

# Indigenous Languages Matter for Development, Peace Building, and Reconciliation



**Proceedings of the  
International Mother Language Day (IMLD) Conference  
19<sup>th</sup> -21<sup>st</sup> February 2020  
Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology, Kakamega, Kenya**

**Editors:**

David Barasa  
Lucy Mandillah  
Rose Auma  
Benard Mudogo

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## Table of Contents

<b>Foreword</b> .....	<b>6</b>
<b>Mother language in its real element: The capacities of indigenous languages in national development</b> .....	<b>7</b>
<i>Felicia Arudo Yieke</i> .....	7
<b>The Literary Negation of Coercive Social Power and the Sanitization of Igbo mores in Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie’s Purple Hibiscus</b> .....	<b>19</b>
<i>1Joseph Nderitu Murage, 2Justus Kizito Siboe Makokha</i> .....	19
<b>Language Maintenance and its Role in Expanding Language Domains in Kenya with Special Reference to Kimeru</b> .....	<b>30</b>
<i>John Kirimi M’Raiji</i> .....	30
<b>Tense Marking in Lubukusu</b> .....	<b>44</b>
<i>Aggrey Wafula Watulo</i> .....	44
<b>Manifestation of Mother Tongue in Intonation of English: Evidence from Lubukusu</b> .....	<b>55</b>
<i>Billian Khalayi Otundo</i> .....	55
<b>Mother Language as Repository of Culture and Identity: A Case of Classic Kiswahili Poetry</b> .....	<b>78</b>
<i>Amiri Swaleh</i> .....	78
<b>Are the Batura a Bukusu clan? A Linguistic Indexing of the Batura Identity</b> .....	<b>95</b>
<i>1Sarah Nakhone, 2Evelyne Kitembe</i> .....	95
<b>Indigenous Language as a tool for Lifelong Learning for Sustainable Development in Africa</b> .....	<b>108</b>
<i>Beth Njeri Ngugi</i> .....	108
<b>Rethinking a Workable Language-in-Education Planning Model in Kenya</b> .....	<b>122</b>
<i>Robinson Oduma</i> .....	122
<b>A Historical Analysis of the Mother Language Crisis in Urban Primary Schools in Uganda 1903-2007: A Review Paper</b> .....	<b>134</b>
<i>Priscilla Asiimire</i> .....	134
<b>Phonological and Lexical Variation in Logooli, Lutirichi and Lumundu</b> .....	<b>141</b>
<i>1Kaluhi Everlyn Masolia, 2David Barasa</i> .....	141
<b>The Role of Women in Development in the Agikuyu Proverbs</b> .....	<b>158</b>
<i>1Arthur K. Muhia, 2Simiyu Kisurulia</i> .....	158
<b>An Assessment of the Role of Vernacular Radio Stations in Conservation of Culture in Kenya. A Case of “Ohigla” Program on Ramogi FM in Kisumu County, Kenya</b> .....	<b>165</b>
<i>1Joseph Ouma Muga Othoth, 2Peres Wenje</i> .....	165

