framework in which time is perceived as quantifiable and sequentially structured [13]. The naming system therefore reflects a counting-based method of organizing and identifying temporal units within the weekly cycle.

Methodologically, this objective was addressed through the similar qualitative research design [6], with particular attention to semantic analysis of weekday names. Semi-structured interviews endorsed participants to provide rich descriptions of meanings and usage patterns in their native languages [18], while Focus Group Discussions enabled participants to share, compare, and explain different weekday naming forms, generating rich qualitative data through social interaction and discussion [11, 15]. Documentary review of existing linguistic materials provided additional contextual and comparative insights [3]. Thematic analysis [4] was used to identify semantic patterns, revealing strong semantic consistency across the languages, with each language maintaining the same underlying meanings for each day of the week.

Other supportive arguments in this objective include the identification of semantic borrowing combined with structural adaptation, particularly in the way weekday naming systems resemble the Swahili calendar logic. This phenomenon is best termed as loan translation (calquing) rather than direct lexical borrowing, where the semantic structure of a source language is transferred, but the receiving languages express it using their own morphological and phonological resources [22]. The findings also reveal a clear separation between conceptual meaning and linguistic form, with meaning (semantics) being shared, stable, and culturally consistent, while form (lexicon and phonology) is adaptable and language-specific. This confirms that semantic universality does not necessarily depend on lexical uniformity, a key principle in Lexical Semantics Theory [7, 13].

2.5. Methodological Challenges and Limitations

In spite of the comprehensive methodological approach used in this study, several challenges and limitations must be acknowledged, as they connect directly to the methodological framework termed in the next section. One significant challenge was the difficulty in accessing fluent elderly speakers who retain extensive knowledge of indigenous linguistic structures. As noted by [3], qualitative research depends heavily on information-rich cases, but the increasing influence of Swahili and English in the Mbeya and Songwe Regions has led to language shift and loss of indigenous vocabulary, particularly among younger generations. This necessitated the use of purposive and snowball sampling techniques [18] to identify and recruit competent speakers aged between 40 and 80 years, but the availability of such informants was limited, requiring extensive community engagement and networking.

Another challenge found was the linguistic diversity within the study area, with Safwa, Malila, Ndali, and Nyiha exhibiting both shared features and distinct characteristics [19]. This diversity required careful attention to dialectal variation and the use of multiple data collection methods, including interviews, FGDs, and documentary review, to achieve methodological triangulation and improve the trustworthiness of findings [3, 12]. However, the variations in pronunciation and terminology across villages and even within the same language group posed difficulties in establishing consistent data coding and analysis frameworks. Additionally, the lack of comprehensive linguistic documentation for some of these languages meant that documentary review was limited, requiring greater reliance on primary data collection [10]. The study also faced challenges in translation and interpretation, as some linguistic concepts and semantic distinctions did not have direct equivalents in English or Swahili, requiring careful negotiation during data analysis. These methodological challenges are further elaborated in the subsequent section, which details the specific procedures and strategies employed to address these limitations while maintaining the validity and reliability of the findings.

3. Research Methodology

This section outlines the methodological framework of the study by describing the research design, area of study, target population, sampling procedures, data collection methods, and data analysis techniques employed. It provides a comprehensive explanation of how the study was systematically structured to ensure the collection of reliable and relevant linguistic data on weekday naming systems in Safwa, Malila, Ndali, and Nyiha languages. The section also highlights the geographical scope of the research, the characteristics of the participants involved, and the strategies used to select appropriate informants. In addition, it details the specific methods used to gather data, as well as the analytical procedures applied to interpret the morphophonological and semantic features. Overall, this methodological overview demonstrates how each component of the research process was carefully integrated to ensure validity, consistency, and depth in addressing the objectives of the study.

3.1. Research Design

This study employed a qualitative research design, which was considered suitable given its focus on exploring and describing the linguistic patterns, meanings, and morphophonological structures found in the weekday naming systems of Safwa, Malila, Ndali, and Nyiha. A qualitative approach was deemed appropriate because it allows for an in-depth examination of language use within its natural social context. As noted by Creswell [6], qualitative research is particularly effective for understanding social and linguistic phenomena as they occur in real-life settings, rather than in controlled or artificial environments. This design also enabled the researcher to gather rich and detailed descriptive data directly from native speakers, especially elderly participants who are more likely to retain extensive knowledge of indigenous linguistic structures. Their insights were essential for understanding traditional weekday naming systems and the underlying morphophonological processes. Overall, the qualitative approach provided a flexible and context-sensitive framework for capturing authentic linguistic data and interpreting it within its cultural and communicative environment.

