

SHONA LEXICOGRAPHY

G. FORTUNE

Department of African Languages, University of Rhodesia

A REVIEW OF the second edition of Hannan's *Standard Shona Dictionary*¹ provides an opportunity, not only to evaluate the book itself as a dictionary in its own right but, that done, to indicate the extent to which it carries forward previous work in Shona lexicography. It also provides an opportunity to pay a tribute to its author for his contribution towards the study of the Shona language and the development of its written literature.

In order to place Hannan's work typologically within the species of dictionary, an article by the scholar Yakov Malkiel provides a set of characteristic dimensions with reference to which dictionaries may be analysed, and in terms of which they vary among themselves.² These are the dimensions of range, perspective and presentation.

RANGE

By range is meant the 'volume and spread of the material assembled' and it has three aspects, the density of entries, the number of languages covered, and the degree of concentration on strictly lexical data.³ A dictionary's density is its approximation to an ideally complete lexicographic record. It is not within this reviewer's competence to say how complete or incomplete a record the *Standard Shona Dictionary* is. Writing to introduce his first edition Hannan reckoned that the number of entries in the Shona-English part of the dictionary would exceed 20 000, and those in the English-Shona part less than half that number.⁴ Announcing the end of the proof-reading for the second edition at the end of November 1973, he estimated there were some 81 000 entries in all, of which some 54 000 were in the Shona-English section.⁵ The second edition marks a considerable advance in coverage, and a comparison of almost any page with the corresponding section of the first

¹ M. Hannan, S.J. *Standard Shona Dictionary* (Salisbury, The Rhodesia Literature Bureau, 2nd edit., 1974).

² Y. Malkiel, 'A typological classification of dictionaries on the basis of distinctive features', in F. W. Hoeselander and S. Saporta (eds), *Problems in Lexicography* (Bloomington, Indiana Univ. Press, 1967), 3-24.

³ *Ibid.*, 7-15.

⁴ M. Hannan, 'Shona dictionary', *NADA* (1958), XXXV, 19.

⁵ Ministry of Education, Salisbury, *Minutes of the Nineteenth Meeting of the Shona Language Committee*, 8 Oct. 1973, Item III.

edition will bear this out. However, no one pretends that this dictionary is a complete record of all the words in spoken and written Shona. In order to form a judgement on the coverage of the present dictionary and its approach to a complete record, it will be useful to consider one or two points of method. Hannan does not list homophones separately, a procedure which makes for a reduction in the number of entries. For example the entry introduced by *nhanga* [LL] KkoMZ n 5 reads: Pumpkin (gen term). 2.Z House in which sleep the unmarried girls of a family. cp *kagero* Ko (B); *ruvheyhe* M. 3.Z Hostel for unmarried girls.⁶ This entry defines at least two distinct homophonous nouns.

In a contrary sense, however, the number of entries is considerably increased by listing all the variant forms of the same word. For example both *mukombe* and *mukombo* (ladle), both *nhangande* and *nhangandi* (one small stick), and the three forms *ngwibu*, *ngwichu* and *ngwidu* (severing) are each the heads of separate entries. It is only the first in each case which is fully developed but the others are duly entered and carry a rubric referring back to the main entry. The last example is one of three ideophonic variants which are particularly prone to occur in phonemically slightly different forms and thereby to generate a multiplicity of entries.

It may be asked what is meant by a complete record of all the words in a language. Discussing this difficult and probably unanswerable question Malkiel refers to the practice of some lexicographers who deliberately smuggle latent words into their lists:

In the languages possessing an arsenal of productive suffixes (such as Slavic or Romance) a lexicographer can quite unobtrusively, manufacture, by the hundreds and thousands, derivatives of his own making. These formations are readily understandable and give the appearance of authenticity; the truth is that speakers, for some reason or other, have not bothered to activate on the same scale all these grammatical potentialities. It is difficult to detect such camouflaged illicit entries, especially in view of legitimate border-line cases (nonces); an unduly geometric design of representative word families, a dictionary's too heavy saturation with certain recurrent derivational schemes at once arouses the suspicion of an experienced reader.

Hannan's awareness of this possibility is expressed in several places in

⁶ The designations 'H' and 'L' in square brackets indicate the sequence of syllabic tones carried by a word or, in the case of verb stems, the tone class they belong to. The designations 'K', 'Ko', 'M', 'Z', 'Ko(B)' indicates respectively the dialect clusters of Karanga, Korekore, Manyika, Zezuru and the Budya variety of Korekore. The letter 'n' followed by a number indicates a noun and the class it belongs to. Hannan has omitted to classify 2. as n 9.

⁷ Malkiel, 'A typological classification of dictionaries', 9.

a paper he gave in 1959, just after the publication of his first edition.⁸ After mentioning the verbal extensions by which extended or derived verb stems are formed from simple or basic stems, the derivation of nouns from both simple and derived verb stems, and, finally, the tense and aspect signs used in the inflection of verbs which convey shades of meaning and precisions of implications which can be expressed in English only by very much longer forms of speech, he concludes as follows:

These few condensed remarks about the Shona verb have, I hope, left you with the impression that a pure African language is a much finer instrument, and wields a far vaster vocabulary, than the feeble hybrid called Fanigalo. In particular it evokes a certain amount of surprise when it is stated that the hastily compiled Standard Shona Dictionary contains over 23 000 entries in the Shona-English section. But when you consider that for every verb stem that is entered there are from ten to twenty derived forms also in use, this really means that the Shona vocabulary, not all of which can be claimed to have been entered in the new dictionary, really exceeds 80 000.

In order that the point may be understood, and Hannan's practice in his two editions made clear, it is necessary to list the main forms of derivation that exist in Shona. From both the numerical and structural points of view there are three main kinds of lexical morpheme⁹ in Shona: noun stems, verb radicals and ideophones. Hannan lists ideophones as such, verb radicals as stems, that is with terminal vowel /-a/, and noun stems with a primary prefix.¹⁰

e.g. the ideophones	<i>svetu</i>	[HL]	(jumping upwards)
	<i>gweju</i>	[HL]	(wrenching off)
the verb radicals	<i>-sung-</i>	[H]	cited as <i>-sunga</i> (tie)
	<i>-bat-</i>	[H]	cited as <i>-bata</i> (hold)
the noun stems	<i>-rume</i>	[HH]	cited as <i>murume</i> n 1 (man, husband)
	<i>-pofu</i>	[LL]	cited as <i>bofu</i> n 5 (blind person or animal)

⁸ The paper, a copy of which is in my possession, was one of two delivered to a Conference which is not named or dated. The first is on Shona linguistic structure and the second is on Shona traditional literature. Internal evidence seems to show that the use of Fanigalo was being advocated at the time as a means of communication between different language groups. The date was probably 1959.

⁹ A commonly accepted description of the morpheme is 'the smallest meaningful unit in the structure of a language that is grammatically pertinent'; see H. A. Gleason, *An Introduction to Descriptive Linguistics* (New York, Holt, Rinehardt and Winston, 1961), ch.5.

¹⁰ Primary prefixes are the constituents with which noun stems most commonly combine, and with which they indicate normal specimens of the items to which they refer. For example the noun *mu-rume* (man, husband) consists of the two constituents /mu-/, a primary prefix, and /-rume/, a noun stem.

Derivative forms from ideophones: The formation of both nouns and verb radicals in which ideophones are nuclei are regular and productive processes. Thus from the ideophone *svetu* we have the derived noun *cha-mu-svetu-mu-svetu* n 7 (jumping by many in all directions) and the derived verb stems */svetu-k-/* (jump up), */svetu-dz-/* (make to jump). And from *gweju* we have the derived noun *cha-mu-gweju-mu-gweju* n 7 (indiscriminate wrenching by many) and the derived verb radicals */gweju-k-/* (be wrenched off), */gweju-r-/* (wrench off) and */gweju-dz-/* (cause to wrench off). The derivation of nouns is affected by the addition of appropriate noun prefixes and, normally, reduplication. That of the verbs is effected by the addition of one or more of a number of suffixal 'verbalizers'.

