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**Abstract Nouns within the System
of Noun Class 14 in Swahili**

Structural and Semantic Pattern of the *u*-Class (14)

An analysis of the *u*-class (14) rests on the assumption that a class is a linguistic category which represents some semantic value and is, at the same time, formally homogeneous, the so-called nominal class prefix functioning as the class marker. Having assumed that A is a set of words of definite semantic value, and B — a set of words of definite form, we conclude that A set is included in B set. In the course of pertinent research it has been maintained that in the Bantu languages the extreme identity of A and B sets does not occur and that, consequently, form and meaning are not adequate here. E.g.,

if *kitu* 'thing' is x then $x \in A$ and $x \in B$

if *kipofu* 'blind man' is y then $y \notin A$ and $y \in B$

if *meza* 'table' is z then $z \in A$ and $z \notin B$.

The above example can be explained as follows: *kipofu* 'blind man' belongs to class 7 (things) because it does not represent "an independently acting person", *meza* 'table' is a loan-word and for this reason it belongs to class 9 which is a set of "foreign words". Quite a number of doubts referring to the relationship between form and meaning within a class can be eliminated in similar way but, nevertheless, no definite picture can be obtained without an ample analysis of the functioning of noun classes, to be carried out from various points of view and with regard to various classes¹. The results of relevant research suggest that the pattern of the noun classes includes the overlapping A and B sets — $A_1 \cap B_1 \cap A_2 \cap B_2 \dots\dots A_{21a} \cap B_{21a}$, and the system of the noun classes represents a family of sets.

¹ Examples of such analysis can be found in: C. M. D o k e, *The Significance of Class 1a of Bantu Nouns*, in: *Festschrift Meinhof*, Hamburg 1927, pp. 196—203; and K. K u e h l, *Eine fast verloren gegangene Klasse des Ur-Bantu*, *ibid.*, pp. 233—40.

1. Structural Classification of Class 14 in Swahili

U- class (14) whose basic form is $u \sqrt{\quad} v$ is generally named as "class of abstract nouns", as it is shown below:

Author	Year	Statement
Delaunay	1885	"Généralement les noms abstraits sont rangés dans cette classe." ²
Saint Paul Illaire	1890	"Das charakteristische Präfix von abstracten Substantiven ist im Allgemeinen <i>u-</i> (rep. <i>w-</i>) der VI. Klasse, ohne dass damit indessen ausgeschlossen wäre, dass auch einige Abstracta mit anderen Präfixen — vor Allem mit <i>ma-</i> gebildet werden können." ³
Seidel	1890	"Viele Wörter dieser Klasse sind Abstrakta und bilden als solche keine Mehrzahl." ⁴
Velten	1911	"Viele Wörter dieser Klasse sind Abstrakta." ⁵
Steere	1919	"Abstract nouns generally belong to this class." ⁶
Werner	1919	"The fourteenth class... includes abstract nouns..., and names of materials." ⁷
Johnston	1922	"The prefix of No. 14 Class (BU) is normally used in abstract sense, and may be singular, plural, or collective ..." ⁸
Ratcliffe Elphinstone	1932	"Into this class are placed words expressing 'quality and condition', i.e., abstract ideas, and which of course, as such, have no plurals." ⁹
Ashton	1952	"To the U- (BU-) class belong: 1. words which admit of no plural or singular concept, such as abstract nouns denoting qualities or states..." ¹⁰
Haddon	1955	"U-classes... noting that they are sorted into two groups: A) Names of concrete things..., B) Abstract nouns commonly formed from adjectival stems..." ¹¹

² Père Delaunay, *Grammaire kiswahili*, Paris 1885, p. 12.

³ W. Saint Paul Illaire, *Suaheli Handbuch*, Stuttgart-Berlin 1890, p. 155.

⁴ A. Seidel, *Praktische Grammatik der Suaheli-Sprache*, Wien-Leipzig 1890, p. 80.

⁵ C. Velten, *Taschenwörterbuch der Suahelisprache*, Berlin 1911, p. 10.

⁶ E. Steere, *A Handbook of the Swahili Language as spoken on Zanzibar*, London 1919, p. 22.

⁷ A. Werner, *Introductory Sketch of the Bantu Languages*, London 1919, p. 87.

⁸ H. H. Johnston, *A Comparative Study of the Bantu and Semi-Bantu Languages*, vol. II, London 1922, p. 229.

⁹ B. J. Ratcliffe, H. Elphinstone, *Modern Swahili*, London 1932, p. 24.

¹⁰ E. O. Ashton, *Swahili Grammar*, London 1952, p. 104.

¹¹ E. B. Haddon, *Swahili Lessons*, Cambridge 1955, p. 55.

- Perrot 1957 "Most of the U-class nouns are abstract — that is, they denote qualities and states"¹².
- Мячина 1961 „6 класс ... объединяет названия предметов, взятых как один из множества, группу неодушевленных предметов, сюда относятся названия стран и государств и большинство существительных с абстрактным значением ..."¹³.

According to Meinhof and other authors who follow Meinhof's judgement, the pre-Bantu *vu-* (*bu-*) prefix has been, according to phonetic laws, modified in various Bantu languages: in Swahili and Herero it has been contracted into *u-* which led to fusion with the prefix *lu-* (11) whose form has been similarly reduced to *u-*.

1.1. The enquiry into the structure of the Bantu noun, especially that carried out by Meinhof, Johnston and Ashton, enables to establish the following facts relating to the *u-* class in Swahili:

- (a) the *u-* class contains the nouns of two classes: *u-* (*bu-*) (14) and *u-* (*lu-*) (11), the latter class being inclusive of concrete nouns;
- (b) the *u-* class contains the nouns derived mainly from nominal, verbal and adjectival forms;
- (c) the *u-* class forms abstract nouns by means of prefixes and/or suffixes.

1.2. Following is the table compiled by E. O. Ashton¹⁴.

Class <i>u-</i> (<i>bu-</i>)		Class <i>u-</i> (<i>lu-</i>)	
Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural
before consonant: <i>u-</i>	—	<i>u-</i>	<i>n-</i> , <i>m-</i>
before vowel: <i>u-</i> , <i>w-</i> , <i>uw-</i>	—	<i>u-</i> , <i>w-</i> , <i>uw-</i>	<i>ny-</i>

The table indicates that the essential distribution of nouns of the *u-* class — implemented from the point of view of the class prefix — is based on isolating:

- (a) nouns with *u-*, *w-*, and *uw-* in singular, which have no plural number, and
- (b) nouns with *u-* in singular and *n-* in plural.

To the table should be added:

- (a) nouns with *u-* in singular, which have no prefix in plural,
- (b) nouns with *u-* in singular, which have the prefix *ma-* in plural, and
- (c) nouns with *u-* in singular, with *ny-* and *u-* in plural.

1.3. The analysis of the nouns belonging to the *u-* class reveals the existence of the following suffixes: *-i*, *-u*, *-fu*, *-e*, *-o* and *-ji*.

1.4. Considering the contents of the above paragraphs and the material supplied by the suffixes, it is possible to specify the following structural patterns in the *u-* class:

1.4.1. Patterns appearing both in singular and plural:

¹² D. V. Perrot, *Teach Yourself Swahili*, London 1957, p. 21.

¹³ in: D. A. Ольдерогге, *Kamusi ya kiswahili-kirusi, Суахили-русский словарь*, Москва 1961, p. 518.

¹⁴ E. O. Ashton, *Swahili Grammar*, pp. 104—105.

1.4.1.1. $u \sqrt{\quad}$ pl. $nyu \sqrt{\quad}$ (monosyllabic in sg. and pl.)