3.2. Area of Study

The study was carried out in Mbeya and Songwe Regions of Tanzania, focusing specifically on districts where Safwa, Malila, Ndali, and Nyiha are widely spoken. In Mbeya District, data were collected from villages such as Simambwe, Shibolya, Ilembo Usafwa, Italazya, Iyunga, Shitete, Shigamba, and Nsongwimantanji. In Ileje District, the selected villages included Isongole, Itumba, and Mbebe. In Mbozi District within Songwe Region, the study covered Idiwili, Ilomba, Iyula, Izyila, Iwiji, Ndola, and Igamba. These locations were deliberately chosen because they fall within the main geographical

areas where the target languages are actively used, making them ideal for accessing fluent native speakers. The selection particularly prioritized areas with a high presence of elderly residents, as they are more likely to retain and transmit indigenous linguistic knowledge, including traditional weekday naming systems and related morphophonological structures.

3.3. Target Population

The target population consisted of native speakers of Safwa, Malila, Ndali, and Nyiha living in the selected villages. The study specifically concentrated on adults aged between 40 and 80 years, as this age group is more likely to possess and preserve indigenous linguistic knowledge, particularly regarding traditional systems such as weekday naming practices. In total, the study engaged 50 individual informants (two from each village) and 20 participants who took part in Focus Group Discussions (FGDs). The sample also included both genders, with 25 women and 45 men, to ensure balanced representation in the collection of linguistic data.

To select participants, the study applied a combination of purposive, snowball, and stratified village sampling techniques. Purposive sampling was used to identify elderly participants knowledgeable about indigenous linguistic structures, while snowball sampling allowed initial informants to recommend other competent speakers within their communities. In addition, stratified village sampling ensured that each language group and geographical area was adequately represented, thereby improving the diversity and reliability of the data. As noted [18], purposive sampling is particularly suitable in qualitative research because it focuses on selecting information-rich cases that can provide deep and meaningful insights into the phenomenon under investigation.

3.4. Data Collection Methods

The study adopted a mixed-methods approach involving interviews, focus group discussions, and documentary review to achieve methodological triangulation and improve the trustworthiness and dependability of the findings. As noted [6], employing several data collection techniques in qualitative research enhances validity by enabling researchers to compare and verify information across different sources. Interviews offered rich individual accounts of how speakers of Safwa, Malila, Ndali, and Nyiha understand and use weekday names in their daily communication. In contrast, focus group discussions expanded the data by promoting group interaction, where participants could contrast linguistic forms, negotiate meanings, and jointly confirm interpretations an approach highlighted [18] as essential for generating deeper qualitative understanding. Furthermore, documentary review provided access to existing scholarly literature, linguistic documentation, and related studies, which helped to validate and supplement the primary data, a strategy strongly recommended in qualitative research by Bowen [3]. Overall, the integration of

these three methods minimized bias, enhanced data credibility, and supported a more detailed examination of the morpho-phonological and semantic features of the study.

3.4.1. Interviews

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with a total of 50 informants drawn from the Mbeya and Songwe regions. This method was chosen because it combines predetermined questions with the flexibility to explore emerging issues in depth, making it particularly suitable for linguistic and sociolinguistic research. According to Patton [18], semi-structured interviews are effective for capturing detailed and context-dependent information while still maintaining a clear research focus. In this study, the interviews were used to explore weekday naming systems in Safwa, Malila, Ndali, and Nyiha, with particular attention to how these lexical items are formed and interpreted within their respective speech communities. Respondents provided rich descriptions of morphological structures, phonological patterns, and cultural influences that shape weekday naming practices.

Furthermore, the semi-structured format enabled participants to expand on their responses, offering explanations of meanings and usage patterns in their native languages while allowing the researcher to probe for clarification where necessary. As noted by Creswell [6], such flexibility in qualitative interviewing enhances the depth and quality of data by allowing participants to elaborate on complex issues as they arise. This approach was particularly valuable for identifying morphophonological processes such as affixation and consonant alternation, which are central to the analysis. Overall, the interviews generated comprehensive qualitative data that significantly contributed to understanding the relationship between word formation processes and semantic interpretation in the weekday naming systems of the selected Bantu languages.

3.4.2. Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)

Twenty participants took part in the Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), which provided an important platform for collective linguistic analysis and interaction among speakers of the studied languages. FGDs enabled participants to share, compare, and explain different weekday naming forms used within their speech communities, thereby generating rich qualitative data through social interaction and discussion [11]. This interactive setting allowed participants to clarify pronunciation differences, meanings, and contextual usage of specific lexical forms, which enhanced the depth and reliability of the linguistic data collected. The discussions also encouraged participants to reflect on similarities and differences across Safwa, Malila, Ndali, and Nyiha, making it easier to identify recurring phonological and morphological patterns within the languages.

In addition, the FGDs played a significant role in validating responses obtained from individual interviews. According to Morgan [15], focus group interaction helps researchers obtain more detailed explanations because participants respond to

and build upon each other's ideas. Through collective discussion, participants confirmed or corrected certain pronunciations and interpretations, thereby strengthening the credibility and accuracy of the findings. The interaction further generated spontaneous explanations concerning dialectal variation, pronunciation practices, and language use that may not have emerged during individual interviews alone. Therefore, FGDs were valuable not only as a verification tool but also as a means of producing deeper sociolinguistic and morphophonological insights into the weekday naming systems of the studied Bantu languages.

