

Social Development

Dar es Salaam and legends of its all-round superiority



By Shimbo Pastory

In Tanzania, for a good number of years, coming from Dar es Salaam, visiting, working, or having anything at all to do with Dar es Salaam has been taken as a thing of pride. For many Tanzanians, Dar es Salaam has been an icon of city civilisation as regards civility of speech, lifestyles, modernity, and progressiveness. Out there, Dar es Salaam is more or less like a hide-out of the affluent. While it is true that Dar es Salaam is way ahead of a number of other regions in the country in terms of growth, development and progress, there are concerns over its ascendancy.

At school, I happened to find myself in a discussion with boys from Dar, and they were comparing Mlimani City mall to the then-new Mbeya shopping complex. When it came to me giving a comparative opinion, I remember taking at least 10 minutes to com-

pare the Mbeya shopping complex with the Mlimani City mall, which I had then never seen. Eloquence won me an honour that day because most of the listeners did not know the two places anyway. At least I knew one, though I lied about the other.

Averagely in the regions (as we have been accustomed to saying) people from cities are revered higher than others, sometimes even not on the basis of merit or measured performance. Even children who have really not known anything special in the cities are taken as more knowledgeable than their peers in the non-city regions.

The social, technological, financial, and economic systems in the city are taken to be comparably more effective than those outside big cities. The same applies to social services. As such best hospitals, schools, and business hubs are traditionally established in cities; and in our case in Dar es Salaam and other cities. Though this is a trend of the age, which I believe is gradually dying a natural death.

A popular news media with wide national coverage reported last week of how awful it was for a school in Dar es Salaam to have students sitting on the floor while learning. That complaint is genuine and positive. The media statement then made an ambiguous comparison: "If the situation is like this in Dar es Salaam, how much worse will it be in the regions (in Swahili - 'mikoani')?" I found this



Today one does not necessarily need to be in Dar es Salaam to have their talents seen and yielded. PHOTO | FILE

particularly intriguing and worth questioning, as it leans towards being a biased opinion. The fact that Dar es Salaam is doing well in many areas does not mean it is ipso facto the national standard of progress in delivering social welfare services to the citizens.

So many regional jurisdictions have proved to be outstanding in different areas based on the resources available as well as the policies and priorities they set for themselves. For example, Moshi Municipality has for years been in the lead as the cleanest municipality in the country. Dar es Salaam which is a city has been for years on the struggle with slum areas, disease outbreaks, waste management, and poorly planned settle-

ments in areas prone to flooding.

In terms of education, Dar es Salaam has not gone near the top of the list in terms of aggregated performance in Primary education, form two, form four, and form six national examinations for a good number of years now. In the recently released form two examinations results of last year, a school in Dar es Salaam recorded 229 division zeros, with 0 division One, 5 division two, and 9 division 3. This, among others, can never pass for good performance anywhere in the country.

It is high time we go beyond the profiles of the places we live and recognise the good for what it really is as well as condemn the bad with a similar yardstick. Facili-

ties and services in the cities are not automatically the best reflections of the ideal and the standard. This bias has encroached so deeply, especially in young people, that some even feel ashamed to tell others where they come from because they think appearing to come from the city is the best and more respectable thing.

There are good schools outside Dar es Salaam, including public primary and secondary schools. It is a failure on the part of the regional education office and the regional management to have students sitting on the floor, regardless of where it happens. It is thus wrong to make deplorable situations in Dar es Salaam reflections of expected standards in other regions.

There are as well good higher learning institutions, business, investment, and work opportunities, outside the metropolitan Dar es Salaam. While it would have been different in the past, today one does not necessarily need to be in Dar es Salaam to have their talents seen and yielded. All regions in the country have their strengths and weaknesses, and knowledge of these is helpful in guiding young people who are planning to settle and plan their lives properly.

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FRENCH CLASS

Let's talk about the past!

already

Passé composé cannot be used for past emotions.

I specify that the passé composé is used for near past, because another tense (l'imparfait) is used for actions that are further in the past. This is comparable to the way we differentiate between 'nime' and 'nili' in Swahili. For example,

'J'ai mangé de la mangue' would be equivalent to 'Nimekula embe'.

Having said that, the Swahili analogy is not precise as the use of 'Nili' and all its variations isn't identical to the 'imparfait' tense, but we'll get more into that another time!

Indeed, even 'nime' and its variations aren't identical to all the uses of the 'passé composé' tense, but anywhere you would use 'nime', you would also be able to use passé composé.

The passé composé is made using this three part formula
Pronoun + avoir/être conjugated + past participle

Il est parti – He left / He has left
Let's break this down into each of the three parts.

Part 1 – Pronoun: IL

This would include the nine personal pronouns we've covered in all our lessons, from je through to ils. This also includes names of people, places or objects, and you would need to assess which of the nine standard personal pronouns that person/thing goes under.

Part 2 – Avoir/Être conjugated: Est

In order to conjugate a verb in the passé composé you will already need to know how to conjugate both 'to have' and 'to be' in the present tense as this is part of the passé composé composition. The conjugations are below if you need the reminder.

| Avoir | Être |
|-------------|----------|
| J' / Je ai | suis |
| Tu as | es |
| Il/ Elle/On | a est |
| Nous avons | sommes |
| Vous avez | êtes |
| Ils/ Elles | ont sont |

Some verbs conjugated in the passé composé use avoir whilst some use être, and for the most part (like many things in French :)) it's random and will require some extent of cramming. Looking for an

acronym to help you remember? Well one common one used to determine some of the more common verbs that use être – is DR/MRS VANDERTRAMP:

Devenir – to become
Revenir – to come back
Monter – to climb
Rester – to stay
Sortir – to go out
Venir – to come
Aller – to go
Naître – to be born
Descendre – to go down
Entrer – to enter
Retourner – to return / go back
Tomber – to fall
Rentrer – to return / re-enter
Arriver – to arrive
Mourir – to die
Partir – to leave

Although these are some of the most common verbs that require the use of the verb être, it is not complete as there are some verbs not included on this list.

Part 3 – Past participle: PARTI

A past participle is essentially a past form of a verb, but it's not a tense; for example, the past participle of learn is learned, of eat is ate and of sleep is slept.

So the past participle of 'apprendre' (to learn), 'manger' (to eat) and 'dormir' (to sleep) is 'appris', 'mangé' and 'dormi' respectively.

In the example above I used one verb from each group (see the lesson on present tense conjugations). I did this because frequently, we see a pattern with past participles and the verbs group placement. In particular:

(i) ER ending verbs will swap to an é in their past participle form.

(ii) IR ending verbs will remove the r to remain with the l alone at the end.

(iii) RE verbs vary, sometimes they adopt an 'is' at the end (ie; apprendre), but sometimes it swaps the 're' for a 'u' (e.g. attendre, meaning to wait, which becomes 'attendu').

In fact, sometimes they're completely irregular. Take 'prendre' for example which means 'to take'. This doesn't become prendis or rendu – it becomes pris. So to be honest, it's probably easier to just cram the participles because trying to learn patterns is likely to make it even harder!

Have a good look over this lesson, as in next week's article we will be putting it into practice!

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By Misuka Tarimo

Bonjour! In this article we will be having a look at one of the most important tenses when speaking French which is the Passé Composé (directly translated to, 'the composed past').

The passé composé is a past tense used

(i) when what you've done wasn't very long ago, or (ii) for completed actions that were done in an instant.

Examples of (i) could be as follows:

Ce matin, j'ai mangé une pomme – This morning, I ate an apple
Je suis déjà sorti – I've gone out