Derivative forms from verb radicals: Verb radicals supply the nuclei for derivative nouns, extended verb radicals and ideophones. Thus from the verb radical */bat-/* we have the nouns *mu-bat-i* n 1 (worker, proprietor), *mu-bat-o* n 3 (handle) and many others; the extended radicals */bat-w-/* (be held), */bat-ir-/* (hold for), */bat-is-/* (hold firmly, strengthen) and many others; and the ideophones *bat-e* (holding), *bat-ei* (holding gently), *bat-anu* (letting go). From the verb radical */sung-/* (tie) we have the nouns *mu-sung-o* n 3 (anything used for tying things; a string trap), *chi-sung-o* n 7 (bond, anything tied) and others; the extended radicals */sung-w-/* (be tied; be made barren), */sung-at-/* (tether), */sung-an-/* (be tangled) and many others and the ideophones *sung-e* (tying), *sung-ei* (tying carefully), *sung-unu* (untying).

Derivative forms from noun stems: Noun stems do not normally provide nuclei for verbal or ideophonic constructions. The verb radical */pofu-mar-/* (be blind, cp. *bofu* (blind person)) is a very rare instance of a verb radical derived from a noun stem. However, noun stems do occur in a great number of secondary forms by the process of substituting secondary prefixes for primary ones, or that of adding secondary prefixes to primary ones. To quote Hannan again:

The stem */rume/* when combined with the prefix */va-/* gives rise to a noun *varume* which means 'men'. But *chirume* means 'manly behaviour', whereas *rume* without any expressed prefix means 'a big or ungainly or uncouth or crude man'. *Urume* means 'male seed', while *zirume* means 'a gigantic man'... [Thus] for every noun entered in the dictionary there exist at least three other forms, not all of which have been counted in the 23 000 entries. In this way it would seem that 80 000 is too low a figure for the Shona vocabulary represented by the entries made in the dictionary. A nearer figure might well be 90 000.¹¹

Entries of ideophones and their derivatives: Hannan's practice in regard to the listing of derivative forms in the first edition differs somewhat from his

¹¹ See above, fn.8.

practice in the second. In regard to ideophones the procedure is the same in both editions. One should note here to his considerable credit that the listing of massive numbers of ideophones is one of the main original contributions of the Dictionary. He has made it clear that the class of ideophone constitutes a major category in the lexicon, comparable to those of the verb radicals and of the noun stems in both number and importance as constituents in Shona grammatical constructions. Hannan's normal procedure is not only to list each ideophone but also the verb stems derived from it. Very often these are three in number, intransitive stems formed by verbalizer /-k-/ transitive stems formed by verbalizer /-r-/, and causative stems formed by verbalizers /-ts-/ or /-dz-/. For example, the entry headed by the ideophone *pogo* is followed by entries headed respectively by the intransitive derived stem /-pogoka/, the transitive derived stem /-pogora/, and the causative derived stem /-pogodza/. The entry under *pogo* lists five meanings, viz.

- KMZ *ideo* Breaking in two. 2. KZ Preparing food in abundance.
3. KZ Emitting smoke. 4. MZ Making a big fire. cp.
bvovo KZ. 5. M Biting long, semi-hard object held in
hand (eg *tsenza*, edible tuber)

All of these meanings are repeated under *-pogora*, viz.

- MZ *v t* Break. cp *-bhogora* KMZ. 2. Z Prepare food in abundance. 3. KZ Emit smoke. cp *-togora* MZ. 4. MZ Make a big fire. cp *-povora* KZ. 5. Bite long, semi-hard object held in hand (eg *tsenza*, edible tuber)

Three meanings are given under *-pogoka* viz.

- Z *v i* Break < *pogo*. cp *-bhogoka* KMZ. 2. Be prepared in abundance (food). 3. KZ Smoke. cp *-togoka* MZ.

Under /-pogodza/ the reader is referred to the first four meanings listed under /-pogora/. While it is probable that these derived verb radicals are not merely latent forms in the sense described by Malkiel, this reviewer thinks that some more economical way of referring to their existence when proved could have been used as their appearance as separate entries is largely redundant.

The entry of nouns derived from ideophones is much more economical, and those listed give the impression of having been encountered in the compilers' sources rather than having been consciously derived in the manner of grammarians. Since nouns are listed not according to stem but according to class prefix, their other constituent, derived nouns are not normally found in the vicinity of the nuclear ideophones. Thus the ideophones *chachu* (eating directly from the cooking pot) and *di di di* (running with short steps) provide the nuclei for the nouns *chamuchachu* *muchachu* n 7 (continual taking of food from cooking pot on the fire by many) and *chamudididi* n 7 (running with short steps). The ideophones *tsverere* (slipping on slippery surface) and *tsvoti* (pouring of liquid) provide the nuclei for the nouns *matsverere* n 6 (kid) and *matsvoti* n 6 (abundance of liquid).

Entries of verb radicals and their derivatives: In regard to derivatives from basic verb radicals the first edition made a normal practice of listing all the extensions (as derivative suffixes with terminal vowel /-a/, in each entry. As Hannan wrote in the introduction:

Verb forms have been entered as simple stems, that is without any prefixal formatives; e.g. *-bva*. The suffixal formatives which, by addition to the root, give rise to derived species of verb stems, are entered after the simple stem; e.g. *-bva*. *-ana*; *-ika*; *-isa*; *-iwa*; *-ura*; *-wa*. This means that in addition to the simple form *-bva*, there are these derived species of verb stems: *-bvana*; *-bvika*; *-bvisa*; *-bviwa*; *-bvura*; and *-bvwa*. One who wishes to find the meanings of the derived stem, *-bviwa*, will not find any dictionary entry, *-bviwa*. He will find *-iwa*, the suffixal formative, which, when added to the root *-bv-*, results in the passive species of derived verb stem *-bviwa*. He will also find, as already stated, the simple *-bva* and its equivalent meaning in English. Some of the derived stems are of rare occurrence, others are heard more often than the simple stem. No attempt has been made to indicate in the dictionary which of the derived stems occur frequently.¹²

Reference to the entry under *-bva* reveals that five other 'suffixal formatives' have been listed in addition to the six listed above, namely *-anya*, *-ara*, *-ata*, *-aura*, *-ira*. Of these eleven 'suffixal formatives', however, it is doubtful whether more than five occur with the radical /-bv-/; /-bva/ means 'move from' in English, /-bvika/ means 'be capable of coming out', /-bvira/ 'move from', /-bvisa/ 'take from', /-bvwa/ 'be gone from'. But forms like /-bvana, -bvanya, -bvura, -bvata/ etc. are either non-existent or are unrelated to /-bva/. Now the entry of every simple verb stem in the first edition is accompanied mechanically by a similar series of suffixal formatives, usually between ten and twelve in number, indicating the existence of derived verb stems many of which are not only infrequent but non-existent.

This almost mechanical repetition of the derivative suffixes, almost because there is variation in the number listed and this points to a degree of checking or verification having been done, is the most serious flaw in the entries of verbs in the first edition, and has been avoided in the edition now under review. Instead we have now the listing of simple or basic verb stems as well as of the commoner derived stems. For example, in addition to /-jamba/ (move, walk, progress, journey, travel), we have /-jambidzana/ (be on cordial terms, get on together, be compatible) and /-jambisa/ (move, direct, drive, 2. walk quickly). Other derived stems formed by the use of extensions (or derivative suffixes) feature among the examples under the entry headed by the simple or basic stems. For example, under the head

¹² *Standard Shona Dictionary* (London, Macmillan, 1st edit., 1959), viii.

/-posha/ (lend) we have the causative */-poshedza/* and the passive */-poshwa/* illustrated. Thus the procedure followed in respect of extended verb stems in the second edition is much more objective and documented, and avoids the change of inventing not only latent but non-existent forms.

Some indication is given in this edition of the use of verb radicals as nuclei in the formation of ideophones. Thus both */-moma/* (settle on and cover as do bees) and *mome* (settling on and covering) are listed but without the relationship being indicated. Similarly */-mona/* (wind around etc.), *moné* (turning), *monono* (unwinding) are listed, again without the relationship being indicated. Some ideophonic constructions with verbal nuclei are very productive, for example those with ideophonizer */-e/*, and, like the use of certain of the verbal extensions, for example the passive */-w-/*, do not need exemplification. Other ideophonic constructions in which verb radicals are constituents, for example with the ideophonizers */-au/* (extensive idea) and */-anu/* etc. (reversive idea), are not so predictable, and need entries, or at least an indication in the entry which treats the verb stem, that such ideophonic derivations exist.