3.4.3. Documentary Review

The researcher reviewed existing linguistic materials, including grammar descriptions of Safwa, Malila, Ndali, and Nyiha, academic articles on Bantu morphology and phonology, and archival language documentation where available. According to Bowen [3], documentary review enhances qualitative research by providing contextual and comparative insights.

3.5. Data Analysis Procedures

Data were analyzed using thematic analysis. Thematic analysis was appropriate because it allows identification, organization, and interpretation of patterns within qualitative linguistic data [4]. The analysis involved: transcription of interview and FGD data, translation of data into English where necessary, coding of linguistic patterns related to weekday naming, identification of morphological and phonological processes, and grouping of data into emerging themes such as borrowing and adaptation of weekday names, morphological structures in naming, phonological variation across languages, and indigenous versus borrowed time expressions.

3.6. Validity and Reliability (Trustworthiness)

To ensure trustworthiness of findings, the study applied: triangulation (using interviews, FGDs, and documentary review), member checking (participants verified interpretations), peer review (linguistic experts reviewed data interpretations), and thick description (detailed explanation of linguistic forms was provided to ensure transparency). Lincoln and Guba [12] emphasize that credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability are essential in qualitative research.

3.7. Ethical Considerations

The study observed ethical research standards by: obtaining informed consent from all participants, ensuring confidentiality and anonymity of respondents, respecting cultural values of the communities studied, allowing voluntary participation and withdrawal at any stage, and using data strictly for academic purposes. Generally, this study employed a qualitative

research design combining interviews, FGDs, and documentary review to investigate weekday naming systems in Safwa, Malila, Ndali, and Nyiha. The data were analyzed thematically to uncover morphophonological patterns and linguistic variation across the selected communities in Mbeya and Songwe regions.

4. Data Analysis and Discussion of Findings

This section presents a detailed analysis of weekday naming systems in Safwa, Malila, Ndali, and Nyiha, with particular attention to the linguistic processes involved in their formation and usage. The discussion examines the structural similarities and differences found across the four languages, especially in relation to morphological composition, phonological variation, and semantic interpretation. By analyzing the prefixes, consonant alternations, and lexical forms that appear in weekday names, the study demonstrates that these naming systems are not arbitrary but follow organized grammatical and phonological principles typical of Bantu languages. The analysis further

highlights how linguistic variation across the languages reflects both shared historical origins and dialect-specific developments.

The interpretation of the data is guided by Generative Morphophonology Theory [5] and Lexical Semantics Theory [7, 13]. Generative Morphophonology Theory helps explain how underlying morphological forms are transformed through phonological rules such as aspiration, assimilation, and consonant alternation to produce the surface forms used in speech. At the same time, Lexical Semantics Theory provides a framework for understanding how meaning is encoded and organized within the weekday names themselves. Together, these theories make it possible to analyze the interaction between word formation, sound structure, and meaning, showing that weekday naming in these languages reflects a systematic relationship between linguistic form and semantic function.

4.1. Overview of the Data

The data show systematic weekday equivalents across the four languages:

Table 1. Weekday Names in Safwa, Malila, Ndali, Nyiha, and Swahili.

No.	Safwa	Malila	Ndali	Nyiha	Swahili and English Meaning
1	Lwando	Pamandi	Pamande	Pamandi	Jumatatu (Monday)
2	Lwabhili	Pakibhili	Pabhubhili	Pachibhili	Jumanne (Tuesday)
3	Lwatatu	Pakitatu	Pabhutatu	Pachitatu	Jumatano (Wednesday)
4	Lwabhoni	Pakinayi	Pabhuna	Pachinai	Alhamis (Thursday)
5	Lwasanu	Pakisanu	Pakihano	Pabhuhano	Ijumaa (Friday)
6	Mpyajilo	Pamuyeluka	Pampyaghilo	Pamuyeluka	Jumamosi (Saturday)
7	N'lungu	Pamulungu	Pamulungu	Pamulungu	Jumapili (Sunday)

The above data demonstrate a clear relationship between semantic consistency and structural variation across the studied languages, revealing that while the weekday names maintain similar meanings, their phonological and morphological forms differ systematically from one language to another. This indicates that the languages share common semantic concepts and historical foundations, yet each applies its own phonological and morphological rules in shaping the surface forms of the words. Using Generative Morphophonology Theory, these differences can be explained through rule-governed sound changes such as aspiration, affrication, and assimilation that occur after morphological formation. At the same time, Lexical Semantics Theory explains how the meanings of the weekday names remain stable and recognizable despite formal var-

iation. Together, the two theoretical frameworks show that linguistic form and meaning are closely interconnected, and that variation in pronunciation or structure does not necessarily alter the core semantic identity of the lexical items.