1.4.1.2. $u \sqrt{\quad}$ pl. $\sqrt{\quad}$

1.4.1.3. $u \sqrt{\quad}$ pl. $n \sqrt{\quad}$

1.4.1.4. $u \sqrt{\quad}$ pl. $ma \sqrt{\quad}$

1.4.2. Patterns appearing in singular only:

1.4.2.1. $u \sqrt{\quad}$ (monosyllabic)

1.4.2.2. $u \sqrt{\quad}$

1.4.2.3. $u(\sqrt{\quad}) + (\sqrt{\quad})$

1.4.2.4. $u(\sqrt{\quad}) \text{ } ji$

1.4.2.5. $u \sqrt{\quad} \text{ } i$

1.4.2.6. $u \sqrt{\quad} \text{ } vi$

1.4.2.7. $u \sqrt{\quad} \text{ } zi$

1.4.2.8. $u \sqrt{\quad} \text{ } si$

1.4.2.9. $u \sqrt{\quad} \text{ } fu$

1.4.2.10. $u \sqrt{\quad} \text{ } vu$

1.4.2.11. $u \sqrt{\quad} \text{ } e$

1.4.2.12. $u \sqrt{\quad} \text{ } o$

1.4.2.13. $u \sqrt{\quad} \text{ } e$

1.4.2.14. $u \sqrt{\quad} \text{ } +u \sqrt{\quad}$

1.4.2.15. $u \sqrt{\quad} \text{ } u$

1.4.2.16. $u(enye + \text{noun})$

1.5. The *u*- class contains prevailingly the derivative forms, and among them mainly those derived from the basic forms of verbs, nouns and adjectives. The above classification includes hitherto largely neglected nouns with duplicated stems ($u \sqrt{\quad} (+) \sqrt{\quad}$), compounds ($u \sqrt{\quad} + u \sqrt{\quad}$) and combinations of the participle *-enye* and noun $u(enye + \text{noun})$.

The suffixes *-i* and *-u* which appear together with the class prefix *u*- have been classified according to the phonetic laws: $vu > zi$, $la > zi$, $ka > si$, shi , $ta > si$, $ba > vi$, zi , vi , $wa > vi$, and $ka > fu$, $VV > vu$ (separated here for the sake of clarity).

All the forms constructed on the basis of borrowings, mainly Arabic, have been classified separately in view of the forthcoming necessity, in the course of semantic classification, of their comparison with forms originating from the stock of native words.

1.6. Structural patterns

The present author has availed himself of the material contained in the recent dictionary of the Swahili language (*Kamusi ya Kiswahili-Kirusi*, Moscow 1961) which, having taken into account the results of lexicographic research conducted up to now by Madan, Johnson and Velten, provides sufficient basis for detailed considerations and analyses.

In order to systematize the material it was necessary:

(a) to eliminate out of the total *Kamusi* vocabulary (18,000 words) all the nouns with the prefixes *u*- and *w*- in singular, and with *n*-, *m*-, and *ma*- in plural (1,030 words),

- (b) to eliminate 275 loan words,
- (c) to divide nouns of the native stock (755 words) into groups, according to the structural pattern: prefix in singular and plural — root — stem vowel (suffix),
- (d) to establish the relationship between the structural patterns and basic, as well as derivative, forms, and
- (e) to determine meaning within the framework of a structural pattern; here the meaning given in *Kamusi* was verified on the basis of comparison with *Standard Swahili-English Dictionary* by F. Johnson (London 1955), *Suaheli Wörterbuch* by C. Veltén (Berlin 1933) and *Kamusi ya Kiswahili yaani kitabu cha maneno ya Kiswahili* by F. Johnson (London 1935).

The results of quantitative research are presented in the tables following the discussion of each structural type. The following categories have been devised for this purpose: abstract nouns (abstr.), anatomical terms (anat.), botanical terms (bot.), words connected with zoology (zool.), geography (geogr.), medicine (med.), domestic life (dom.), and varia, words concerning family relations, physiology, etc. (var.).

1.6.1. Pattern: sg. $u \sqrt{\quad}$ pl. $nyu \sqrt{\quad}$

- (a) primary monosyllabic nouns:

e.g., *ufa* pl. *nyufa* 'cleft', 'split', 'crack'
uo pl. *nyuo* 'cover', 'case', 'sheath'
upo pl. *nyupo* 'dipper'

- (b) derivative monosyllabic nouns:

e.g., *ufu* pl. *nyufu* 'death', 'deadness' < *fa* 'to lose strength', 'to die'

Total	abstr.	anat.	dom.	bot.
17	1	2	12	2

1.6.2. Pattern: $u \sqrt{\quad}$

- (a) primary monosyllabic nouns (no plural number):

e.g., *ume* 'manliness', 'potency', 'male nature'
uchu 'desire', 'concupiscence'
uchi 'nakedness', 'nudity', 'sex organs (vulg.)'

- (b) monosyllabic nouns derived from:

— nouns:

e.g., *utu* 'humanity', 'manhood' < *mtu* 'man', 'one of the human race'

— adjectives, e.g., *uke* 'womanhood' < *-ke* 'female'

Total	abstr.
5	5

1.6.3. Pattern: $u \sqrt{\quad} v$ pl. $\sqrt{\quad} v(u \sqrt{\quad} \text{ pl. } \sqrt{\quad})$

Nouns derived from:

- (a) nouns:

e.g., *ubapa* 'flatness' < *bapa* 'flat surface'

uchoyo 'greediness', 'covetousness' < *moyo* 'heart', 'soul', 'desire'

(b) verbs:

— basic forms:

e.g., *upeo* 'ideal', 'top', 'best example' < *pea* 'to be completely developed'*ukomo* 'death', 'destruction' < *koma* 'to cease', 'to come to an end'*ukaango* 'cooking (with fat)' < *kaango* 'to cook with fat'— converse form: e.g., *ufunguo* 'opening' < *fungua* 'to open'

— relative form:

e.g., *uponyi* 'cure', 'swing' < *ponya* 'to cure', 'to restore to health', 'to evade danger'

Total	abstr.	bot.	anat.	dom.	var.
105	20	18	11	43	13

1.6.4. Pattern: *u* $\sqrt{\quad}$ *v* pl. *n* $\sqrt{\quad}$ *v* (*u* $\sqrt{\quad}$ pl. *n* $\sqrt{\quad}$)

Nouns derived from:

(a) nouns: e.g., *uwingu* 'cloudiness', 'darkness', 'heaven' < *wingu* 'cloud'

(b) verbs in basic form:

e.g., *ubishi* 'opposition', 'contrariness' < *bisha* 'to beat', 'to oppose'*ugono* 'sleeping-turn', 'sleeping time', 'sexual intercourse' < *gona* 'to sleep', 'to lie down'

Total	abstr.	anat.	bot.	dom.	med.	geogr.
22	4	3	4	8	1	2

1.6.5. Pattern: *u* $\sqrt{\quad}$ *v* pl. *ma* $\sqrt{\quad}$ *v* (*u* $\sqrt{\quad}$ pl. *ma* $\sqrt{\quad}$)(a) nouns in basic form: e.g., *uele* 'sickness', 'illness'

(b) nouns derived from:

— adjectives: e.g., *upana* 'width', 'breath' < *-pana* 'broad', 'wide', 'flat'

— verbs in basic form:

e.g., *umo* 'bite', 'hurting' < *uma* 'to bite', 'to cause pain'*ungu* 'a joining', 'a joint' < *unga* 'to join', 'to connect'*urembo* 'finery', 'display' < *remba* 'to decorate', 'to make beautiful'

Total	abstr.	anat.	dom.	bot.	geogr.	med.	zool.	var
59	37	2	4	8	5	5	1	1

1.6.6. Pattern: *u* $\sqrt{\quad}$ (no plural)

(a) nouns in basic form:

e.g., *uketo* 'depth'*ubwete* 'laziness', 'idleness'*umeme* 'electricity', 'lightning'

(b) nouns derived from:

— nouns:

e.g., *ufalme* 'kingship', 'kingdom' < *mfalme* 'king'

ubaba 'fatherhood' < *baba* 'father'
utoto 'childhood' < *mtoto* 'child'
umungu 'divinity', 'deity' < *mungu* 'god'
uchawi 'witchcraft', 'magic' < *mchawi* 'wizard'