Nouns which are constructed with verb radicals as nuclei are often but not consistently indicated under the verbal entry. For example under */-tadza/* (be unable, fail to do, do wrong) the derivation of the nouns *mutadzi* n 1 (one who has done wrong and been found guilty) and *rutadzo* n 11 (unsuccessful attempt, sin), each with its own entry, is indicated. Here again the choice of derived nouns for entry has probably been decided not on the grounds of their latency but of actual occurrence in the sources.

Entries of noun stems and their derivatives: In regard to the entry of derivatives in which noun stems are nuclei, the rather rare cases of verb radicals derived from noun stems have been mentioned, as well as the constructions which arise out of the secondary prefixes with noun stems. The latter may be considered as derivative forms in an analogous sense. Here again certain formations such as those of diminutives and augmentatives are common and predictable. Others need to be indicated. For example, in the case of *mukomana* n 1 (boy), if the rules for the formation of diminutives and augmentatives by using secondary prefixes had been treated in the Introduction, it would have been unnecessary to list *gomana* n 5 (big fellow) as a separate entry.

Returning to the question posed earlier as to what is meant by a complete record of all the words in a language, it seems impossible for a lexicographer to know what a complete record consists of, and just as impossible to make one. Strangely enough Fr Hannan believed that he had recorded as many as 80 per cent of the words used by Shona-speakers in his first edition.¹³ After compiling the second edition in which the Shona

¹³ *Standard Shona Dictionary* (1959), ix.

entries were two and a half times as many he was more cautious and wrote, calling for further contributions, 'In spite of all that we have done to make this work as complete and accurate as possible, there must be many omissions'.¹⁴ He invited people to send in contributions found to be missing from the Dictionary as a result of work done in their own fields so that they could be collected, published annually in *NADA* and added to future editions. As an example of a gap in the record this reviewer finds the dictionary deficient in words used in the diction of traditional poetry. No doubt many of these words are passing out of the speech of all but the oldest age grades, and this fact points to another aspect of the difficulty in determining what is a complete record. For with changes in culture the lexicon is proving unstable. The entry of loan words, more accurately referred to as adoptive words, is a more prominent feature in this edition than in the former. Further editions will give greater prominence to them.¹⁵

One reason for the vastly increased coverage in the second edition is the increase in published Shona literature in the years when it was being revised (1967-73), as well as the greater use of what was available before. Written literature appears not to have been used as a source for the first edition owing to the fact that the compiler was under contract to complete it in the shortest possible time. In the article in *NADA* in 1957 Fr Hannan revealed that his list had been compiled from material collected by other workers, and these sources are indicated in the Introduction. For the second edition he had the collaboration of a number of people to fill gaps in the dialectal record, in addition to his team of compilers, as well as the assistance of the Rhodesia Literature Bureau. However, after the last entry has been made, the modern lexicographer still has to recognize, like Dr Johnson, the inevitable deficiencies of his work: 'No dictionary of a living tongue can ever be perfect, since while it is hastening to publication some words are budding and some are falling away', and 'He that undertakes to compile a dictionary undertakes that which, if it comprehends the full extent of his design, he knows himself unable to perform. Yet his labours, though deficient, may be useful, and with the hope of this inferior praise he must incite his activity and solace his weariness'.¹⁶

A further reason why any dictionary of Shona will always have to content itself to be an approximation to a complete record lies in the number of complex nominal constructions in current use. No doubt the number of

¹⁴ *Standard Shona Dictionary* (1974), ix.

¹⁵ This feature is dealt with by H. Chimhundu, 'Some problems relating to the incorporation of loan words in the lexicon'; see below, 75-91.

¹⁶ Both are remarks of Dr Samuel Johnson, the great English lexicographer. The first is from the preface to his *A Dictionary of the English Language* (1828 edition), and the second from the Advertisement to the 1773 edition; they are quoted in T. G. Benson, 'A century of Bantu lexicography', *African Language Studies* (1964), V, 64.

ideophones, basic noun stems and simple verb radicals is a finite one. Yet their record constitutes in itself a very formidable task. What are we to say of the numerous combinations of these three basic types of morpheme as nuclei of larger nominal constructions of which the dictionary records a number? For example the complex nominal construction *mudyandigere* which as a class 1 nominal means 'a lazy person, pensioner', and as a class 3 nominal means 'a person', cp. /-dya/ (eat), *ndigere* (I being seated).

Another side to the density of a dictionary is its coverage in depth, that is the extent to which it goes in recording and documenting different meanings of items, including the different connotations which depend on different contexts. The majority of entries are provided with clear and concise definitions. Often the English glosses corresponding to a Shona entry have to be listed and numbered from No. 2 onwards. The first of a series is never numbered. Numerical listing of glosses occurs where the head of the entry is homophonous, a number of different words or morphemes having the same phonemic form and the same tone pattern. An example has already been cited, namely *nhanga* [LL], which is both a noun of class 5 meaning 'pumpkin', a general term common to all dialects, and in the Zezuru dialect, a noun of class 9 meaning 'a hut in which unmarried girls sleep'. Many ideophones are homophones, e.g. *gadu*, which in Zezuru has the following meanings in English: (1) 'striking someone in the face'; (2) 'making a deep incision in someone'. In Manyika this form has two different meanings which are listed as (3) 'chopping', and (4) 'hoeing hard ground'. This example shows that homophonous forms often have regional connotations. This indication of the regional and dialectal distribution of words is a second major contribution of the dictionary together with the concurrent indication of synonyms which occur in other dialects. Thus, in the case of the third and fourth meanings of *gadu*, namely 'chopping' and 'hoeing hard ground', which occur in Manyika, the reader is referred to the Zezuru forms *ga* (chopping) and *gau* (hoeing hard ground). This information about dialectal incidence and dialectal synonyms is extremely useful, making such forms mutually intelligible and available to a common literature.

With the movement of people from their traditional homes where their clans or sub-clans have their roots, and the growth of towns with new urban forms of Shona whose influences in country districts is considerable, the territorial definition of the Shona dialects which dates back some fifty years has obviously been profoundly modified, and a new survey will be needed to describe the sociolinguistic position today. The terms 'Z', 'K', 'M', and 'Ko' stand for the clusters of dialects defined by Professor C. M. Doke in 1931, Zezuru, Karanga, Manyika and Korekore. The areas to which these dialects are referred are shown in the maps on the end papers. It is probable that narrowly dialectal terms are now restricted to the oldest age groups.

The dialectal dimension stresses space. The time dimension in which

philological analysis and research moves is represented by the starring of forms which are reflexes of items listed in Professor Guthrie's *Comparative Bantu*¹⁷ and so likely to have been in Shona, showing its relationship to other Bantu languages, for a very long time.

Often, but not in the majority of entries, illustrative examples are provided on no very clearly discernable criterion. Common verbs whose extended forms call for some treatment in the absence of their separate entry are illustrated, as well as those which cover several shades of meaning in English. An example is /-ramba/ corresponding to 'refuse', 'demur', 'deny', as well as 'persist'. The latter meaning should have been distinguished as that of a separate homophone. Another ground on which examples are provided is when the head of an entry is the key word, or the nucleus of a key word, in a proverb or riddle. For example, the case of /-bata/ (touch, hold, catch, seize, acquire, practise, capture) calls for the citing of the proverb, *Chawawana batisisa, mudzimu haupe kaviri* (Hold on tightly to what you have, the spirit elder does not give twice). Proverbs are indicated by the abbreviation 'prov'. In other cases examples are cited to confirm the grammatical identity of the head of the entry. For example *zvino* (now) is cited in its inflected form in the example *Uchiri kuHarare nazvino wose* (Are you still in Salisbury even now?) to show that it is indeed a noun of class 1a. Where an item is peculiar to Shona culture or unknown in English an example will be illustrated. For example /-seva/ (dip morsel of sadza into side dish) is exemplified by the sentence: *Ari kuseva sadza mumuto* (He is dipping his morsels of sadza into gravy before conveying them to his mouth).