4.2. Analysis Based on Generative Morphophonology Theory

Generative Morphophonology explains that words are first formed at an abstract underlying level through morphological processes and are later transformed into surface phonological forms through systematic rule-governed operations [5]. According to this theory, phonological variations are not accidental but result from predictable processes such as assimi-

tion, aspiration, consonant weakening, deletion, and affrication, which apply after morphological formation has taken place [9, 21]. These phonological rules modify sounds depending on their linguistic environment and the structural patterns of a particular language or dialect. In Bantu languages, for example, an underlying consonant such as /b/ may surface as [bh] or [ch] due to phonological adjustment processes influenced by articulation and dialectal pronunciation patterns. Therefore, Generative Morphophonology provides an important framework for explaining how words can preserve the same grammatical and semantic identity while displaying different phonological realizations across related languages and dialects [8].

4.2.1. Morphological Variation of Weekday Names

Another important finding in this study is the variation in prefixation patterns across the examined Bantu languages. The data show that different speech communities employ distinct nominal prefixes in the formation of weekday names. In Safwa, the commonly occurring prefix is Lwa-, while in Malila, Ndali, and Nyiha the forms Pa-, Pach-, and Pabh- are frequently used. Examples from the data include Lwabhili in Safwa, Pakibhili in Malila, and Pachibhili in Nyiha. Although the prefixes differ phonologically, they perform a similar grammatical function in marking and categorizing nouns within the noun class system characteristic of Bantu languages.

These prefixes function as nominal markers, supporting the argument that weekday names in these languages are grammatically treated as nouns rather than simple lexical labels. According to Bantu linguistic structure, noun class prefixes play an essential role in classification, agreement, and semantic organization [9]. The presence of prefixes such as Lwa-, Pa-, Pach-, and Pabh- demonstrates that weekday names are integrated into the broader grammatical system of the language. This confirms that the naming of days follows regular morphological principles found in Bantu noun formation, where prefixes contribute both grammatical meaning and structural identity to the word.

The variation among the prefixes Pa-, Pach-, and Pabh- can be explained through phonological processes such as assimilation, strengthening, and consonant modification. In some dialects, the basic prefix undergoes phonetic adjustment depending on the surrounding sounds and pronunciation patterns of the speech community. For instance, the emergence of forms like Pach- and Pabh- reflects consonant strengthening and affrication, where sounds become more forceful or change their articulation during speech production. These differences illustrate how closely morphology and phonology interact in Bantu languages, since the underlying grammatical prefix remains functionally similar even when its phonetic realization changes across dialects.

4.2.2. Phonological Variation and Rule Application

A key finding of this study is the presence of systematic phonological variation in the formation and pronunciation of

lexical items across related Bantu varieties. The data reveal consistent consonant alternations, particularly involving the consonant /b/, which undergoes gradual modification in different phonological environments. The observed patterns include transformations such as /b/ → [bh] → [ch], as illustrated in forms like bhili → chibhili, as well as the simpler shift /b/ → [bh], which reflects consonant aspiration. These sound changes are not random but follow predictable linguistic patterns influenced by both morphological structure and dialectal pronunciation tendencies.

Examples such as Lwabhili → Pachibhili and Pabhuhili → Pachibhili demonstrate how phonological processes operate after morphological elements have already been combined. In these cases, the original consonant /b/ is modified through aspiration, producing [bh], and in some environments it further develops into the affricate [ch]. This process suggests the influence of surrounding sounds and articulatory ease in speech production. The alternation also reflects how speakers adapt pronunciation to fit the phonological system of a particular dialect or speech community. As a result, different surface forms may emerge even though they originate from the same underlying lexical or morphological structure.

From the perspective of Generative Morphophonology, these variations can be explained as the application of phonological rules after morphological formation has taken place. Such rules include voicing and aspiration processes, consonant weakening, and affrication, where a bilabial stop like /b/ changes into an affricate [ch] under certain phonetic conditions. In addition, dialect-specific phonological adjustment contributes to the variation observed among speakers and regions. Generative theory assumes that words are first formed at an abstract underlying level and are later modified by phonological rules to produce the surface pronunciation used in actual speech. Therefore, the alternations identified in this study provide evidence that phonological processes play a significant role in shaping linguistic variation within Bantu languages. This supports Chomsky and Halle [5], who argue that surface forms are derived through ordered phonological rules acting on underlying forms.

4.2.3. Shared Underlying Forms

The pattern observed in these weekday names points to a deeper historical relationship among the languages, especially their inheritance from a common Proto-Bantu linguistic system. Although the modern forms may appear different on the surface because of pronunciation shifts, sound loss, vowel harmony, or local innovations, the roots themselves remain recognizably related. For example, the root -bhili corresponds to the numeral "two" in many Bantu languages. In several communities, the weekday system is organized numerically after the first day, so the "second day" derives from this root. Even when pronunciation differs slightly across languages—such as -bili, -bhiri, or -viri the semantic core remains stable. This demonstrates how cognate forms evolve phonetically while preserving meaning.