— adjectives:

e.g., *ujinga* 'ignorance', 'folly' < *-jinga* 'stupid'
ugumu 'hardness', 'difficulty' < *-gumu* 'hard', 'strong'
ukwasi 'wealth', 'riches' < *-kwasi* 'wealthy'
uovu 'badness', 'evil' < *-ovu* 'bad' (morally)
udogo 'littleness', 'insignificance' < *-dogo* 'little'
unene 'corpulence', 'thickness' < *-nene* 'thick', 'fat'
ufupi 'shortness' < *-fupi* 'short'

— numerals:

e.g., *utatu* 'trinity' < *-tatu* 'three'
umoja 'unity', 'oneness' < *moja* 'one'

— prepositions:

e.g., *umbele* 'future', 'forwardness' < *mbele* 'before', 'in front of'
ujuju 'height, summit' < *juu* 'above', 'on', 'upon'

Total	abstr.	bot.	med.	var.	anat.	dom.	zool.
86	54	8	1	19	2	1	1

1.6.7. Pattern: *u* $\sqrt{\quad}$ *a*

Nouns derived from basic verbs:

e.g., *uganga* 'charm', 'medicine', 'doctoring', 'healing' < *ganga* 'to bind up',
'to mend (what is injured or broken)'
usimanga 'triumph' (ill-natured), 'mockery' < *simanga* 'to triumph (over)',
'to rejoice'
ukawa 'delay' < *kawa* 'to tarry', 'to linger', 'to delay'

Total	abstr.	anat.	dom.	bot.	geogr.	med.	zool.	var.
62	38	2	6	8	5	1	1	1

1.6.8. Pattern: *u* $\sqrt{\quad}$ *ji*

(1) Nouns derived from verbal forms, i.e., from:

(a) causative forms:

e.g., *uagizaji* 'request', 'order' < *agiza* 'to order', 'to direct', 'recording'
uandikishaji 'registration' < *andikisha* 'to cause to write', 'to dictate',
'to cause' 'to be set in order'
uingizaji 'import, importing' < *ingiza* 'procuring entry, allowing'

(b) relative forms:

e.g., *uangaliaji* 'watching', 'supervision' < *angalia* 'to observe', 'to pay attention to', 'to look at'

upepeaji 'fanning' < *pepea* 'to fan', 'to wave'

utumiaji 'use, utilization' < *tumia* 'to make use of', 'to employ'

(c) converse forms:

e.g., *ufunguaji* 'opening' < *fungua* 'to open', 'to release' (*funga* 'to fasten', 'to close')

(d) neuter (stative) forms:

e.g., *upayukaji* 'incoherence', 'indiscreetness' < *payuka* 'to be delirious', 'to talk foolishly'

(e) reciprocal forms:

e.g., *upatikanaji* 'revelation', 'delivery' < *patikana* 'to be gettable', 'to be obtainable'

ufananaji 'similarity', 'likeness' < *fanana* 'to do for each other', 'to be similar'

(f) static forms:

e.g., *usimamaji* 'being', 'sojourning' < *simama* 'to stand', 'to come to a stand', 'to be stationary'

(2) nouns derived from verbs in basic form:

e.g., *uazimaji* 'borrowing', 'lending' < *azima* 'to borrow', 'to lend'

uchimbaji 'raising', 'cultivation' < *chimba* 'to dig', 'to drill'

ufugaji 'training', 'taming' < *fuga* 'to tame', 'to breed'

Total	abstr.	anat.
73	72	1

1.6.9. Pattern: *u* $\sqrt{\quad}$ *i*

Nouns derived from verbs, i.e., from:

(1) basic verbs:

e.g., *ugoni* '(act of) adultery' < *gona* 'to sleep', 'to lie down'

usemi 'talk', 'speech', 'speaking' < *sema* 'to say', 'to talk', 'to speak'

unyang'anyi 'robbery, abduction' < *nyang'anya* 'to take by force', 'to plunder'

(2) derivative verbs, i.e., from:

(a) reciprocal verbs:

e.g., *upindani* 'stiffness', 'obstinacy' < *pindana* 'to be bent together'

ushindani 'rivalry, fighting' < *shindana* 'to try to overcome each other'

usononi 'pain', 'hurt' < *sonona* 'to regret', 'to be sorry on'

(b) causative verbs:

e.g., *uzushi* 'invention', 'coming in sight', 'discovery' < *zusha* 'to invent', 'to bring to light'

upurukushani 'negligence', 'careless manner' < *purukusha* 'to treat with contempt'

(c) numerals:

e.g., *uwili* 'duality', 'dualism', 'doubleness' < *wi* 'two'

(d) adverb:

e.g., *umbali* 'distance' < *mbali* 'far', 'apart'

(3) adjectives derived from verbal forms:

e.g., *upuzi* 'gossip', 'nonsense' < *-puzi* 'foolish' (*puza* 'to be silly', 'to be foolish')

upinzani 'obstruction', 'opposing' < *-pinzani* 'obstructive' (*pinza* 'to obstruct', 'to stop the way')

Total	abstr.	anat.	dom.	bot.	zool.
23	13	2	2	4	2

1.6.10. Pattern: *u* $\sqrt{\quad}$ *vi*

Nouns derived from basic verbs:

e.g., *ulevi* 'drunkenness', 'giddiness' < *lewa* 'to be drunk', 'to wave to and fro'
ujuvi 'impertinence', 'sauciness', 'precocity' < *jua* 'to know', 'to understand'
ugomvi 'quarrel', 'quarrelsomeness' < *gomba* 'to forbid', 'to contradict'

Total	abstr.	zool.
7	6	1

1.6.11. Pattern: *u* $\sqrt{\quad}$ *zi*

Nouns derived from:

(a) basic verbs:

e.g., *ukazi* 'staying', 'mode of living' < *kaa* 'to stay', 'to dwell'

uozi 'marrying', 'wedding' < *oa* 'to take a wife'

uzazi 'fertility', 'parentage', 'childbirth' < *zaa* 'to give birth to', 'to produce fruit'

(b) relative verbs:

e.g., *uangelizi* 'notice', 'observation' < *angalia* 'to look at', 'to pay attention to'

uchochezi 'provocation' < *chochea* 'to poke at', 'stir up'

uchongezi 'betrayal', 'slander' < *chongea* 'to betray', 'to tell tales about'

(c) causative verbs:

e.g., *uchukuzi* 'porterage', 'getting carrier' < *chukuza* 'to employ a person to carry'

ufyozi 'contempt', 'scorn' < *fyoza* 'to make a mock of', 'to treat scornfully'

upenyezi 'insinuation', 'suggestion' < *penyesha* 'to force into', 'to insinuate'

(d) static verbs:

e.g., *uandamizi* 'procession', 'following' < *andama* 'to follow in order'

usimamizi 'supervision' < *simama* 'to keep in a particular place'

(e) neuter (stative) verbs:

e.g., *ubaguzi* 'discrimination' < *baguka* 'to be separate', 'to be at variance'

utumbuizi 'soothing by singing' < *tumbuika* 'to be soothed by being sung to'

(f) converse verbs:

e.g., *udakuzi* 'indiscreetness' < *dakua* 'to talk indiscreetly'

ufumbuzi 'revelation' < *fumbua* 'to open', 'to reveal'
ufunguzi 'opening (of a meeting)' < *fungua* 'to open'

Total	abstr.	anat.	bot.
84	80	2	2

1.6.12. Pattern: *u* $\sqrt{\quad}$ *si*

Nouns derived from basic verbs:

e.g., *utesi* 'persecution', 'strife' < *tesa* 'to persecute', 'to afflict'

ufuasi 'following', 'discipleship' < *fuata* 'to follow', 'to come behind', 'to obey'

Total	abstr.
8	8

1.6.13. Pattern: *u* $\sqrt{\quad}$ *fu*

Nouns derived from adjectives based on verbal forms:

e.g., *udanganyifu* 'cunning', 'deceitfulness' < *-danganyifu* 'delusive' (*danganya* 'to belie', 'to elude')

uangalifu 'carefulness', 'attention' < *-angalifu* 'careful', 'observant' (*angalia* 'to pay attention', 'to observe')

utukufu 'majesty', 'glory' < *-tukufu* 'exalted', 'majestic', 'glorious' (*tukuka* 'to become exalted, grand, glorious')

