

MULTILINGUAL ASTRONAUTICAL TERMINOLOGY SYMPOSIUM (E8)
Multilingual Astronautical Terminology (1)

Author: Mr. Meshack Ndiritu

Regional Center for Mapping of Resources for Development, Ethiopia, meshackkinyuan@gmail.com

DOMESTIC ACTIVITY IN SWAHILI TRANSLATION ON THE SPACE-RELATED TERMINOLOGY

Abstract

This paper explores the domestic activity in Swahili translation on the space-related terminology. The Multilingual Space Dictionary Study Group is an initiative of the International Academy of Astronautics (IAA). The dictionary has about 3,000 technical terms covering various fields of space science, Astronautics, Technology, Law, medicine, Mathematics, etc. The translation of these terms to various languages enables the communities and the world to have easy understanding of the technical terms. So far, this Dictionary has been translated to over 20 languages all over the world. Swahili is a local African language used in the following countries: Kenya, Tanzania, Zanzibar, Uganda, Democratic Republic of Congo, Zambia, Mozambique, Malawi, Rwanda and Burundi, Somalia, and the Comoros Islands. In Malawi, Mozambique, and Zambia; the language is used by some small communities. All these countries make up to over 150 million population (About 15.1% of Africa's population). Many educational institutions use Swahili as a lecture language. Space science and technology is a potential area that is rapidly picking up in Africa and some countries have already established their own space agencies. Such countries are also building human capacity in the engineering, managerial and technical fields to enable them handle the space industry endogenously. Kenya is among the potential space fairing nations, and it has an Equatorial satellite launching and tracking station in Malindi called San Macro which is operated by the Italian Government. The translation of the space dictionary to Swahili was a great initiative that would enable local authorities and communities understand and embrace the technology. Publication of this dictionary would also enable free access to such people and hence it is a great asset in developing human capacity in space science and technology. I would encourage IAA to continue supporting publication of this dictionary to more languages, especially those languages used in the developing world (including Swahili), since this would create awareness of space technology in the community level