Considerations of economy and the need to compile a dictionary of convenient size and price no doubt decided the compilers to limit the number of illustrative examples. This points to the exercise of discrimination and self-denial in a man so familiar with Shona culture and anxious to do it justice. Clarity and conciseness are always present. Perhaps in a further edition where space can be saved by the omission of predictable derived forms more space can be given to many items of Shona belief and culture which call for further description and exemplification, for example *njuzu* (water sprite), *mudzimu* (spirit elder of a family), *dare* (meeting place for men of village), *nhembo* (elegaic poetic utterances), *nhango* (didactic poetry), *mutupo* (clan name), *chidao* (principal praise name). Further we should like a treatment of items in relation to the social situation in which they are suitable and to which they may be restricted. There are a number of distinctive speech styles in Shona which are part of certain social relationships, for example those that link the families of a bridegroom and bride, or which

¹⁷ M. Guthrie, *Comparative Bantu: An Introduction to the Comparative Linguistics and Prehistory of the Bantu Languages* (Farnborough, Hants, Gregg International 4 vols, 1968-72).

are appropriate to certain social situations, such as a village court. The only indication of this sort in the dictionary at present is the labelling of certain expressions as coarse or tactful. The dictionary does not define the social relationships or contexts when the use of such words would be offensive. In some contexts they are obviously in place. Our knowledge of the distinctive markers of these distinctive speech styles is as yet rudimentary but, as these become identified, and to the extent to which they are lexical items, they should be incorporated as such in the dictionary where they will reveal the great inner diversification of Shona speech. Another kind of addition we hope for is the inclusion of more idioms. This reviewer knows that Fr Hannan had an ear for these and that he had collected many — for example, those including the nuclear word *mwoyo* (heart). Certain of these have been entered but there were many more. He has obviously had to restrict himself to the limits of this medium-sized dictionary.

Two other aspects of the dimension of *range* were mentioned at the beginning of this section, namely the number of languages covered and the degree of concentration on strictly lexical data. What we have is a Shona-English dictionary. In both editions Fr Hannan emphasized that in terms of the task he had accepted and its immediate aims he could provide only an index in the English-Shona section. "The coupling of a full-sized "dictionary" and a meagre "vocabulary", typically one fourth or one fifth its size, which is in reality little more than a makeshift index is not uncommon at all because often the two sections have deliberately not been planned on the same footing."¹⁸ In this second edition the main English-Shona Index is followed by three appendices which are indices to botanical names, to interjectives and to ideophones. The main index and those of interjectives and ideophones have an interest additional to their usefulness in tracing Shona equivalents needed for English words. From a cross-cultural point of view they show graphically the areas of life where Shona vocabulary has proliferated and diversified in response to cultural needs and interests. For example the treatment of *beer* occupies two columns, while everywhere the stylistic emphasis on graphic representations of actions and events is shown by the multiplicity of ideophones and their derivatives. For example the Shona equivalents for various postures adopted while sitting occupies a column, while those expressing various kinds of gait during walking occupy almost six.

From the description and evaluation so far it will be clear that the concentration in the dictionary is predominantly lexical. I have expressed my hope that it may become more encyclopaedic in future editions, given the many special features of Shona culture which have no equivalents in

¹⁸ Malkiel, 'A typological classification of dictionaries', 12.

English. Again with a view to the future and with a view to the more economical lexical ordering of the material the following suggestions are made for the organization of entries involving ideophones, verb radicals and noun stems. They incorporate the criticisms made so far in this review.

Much more use could be made of the Introduction to provide a simple outline of the linguistic structure of the language and, in particular, the way in which the basic classes of morpheme are related in normal productive processes of derivation. With a little more linguistic insight on the part of readers, the setting out of the dictionary entries could be made more elegant, more economical and reflect better the structure of the language of which it is the lexicon. In the case of ideophones this would mean listing (a) the structures of ideophones and verbalizers which form derived 'deideophonic' verbal radicals and (b) the structures of noun prefixes and ideophones which form complex 'deideophonic' nominal constructions. The most common derivations, both verbal, i.e. with verbalizers /-k-, -r-/ and nominal i.e. with prefixes /cha-mu-/ and reduplicated stem, are largely predictable in their meaning, and no more than an indication of their existence would be necessary in an entry with an ideophone headword. The less common derivations, e.g. with verbalizer /-t-/ or with noun prefix /ma-/ would require both an entry in the appropriate place among the derivative forms as well as their English meaning. For the rest the typical entry with ideophone headword might run as follows.¹⁹

e.g. *simu* [HL]

- (1. Dialectal distribution) KKoMZ
- (2. Linguistic category) *ideo*
- (3. English equivalent) *Rising*²⁰
- (4. Synonyms) cp *sumu*, *kwaku*
- (5. Verbal derivatives with) /-k-, -dz-, -ts-/
- (6. Nominal derivatives with) /cha-mu-... mu-.../
- (7. Examples) *Akati simu pasi* (He rose from the ground)

Simuka, tiende (Rise, let us go!)

Simudza ruoko (Raise your hand!)

Vanhu zvavakati vavhundutswa neshumba, chakava chamusimu musimu (When they were startled by the lion, the people jumped up helter-skelter)

The entry would end, where necessary, with notes on (8) grammatical, stylistic and social restrictions on use; (9) idioms in which the item occurs; and (10) cultural aspects needing interpretation. In the case of *simu* there would be little or nothing to add.

¹⁹ The aspects listed on the left of the entries which follow indicate merely the order which, it is suggested, the material of each entry should follow. It is not intended that they should be made explicit in the entries themselves.

²⁰ There is no need to use the preposition 'of' when giving English equivalents of ideophones.

Setting up entries in this way with ideophones as headwords would double the size of the entry but it would render the listing of derivatives elsewhere unnecessary. It would also have the merit of concentrating all the information about the ideophone, both in itself and as a nucleus for derivative forms, in one place, so that a complete grasp of its potentiality as a constituent form in larger constructions, both morphological and syntactic, becomes possible.

In the much more complex case of verbs the Introduction should describe (a) the structures of verb radicals and extensions which form extended verb radicals; (b) the structures of verb radicals and extensions with terminal vowels which form deverbative nouns; and (c) the structures of verb radicals and 'ideophonizers' which form deverbative ideophones. Once again the most common derivatives resulting from regular productive processes would need no more than the indication that they are in use and are not merely latent. For example in the case of the verb radical */bik-/* (cook) the existence of the passive extended radical */bikw-/* or */bikiw-/* could be indicated by the mere inclusion of the passive extension */w-/* or */iw-/*. Similarly the existence of the agentive deverbative noun *mubiki* (cook) and of the deverbative ideophone *bike* (cooking) could be indicated merely by the inclusion of the affixes concerned, namely */mu-∞-i* and */∞-e/*. Less common derivatives and those whose meaning cannot be easily deduced from a productive rule would need not only the inclusion of the affixes concerned in the entry but the provision of English equivalents and illustrative examples.

An example of a typical, rather straightforward, verbal entry might be as follows:

e.g. **-bik-** [L]

- (1. Dialectal distribution) KKMZ
- (2. Linguistic category) R (viz. verb radical)²¹
- (3. English equivalent) Cook in a liquid, brew, stew.
- (4. Synonyms) (Nil in this case.)
- (5. Verbal derivatives)²² */an-* cook one another, e.g. in folktale plots; *-idz-*, help to cook; *ik-*; *-ir-*; *-is-* cook: i.e. cause to get cooked; *-w-* or *-iw-/*
- (6. Nominal derivatives) */mu-∞ i*; *mu-∞-o* taste; *chi-∞-o* cooking pot; *chi-∞-iro* cooking vessel; *chi-∞-wa* cooked food; *chi-∞-e ∞-e* cooking without method; *ma-∞-o* feast; *ma-∞-irwo* way of cooking; *ma-∞-irwo* way of being cooked; *∞-o* cooked food or drink; *ma-∞-wa* smarting pain; cooked food/

²¹ The term 't' (for transitive) and 'i' (for intransitive) and should give place to the more useful classification of verb radicals with reference to their potentiality for occurring with primary and secondary object complements which has been proposed by Dr N. C. Dembetembe; see below, 'A syntactic classification of non-auxiliary verbs in Shona, 49-59.

²² Combinations of extensions will also be entered, e.g. */-idz-an-/* etc.

- (7. Ideophonic derivates) /*u-e* *uɛi* cooking lightly;
/ *u-du*/ cooking without care,
grossly/
- (8. Examples) *Ndibikire sadza* (Cook some sadza for me)
Teza huni dzokubikisa doro (Gather firewood to brew
some beer) *Ndabikwa nezuva* (I am perspiring, lit.
am stewed, because of the sun) *Ndibikidzewo* (Please
help me to cook) *Bikira muhari iyi* (Cook in this pot)
Pamabiko zvokudya hazvibikwi natoga, asi vadzimai
vanobikidzana (At a feast the food is not cooked by
one person alone, the women all help together with
the cooking. *Iti zai rangu bikei* (Lightly boil my egg)
- (9. Idioms) *Abikwa neshamhu* (He was thrashed with a stick)
-bika-bika (beat all over, severely; also, cook without
method or purpose).