Total	abstr.	bot.
15	14	1

1.6.14. Pattern: *u* $\sqrt{\quad}$ *vu*

Nouns derived from:

(1) nouns:

e.g., *utumbavu* 'swelling', 'rising up' < *tumba* 'case', 'unopened bud of a flower'

(2) verbs in relative form:

e.g., *uvumilivu* 'endurance', 'patience', 'perseverance' < *vumilia* 'to tolerate', 'to suffer', 'to persevere in'

uteketevu 'destroying', 'destruction' < *teketea* 'to be destroyed', 'to be ruined'

uchukivu 'hatred', 'repugnance' < *chukia* 'to hate', 'to dislike'

(3) adjectives based on verbal forms:

(a) basic:

e.g., *unyamavu* 'silence, quiet, repose' < *-nyamavu* 'silent, quiet' (*nyamaa* 'to stop talking')

ushupavu 'hardness, firmness' < *-shupavu* 'firm', 'well-built' (*shupaa* 'to be hard', 'to be well set')

upumbavu 'stupidity', 'ignorance' < *-pumbavu* 'stupid', 'ignorant' (*pumbaa*

'to be speechless', 'to be foolish', 'to be silly')

(b) relative:

e.g., *ukulivu* 'remissness', 'oppressiveness' < *-kulivu* 'tiresome', 'burdensome' (*kulia* 'to be a burden to someone')

upotevu 'vandalism' < *-potevu* 'wasteful', 'ruinous' (*potea* 'to get lost', 'to go to ruin')

usikilivu 'attention', 'intelligence', 'listening' < *-sikilivu* 'obedient', 'docile', 'attentive' (*sikia* 'to hear', 'to obey')

(c) neuter (stative):

e.g., *upetekevu* 'contempt', 'arrogance' < *-peketevu* 'provoking' (*peketeka* 'to be insulting', 'to be stirred up')

(d) causative:

e.g., *upotovu* 'caprice', 'perversion' < *-potovu* 'wasteful', 'prodigal' (*potoa* 'to ruin', 'to pervert')

Total abstr.

30 30

1.6.15. Pattern: *u* $\sqrt{\quad}$ *u*

Nouns derived from verbal forms;

e.g., *udaku* 'gossip' < *dakua* 'to let out secrets'

usugu 'stupidity', 'obstinacy' < *sugua* 'to rub', 'to clean by rubbing'

usununu 'melancholy', 'pain' < *sonona* 'to be sad'

Total abstr.

5 5

1.6.16. Pattern: *u* $\sqrt{\quad}$ *e*

Nouns derived from

(a) basic verbs;

e.g., *utende* 'witchcraft' < *tenda* 'to do', 'to act', 'to practice'

ushinde 'defeat', 'state of being conquered' < *shinda* 'to overcome', 'to conquer'

unyege 'tickling', 'itching', 'irritation' < *nyega* 'to cause to itch or tickle'

(b) adjectives formed on the basis of verbal forms:

e.g., *unyonge* 'meanness', 'poverty', 'feebleness' < *-nyonge* 'low', 'servile' 'mean' (*nyonga* 'twist', 'worry', 'vex')

upotoe 'caprice', 'perversion', 'perverseness' < *-potoe* 'spoil', 'depraved', 'perverse' (*potoa* 'to twist', 'to spoil')

ubembe 'coaxing', 'allurement', 'prostitution' < *bembe* 'enticing', 'coquetish' (*bemba* 'to inquire into a person's affairs secretly', 'to seduce')

Total abstr. anat. dom. bot. zool.

26 13 3 3 5 2

1.6.17. Pattern: $u \sqrt{\quad} o$

Nouns derived from verbal forms, such as:

(a) basic forms:

- e.g., *uwazo* 'imagination' < *waza* 'to suppose', 'to imagine'
uteto 'quarrelling', 'debate' < *teta* 'to act strongly', 'to quarrel'
utisho 'frightening', 'terrifying' < *tisha* 'to frighten'

(b) reciprocal forms:

- e.g., *upendano* 'affection', 'love', 'liking' < *pendana* 'to love each other' (*penda* 'to love', 'to like')

uwutano 'mutual attraction', 'force of gravity' < *vutana* 'to pull each other' (*vuta* 'to draw', 'to pull')

(c) static forms:

- e.g., *ushikamano* 'tenacity', 'a holding fast together' < *shikamana* 'to be in a state of firmly holding together' (*shika* 'to hold fast', 'to keep hold on')

usimamao 'the condition of being erect' < *simama* 'to be erect'

(d) converse forms:

- e.g., *ufumbulio* 'separation' < *fumbua* 'to disclose' (*fumba* 'to close together')
ufunguo 'commencement', 'exordium' < *fungua* 'to unbind' (*funga* 'to unbind', 'to fasten', 'to bind')

(e) causative forms:

- e.g., *uwasho* 'lighting' < *washa* 'to light', 'to set fire on' (*waka* 'to burn brightly')

upatanisho 'reconciliation' < *patanisha* 'to bring to agreement' (rec. *patana* 'to work harmoniously' < *pata* 'to get', 'to find', 'to attain', 'to come upon')

(f) relative forms:

- e.g., *ukamio* 'threatening', 'evil intention', 'menacing' < *kamia* 'to threaten', 'to be insistent in demanding anything' (*kama* 'to squeeze')

Total	abstr.	anat.	dom.	bot.	geogr.	zool.	var.
95	74	3	11	1	3	1	2

1.6.18. Pattern: $u(\sqrt{\quad}) + (\sqrt{\quad})$

Nouns with duplicated stem, derived from:

(a) nouns:

- e.g., *ububu* 'dumbness' < *bubu* 'a dumb person' *ugoigoi* 'inertia', 'heaviness' < *goigoi* 'a lazy, idle, weak person'

ucheachea 'brightness after cloudiness', 'dawn' < *kichea* 'brightness', 'dawn'

(b) adjectives:

- e.g., *uvuguvugu* 'lukewarmness', 'stuffiness', 'confusion' < *-vuguvugu* 'tepid', 'lukewarm'

uzuzu 'rawness', 'strangeness' < *-zuzu* 'foolish', 'simple'

(c) basic verbs:

e.g., *ufifi* 'pretence of forgetting or not understanding' < *fifia* 'to be dying away' 'to disappear'

ujotojoto 'heat', 'warmth' < *ota* 'to sit close to a fire', 'to bask in the sun'

Total	abstr.	bot.
21	18	3

1.6.19. Pattern: (*u* $\sqrt{\quad}$) + (*u* $\sqrt{\quad}$)

Compounds:

e.g., *uanaume* 'male character' < *uana* 'childhood' + *ume* 'manhood'

uanauke 'female character' < *uana* 'childhood' + *uke* 'womanhood'

Total	abstr.
2	2

1.6.20. Pattern: *u*(*enye*) + (noun)

Nouns composed of an adjectival participle and a noun, e.g. *uenyekiti* 'representation' < *-enye* 'possessing' + *kiti* 'chair'

Total	abstr.
2	2

1.7. Abstract nouns based on borrowings

1.7.1. Borrowings from Arabic

1.7.1.1. Pattern: (borrowing) *v*

Nouns derived from nouns with accidental coincidence in the initial position:

e.g., *ujuba* 'fearlessness', 'tyranny' < *u'gūba* اعجوبة 'wonder', 'marvel'

umati 'crowd' < *umma* أمة 'folk'

1.7.1.2. Pattern: *u* (borrowing) *v*

Nouns derived from:

(a) nouns:

e.g., *urafiki* 'friendship' < *rafīq* رفيق 'friend'

ukafiri 'apostasy', 'blasphemy' < *kāfir* كافر 'pagan', 'unbeliever'

unafiki 'hypocrisy', 'deceit' < *munāfiq* منافق 'liar', 'hypocrite'