Similarly, -tatu consistently reflects the numeral "three," associated with the "third day." This root is one of the most stable numeral forms across Bantu languages and appears in languages such as Swahili, Zulu, and Luganda with only minor phonological variation. Its recurrence across geographically distant speech communities strengthens the argument for a shared ancestral lexicon. The forms -naye / -nai / -ne for the fourth day likely derive from the Proto-Bantu numeral root for "four," commonly reconstructed as -nai or -ne. Over time, languages adapted this root according to their own sound systems. Some inserted vowels for ease of pronunciation, while others simplified consonant clusters or altered vowel quality. These processes produced surface variants that still retain a recognizable historical connection.

Likewise, -sanu / -hano for the fifth day reflects another widespread Proto-Bantu numeral root associated with "five." In many Bantu languages, consonant alternation between /s/ and /h/ is common due to historical sound shifts. Thus, forms such as -sanu, -tano, and -hano can all be understood as reflexes of the same inherited lexical source. This type of variation is typical in comparative Bantu linguistics and helps scholars trace genealogical relationships among languages [17]. The broader implication is that these weekday names are not isolated lexical coincidences. Rather, they preserve evidence of a historically shared counting-based naming system inherited from Proto-Bantu culture and language. The differences observed today mainly reflect centuries of phonological change, regional contact, and independent linguistic development. Therefore, the weekday terminology provides both linguistic and historical evidence for common ancestry among Bantu languages.

4.2.4. Lexical Innovation in Saturday Terms

Saturday shows greater variation: Safwa: Mpyajilo, Malila: Pamuyeluka, Ndali: Pampyaghilo, and Nyiha: Pamuyeluka. This indicates greater lexical instability for non-numerical weekday origins and possible cultural or historical reinterpretation of Saturday naming. Generative morphophonology explains this as lexical divergence where no stable underlying numeral root exists, leading to different phonological outputs.

4.3. Analysis Based on Lexical Semantics Theory

Lexical Semantics is a branch of linguistics that focuses on the study of meaning relationships and the conceptual organization of vocabulary within a language. It examines how words are structured in terms of meaning, how they relate to one another, and how they form coherent semantic fields that reflect human cognition and experience. According to Lyons [13], lexical meaning is not random but systematically organized within networks of semantic relations, such as synonymy, antonymy, hyponymy, and hierarchical classification. Similarly, Cruse [7] emphasizes that lexical items derive their meanings through their relationships with other words in a

structured semantic system rather than existing in isolation. From this perspective, vocabulary is understood as a conceptual map of experience in which words are grouped into domains such as time, space, kinship, and nature. Therefore, Lexical Semantics provides an important analytical framework for understanding how meaning is constructed, organized, and interpreted within linguistic systems, making it highly relevant for analyzing patterns such as weekday naming across related languages.

4.3.1. Semantic Uniformity Across Languages

A key outcome of this study is the strong semantic consistency found in the weekday naming systems of Safwa, Malila, Ndali, and Nyiha. While the languages differ noticeably in their phonological forms and morphological patterns, they maintain the same underlying meanings for each day of the week. In other words, all four languages show full alignment in how the seven-day cycle is structured and understood, even though the actual word forms vary in pronunciation and construction. The uniformity can be summarized as follows:

Table 2. Semantic Uniformity of Weekday Meanings Across Languages.

Day	Meaning Preserved Across Languages
Monday	First day of the week (Jumatatu equivalent)
Tuesday	Second day of the week
Wednesday	Third day of the week
Thursday	Fourth day of the week
Friday	Fifth day of the week
Saturday	Sixth day of the week
Sunday	Seventh day of the week

This table demonstrates that the conceptual structure of the week is fully shared across the four languages. In other words, speakers of Safwa, Malila, Ndali, and Nyiha all conceptualize time using the same sequential framework, where each day occupies a fixed and universally recognized position within the weekly cycle.

From a semantic point of view, the findings reveal that the weekday naming system operates as a consistent cultural and cognitive framework for organizing time across the studied communities. The similarity in the interpretation of weekday names indicates that Safwa, Malila, Ndali, and Nyiha speakers share a common understanding of temporal sequencing, possibly shaped by regional interaction, historical relationships, contact with Swahili, and the influence of formal calendar systems. Nevertheless, although the semantic structure is shared, each language preserves its own unique phonological and

morphological characteristics, showing that semantic similarity can exist alongside linguistic diversity.

This observation strongly supports the principles of Lexical Semantics Theory, especially the argument advanced by Lyons [13] that meaning may remain constant even when lexical forms differ considerably between languages. Within lexical semantics, meaning is viewed as a conceptual system that is independent of the surface realization of words. Consequently, despite differences in pronunciation and word formation among Safwa, Malila, Ndali, and Nyiha, the semantic meaning associated with weekday names remains stable and universally understood across the languages.