<b>The Importance of Learning Materials in Mother Tongue Education in the Kenyan Competency Based Curriculum..</b>	<b>179</b>
<i>Joyce Imali Wangia.....</i>	<i>179</i>
<b>The Language of Environmental Conservation and Destruction: Examples from the Kisii and Tachoni Folklore.....</b>	<b>191</b>
<i>1Simiyu Kisurulia, 2Lena Nyandwaro .....</i>	<i>191</i>
<b>Vowel Harmony in English Borrowed Words in Ng’aturukana .....</b>	<b>201</b>
<i>1Tioko Celestine Nkieny, 2Henry Simiyu Nandelenga, 3Joshua Mulinge Itumo.....</i>	<i>201</i>
<b>Morpho-Phonemic Processes in Lukabarasi Lexical Borrowing from Nandi: A Case of Chepsaita Scheme.....</b>	<b>212</b>
<i>1James Matseshe, 2 Reginald Atichi Alati.....</i>	<i>212</i>
<b>Masimulizi Katika Mchakato wa Kufundisha Kipengele cha Wahusika Katika Riwaya za Kidagaa Kimemwozea na ile ya Choji la Heri.....</b>	<b>219</b>
<i>Stephen Muyundo Ndinyo.....</i>	<i>219</i>
<b>Social Media and Mother Tongue: An analysis of the use of Dholuo in Facebook.....</b>	<b>237</b>
<i>Kashara Juma Erick .....</i>	<i>237</i>
<b>Mother Language in the Early Years Education in Kenya: The Place and Role of Folklore .....</b>	<b>254</b>
<i>1Boswell Owuor, 2Carolyn Omulando.....</i>	<i>254</i>
<b>Non-Equivalence and the Translatability of English Medical Discourse into Lukabarasi.....</b>	<b>277</b>
<i>Benard Mudogo.....</i>	<i>277</i>
<b>Teaching Mother Tongues in Kenya: The Role of Teacher Training .....</b>	<b>287</b>
<i>1Jacktone O. Onyango, 2Ireri Mbaabu .....</i>	<i>287</i>
<b>Challenges faced by Teachers of English while teaching oral skills in Public Primary Schools.....</b>	<b>294</b>
<i>Vivian Afandi .....</i>	<i>294</i>
<b>Towards Afrocentricism in Africa: Is Afro – Language an Antidote to Africans’ Double - Consciousness? .....</b>	<b>311</b>
<i>Jeremiah Mutuku Muneeni .....</i>	<i>311</i>
<i>1Stella Wangari Muriungi, 2Benard Angatia Mudogo.....</i>	<i>320</i>
<b>Constitutionalism and Mother Tongue: The Contradictions in the Kenyan Justice System.....</b>	<b>332</b>
<i>Henry Simiyu Nandelenga .....</i>	<i>332</i>
<b>Niche Markets for the Mother Language Enterprise: An Insight to the Production and Distribution of Linguistic Resources in Kenya .....</b>	<b>350</b>
<i>Jayne MutigaJ.....</i>	<i>350</i>
<b>The Relationship between English Word Stress Perception and Production among Lwidakho speaking Form Three Secondary School Students.....</b>	<b>360</b>
<i>1Achesa Rodgers, 2Lucy Mandillah, 3David Barasa.....</i>	<i>360</i>

<b>A Discourse Construction of Gender in Selected Lubukusu Initiation Songs .....</b>	<b>365</b>
<i>1Pamellah N. Wanjala, 2Reginald Atichi Alati .....</i>	<i>365</i>
<b>Kiswahili: From National to Motherlanguage, A Kenyan Perspective.....</b>	<b>379</b>
<i>Miruka Frida Akinyi .....</i>	<i>379</i>
<b>Animals are Ethnic Groups: A Metaphorical and Metonymicals Study of Ethnicity in Kenya.....</b>	<b>386</b>
<i>Solomon Onchoke Aunga .....</i>	<i>386</i>
<b>Mother Tongue, Identity and Culture .....</b>	<b>406</b>
<i>Kiama Muthumbi.....</i>	<i>406</i>
<b>African Indigenous Languages and Culture for Peace and Sustainable Development through Education.....</b>	<b>412</b>
<i>Lucy Mandillah .....</i>	<i>412</i>
<b>The role of Indigenous Econaming System in Mitigating Exploitation of Wildlife Species and Habitat Loss: A case of Lubukusu and Lukabarasi languages in Western Kenya .....</b>	<b>419</b>
<i>1Makarios Wanjala Wakoko, 2Benard Angatia Mudogo .....</i>	<i>419</i>
<b>Nafasi ya Lugha ya Mama/Kwanza (L1) katika Mtaala wa Umilisi katika Shule za Chekechea nchini Kenya.....</b>	<b>429</b>
<i>Shadrack Opunde .....</i>	<i>429</i>

## Foreword

The International Mother Language Day is celebrated worldwide on February 21<sup>st</sup> every year. The day is intended to create awareness on the importance of the mother language in the preservation of our cultural identity, promotion of cultural diversity and literature. The Directorate of Research and Postgraduate Support and the Department of Language and Literature Education of Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology (MMUST), in collaboration with the Kenya National Commission for UNESCO, Ministry of Sports, Culture and Heritage, County Government of Kakamega, Longhorn Language Services and Bible Translation & Literacy E. A. organized a three-day conference in order to commemorate this important day. The event took place from the 19<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup> of February 2020, at the main campus in Kakamega Town. The theme of the conference was “*Indigenous Languages Matter for Development, Peace-building and Reconciliation*”.