Grammatical, stylistic or social restrictions on the use of this verb radical might follow as well as cultural interpretation. Since /*-bik-*/ appears to be a neutral item in both these respects, there would probably be nothing to add.

The entry of noun stems in the *Standard Shona Dictionary* departs from the procedure adopted for ideophones and verb radicals. Benson writes:

The main difficulty in Bantu dictionaries is the method of listing the nouns. Many Bantu lexicographers in the past and also today have argued that for the guidance of the non-expert user of the dictionary alphabetical order by prefixes is preferable. The result is of course a very considerable number of entries under the initial letter of the common prefixes such as *mu-*, *mi-*, . . . and so on. Under this system, if it is consistently followed, the plural of a noun should have its own place separate from the singular. The result is a great waste of space, and in fact this double entry has seldom been carried out in full. One cardinal principle which emerges from our study is that everything which needs to be said about a stem or root should be channelled into one single full article, complete with citations if needed. If, as sometimes happens, the singular and plural have current meanings it is important that these should be shown alongside each other.²³

Hannan concedes that 'noun forms, as well as verb forms, would have made the compilation much shorter had they been entered as single stems'. Nevertheless, 'nouns have been entered with their prefix because that is the form in which they are heard or written, and because the use of different prefixes with the same stem often results in words of quite different meaning; e.g. *munhu* (person) and *kunhu* (place).'²⁴ For Benson the juxtaposition of examples of the same stem with different prefixes is desirable as throwing light on the stem, the common nucleus, combinations of which with

²³ 'A century of Bantu lexicography', 81-2. He is referring to his experience on a Standard Kikuyu Dictionary.

²⁴ *Standard Shona Dictionary* (1974), Introduction, viii.

different prefixes denote its different realizations. Thus it is instructive to compare *munhu* (person or human entity), *chinhu* (thing or material entity), and *kunhu* (locality or locative entity). If it was judged suitable to enter verb stems without prefix and to expect readers to be able to ignore verbal inflections in finding them, surely the same would have been possible with the much simpler structure of the noun? Entry of nominal entries by stems is the normal practice in dictionaries of Nguni and Sotho,²⁵ and is the procedure being followed in the Ndebele-English Dictionary currently being compiled in the Department of African Languages, University of Rhodesia.

Alphabetical listing of noun stems would still allow them to be entered in combination with their primary prefixes, either prefixed to the stems but in lighter type, as Paroz does in the *Southern Sotho-English Dictionary*, or entered in brackets immediately after, as is the practice of Doke and Vilakazi in the *Zulu-English Dictionary*.

An example of this sort of entry might be set up as follows:

e.g. **mu-rume** [LHH]

- (1. Dialectal distribution) KKoMZ
- (2. Linguistic category) n 1
- (3. English equivalent) Man, husband
- (4. Synonyms) (Nil in this case)
- (5. Nominal 'derivates') /rume 5 *ma-*; *chi-* 7 small, plump man; male fashion; one of the four divining dice (*hakata*) used by the diviner (*n'anga*); *ndume* 9 male, human or animal; *ru-* 11; *ka-* 12; *u-* 14 male (coarse expr)/
- (6. Nominal constructions, i.e. with /-rume/ as suffix)
munhurume 1 male person;
mwanarume 1 male child;
tsvimborume 9 unmarried male;
gukurume 5 cock;
gombarume 5 philanderer.
- (7. Examples) **Murume** *akanaka asiri wako* (A man is attractive when not your husband (prov)) **Chirume** *kufumira pachimwe, kumuromo chakatakura* (For a fellow to go early to another means he carries something on his lips, i.e. has some business to discuss (prov)) **Rume** *rimwe harikombi churu* (One man, however big, cannot surround an ant-hill, i.e. he needs the cooperation of others (prov)) **Karume** *kangu* (Man feared for his fighting ability).

Once again restrictions on the use of this noun, and some cultural interpretation throwing light on its connotations, arising perhaps out of the institution of polygamy, might follow.

²⁵ For example C. M. Doke and B. W. Vilakazi, *Zulu-English Dictionary* (Johannesburg, Witwatersrand Univ. Press, 1948), and A. Mabilie and H. Dieterlin, *Southern Sotho-English Dictionary* revised by R. A. Paroz (Morija, Morija Sesuto Book Depot, 1950).

Nouns with zero prefixes will obviously be listed according to their initial letter and without any prefix. For example *mambo* 1a (chief), *feso* 5 (devil thorn), *shongwe* 9 (rocky pinnacle). Nouns with non-syllabic prefixes whose stems have undergone some prefixal morphophonemic change should logically also be listed according to the first letter of their stems. For example *banga* 5 (knife) should appear under 'p' as *(ri-)panga*, and *hama* 9 (kinsman) under 'k' as *N-kama*. But such a procedure would truly be confusing and it is probably better to list nouns of these classes under the initial letter of the whole word. As Benson says, referring to the corresponding case in Kikuyu, 'Every language has some element that will not conform to the general pattern.'²⁶

PERSPECTIVE

The aim which a compiler of a dictionary has in launching and delimiting his work will have very practical effects on the type of material selected, its arrangement and its tone. Malkiel lists two basic and complimentary perspectives, diachronic or the historical ordering of linguistic facts, and synchronic, the lexicon as it is today. As already stated the dictionary has a single historical and comparative strand in that Shona reflexes of Common Bantu stems are starred. For the rest the aim is to make a contemporary record, at the same time not showing an undue haste in the recognition of adoptives before they become current.

The aims of the compiler are very clearly stated in the Introduction. They are (1) to record Shona words in Standard Shona Spelling; (2) to provide, by a number of examples of the use of words in sentences and phrases, illustrations of the application of the principles of word-division on which Standard Spelling is based; (3) to provide as complete a list as possible, within the time and with the facilities available, of the words used both in speech and writing by those whose dialects are known as *chiKaranga*, *chiKorekore*, *chiManyika* and *chiZezuru*. These dialects or dialect clusters are what is known as Central Shona, and exclude both Eastern Shona or Ndaue as it is called in Rhodesia, and the Western Kalanga dialects. We think, in passing, that Ndaue could well have been included among the dialect clusters which contribute to the Dictionary, as it was originally intended, from the first recommendations on unification, that 'a Dictionary be prepared, to be as inclusive as possible of words from Zezuru, Karanga, Manyika and Ndaue.'²⁷ The reason given for including these dialects at that

²⁶ Benson, 'A century of Bantu lexicography', 83.

²⁷ Southern Rhodesia, *Report on the Unification of the Shona Dialects by Clement M. Doke* (Sessional Papers, C.S.R. 25, 1931), Recommendation 5, 81.

time was that the first essential of the dictionary was to recognize and incorporate as far as possible words from those dialects which had been used as literary media.

At this point it is desirable to document the stages in the production of the dictionary by referring to the two bodies which, along with Fr Hannan and his team, were responsible for its compilation. In May 1954 a committee of the Native Affairs Department of Southern Rhodesia, called the Interim Literature Committee, passed a resolution recommending that a standard Roman alphabet orthography be accepted for chiShona for all official purposes. This resolution was followed by another requesting the Government to appoint a committee to devise a method of writing the sounds of the Shona dialects with the letters of the Roman alphabet, with due regard to the system at present in use in the schools, and bearing in mind the problem of word-division and the need for urgency.²⁸ A representative committee, called the Shona Language Committee, was appointed, and, at meetings in July 1954 and February 1955, produced the required standard Roman alphabet to replace the Union Shona orthography approved in 1932 which, with its six non-Roman special symbols, had, in the twenty-three years of its use, failed to gain general acceptance and was holding up the production of Shona literature. At the latter meeting the Committee recommended

1. that a comprehensive Shona-English, English-Shona dictionary be prepared including (a) an introductory grammatical outline; (b) comprehensive vocabularies of the Shona dialects, excluding the western group; (c) tone-marking of dictionary entries only.
2. that the compilation of the dictionary be financed by the Government as a project of the African Publications Bureau.