(b) adjectives:

e.g., *ubahili* 'niggardliness' < *baḥīl* بحيل 'miserly', 'grasping'

ufidhuli 'arrogance', 'insolence' < *fuḍūlī* فضولي 'arrogant', 'insulting'

uyabisi 'hardness', 'rudeness' < *yabs, yabis* يبس 'dry', 'hard'

(c) verbs:

e.g., *ukaidi* 'obstinacy', 'disobedience' < *kaid* كيد 'to outwit someone'

ufadhili 'kindness' < *faḍila* فضل 'to be kind', 'to be accessible'

usahihi 'correctness' < *saḥḥih* صحح 'to put right', 'to sign'

1.7.1.3. Pattern: *u* (borrowing) *u*

Nouns derived from adjectives:

e.g., *uhafifu* 'commonness', 'worthlessness' < *hafif* خفيف 'valueless', 'insignificant'

unadhifu 'neatness', 'cleanliness' < *naḡīf* نظيف 'clean', 'well kept'

udhaifu 'weakness' < *da'if* ضعيف 'weak', 'powerless'

1.7.1.4. Pattern: *u* (borrowing) *fu*

1.7.1.4.1. Nouns derived from Arabic adjectives, with a Swahili adjectival formative element *-fu*:

e.g., *udhahirifu* 'manifestation', 'clearness' < *-dhahirifu* 'clear' < *ḡāhir* ظاهر 'clear', 'distinct', 'external'

uharibifu 'destruction', 'corruption' < *-haribifu* 'destructive', 'doing harm' < *hārib* خارب 'destroyed', 'ruined'

udhalilifu 'humbleness', < *-dhalilifu* 'humble' < *dalil* ذليل 'contemned', 'humble'

1.7.1.4.2. Nouns derived from the adjectives based on Arabic verbal forms:

e.g., *ubadilifu* 'changeableness', 'exchange' < *-badilifu* 'changeable', 'shifty', 'unstable' < *badil* بدیل 'to change', 'to exchange'

ulaanifu 'cursing' < *-laanifu* 'accursed' < *la'ana* لعن 'to curse', 'to damn'

uzinifu 'lasciviousness', 'chambering' < *-zinifu* 'adulterous' < *zini* زنى 'to commit adultery'

1.7.1.5. Pattern: *u* (borrowing) *isha*

Nouns derived from Arabic verbs, with a Swahili suffix of the causative form (*-isha*):

e.g., *uimarisho* 'stability', 'solidity', 'firmness' < *imarisha* 'to establish', 'to make firm, solid' < *ammara* عَمَّر 'to build', 'to create'¹⁵

usafirisha 'discharge', 'sending off' < *safirisha* 'to send off', 'to give farewell greetings' < *saffara* سَفَّر 'to send off'

1.7.1.6. Pattern: *u* (borrowing) *v*

Nouns derived from Arabic verbs (form X):

e.g., *ustahimili* 'patience', 'perseverance' < *istahmil* استحمل 'to be patient'

ustahili 'merit', 'worthiness' < *istā'hil* استأهل 'to deserve respect'

ustaarabu 'civilization', 'culture' < *ista'rab* استعرب 'to be civilized'

1.7.1.7. Pattern: *u* (borrowing) + (borrowing)

Compounds:

e.g., *ubinadamu* 'humanity' < *ibn ādam* ابن آدم 'Adam's son'

ubiashara 'trade', 'trading' < *bā'a* 'to sell' + *šarā* 'to buy' (شَرَى + بَاع)

1.7.1.8. Pattern: *u* (*enye*) + (borrowing)

Composition of a Swahili adjectival participle with an Arabic loan-word:

e.g., *uenyemali* 'the possessing' < *enye* 'the possessing' + *mali* مَلِي 'rich' (*māli* 'wealth')

Total	abstr.	var.
267	255	12

¹⁵ The abstract noun 'solidity', 'stability' *imara* is not derived from a verbal, but from a nominal form, viz., *imāra* عمارة 'structure', 'building'.

1.7.2. Borrowings from other languages

1.7.2.1. Borrowings from Persian:

e.g., *ushenzi* 'barbarity' < *zenġ* 'barbarian' (Arabic زنج *zanġ*, *zing* 'a Negro'
utundu 'cunning', 'dissipation' < *tund* توند 'unpleasant', 'uncivil'

1.7.2.2. Borrowings from Portuguese:

e.g., *ukristo* 'Christianity' < *cristo* 'Christ'
ultima 'need', 'poverty' < *ultimo* 'last'

1.7.2.3. Borrowings from English:

e.g., *uchifu* 'management', 'chiefdom' < chief
udaktari 'medicine' < doctor
ukomunisti 'Communism' < Communist

Total	abstr.	var.
18	16	2

1.7.3. Within the *u*- class the borrowings from Arabic represent 26.2 per cent of all the nouns. The rules according to which the Arabic words have been naturalized are phonetically discussed in detail by A. N. T u c k e r.¹⁶

On the basis of derivative forms these rules can be presented — according to the existent patterns — in the following way:

(1) Nouns derived from:

- (a) nouns with incidental phonetic coincidence in the initial position (pattern: (borrowing) *v*);
- (b) nouns (pattern: *u* (borrowing) *v*).

A. N. T u c k e r remarks that "a pseudo-Arabic verbal noun may be coined by adding the suffix *-a...* to the Arabic verbal noun (instead of *-i* or *-u*)¹⁷. It should be borne in mind that there exists vocalic harmony which decides on the selection of a stem vowel. For example, *-i-* in the last but one syllable necessitates the stem vowel *-i*; cf. *uhaini* < *hā'in*, *unafiki* < *munāfiq*¹⁸. This fact plays an important role in the course of discussing the wordformation function of the suffixes.

(2) Nouns derived from adjectives; patterns: *u* (borrowing) *u*, *u* (borrowing) *fu* and *u* (borrowing) *v*.

(3) Nouns derived from adjectives formed on the basis of Arabic verbs according to the Swahili morphological principles (pattern: *u* (borrowing) *fu*).

(4) Nouns derived from basic verbal forms (pattern: *u* (borrowing) *v*), from causative forms based on the Arabic roots (pattern: *u* (borrowing) *usha*), and from form X of the Arabic verb.

¹⁶ A. N. T u c k e r: *Foreign Sounds in Swahili*, BSOAS XII (1947), pp. 214—32. Also K. F. R ů ž i č k a: *Lehnwörter im Swahili*, "Archiv Orientalní", XXI (1958), pp. 582—609.

¹⁷ T u c k e r, *Foreign Sounds in Swahili*, p. 222.

¹⁸ B. K r u m m, *Wörter und Wörterformen orientalischen Ursprungs im Suaheli*, Hamburg 1932, p. 39.

(5) Compounds consisting either of two elements of the Arabic origin (pattern: *u* (borrowing) + (borrowing)) or of an aboriginal element and an Arabic borrowing (pattern: *u* (*enye*) borrowing).

2. Semantic classification

In his paper concerning the meaning of words, J. Kuryłowicz maintains that "the most important is the main meaning, that is to say, the meaning which is not determined by the context, while the remaining (specific) meanings supplement the semantic elements of the main meaning with contextual elements"¹⁹. According to this position the semantic classification of the material supplied by Johnson's, Olderogge's and Velten's dictionaries has been devised primarily from the point of view of the main meaning of the words, though Johnson's dictionary²⁰ offers, in the ambiguous cases, the context in which the given word can appear.

Among the abstract nouns it is possible to distinguish those which denote an abstract action, state and quality. In Ashton's opinion, the abstract nouns belonging to the *u*- (*bu*-) class express quality and state. W. Saint Paul Illaire concludes in his analysis of the Swahili abstract nouns that those derived from verbs contain the meaning expressed in the given verb, while the abstract nouns originating from nouns define quality, state, position, action, title, etc., of a person, and those deriving from adjectives define quality contained in the adjective.