This publication comprises of more than 30 papers, which are contributions from renowned scholars, publishers and stakeholders in the field of Language, Linguistics, Literature, Communication, and Political science among others, who participated in the conference. The speakers were drawn from various countries around the world. The papers focus on the following six sub-themes of the Conference: Language maintenance; language technology and communication; sociology of language; language, education, gender and politics; language and literature; mother language and sustainable development. The papers have been evaluated to guarantee scientific quality and content of the presentations by the chairpersons of the various sessions. All accepted contributions are presented in this publication. The organizers recognize the tremendous contribution made by the participants and our open access peer reviewed proceedings are intended for a wider distribution of knowledge.

We sincerely thank all the authors without whose efforts this publication would not have been realized. We equally thank the scientific committee members and the secretariat for their tireless efforts, sacrifice and the excellent work done in coming up with the publication. We also acknowledge the support of our partners and sponsors. We invite you to exciting and fruitful read.

*Dr. Rose Auma*  
*Chairperson, Department of Language and Literature Education*  
*Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology*

Felicia Arudo Yieke  
Laikipia University

### **Abstract**

What is a mother language? Why not a father language? Is mother language the same as mother tongue? What about an indigenous language? Or even a vernacular? What about a First language or L1? What is the layman's perspective on a mother language? What about the sociolinguistic perspective? What is the UNESCO take on mother language? What is National Development? How do we relate indigenous languages to national development? This paper interrogates all these questions and further looks at language policy in Kenya and the place of mother language in diverse fields as well as the issues and challenges involved due to such diversity. We conclude by discussing the future of mother language in Kenya.

**Keywords:** Attitudes, diversity, identity, language policy, national development

### **Introduction**

From the sociolinguistic perspective, the term 'vernacular' generally refers to a language which has not been codified or standardized and which does not have official status and is the most closely associated with locally-based communities. This is already a biased view of vernacular since it is already subordinated to an 'official' standard language in a globalized society. In a multilingual speech community, the many different ethnic or 'tribal' languages used by different groups are referred to as vernacular languages. Vernaculars are usually the first language learned by people in multilingual communities and they are often used for a relatively narrow range of informal functions (circumscribed). Again, the fact that it is used in relatively narrow range of functions already denigrates the whole idea of a vernacular which gives it further stigma. In the sense that it is acquired as a first language, then it means that it must have been acquired at home as a first variety. Appraising vernacular positively, we would see a vernacular as a language that gives the speaker a sense of belonging and a positive identity with the self.

More positively still, the term 'vernacular' is sometimes used to indicate that a language is used for everyday interaction, without implying that it is appropriate only in informal domains. For instance, in the process of 'vernacularisation' of Hebrew, its functions were extended from exclusively formal functions to include ordinary informal: from being a language of ritual, Hebrew thus became a language of everyday communication; a vernacular language. In this sense, any language which has value to its speakers will be considered a vernacular. This is a very broad definition which contrasts with standardized languages which are used for more formal functions.

From our descriptions so far, vernacular could thus also refer to a mother tongue or mother language which refers to a child's first language; the language learned in the home from older family members. Mother tongue instruction thus generally refers to the use of the learners' mother tongue as the medium of instruction. Additionally, it can refer to the mother tongue as a subject of instruction (UNESCO, 2003: 13). It is considered to be an important component of

quality education, particularly in the early years. UNESCO (1953) emphasized the importance of educating children in their mother tongue and remark that an education that is packaged in a language which the child does not understand is simply difficult for the child. Children are found to learn better when they start off education in mother tongue then transit smoothly to a second language. Some scholars have questioned the fact that if we talk of mother tongue, then why can we not also talk of father tongue? This would however be a discussion for another day on a topic on Gender and Language education.