A competent and elegant small dictionary had already been prepared by one of the members of the Language Committee which had devised and recommended the 1932 orthography.²⁹ It was necessary to replace this as soon as possible in order to standardize the 1955 system of spelling. No time was lost in commencing the work, the Publications Bureau commissioned the services of Fr Hannan as lexicographer, and by January 1956 the Secretary of the Shona Language Committee, which had set the guide-lines for the new dictionary, announced in a circular to all interested persons that work on the dictionary had commenced, and 'your assistance is requested

²⁸ Ministry of Internal Affairs, Salisbury, Minutes of the Third Meeting Interim Literature Committee, Native Affairs Department, 19 May 1954, Items 1 and 2.

²⁹ H. Barnes, C. R., *A Vocabulary of the Dialects of Mashonaland in the New Orthography* (London, The Sheldon Press, 1932).

so that this standard dictionary will contain every possible Shona word now in current use'.³⁰

At its meeting on Wednesday, 4 January 1956, the Shona Language Committee decided to omit ChiNdau from the dictionary.³¹ No reason is apparent in the minutes, but the fact that the new 1955 Standard Spelling was considerably less accommodating to local variations than the 1932 was probably responsible.³²

At the next meeting on 9 January 1957 the Committee expressed itself as very satisfied with the progress made and voted unanimously to extend the contract with Fr Hannan and his assistant, Mr E. Gumbo. The first printing by Macmillan was of 10 000 copies which sold at 10s.6d. per copy, and the date of publication was December 1959. The Shona Language Committee under the Chairmanship of the Revd S. K. Jackson continued to meet until the dictionary was published, helping with technical advice, until its last meeting as a Committee of the Department of Native Affairs on 5 July 1960. The chairman congratulated Fr Hannan and Mr Gumbo on their work and, by implication, the Southern Rhodesia African Literature Bureau which had been responsible for arranging both compilation and publication, and which continued to be responsible for distribution. A reprint of another 10,000 copies was authorized, and Fr Hannan was invited to prepare a revised edition incorporating words collected during the next few years. It was agreed that tone-marking should be included.

At this stage several changes took place. In 1963 the Shona Language Committee became a committee of the Ministry of Education. The Revd S. K. Jackson retired to devote himself to Bible Translation and to adapt the Bible of the 1955 orthography, while Fr Hannan was voted Chairman to take his place. He was now anxious that the compilation of the revised and fuller dictionary should be entrusted to an African graduate.³³ At the next meeting on 8 November 1965 he asked the committee whether there was any support for a Shona-Shona dictionary and an English-Shona dictionary with a Shona Index including tones. These could replace the present *Standard Shona Dictionary* when out of print. There had been some resistance to the present dictionary because it had been compiled by a European instead of an African. As there had been no success in inducing an African graduate to undertake the work, the Committee voted for the

³⁰ Ministry of Education, Salisbury, Circular Letter signed by J. C. Cheney, Secretary, Shona Language Committee, 16 Jan. 1956.

³¹ Ibid., Minutes of the Meeting held on Wednesday, 4 Jan. 1956, Item 5.

³² Compare the latitude allowed by Doke, *Report on the Unification of the Shona Dialects*, para. 158, 'Explanations and Examples in the New Orthography', with the rigidity adopted in the *Guide to Standard Shona Spelling* (Salisbury, Chishawasha Mission Press, 1955).

³³ Ministry of Education, Salisbury, Minutes of a Meeting of the Shona Language Committee held on 30 Nov. 1964.

revision of the *Standard Shona Dictionary* with the inclusion of tone-marking in such a way as would not add noticeably to the expense.³⁴

The revision and redrafting of the second edition began in earnest in 1967 and was to last until 1974 when the final pages of the manuscript were brought in to the publishers, the Rhodesia Literature Bureau, and the historic photograph of Fr Hannan and his team taken which appears on the dust cover. Seven years of unremitting work saw the work through, but it would have taken much longer had it not been done in close collaboration with the Bureau staff. It was the Bureau which paid the salaries of the team through its vote from the Rhodesian Government. The dictionary team and the editorial staff of the Bureau checked and re-checked each other's work. The manuscripts submitted to the Bureau, as well as its publications, provided thousands of new entries. When a halt was called to the compilation, the Publications Officer, Mr E. W. Krog, who was also Secretary to the Shona Language Committee, arranged for the publication of the dictionary by Mardon Printers as the Government was understandably reluctant to spend foreign currency on a project which could be produced within the country. The Bureau editors were called in again to collaborate with the proof reading. The 10,000 copies printed were lodged in the Bureau warehouse and the Publications Office initiated a publicity campaign to promote the sales. Owing to Bureau sponsorship and publication it was possible to retail the 1,000 page volume at the sub-economic price of Rh\$4.50. To date, of the 10,000 copies printed, over 7,000 have been sold, and urgent thought must be given already to producing a reprint. The whole project is a magnificent example of hard work, collaboration, sound business sense and local enterprise in support of the growth of written Shona. Those who have to publish in the divided dialects of the languages to the south of us, Nguni divided into Zulu, Xhosa and Swazi, and Sotho divided into Southern Sotho, Pedi and Tswana, look with envy on the achievement, incomplete and precarious as yet, of a standard written form, common to the no less heterogeneous dialects of Shona. The two figures who stand out prominently in this work of integration are those of Doke and Hannan. The work of the first lasted little more than a year. It has proved a solid and enduring foundation, a sound piece of phonetic analysis applied to the production of a common viable spelling and writing system. The work of the second, one could say, lasted forty years from the time that Michael Hannan began to prepare himself for work among the Shona people until his death in 1977. His *magnum opus scriptum*, his great written work, grew out of his *magnum opus factum*, the work he did for and among the Shona people. His knowledge of the Shona language and culture was put at the

³⁴ Ibid., Minutes of a Meeting of the Shona Language Committee held on 8 Nov. 1965, Item 3, Revised Edition of Dictionary.

service of what might seem a rather narrow aim, a record of words and sentences to illustrate the principles of Standard Shona. He disciplined it into the system of entries, alphabetically arranged and consistently structured, that we have, its limited orthographic prescriptive aim caught up in a scholarly and objective work. His combined knowledge and love of the language has filled this enterprise that it is mainly the third aim, abundantly fulfilled, that we are aware of, namely the provision of as complete a record of Shona speech as possible 'in the time and with the facilities at our disposal'.

PRESENTATION

In Malkiel's scheme for dictionary classification 'perspective' envisages the broad policies, while 'presentation' serves as a convenient term for subsuming narrower preferences such as typographic style, use of special symbols and abbreviations, latitude of definition, volume of verbal documentation, graphic illustration and many similar externals.²²

In presentation the *Standard Shona Dictionary* is a model of clarity and easy reference. Heads of entries are in bold lower case, and are followed by their tone patterns, distinguished, where necessary, according to dialect. The abbreviation indicating the linguistic category follows, and then the English equivalents. Shades of meaning of the same morpheme are distinguished and numbered in the same way as homophones which are distinct morphemes of quite unrelated meaning — a procedure which imports a certain imprecision from the semantic point of view. In each section of the entry synonyms are indicated with their dialectal incidence, and the result is a tightly built whole, drawn together by innumerable cross-references. Derivative forms are sometimes indicated according to section, as well as the forms from which the head of the entry is derived. After this, illustrative examples follow, but not in the majority of cases. Many of the examples are proverbs.

As has already been stated, the vast majority of entries in the *Dictionary* are of nouns, verb stems and ideophones. Of the remaining non-nominal substantives, adjective stems are treated like noun stems and listed with one or two representative prefixes. Enumerative, quantitative and selector stems are listed, however, as stems. The pronouns of each person and class are listed, and all the demonstratives in both simple and emphatic forms.

Noun stems, verb radicals and ideophones are the main root morphemes of the language. Each of the members of the different classes of affix morpheme, both inflecting and non-inflecting, are entered and illustrated as well, and the descriptive model of analysis is still, to a large extent, my

²² Malkiel, 'A typological classification of dictionaries', 5.