In addition, the semantic consistency observed in the data suggests that weekday names belong to a shared temporal semantic field in which lexical items are systematically arranged according to their place within a chronological sequence rather than through arbitrary naming. This demonstrates that speakers conceptualize time as a linear and ordered progression, where the meaning of each day depends on its relationship to the others within the weekly cycle. Overall, the analysis indicates that while the four languages display phonological and morphological variation, they maintain complete semantic similarity in their weekday naming systems. This confirms that semantic structures tend to remain more stable than lexical forms.

4.3.2. Numerical Semantic Structure

One significant semantic pattern identified in the data is that the naming of weekdays in Safwa, Malila, Ndali, and Nyiha is closely connected to a numerical system, especially for the weekdays representing the second through the fifth days. Lexical forms such as -bhili, -tatu, -nayi, and -sanu/-hano correspond to the numbers "two," "three," "four," and "five" respectively. This demonstrates that weekday names in these languages are systematically motivated by numerical concepts rather than being arbitrary lexical labels. The naming system therefore reflects a counting-based method of organizing and identifying temporal units within the weekly cycle.

The data further show that speakers conceptualize time through an ordered numerical sequence in which each day derives meaning from its position within the progression of the week. For instance, the second weekday is associated with the numeral "two," the third with "three," and so forth, revealing a strong relationship between numerical cognition and temporal reference. This indicates that weekdays are understood relationally, as interconnected parts of a continuous sequence rather than independent lexical items. Such organization reflects a cognitive framework in which time is perceived as measurable and sequentially structured.

From the viewpoint of Lexical Semantics Theory, this pattern illustrates how vocabulary is arranged within a semantic field associated with time and temporal reference. According to Lyons [13], lexical items are organized into semantic domains that mirror human conceptual systems and experiences. In this case, weekday names form part of a temporal semantic

field structured through numerical relationships, where each lexical item gains meaning both from its temporal position and its embedded numerical value. Consequently, the naming system reflects a culturally grounded understanding of time as linear, ordered, and countable, demonstrating how language encodes cognitive and cultural perceptions of reality.

4.3.3. Semantic Borrowing and Adaptation

The analysis also reveals evidence of semantic borrowing combined with structural adaptation, particularly in the way weekday naming systems resemble the Swahili calendar logic. In Swahili, weekday names such as Jumatatu (Monday) and Jumanne (Tuesday) reflect a sequential interpretation of time, where days are conceptualized based on their order within the week. For example, Jumatatu is interpreted as the "first day after Sunday," while Jumanne corresponds to the "second day," and so forth. A similar semantic structure is observed in Safwa, Malila, Ndali, and Nyiha. However, unlike direct borrowing where lexical forms are adopted wholesale, these languages maintain their indigenous phonological and morphological systems while preserving the underlying semantic structure of Swahili weekday sequencing. For instance, although the phonological realizations differ significantly (Lwabhili, Pakibhili, Pabhubhili, Pachibhili), the conceptual meaning remains aligned with the idea of "second day."

This phenomenon is best described as loan translation (calquing) rather than direct lexical borrowing. In this process, the semantic structure of a source language is transferred, but the receiving languages express it using their own morphological and phonological resources. As a result, the meaning structure is borrowed, while the form is locally generated. Thomason and Kaufman [22] describe this as a form of structural and semantic adaptation in language contact situations, where languages adopt conceptual frameworks from a dominant or contact language while maintaining their internal grammatical systems. In this case, Swahili appears to have influenced the conceptual organization of weekday sequencing, but Safwa, Malila, Ndali, and Nyiha have preserved their own linguistic identities through distinct morphophonological realizations. Therefore, the data suggest that weekday naming in these languages is not a case of simple borrowing, but rather a hybrid system of semantic transfer and morphological localization, where shared meaning coexists with diverse linguistic expression.

4.3.4. Semantic Stability Versus Lexical Variation

The findings of this study clearly demonstrate a strong distinction between semantic stability and lexical variation in the weekday naming systems of Safwa, Malila, Ndali, and Nyiha. On the one hand, the meanings associated with each weekday remain consistently shared across all four languages, while on the other hand, the phonological and lexical forms used to express these meanings differ significantly from one language to another.

In terms of semantic structure, all the languages investigated maintain a uniform conceptual ordering of the seven-day week, corresponding directly to the Swahili system (Jumatatu to Jumapili). This indicates that speakers across Safwa, Malila, Ndali, and Nyiha share a common cognitive and cultural understanding of temporal sequencing. The days of the week are therefore conceptually fixed and universally recognized within the speech communities, regardless of the linguistic form used to express them.

