

## On-site Education of Practical Languages for Area Studies

### Report in 2010

—Swahili, Botswana University, Botswana, Term ( 19 Dec. 2010 – 19 Mar. 2011)—

Year of Enrollment: 2010

Graduate School of Asian and African Areas Studies

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#### On My research theme and/or Language Training

I studied about distribution of VCD cinema by Swahili language, but I have changed it to mountain glacier of East Africa. I was touched by natural environment of Botswana and I have decided to research African natural environment. There are two main themes, one is the relationship between glacier recession and climate change, and the other is reconstruction of climate history of East African mountain area from analysis of snow algae and other organisms embedded in ice and snow strata.

Another theme is real-time mapping of glacier recession by using handy-GPS. So far little research has been done on glacier ecosystem of African mountains. My work thus may bring the discovery of new species and organisms. It's also important to compare this data with other data of other glacier areas. Many researchers advocated that glaciers in Africa will disappear by one or two decades. Therefore, it is important to conduct research on glaciers in Africa as soon as possible.

There are three areas in Africa where mountain glacier exists, namely Mt. Kilimanjaro(Tanzania), Mt. Kenya(Kenya) and Mt. Rwenzori(Uganda, DRC). All of them located in Swahili speaking area, so it is important to speak Kiswahili(Swahili language). I thus made use of this programme for learning Kiswahili, especially brushing up listening and speaking skills, because it is important to communicate with local porters and researchers by Kiswahili.

#### About the language I learned

Kiswahili is one of the Bantu languages, spoken mainly in the east coast of Africa. It is used as official language of Tanzania, Kenya, and Uganda, and also used as common language in east DRC, and in a part of Rwanda and Brundhi.

Kiswahili has been used as business language since ancient times. The number of speakers is more than 70 millions, so it is the most popular language in Bantu languages. In the old times, it was written by Arabic characters, but nowadays, it is written by Latin characters.

#### How did I learn there?

In this programme, I was taught by Tanzanian teacher, who is graduate school student majoring linguistics and has taught English and Kiswahili at University of Dar es Salaam. It was private lesson, and English was used as an intermediate language.

I had the lesson was 2 hours per day, and 6 to 10 hours per week. Besides this, I brushed up my

conversation skill through having conversation in Kiswahili community, which is composed of many Kenyans and Tanzanians.

This lesson was composed of mainly 4 parts, these are:

- (1) Grammar: two teaching materials were used. One is a published textbook written by English, and the other is handouts written by the teacher himself.
- (2) Vocabulary: we chose 20 words from newspaper or books by Swahili per lesson, and the teacher taught me the meanings of these words. Finally, the word book we made contains about 2000 words.
- (3) Conversation: the teacher and I were talking in Swahili some time every lesson, with using grammar things which I was taught by the same lesson.
- (4) Listening: I listened to Internet swahili radio or swahili songs, or sometimes it was a conversation with the teacher and his friends.

Also, I took a mid-term and final exams.



In lesson 1



In lesson 2



Having a break...

### **Achievement and reflection about lesson**

Although I had studied Kiswahili to some extent in Japan, once lesson had started, I couldn't understand what he said. I realized that it is unsatisfactory to study Kiswahili only in Japan. In the later period, I could get most of what he said. So I achieved good level of listening in Kiswahili.

It is most regrettable that I couldn't promote my own research during my stay in Botswana. I couldn't learn Setswana(Tswana Language) neither. This is partly because almost all people live in Gaborone can speak English well.

### **Impressive experience within a training period**

There are many students from abroad and teachers from other African countries in the University of Botswana. English is the common language there. A Tanzanian Professor commented that Botswana is so small and peaceful that many people come over this country.

There are a lot of Chinese shops and companies in Botswana. Some of Botswana people have formed negative attitude toward Chinese people because, according to them, Chinese people have curtailed the business opportunities of Botswana nationals.

Most of Botswana people are very good at speaking in English. So the stay provided me with a good opportunity for the training of English Conversation.