Analytical Grammar of Shona.³⁶ Since that work did not deal with the structure of units larger than words, the dictionary is deficient in the information it gives on such things as phrase-inflecting and clause-inflecting morphemes. Earlier in this review it was stated that the Introduction to the *Dictionary* should include a description of the main kinds of derivation. It should also include a description of the main structures larger than the word, namely phrases, inflected phrases and clauses, their structure and their potentiality for entering larger constructions as constituents. This background information is needed to describe and identify more adequately many of the affixes with extensive syntactic functions such as the inflecting morphemes of substantive phrases and verb phrases. It is hoped that a second edition of the *Analytical Grammar of Shona* will soon be published to provide the extended hierarchical treatment of Shona grammatical constructions on all levels from the word to the sentence, and, if it proves acceptable, provide the *Dictionary* with the architectonic dimensions needed to see each item in its own proper structural domain. For lack of these perspectives the identification of a number of items is faulty or fumbling, for example the description of the very different structures *nokuda* and *dzokono* as 'adv conj', namely adverbial conjunctives.

The linguistic structure is one architectonic principle which, duly digested, must order, inform and illustrate the identification and positioning of the morphemes of a language listed in a dictionary. Complementary to this a dictionary should also identify the items in terms of what Gleason calls the structure of content, that most intimate system of inter-related meanings and values which is at the heart of a culture.³⁷ It is with reference to bodying out this structure that I have suggested that the definitions of meaning might become more encyclopaedic and written from within the Shona world view.

PREVIOUS DICTIONARIES AND VOCABULARIES

Dictionaries are a cannibalistic species which usually incorporate and digest their predecessors. Hannan has acknowledged a number of the earlier dictionaries and vocabularies as a principal source of his first edition, and it will be of interest to conclude this review by listing them according to date of issue and dialect.

³⁶ G. Fortune, *An Analytical Grammar of Shona* (London, Longmans, Green, 1955).

³⁷ Gleason, *An Introduction to Descriptive Linguistics*, 3: 'The speaker comprehends what he is talking about in terms of an organising structure. This structure causes him to select certain features for description and determines the ways in which he will interrelate them. It also cuts the situation up into portions in a characteristic way. These selected features... form patterns which recur, and which are at least partially predictable. These recurrent patterns are the structure of content.'

The first vocabulary incorporating a list of Shona words was made by the pioneer Bantu comparativist, Bleek, in his *The Languages of Mosambique*.³⁸ The dialect represented was called Sofala, no doubt the modern Shangwe spoken along the coast between the Pungwe and Save rivers. The first vocabulary to deal with the languages of this country was Weale's *Matabele and Makalaka Vocabulary*.³⁹ The Shona dialect represented is Karanga, but the book shows signs of having been hastily put together and inconsistently spelt and proof-read. Weale writes with reference to the design of the book:

The idea in giving these two languages in the same book is to give the reader a chance of studying the one while merely glancing at the other, it would be a great mistake to attempt to learn the two at the same time, the Matabele will be found easier to learn than the Makalaka and in a great many cases far more useful.⁴⁰

The next to appear was the *English-Mashona Dictionary* by the Revd A. M. Hartmann, S.J., one of the chaplains of the Pioneer Column.⁴¹ Though so small in size and consisting of only about 1,000 entries, its illustrative examples are sometimes more ambitious than those of the *Standard Shona Dictionary* and they reflect the events of the time. The spelling adopted, an aspect in which both Weale and Hartmann were pioneers, was devised on the principle: vowels as in German, consonants as in English. Hartmann found difficulty in distinguishing between voiced and voiceless sounds and so the results, though quite intelligible, look strange today. For example the entry *Exterminate* v.a. *Kill, uraya petsa*. All the mice have been exterminated since the arrival of the white men in our country; we can no longer enjoy them, *magonzo osse akapetsgwa gubvira guzwiga gwawarungu munyika medu; atichagona guadshga*. In modern spelling this would read: *Makonzo ose akapedzwa kubvira kusvika kwavaRungu munyika medu; hatichagona kuadya*. Hartmann's Dictionary was preceded by his *Outline of a Grammar of the Mashona Language*.⁴² He called the form of Shona which he described the Gomo dialect, no doubt Zezuru as spoken among the Shawasha.

In 1897 W. A. Elliot published his *Dictionary of the Tebele and Shuna Languages*.⁴³ He had lived among the Ndebele for fourteen years as a member of the London Missionary Society before producing it, and it is a much more ambitious project than either of its predecessors and some

³⁸ W. H. I. Bleek, *The Languages of Mosambique* (London, Harrison, 1856).

³⁹ M. E. Weale (Late D Troop B.S.A.Cos. Police), *Matabele and Makalaka Vocabulary. Intended for the Use of Prospectors and Farmers in Mashonaland* (Cape Town, Murray and St Leger, 1903, 32pp).

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 32

⁴¹ Published in Cape Town, Juta, 1894, vi, 74pp.

⁴² Published in Cape Town, F. Y. St. Leger, 1893, 69pp.

⁴³ Published in London, David Nutt, 1897, xv, 440pp.

of its successors. It was divided into three vocabularies. The first listed English terms with 'Tebele' and 'Shuna' equivalents in parallel columns (pp. 1-179), about 6,000 entries. The second part consisted of the 'Teb.-Eng.' section (pp. 180-257), and the third the 'Shuna-English' (pp. 258-398). The vocabularies were preceded by a grammatical outline of the languages and followed by a series of phrases divided into sections dealing with Travel, Cattle, Work, Buying and the like, arranged in three columns. Elliot's work is noteworthy in that it was 'an attempt to present a written basis for the Shona language as a whole, from which the peculiarities of the different dialects may be observed'. His examples are drawn from Kalanga and Karanga, and his aim, to prepare a really satisfactory dictionary of the language of the Shona as a whole, was not to be taken up again until the work of Fr Hannan. As an example of the difficulty in making such a work complete, he quotes (p.vi) the amusing experience of a Dr Young who, after the publication of his *Analytical Concordance to the Bible*, involving thirty years labour, and 'striving in every way to avoid errors', told how a critic pointed out to him that the words 'Holy Ghost' had been omitted.

The next vocabulary to appear was compiled by Mrs H. E. Springer of Old Umtali entitled *A Hand-Book of Chikaranga*⁴⁴ in which pages 1-24 form a grammatical outline and the rest are divided into two vocabularies, English-Chikaranga (pp. 25-81), and Chikaranga-English (pp. 82-106). Though Mrs Springer's work was concerned largely with Manyika, she chose to call the language Chikaranga because she was sure it was the same language as had been spoken in the Makaranga kingdom described by the Portuguese, and because no term could be discovered among native speakers to apply to the language of the whole country. It is interesting to note that the Revd Fr F. Marconnes was, for similar reasons, to call his interesting grammar, published at the request of Doke in 1931, *A Grammar of Central Karanga*.⁴⁵ Mrs Springer tells us that the Revd John White of Salisbury allowed her to consult the vocabulary he had compiled, and that from it she extracted some 200 words known but seldom used in Manicaland. She looked forward to the publication of a common Bible to be used by speakers of all dialects as 'there is no more difference between the different dialects here than between the dialects of the different parts of the United States'.⁴⁶ With this in view she kept in mind the suitability of her Shona entries for Bible translation.

In 1906 the first edition of the work which was to be the main reference book in Zezuru for many years appeared, the *English-Chiswina Dictionary with an Outline Chiswina Grammar* by E. Beihler, S. J. It was divided into

⁴⁴ Published in Cincinnati, Jennings and Graham, 1905, 106pp.

⁴⁵ Published in Johannesburg, Witwatersrand Univ. Press, 1931.

⁴⁶ Springer, *A Hand-Book of Chikaranga*, 40.

a grammatical section with index (56 pages), an English-Chiswina Dictionary (pp. 57-263) and a Chiswina Vocabulary (pp.1-120), the latter being an Index to the Dictionary. An interleaved copy in the possession of the present reviewer states that the English-Chiswina section contains 4,500 words and the Chiswina-English 3,425 words. Subsequent and enlarged editions of this work were published in 1913 and 1927.⁴⁷ In the third edition the grammar received more attention and the work was entitled on the cover *Chiswina Grammar with English-Chiswina Dictionary and Chiswina-English Vocabulary*. However, the title page retained the wording of the first edition. Doubts about the suitability of the name of the language appear in the Preliminary Remarks where, after giving the names and distribution of local dialects, the compiler adds, 'The Native Department of S. Rhodesia is of opinion that the use of the term "Chiswina" should be officially discouraged, and the term "Chishona" substituted for it.' Accordingly the second part of the dictionary in both the second and the third editions is headed 'Mashona or Chiswina Vocabulary'. In a fourth edition which appeared in 1950⁴⁸ the obnoxious term 'Swina' is dropped completely, and the term 'Shona' is substituted throughout. This edition was printed to provide a work of reference in the absence of any other at that time. It was printed in the original pre-1931 spelling as there were doubts whether the 1931 New Orthography would come into general use. Indeed, one of the reasons why the 1931 orthography did not come into general use may have been the popularity of 'Beihler' among members of the Native Affairs Department, later the Department of Internal Affairs.