However, at the lexical level, there is considerable variation in how these meanings are linguistically encoded. Each language employs distinct phonological realizations and morphological structures, such as Lwa-, Pa-, Pach-, and Pabh- prefixes, as well as different consonant and vowel patterns. For example, the same concept of "Tuesday" is realized as Lwabhili in Safwa, Pakibhili in Malila, Pabhuhili in Ndali, and Pachibhili in Nyiha. Despite referring to the same temporal concept, the surface forms differ due to language-specific phonological rules and morphological adaptations. This pattern confirms a key principle in Lexical Semantics Theory, which holds that meaning can remain stable across languages even when the lexical forms used to express that meaning vary considerably [7, 13]. In this case, meaning is anchored in a shared conceptual system of time organization, while lexical expression is shaped by individual language structures and sound systems.

Therefore, the data illustrate that weekday naming in these languages reflects a clear separation between conceptual

meaning and linguistic form. Meaning (semantics) is shared, stable, and culturally consistent, whereas form (lexicon and phonology) is variable and language-specific. This contrast highlights an important linguistic principle: semantic universality does not necessarily depend on lexical uniformity.

In conclusion, the relationship between semantic stability and lexical variation in this study shows that while Safwa, Malila, Ndali, and Nyiha differ in how they linguistically encode weekday names, they converge on a common conceptual understanding of time. This reinforces the idea that lexical diversity across related languages does not disrupt shared meaning, but rather reflects natural linguistic variation within a common semantic framework.

4.4. Integrated Morphophonological and Semantic Discussion

By integrating Generative Morphophonology Theory and Lexical Semantics Theory, the analysis reveals a strong interaction between linguistic form and meaning in the weekday naming systems of Safwa, Malila, Ndali, and Nyiha. The data demonstrate that weekday names cannot be fully explained by either morphology or semantics alone; rather, they require a combined theoretical interpretation in which structural form and conceptual meaning operate together but at different linguistic levels. The interaction between the two theories is summarized as follows:

Table 3. Theoretical Interaction Between Morphophonology and Semantics.

Linguistic Level	Observation from Data	Theoretical Explanation
Morphology	Variation in prefixes such as Lwa-, Pa-, Pach-, and Pabh-	Explained by Generative Morphophonology as noun-class-based prefixation and morphological structuring
Phonology	Systematic sound alternations such as /b/ ↔ [bh] ↔ [ch]	Phonology Systematic sound alternations such as /b/ ↔ [bh] ↔ [ch] Interpreted as phonological rule application operating on underlying forms
Semantics	Consistent weekday meanings across all four languages	Explained by Lexical Semantics as stable conceptual meaning across lexical items
Structural Organization	Preservation of numerical sequencing of days (1-7)	Interpreted as semantic field organization based on numerical cognition

Key Theoretical Insight

The findings reveal that weekday naming in Safwa, Malila, Ndali, and Nyiha operates as a dual-structured linguistic system in which form and meaning function independently but interactively. On one hand, the morphophonological structure of weekday names is highly dynamic. It is characterized by variation in prefixes, systematic consonant alternations, and dialectal phonological adjustments. These variations reflect

the operation of productive morphological processes and language-specific phonological rules, as explained by Generative Morphophonology Theory. On the other hand, the semantic structure of weekday names remains highly stable across all four languages. Despite differences in pronunciation and morphological realization, all languages preserve an identical conceptual interpretation of the seven-day week. This semantic stability is best explained through Lexical Semantics Theory, which emphasizes the persistence of meaning across different

lexical forms.

5. Conclusion

This study investigated weekday naming systems in Safwa, Malila, Ndali, and Nyiha spoken in Mbeya and Songwe Regions of Tanzania, with a focus on their morphophonological structure and semantic organization. The analysis was guided by Generative Morphophonology Theory and Lexical Semantics Theory, which together provided a strong explanatory framework for understanding how weekday names are formed, how they vary in sound, and how meaning is maintained across related languages. The study established several key findings.

First, weekday naming in Safwa, Malila, Ndali, and Nyiha follows a systematic morphological structure. Most weekday names are formed using identifiable prefixes such as Lwa-, Pa-, Pach-, and Pabh-, which function as nominal markers consistent with Bantu noun class systems. These prefixes are attached to lexical roots that often reflect numerical sequencing or inherited temporal concepts. Second, the study found significant phonological variation across the languages, particularly in consonant alternation patterns such as /b/ → [bh] → [ch]. Despite these differences, the underlying morphological structure remains largely stable. This confirms that the languages share common underlying forms that are realized differently at the surface level due to phonological rules and dialectal variation.

Third, the data revealed that weekday names are strongly influenced by a numerical semantic system, especially for weekdays two to five (Tuesday to Friday), where lexical roots correspond to numbers such as "two," "three," "four," and "five." This indicates that temporal cognition in these languages is structured through a linear numerical conceptualization of time. Fourth, despite phonological and morphological variation, the semantic meaning of weekday names remains consistent across all four languages. Each language preserves the same conceptual ordering of the week as found in Swahili, indicating strong semantic stability even in the presence of structural divergence. Finally, Saturday and Sunday show greater lexical variation compared to other weekdays, suggesting either historical lexical replacement, cultural reinterpretation, or loss of older indigenous forms in these temporal categories.