Some scholars would still talk of indigenous languages as those languages spoken uniquely by an indigenous community and/or with origins in a given community or country (Spolsky, 2002). Given the nature of language change, however, many 'indigenous' languages may thus not actually meet this definition. Some scholars would be more general and talk of a local language which refers to the language spoken in the homes and marketplaces of a community, as distinguished from a regional, national or international language.

In view of all these different strands but with a lot of similarities, I beg to use the terms interchangeably unless otherwise advised. With this rich resource of a mother language within the reach of many people in the country, we would then ask how we would use our languages for national development. National development in our working definition here refers to the ability of a nation to improve the lives of its citizens politically, socially and economically by providing amenities like quality education, potable water, transportation infrastructure, healthcare, etc. It is expected that such development would spur growth and change in both quantitative and qualitative ways and transform the lives of individuals in a country.

### **Language Policy in Kenya and the Place of Mother Tongue in Diverse Fields**

Nabea (2009) argues that the colonial language policy in Kenya impacted greatly on post-colonial language policy;

'[T]he colonial language policy was always inchoate and vacillating such that there were occasions that measures were put in place to promote or deter its learning. However, such denial inadvertently provided a stimulus for Kenyans to learn English considering that they had already taken cognizant of the fact that it was the launching pad for white collar jobs (Nabea, 2009: 122).

Indeed language policy in Africa goes back to the colonial times and scholars and theorists like Chinua Achebe (1973, 1994, 2006), Ngugi Wa Thiong'o (1986, 1993, 1994), Frantz Fanon (1952, 1963), among others have written extensively about the colonial agenda of stripping African peoples of their languages, cultures and identities that was characteristic of not just the colonial era, but the present day as well. Even though we may not be colonial nations any more, the effects of colonialism can still be felt in the ways former colonized societies view themselves and their languages (Wa Thiong'o, 1986) and in most cases, this view of themselves is condescending. How did we come to this? Was it the colonial agenda that in linguistic imperialism (Phillipson, 1992), there would be domination of the English language at the expense of all the other multitude of all the other African languages in contexts where English was establishing itself?

Phillipson (1992: 47) defines English linguistic imperialism as when 'the dominance of English is asserted and maintained by the establishment and continuous reconstitution of structural and cultural inequalities between English and other languages'. He observes that while the British are heavily implicated in the domination of English in former British colonies, America has also joined forces with the British Council in an effort to make English a 'world language' (Phillipson, 1992: 133) and legitimize this endeavour as being in the best interest of both the national and international community in a globalised world. Achebe (2006) apportioned the blame on why African languages are experiencing threats by English as not to imperialism but the fact that Africa is experiencing increasing linguistic plurality as a result of internal migrations that have seen communities and ethnicities mix to the extent that using African languages in schools and other such spaces becomes quite challenging.

It is due to the issues of language, ethnicities and identity that Wa Thiong'o in his writings (1986) would go on to privilege African languages and identities while relegating English and western identities as colonial, whereas writers like Achebe (1994) would support the hybridity of African languages and English. Achebe's position values English for its ability to make communication possible among people from different ethnic backgrounds, while also valuing African languages (Achebe, 2006). He acknowledges that English came to Africa as part of a package that included the evils of colonialism, but argues that this is not justification to reject a language that serves an important role in African literature, and Africa in general (Achebe, 1973). He further argues that it is however important for an African writer to maintain the voice of his own Africanness and his own experiences, since the aim in using English should not be to use it like a native speaker, but to make it serve one's particular voice and culture (Achebe, 1994). In this situation, we see English as an instrument and not really one to express one's cultural identity, although again, an individual can portray multiple identities depending on what they want to do with them.