After Beihler's first edition the next dictionary to appear was *A Dictionary with Notes of the Grammar of the Mashona Language commonly called Chiswina*.⁴⁹ Pages i-xliv were devoted to a grammatical outline, pp. 45-134 to the English-Chiswina Dictionary, and pp. 135-206 to the Chiswina-English Dictionary. No author's name is mentioned but it is known that the book was the work of Fr H. Buck and compiled at St Augustine's Mission, Penhalonga. The language treated is Manyika.

⁴⁷ Published in Roermond, J. J. Romen and Sons, 1906, 263, 120 pp. The second in Holland, while the third, with additions by the Revd Fr J. Seed, S.J., was printed in Natal by the Marianhill Mission Press. The publishers of all three editions were the Jesuit Fathers, Chishawasha.

⁴⁸ The title on the cover reads *Beihler's Shona Dictionary*. The title page reads *A Shona Dictionary with an Outline Shona Grammar Originally Compiled by the Revd E. Beihler, S.J.* (Chishawasha, The Jesuit Fathers; and Cape Town, Longmans, Green, 1950, xii, 337pp.).

⁴⁹ Published in London, S.P.C.K., 1911, xlv, 206pp.

The first vocabulary of Ndaue appeared in 1951 entitled *Chindau-English and English-Chindau Vocabulary*. Published by the Rhodesian Branch of the American Board Mission, it appeared anonymously like Fr Buck's dictionary. It was, in the main, the work of the Revd G. A. Wilder who had begun to make a collection of Ndaue words as far back as 1888. However, as the Mission among the Ndaue employed Zulu almost exclusively for its work at the beginning, not much attention had been paid to Ndaue, and that is the reason given for the relatively late appearance of the book. It contains about 4,000 Ndaue entries. Unlike the earlier works the section listing the Shona entries is placed first.

The same year Mrs C. S. Louw published her *Manual of the Chikaranga Language*,⁵⁰ arranged in four parts: Grammar (pp. 3-104); Key to the Exercises (pp. 105-28); Useful Conversational Sentences (pp. 129-44); and Vocabulary in two sections, English-Chikaranga (pp. 149-290) and Chikaranga-English (pp. 291-397). The Karanga vocabulary contains over 8,000 words. The purpose of the *Manual* was

to provide for the European student a gradual introduction to the grammar of this important branch of the group of African Native languages known as the Bantu family . . . The Vocabulary of Part IV does not claim to be either an exhaustive or correct *dictionary*. Such words have been included as could be collected from the natives, and meanings assigned them, which, it is hoped, will be found to be generally correct.

The compiler appeals for criticisms and additions and asks others to 'co-operate by suggestion and advice towards the issue in the future of a correct and complete Dictionary of the Chikaranga language'.⁵¹

At this point in time, with small dictionaries and vocabularies produced in four of the Shona dialects in which missionary work had been undertaken, new compilations cease. Doke says that a little *English-Chikaranga Dictionary* was produced in 1926, being some 50 pages of excerpts from Mrs Louw's larger book.⁵² And we have seen that an edition of Beihler's Dictionary with the addition of some 800 entries appeared in 1927. The perspective of all these works, to use Ma'kiel's term, had been to assist foreigners to speak local forms of Shona. Almost all of them had been compiled by missionaries, and words had been gathered during the labour of translation of the Bible and other religious and educational material into the different dialects in which the several missionary societies worked. Each dictionary had its own peculiar form of spelling as indeed had each version of the Scriptures.

⁵⁰ Published in Bulawayo, Philpott and Collins, 1915.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, v-vii.

⁵² C. M. Doke, *Bantu : Modern Grammatical, Phonetical and Lexicographical Studies since 1860* (London, International African Institute, 1945), 98.

The desire for a common version of the Bible and, by implication, a common reading and writing system for Shona as a whole, had been voiced at missionary conferences as early as 1906. However, this desire was not to become effective until 1928 when the Southern Rhodesian Government decided to support the use of African languages during the early years of education, and urged the missionary societies to 'put their heads together to get a common language suitable to the needs of the different Mashona tribes, so that larger and less expensive editions of higher class text-books be printed'.⁵³

The result of the collaboration between the missions and Government was, of course, the introduction of the New Unified Orthography for schools in 1932, and of Standard Shona for the country generally in 1955. The book which exemplified the Unified Orthography was the last to appear in this series of dictionaries and vocabularies before the *Standard Shona Dictionary* of 1959 and was entitled *A Vocabulary of the Dialects of Mashonaland in the New Orthography* by the Revd Bertram H. Barnes, C.R.⁵⁴ Fr Barnes had expressed his idea of the dictionary that would be needed to serve the Shona language in an article for 1928 entitled 'A campaign against Babel. The unification of the dialects of Mashonaland'. His words are worth quoting since they express an ideal which was only partly realized in his own work, but has been more fully realized in the dictionaries compiled by Fr Hannan and his colleagues.

This divergence of vocabulary [between the dialects] then, being less serious than has been thought, it seems that the solution may not be the selection of any one dialect to the exclusion of others, but the inclusion of all.

How can it be done? Let us have a dictionary which shall include all the vocabularies in one alphabetical order, printed in the common orthography... The various dialectal areas will all be able to use the dictionary, for their own words will be in it, and at the same time they will be getting familiar with the words found in other dialects. Books for use in school will use the common orthography, and will draw their words from the dictionary, the common pool. Here in Manyikaland we shall, of course, prefer Manyika words, but we shall not be limited to them and we shall find other words in the dictionary. We shall gradually learn some of these other words, and may find it useful to use them as alternatives. We shall take up a book printed for another area, and it will not repel us at once by its unfamiliarity, because it will be printed in the common orthography. We shall be able to read it straight

⁵³ From a paper by the Colonial Secretary of the Southern Rhodesian Government, W. M. Leggate, on Native Education, to the Rhodesia Scientific Association, quoted in C. S. Louw, 'The value of the vernacular in missions', *Proceedings of the Southern Rhodesia Missionary Conference* . . . 1928 (Salisbury, [The Conference, 1928]), 51.

⁵⁴ Published in London, The Sheldon Press, 1932, x, 214pp.

off, very likely reading it with a Manyika accent, but anyway actually reading it. We shall find strange words, but they will not remain strange, for we can look them up in our common dictionary and find out what they stand for in our own dialect.

In a generation or two we shall have advanced perceptibly towards a common language, not by the road of conquest, but by the better road of peaceful interpenetration. Is it not true that we English of all parts of the English-speaking world have been brought to share a common speech very largely by the unifying influence of the dictionary? The Bible and Shakespeare have done much, but it may be argued that Dr. Johnson has done even more.⁵⁵

In the work of both Fr Barnes and Fr Hannan, Shona lexicography entered a new phase. It was no longer a tool for the foreigner to learn a second language, or rather, a dialect of a second language. It became a record of the Shona lexicon for its own sake, and as an aid towards a common literature.⁵⁶

⁵⁵ NADA (1928), VI, 50.

⁵⁶ Other dictionaries with specialist aims have appeared and are listed here to complete the record:

H. Wild, *A Southern Rhodesian Botanical Dictionary of Native and English Plant Names* (Salisbury, Government Printer, [1953]), and *A Rhodesian Botanical Dictionary of African and English Plant Names*, revised and enlarged by H. M. Biegel and S. Mavi (Salisbury, Government Printer, 2nd edit., 1972, xii, 281pp.).

L. H. DeWolf and C. Mazobere, *Theological Dictionary* (Salisbury, Epworth Theological College, mimeo 1963, 49pp.).

I. M. Scovill and S. Nehumayi, *Pocket Shona Dictionary* (Old Umtali, Rhodesia Mission Press, 1965, 102 pp., tone-marked).

D. Dale, S.J., *A Basic English-Shona Dictionary* (Gwelo, Mambo Press in association with Rhodesia Literature Bureau, 1975, xii, 212pp., illustrated).