2.1. Structural patterns and meaning

Out of 755 nouns of the *u*- class (exclusive of the borrowings) the abstract nouns total 514, i.e., 68.7 per cent. The remaining nouns convey various meanings connected with anatomy, botany, geography, medicine, zoology and household equipment; in this group 37.6 per cent of the nouns concern the domestic life and 22.4 per cent are names of plants.

Considering the semantic value of the nouns of the *u*- class it is possible, having applied the opposition — abstract to concrete nouns — to present the following proportions:

proportion	pattern
less than 10 per cent of abstract nouns	<i>u</i> ✓ pl. <i>nyu</i> ✓
10 to 20 per cent of abstract nouns	<i>u</i> ✓ pl. <i>n</i> ✓
	<i>u</i> ✓ pl. ✓ <i>v</i>
50 to 80 per cent of abstract nouns	<i>u</i> ✓ <i>e</i>
	<i>u</i> ✓ <i>i</i>
	<i>u</i> ✓ <i>a</i>
	<i>u</i> ✓ pl. <i>ma</i> ✓
	<i>u</i> ✓

¹⁹ Е. Р. Курилович, *Заметки о значении слова*, "Вопросы Языкознания", III (1955), 3, pp. 73—81.

²⁰ A. Johnson, *A Standard Swahili-English Dictionary*, London 1955.

80 to 90 per cent of abstract nouns

90 to 100 per cent of abstract nouns

$u \sqrt{\quad} o$
 $u \sqrt{\quad} vi$
 $u(\sqrt{\quad}) + (\sqrt{\quad})$
 $u \sqrt{\quad} fu$
 $u \sqrt{\quad} zi$
 $u \sqrt{\quad} ji$
 $u \sqrt{\quad} si$
 $u \sqrt{\quad} vu$
 $u \sqrt{\quad} u$
 $(u \sqrt{\quad}) + (u \sqrt{\quad})$
 $u (enye) + (\text{noun})$
 $u (\text{monosyllabic}) \sqrt{\quad}$

Having selected out of the *u*- class the forms originating from the pre-Bantu *lu*- and *bu*- classes, Ashton attributes the forms characterized by *u*- in singular and *n*- in plural to the concrete nouns while forms with the class prefix *u*- and no plural she attributes to abstract nouns. This division can be justified in terms of the prevailing number of nouns with concrete or abstract meaning, but there is no proof that "all words... [of the *u*- (*lu*-) pl. *n* class] refer to concrete objects with a further implication of length or mass"²¹. Among the monosyllabic nouns formed according to the pattern $u \sqrt{\quad} v$ pl. $nyu \sqrt{\quad} v$ we encounter such verbal noun as *ufu* pl. *nyufu* 'death', 'mortality'. Certain nouns of the patterns $u \sqrt{\quad} v$ pl. $n \sqrt{\quad} v$ and $u \sqrt{\quad} v$ pl. $\sqrt{\quad} v$ are abstract in meaning. E.g., *ubishi* pl. *mbishi* 'argumentativeness', 'strife'; *ugono* pl. *ngono* 'sexual intercourse', 'sleeping-turn', 'sleeping-time'; *uwingu* pl. *mbingu* 'cloudiness', 'darkness'; *uchoyo* pl. *choyo* 'greediness', 'miserliness', 'covetousness'; *upevu* pl. *pevu* 'maturity', 'ripeness'²². It is worthwhile to note that the division of the concrete nouns of the *u*- class as proposed by Ashton again calls for cautious approach to generalizing linguistic facts. For example, she divides the concrete nouns of the *u*- class into the following groups:

- (a) nouns denoting length of objects, e.g., *ukuta* pl. *kuta* 'wall', 'fence';
- (b) nouns containing the notion of mass, e.g., *wali* 'rice';
- (c) nouns expressing a portion of mass (sg. *u*-) and mass as a whole (pl. *n*-), e.g., *unywele* 'hair' (sg.), *nywele* 'hair' (pl.).

The verbs constructed according to the above mentioned structural patterns are often plant names, anatomical and geographical terms and, as such, they can be treated as connected with the notion of length or mass (e.g., *ubua*, pl. *mbua* 'straw', *uwati* pl. *mbati* 'beam', *udole* pl. *ndole* 'finger') but in the majority of cases it would be difficult to apply the criteria proposed by Ashton.

²¹ Ashton, *Swahili Grammar*, p. 105.

²² Cf. A. Werner, *Introductory Sketch...*, p. 65; also D o k e, in his analysis of the Tsonga group (*The Southern Bantu Languages*, London 1954) says that Class 11 contains abstract nouns of verbal origin (p. 187).

2.2. Change in meaning within one semantic category

All the authors of Swahili grammars and dictionaries agree that the pattern $u \sqrt{\quad} v$ represents an essential²³ form of an abstract noun and that derivative forms are in majority among such nouns. The abstract nouns in basic form (e.g., *ubwete* 'laziness', *uchu* 'libido', *usono* 'friendship') appear very rarely.

2.2.1. Prefix *u-* is a class feature with broad abstract meaning. It is possible that, like in other noun classes, where the class prefixes are reduced noun forms (*m-* < *muntu*, *ki-* < *kintu*)²³, the *u-* (*bu-*) prefix originates from a pre-Bantu nominal form which has not been reconstructed yet. Thus an abstract noun can be formally described as a compound consisting of a defining and defined element (noun + noun, noun + adjective, noun + verb, etc.), the role of the *u-* prefix being now that of an auxiliary morpheme (defining element) while any noun, adjective or verb associated with it functions as a main morpheme (defined element).

Shifts in semantic function occurring within a semantic category (a name of an object or feature is transferred to another object or feature with subsequent change in quality but not in essence) can be observed in connexion with the following structural patterns:

- (a) $u(\sqrt{\quad}) + (\sqrt{\quad})$ *ugoigoi* 'inertia', 'heaviness' < *goigoi* 'lazy, weak person'
 (b) $u \sqrt{\quad}$ *ubaba* 'fatherhood' < *baba* 'father'

2.2.2. A new semantic formation consists in the semantic transition of a word from the category including names of objects to that including names of features, or *vice versa*. Such a change of formation is the most frequent phenomenon so far as Swahili abstracts are concerned.

2.2.2.1. The combination of the prefix *u-* and an adjective in basic form appears in the following structural patterns:

- (a) $u \sqrt{\quad}$ *upofu* 'blindness' < *-pofu* 'spoiled', 'blind'
upes 'quickness' < *-epesi* 'quick', 'light'
upole 'gentleness' < *-pole* 'gentle', 'mild'
ugeni 'strangeness' < *-geni* 'strange'
udogo 'littleness', 'smallness' < *-dogo* 'little'
uvivu 'idleness', 'laziness' < *-vivu* 'idle', 'indolent'
uchungu 'bitterness', 'anger' < *-chungu* 'bitter', 'angry'
ubaya 'badness', 'wickedness' < *-baya* 'bad'
ubaya 'badness', 'wickedness' < *-baya* 'bad'
uvuguvugu 'lukewarmness', 'stiffness' < *-vuguvugu* 'tepid', 'lukewarm'

(b) Below are given some examples of the combination of the prefix *u-* with a verb in basic form:

- pattern: $u \sqrt{\quad} a$, e.g., *ukawa* 'delay' < *kawa* 'to delay', 'to linger'
upooza 'deadness', 'dumbness' < *pooza* 'to become useless, paralyzed'

²³ A. Trombetti, *Elementi di Glottologia*, 1905, p. 251. See also F. Graebner: *Das Weltbild der Primitiven*, vol. 1, München 1924, p. 72.

The abstract nouns of the above structure rarely appear in basic form without combination with suffixes.