Wa Thiong'o's position on the language debate is that Africans, including African writers and intellectuals, should not only speak but also write in their African languages. He rejects the notion that English makes it easier to reach a wider audience and instead argues that English rose to such a global status by means of oppression and colonization of other nations. African languages, such as Kiswahili, should be credible candidates for global language status as well (Wa Thiong'o, 1993). Here again is a catch, especially in a scenario where the English language is totally rejected: Excellence in English in Kenya has always been highly celebrated since it is considered the language of upward mobility and in the education system, all examinations are in English, except for Swahili language examinations. What this means is that if one is weak in the English language, one is eliminated in the process thus unable to progress to the next level of education.

It is due to the scenario just described that many parents in Kenya try to minimize the use of mother language by their children in the home background and try to ensure that English is used in all settings so as to improve it (see Campbell & Walsh, 2010; Jones & Barkhuizen, 2011). And even though many families may recognize the importance of local languages for their children's cultural and ethnic identity constructions, they consider mastery of the English language a higher priority because it would afford their children better chances of upward mobility in a more globalized world. Tembe and Norton (2008), Jones and Barkhuizen (2011),

Campbell and Walsh 2010, and Kitoko-Nsiku (2007) observe that many parents in post-colonial African nations believe that it is important that their children become as good in English as possible, even if that means sacrificing, or relegating their African languages to a secondary position, in order to achieve that end. Mastery in the English language, they believe, will propel their children upwards in education and consequently give them better chances in the job market arena. This is a tension that is very difficult to handle. Campbell and Walsh (2010) observed that 'elite' parents are increasingly pushing for the English language even at home. In this scenario, they noted that while the children spoke English with their parents, they used *Sheng*, Kiswahili and mother languages with their friends. This may create collateral damage for both the Kiswahili language and the indigenous languages.

The current language policy in Education in Kenya states that in the lower classes in primary school, the language to be used should be that of the catchment area, which in this case would be the vernacular (in a rural situation of more homogeneity) of the area or Kiswahili (in a rural situation of more heterogeneity), and it is only in the upper primary school that English would be used. The reality on the ground and due to pressure from parents and the community around is that teachers are forced to use both Kiswahili and English in most of the context so far described. In as much as parents would like their children to have strong cultural identity, they are also interested in their children's ability to participate and succeed at the national and global level, which would require them to have strong competencies in English.

Another tension brought about by the language policy was that while the majority of the students in an area had a shared mother tongue, some of the children came from families where they had been taught the local dialect of Kiswahili and very little of their mother tongue. So those students did not comprehend when lessons were conducted in the mother tongue, as also the other students did not comprehend when the lessons were in Kiswahili. Teachers were therefore left with the responsibility to make delicate decisions that will allow all students to gain from their instruction. The irony is that exams were in English for all students even though the policy allowed for instruction in the mother tongue. This is a challenge.

A consequence of the power of the English language in education in Kenya is that policies are put in place that criminalize the use of other languages other than English in school. These policies are clearly leftovers of colonial policies that were aimed at stumping out African languages and cultures by labelling them backward, primitive, and not fit for humans (Kitoko-Nsiku, 2007). Nieto (2002: 81-82) argues that 'privilege, ethnocentrism, and racism are at the core of policies and practices that limit the use of languages other than officially recognized high-status languages allowed in schools and in the society in general'. The result of these policies in Kenyan schools is that a hierarchy of languages is created, with English at the very top and African vernacular languages at the very bottom. As a national language, Swahili lingers somewhere in between, as it is half-heartedly tolerated. Due to our multilingual nature, the school has thus become a field for major tensions that pity the English language against all the other indigenous languages including Kiswahili. The school is therefore seen as one of the major sites of linguistic suppression in post-colonial African nations (Muthwii, 2004; Maeda, 2009; Wa Thiong'o, 1986).

Despite having a language policy for the school system, there are still major challenges that are yet to be overcome. Nyaga and Anthonissen (2012) in their study found that there are difficulties in implementing the policy that allows for instruction in the first three years of schooling to be conducted in the students' mother tongue, or the language of the school's catchment area (Kenya Institute of Education, 2002). These difficulties arise from various factors, including the fact that the government does not back this policy up with resources (Nduati, 2016) such as materials for lower primary that are written in the mother tongue, which would be crucial to making implementation of the policy possible. Additionally, teachers are posted to any part of the country upon completing their training, and as such, many teachers end up teaching at an area where the language spoken is not one they can speak themselves. Now with the advent of de-localisation by the Teachers Service Commission (TSC), the situation may become even worse. Because of this, and also because of the varying multilingual situations among students in different schools, teachers are forced to make their own interpretations of the policy according to what works for their particular context (Nduati, 2016).

