



Vortrag im Rahmen des Linguistischen Kolloquiums

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Dissertation: „Interne und externe Sprachbeziehungen der zentralkenianischen Bantusprachen“

The dissertation project "Internal and External Linguistic Affiliations of Central Kenyan Bantu" aims at a full dialectological survey of the Bantu languages located in the area around Mt. Kenya. The goal of the project is to assess how much linguistic inventory these languages share among each other as well as with adjacent languages (Bantu and Non-Bantu). The linguistic findings are then correlated with accounts from oral traditions in order to come up with a historical scenario that sheds light on both the linguistic and social past of the Kenyan Highlands.

The basis of this project is a large amount of phonological, morphological, and lexical data for all dialects of Central Kenyan Bantu. In a first step, the data are analysed statistically by applying the method of dialectometry aiming at the identification of dialectal core areas. These areas of relatively low linguistic variation are possibly centers of innovation from which linguistic traits spread throughout the region. By additionally analysing the data qualitatively (e.g. word-comparison along the lines of semantic domains), it is possible to establish a connection between the dialectometrical results and socio-historical facts. This enables us to explain, for example, how certain dialect clusters have come into being in the past 400 to 500 years.

In this presentation, we will take a look at the method of dialectometry and its electronic implementation. It will be discussed how phonological, morphological, and lexical data can be compared statistically and what challenges one faces when dealing with closely related languages such as Central Kenyan Bantu. Moreover, questions on qualitative dialectology will be raised: How can we connect the languages under consideration with other languages in the region and how can we distinguish between genetic inheritance and areal diffusion? Finally, oral traditions and other historical accounts from Central Kenya will be reviewed before correlating these with the linguistic findings.

**Ort: Institut für Asien- und Afrikawissenschaften,
Invalidenstr. 118, Raum 410**

Zeit: 16:15 Uhr

Alle Interessierten sind herzlich eingeladen!