From the viewpoint of Generative Morphophonology Theory, the study concludes that weekday names are generated through systematic morphological processes and subsequently modified by phonological rules. The observed sound variations across Safwa, Malila, Ndali, and Nyiha are not random but rule-governed, reflecting dialectal phonological processes such as affrication, voicing, and consonant strengthening.

From the perspective of Lexical Semantics Theory, the study concludes that weekday naming systems are organized within a stable semantic field of temporal sequencing. Although the phonological forms differ, the meanings remain

constant, demonstrating a strong relationship between lexical meaning and the cognitive structuring of time. This confirms that semantic content is preserved even when lexical forms undergo variation across languages.

In general, this study concludes that weekday naming systems in Safwa, Malila, Ndali, and Nyiha are the result of a complex interaction between morphology, phonology, and semantics. The systems are highly structured rather than arbitrary, combining Bantu morphological prefixation, systematic phonological variation, and stable numerical-based semantic organization.

The study further concludes that these languages, although distinct in surface form, share a deep underlying linguistic similarity in their conceptualization of time. The weekday naming system therefore reflects both shared Bantu linguistic heritage and localized phonological innovation. This research contributes to African linguistics by: documenting under-researched weekday naming systems in four Tanzanian Bantu languages, demonstrating morphophonological processes in temporal vocabulary, showing semantic stability across related languages despite phonological variation, and expanding the application of generative morphophonology and lexical semantics.

Abbreviations

FGD Focused Group Discussion

Author Contributions

Pendo Mwashota: Conceptualization, Data curation, Investigation, Methodology, Resources, Writing – original draft, Writing – review & editing

Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest.

References

- [1] Agyekum, K. (2006). The sociolinguistics of Akan personal names. *Nordic Journal of African Studies*, 15(2), 206-235.
- [2] Ainiala, T., Saarelma, M., & Sjöblom, P. (2012). *Names in focus: An introduction to onomastics*. Finnish Literature Society.
- [3] Bowen, G. A. (2009). Document analysis as a qualitative research method. *Qualitative Research Journal*, 9(2), 27-40. <https://doi.org/10.3316/QRJ0902027>
- [4] Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), 77-101. <https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp0630a>

- [5] Chomsky, N., & Halle, M. (1968). *The sound pattern of English*. Harper & Row.
- [6] Creswell, J. W. (2014). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods approaches* (4th ed.). Sage Publications.
- [7] Cruse, D. A. (1986). *Lexical semantics*. Cambridge University Press.
- [8] Hyman, L. M. (2003). Segmental phonology. In D. Nurse & G. Philippson (Eds.), *The Bantu languages* (pp. 42-58). Routledge.
- [9] Katamba, F. (2004). Bantu nominal morphology. In A. Nurse & G. Philippson (Eds.), *The Bantu languages* (pp. 103-120). Routledge.
- [10] Kothari, C. R. (2004). *Research methodology: Methods and techniques* (2nd ed.). New Age International Publishers.
- [11] Krueger, R. A., & Casey, M. A. (2015). *Focus groups: A practical guide for applied research* (5th ed.). Sage Publications.
- [12] Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry*. Sage Publications.
- [13] Lyons, J. (1977). *Semantics* (Vols. 1-2). Cambridge University Press.
- [14] Mdoe, M. F. (2018). Morphological processes in Bantu languages: Evidence from Tanzanian linguistic data. *Journal of African Languages and Linguistics*, 39(1), 55-72.
- [15] Morgan, D. L. (1997). *Focus groups as qualitative research* (2nd ed.). Sage Publications.
- [16] Mwang'eka, I. A. (2026). Morphological analysis of personal names in Chindali language: A case of Ileje District, Songwe Region, Tanzania. ResearchGate. <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/400825452>
- [17] Nurse, D., & Philippson, G. (Eds.). (2003). *The Bantu languages*. Routledge.
- [18] Patton, M. Q. (2002). *Qualitative research and evaluation methods* (3rd ed.). Sage Publications.
- [19] Robinson, N. (2023). Historical evolution of the -ile suffix and language genetic relationship in the Nyasa-Tanganyika corridor. *South African Journal of African Languages*. <https://www.nisc.co.za/products/abstracts/37105>
- [20] Shigini, P. G., et al. (2023). A morphological analysis of Sukuma place names: A case of primary school names in Shinyanga, Tanzania. ResearchGate. <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/374834048>
- [21] Spencer, A. (1991). *Morphological theory: An introduction to word structure in generative grammar*. Blackwell.
- [22] Thomason, S. G., & Kaufman, T. (1988). *Language contact, creolization, and genetic linguistics*. University of California Press.