(c) Following is an example of the combination of the prefix *u-* with basic verb and suffix *-e*:

ushinde 'defeat', 'state of being conquered' < *shinda* 'to conquer'

(d) A combination of prefix *u-* with basic verb and suffix *-o*:

utungo 'composing', 'composition', 'invention' < *tunga* 'to put together', 'to compose'

(e) In the following example the prefix *u-* is combined with basic verb and suffix *-ji*:

ufugaji 'training', 'taming' < *fuga* 'to tame'

More frequent is the combination of prefix *u-* with derivative verbal forms, accompanied by suffixion (*-ji*, *-u*, *-o*, *-e*). The change of the semantic formation follows then the construction of derivative verbal forms (relative, causative, neuter-static, conversive and static) and the verb remains within the same semantic category.

2.2.3. Connexion of prefix *u-* with causative form of the verb and suffixes:

(a) pattern: *u* $\sqrt{\quad}$ *zi* — *ulipizi* 'forcing payment', 'exaction' < *lipiza* 'to exact a return from', 'to make pay'

(b) pattern: *u* $\sqrt{\quad}$ *ji* — *uagizaji* 'order', 'request' < *agiza* 'to order', 'to direct'

uanzishaji 'origin', 'beginning' < *anzisha* 'to set in motion'

(c) pattern: *u* $\sqrt{\quad}$ *o* — *utambulisho* 'explanation', 'feature' < *tambulisha* 'to explain'

(d) pattern: *u* $\sqrt{\quad}$ *i* — *uzushi* 'invention', 'discovery', 'fiction', 'heresy' < *zusha* 'to invent', 'to bring to light'

2.2.4. Combination of prefix *u-* with relative form of the verb and suffixes:

(a) pattern: *u* $\sqrt{\quad}$ *zi* — *uchungizi* 'criticism', 'curiosity' < *chungulia* 'to inspect closely'

(b) pattern: *u* $\sqrt{\quad}$ *ji* — *upepeji* 'fanning' < *pepea* 'to fan'

(c) pattern: *u* $\sqrt{\quad}$ *o* — *upendeleo* 'favouritism', 'inclination' < *pendelea* 'have a special liking for'

2.2.5. Combination of prefix *u-* with conversive form of the verb and suffixes:

(a) pattern: *u* $\sqrt{\quad}$ *zi* — *udakuzi* 'gossiping' < *dakua* 'to talk indiscreetly'

(b) pattern: *u* $\sqrt{\quad}$ *ji* *ufungaji* 'opening' < *fungua* 'to open'

(c) pattern: *u* $\sqrt{\quad}$ *o* *ufumbulio* 'separation', 'disjunction' < *fumbua* 'to separate', 'to disclose'

2.2.6. Combination of prefix *u-* with neuter-static form of the verb and suffixes:

(a) pattern: *u* $\sqrt{\quad}$ *zi* *ubaguzi* 'discrimination' < *baguka* 'to be separate'

(b) pattern: *u* $\sqrt{\quad}$ *ji* *upayukaji* 'indiscreetness', 'incoherence' < *payuka* 'to be delirious' 'to talk foolishly'

(c) pattern: *u* $\sqrt{\quad}$ *o* *ugeuka* 'changing', 'turning round' < *geuka* 'to be changed', 'to be alterable'

2.2.7. Combination of prefix *u-* with reciprocal form of the verb and suffixes:

(a) pattern: *u* $\sqrt{\quad}$ *ji ufanaji* 'likeness', 'similarity' < *fanana* 'to be similar'

(b) pattern: *u* $\sqrt{\quad}$ *o upigano* 'rivalry', 'fighting' < *pigana* 'to hit each other', 'to fight'

2.2.8. Combination of prefix *u-* with static form of the verb and a suffix:

(a) pattern: *u* $\sqrt{\quad}$ *zi uandamizi* 'procession', 'following' < *andama* 'to follow in order'

2.2.9. The small number of adjectival stems in Swahili results to certain extent from the existing possibilities of constructing adjectival forms on the basis of verbs, by means of suffixes *-fu*, *-vu*, and *(-u)*. In this way the connexions between prefix *u-* and verbal adjectives can be observed. Here also the semantic formation changes (verb in basic form > verb in derivative form > adjective > noun), the common semantic category being retained.

Pattern: *u* $\sqrt{\quad}$ *vu*: *upotovu* 'caprice', 'perversion', 'obstinacy' < *-potovu* 'spoilt', 'perverted', 'perverse' (*pota* 'to twist' > *potoka* 'to be crooked, twisted, spoilt')

Pattern: *u* $\sqrt{\quad}$ *fu*: *ukunjufu* 'gladness', 'cheerfulness' < *-kunjufu* 'open', 'amiable' (*kunja* 'to fold', 'to wrap up' > *kunjua* 'to unfold', 'to unwrap')

Pattern: *u* $\sqrt{\quad}$ *e*: *unyonge* 'meanness', 'poverty', 'feebleness' < *-nyonge* 'low', 'mean', 'servile' (*nyonga* 'to strangle', 'to vex', 'to worry')

2.3. In his analysis of the derivative forms of the South Bantu group, Doke maintains that the structure of derivative forms of the personal noun contains formative element *-i* in combination with the class prefix *mtu*, whereas the structure of those forms of the impersonal noun contains formative element *-o* in combination with the remaining classes²⁴, e.g., *hamba* 'to travel' > *muhambi* 'traveller' or *uhambo* 'travel'. In Swahili, however, where the suffixes *-o*, *-i*, or *-ji* appear in combination with both personal and impersonal nouns such a division is not possible.

But if we adopt the superior number of the existing forms as a criterion, we must admit that suffix *-i* is a word-forming element in *nomen agentis* and suffix *-o* — in *nomen patientis*, *instrumenti*, *loci* and *temporis*, in connexion with classes 1 to 13.

Meinhof, who discusses the word-forming function of the suffixes in the Bantu languages, says that "their meaning is not thoroughly conceived yet"²⁵. Meinhof attempts to relate suffix *-i* to verbal nouns of Class 1 (*nomen agentis*) and Class 14 (*nomen actionis*), and suffix *-o* — to such verbal nouns which, in combination with Class 3 and 11, form abstract nouns of the *Anbetung* and *Leidenschaft* pattern.

Ash-ton assumes that in Swahili derivative nouns are constructed by means of suffixes *-ji*, *-u*, and *-e* in order to express state, and *-o* — in order to express action

²⁴ C. M. Doke, *The Southern Bantu Languages*, p. 56.

²⁵ C. Meinhof, *Grundzüge einer vergleichenden Grammatik der Bantusprachen*, Hamburg 1947, p. 138.

or its results²⁶. Illaire, the only writer in the field who devotes a special chapter in his grammar to the abstract nouns, relates suffixes *-o*, *-u*, and *-i* to the forms of abstract nouns deriving from verbs. As for adjectival abstract nouns, Illaire states that such an adjective can be equipped with an additional morphological feature *-fu* (*-vu*). According to Illaire, the suffixes contain first of all structural elements and he does not attribute any major semantic function to the suffixes: that is why they can be treated as structural elements²⁷.

The analysis of verbal, adjectival and nominal abstract nouns does not suffice to define precisely the relationship between suffixes and meaning. The formative elements *-fu* (*-vu*) appear only in connexion with adjectival abstract nouns, and other suffixes — in connexion with such nouns of verbal and adjectival origin; the latter semantically express equally abstract action, quality and state.

2.4. An enquiry into the borrowings does not actually supply new material for the analysis of the relationship between structure of an abstract noun and its meaning. Among 253 borrowings in the *u*- class 43.8 per cent preserves the stem vowel *-i* which is suffixed to Arabic, Persian, Portuguese or English roots, or exchanges the stem vowel *i* or *u* for *a* (16.6 per cent). The adjectival derivative forms preserve the stem vowel of the borrowed adjectives or they suffix the Swahili adjectival formative element *-fu* (*-vu*) (22.9 per cent). The borrowings of the class of abstract nouns suffixed with *-o*, *-ji*, or *-e* do not exceed 10 per cent of the total number of borrowings.

The research on the borrowings of the *u*- class confirms, in essence, the results of Tucker's enquiry which concerned all the nominal forms in Swahili, based on borrowings²⁸. Růžicka, who follows Seidel in this respect, states that in the words borrowed from Arabic it is the type of articulation (*Artikulationsart*) of the preceding vowel that influences decisively the quality (*Qualität*) of the following vowel (*-u* after labial and *-i* after alveolar or liquid consonants). Thus only the suffix *-o* and *-ji* seem to perform a word-forming function. Scarcity of these two

²⁶ E. Ashton, *Swahili Grammar*, pp. 284—292.

²⁷ W. Saint Paul Illaire, *Suaheli Handbuch*, pp. 155—56.

²⁸ Verbal nouns or adjectives are to be found in three forms:

(a) the Arabic verbal noun may be borrowed direct (allowing for phonetic tendencies),

(b) a pseudo-Arabic verbal noun may be coined by adding the suffix *-a*, either to the Swahili verb-stem or to the Arabic verbal noun (instead of *-i* or *-u*),

(c) the verb-stem may be treated like a normal Swahili verb-stem, and be used unchanged, or else given suffixes like *-fu*, *-vu*, *-si*, *-zi*.

Prefixes may be added to all three types of verbal noun or adjectives, but it is to be noted that those words which fall under (a) or (b) predominantly occur in the *n*- or *li*- class, and consequently are usually capable of prefixing *ma-* only. (There are of course a few outstanding exceptions like: *msa:mali*, *msama:ha* ('forgiveness')). Words formed in Bantu fashion, i.e., those falling under (c), may nearly all prefix *m-*, *wa-*, *mi*, and *u-* as well (Tucker, *Foreign Sounds...*, pp. 221—22).

suffixes in the borrowings of the *u*- class possibly testifies to gradual reduction of their semantic importance in the *u*- class.

2.5. Abstract nouns in primary and secondary semantic function:

The research conducted so far leads to the conclusion that an abstract noun may appear in conjunction with the *u*- prefix:

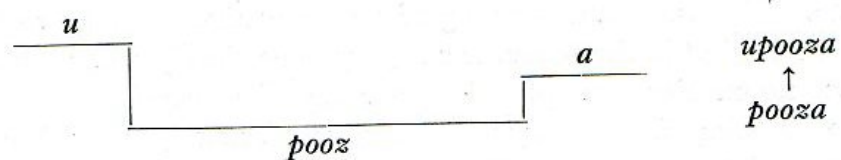
- (1) in basic form, e.g., *ubwete* 'laziness';
- (2) in derivative forms:
 - (a) basic noun > abstract noun, e.g., *pooza* > *upooza* 'deadness'
 - (b) noun > abstract noun, e.g., *mfalme* > *ufalme* 'majesty'
 - (c) adjective > abstract noun, e.g., *-baya* > *ubaya* 'evil', 'ugliness'
 - (d) basic verb > derivative verb > abstract noun, e.g., *omba* > *ombea* > *uombezi* 'request', 'supplication'
 - (e) basic verb > noun > abstract noun, e.g., *lima* > *kulima* > *ukulima* > 'farming', 'ploughing'
 - (f) basic verb > adjective > abstract noun, e.g., *runja* > *-runjifu* > *urunjifu* 'vandalism'
 - (g) basic verb > derivative verb > adjective > abstract noun, e.g., *punga* > *pungua* > *pungufu* > *upungufu* 'insufficiency', 'poverty'

Secondly, it is the prefix *u*- that functions as an element responsible for forming abstract nouns. The meaning of an abstract noun depends either on that of the root of the given noun, verb or adjective (preposition, adverb, numeral), or it depends on the meaning of the derivative forms constructed by means of verbal or adjectival suffixes. While in the other classes the suffixes have both structural and semantic value, in the *u*- class their function is exclusively structural and they here represent a structural element of the noun in case of the verbal abstract nouns. And their semantic function, except for the suffix *-ji*, has been in most cases almost completely reduced, owing to the semantic value of the prefix *-u*. The example of the word-formative function of the suffix *-vu* in the nominal forms of the *u*- class, offered by R ů ž i č k a²⁹, is insofar wrong as it neglects the phenomenon of transition from the verbal — through adjectival — to the nominal category, whereas the transition to the formation embracing the names of features has not actually taken place by prefixing *-u* or suffixing *-u* or *-vu*, but it occurred as soon as the adjective *-potevu* was formed out of the verb *potea*. Only prefixing of *u*- contributed decisively to the formation of the abstract noun.

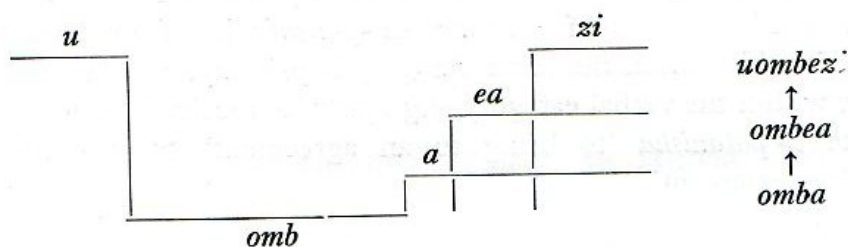
29	Verbum	Träger d. Eigenschaft o. d. Standes	Eigenschaft o. Stand
	-kua (wachsen, gross werden)	: mkuu (der Grosse, Häuptling)	: ukuu (Grösse)
	-potea (verloren gehen)	: mpotevu (Verschwender=)	: upotevu (Verschwendung)

R ů ž i č k a, *Lehnwörter im Swahili*, p. 568.

The structure of an abstract noun can be presented in the following way:



upooza
↑
pooza



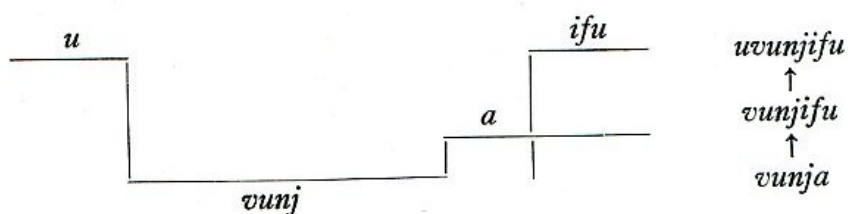
uombez
↑
ombea
↑
omba



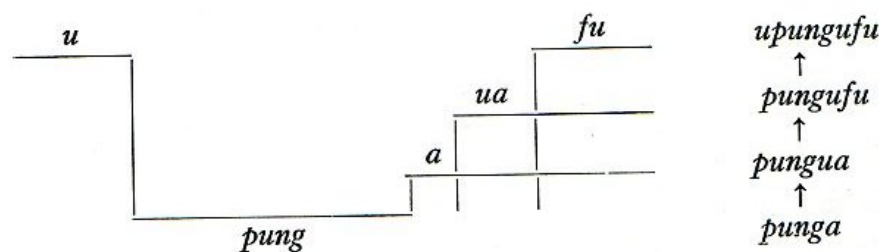
ufalme
↑
mfalme



ubaya
↑
-baya



uvunjifu
↑
vunjifu
↑
vunja



upungufu
↑
pungufu
↑
pungua
↑
punga



ukulima
↑
kulima
↑
lima

In this context an abstract noun of the *u*- class is a derivative whose prefix *u*- supplies the superior meaning and expresses, in general terms, an abstract action, quality or state. Thus, the main meaning of the derivative is bound to be contained not in the basic form but in the semantic category most closely related to the structure of the abstract noun. For example, the meaning of *upungufu* 'decrease', 'defect', 'deficiency', originating from *-pungufu* 'defective', 'scanty', derived in turn from *pungua* 'to decrease', 'to grow less', which eventually results from *punga* 'to decrease (of heat of the sun)', shifts thus from *punga* to *-pungufu*, i.e., from verbal to adjectival category, and for this reason the latter category is primary. Similar shift of meaning can take place within the verbal category, e.g., *pata* 'to receive', 'to achieve' > *patana* 'to co-operate' > *patanisha* 'to bring to an agreement' > *upatanisho* 'alliance', 'mediation', 'appeasement'.