In her study, Jones (2014) found that the teachers in a rural setting where both they and the students spoke the same mother tongue actually supported the national language policy that advocates for the use of mother tongue as the medium of instruction during the first three years. However, these same teachers sought to move away from the mother tongue as soon as the requisite level was done. They also recognized the fact that students struggled to understand the English language, and so code switching between the local mother tongue, Swahili, and English was a prominent feature of classroom discourse and when the situation called for it, teachers used either the local mother tongue or Kiswahili to explain concepts to the learners.

As demonstrated in various studies discussed above, the politics of language in schools is complicated. For both teachers and parents, it is a trade-off where they have to weigh what they believe will provide the best possible existence in a globalized world for the learners. The question though is, do we have to give ourselves up, give up our languages, our cultures, our identities and as such, everything that connects us to our roots in favour of white, western cultures and identities in order to move up in society? This is a question many scholars have asked and largely remains unanswered.

**Language Policy and its Impact on Learners: What This Means for National Development**  
The language policy which privileges English over African languages has led to various things that include marginalisation of African languages and identities, as well as silencing them altogether. We look at the marginalization of African languages and identities in Kenya. Marginalization refers to the ways the identities of speakers of African languages especially in the classroom are devalued while dominant linguistic and cultural identities are promoted as superior. In the Kenyan context, learners' experiences with linguistic and identity marginalization include the punishing, shaming, and silencing of African languages in their schools. Even 'bad' accents while speaking in English are frowned upon (Nduati, 2016).

The kinds of punishment meted out on offenders in the classroom included: corporal punishment (caning); manual labour; public humiliation; writing an apology letters for

speaking their African languages, implying that speaking those languages was wrong; writing compositions; writing exercises; even being ordered to buy books; slashing grass in the field; digging holes for planting; removing tree stumps; cleaning the school compound; washing classrooms; and kneeling down or squatting in an awkward position sometimes for long hours. Learners did not usually question the punishments since they felt that they deserved the punishment and were guilty of speaking in their vernaculars, and so would not even tell their parents of the ordeal because parents wanted their children to learn English due to it contributing to upward mobility. The punishments were seen as a way to try and help students learn English. In some 'elitist' schools, if you spoke your mother tongue, the rest of the students looked down upon you and treated you with contempt while assuming that you belonged to a lower social class.

A common system that was used to identify students who would be later punished for speaking their indigenous languages in the participants' experiences was the use of the monto. The word 'monto' came from the English word 'monitor'. The 'monitor' was used in schools during colonialism to monitor those who spoke African languages so that they could be punished for speaking those languages (Wa Thiong'o, 1986). This practice continues to be practised in some schools today. In my opinion, the monto did not make the students to improve on their English language speaking but instead, they shut up the whole day to avoid punishment thus missed out on practising in the language altogether. You cannot teach a language through coercion!

The language policy equally led to the silencing of both African languages and identities altogether. Negative experiences as a result of the English-only language policy in schools that include the punishments just talked about led students to be silent. In their wisdom, they would rather be silent than risk being punished or ridiculed. By punishing their use of mother languages, the students were taught that those languages were inferior, and by extension, as speakers of those languages, they were inferior. This would certainly affect their self-identities as well as their confidence levels. Even speaking in English with a vernacular influenced accent made one a centre of ridicule and humiliation thus making students prefer to be silent and even dislike English since this was their source of pain. Nieto (2002: 82) noted that '[w]hen particular languages are prohibited or denigrated, the voices of those who speak them are silenced and rejected as well' and when students feel that who they are has been rejected in the English classroom, it is unrealistic to expect that they will be motivated to learn English (Nduati, 2016).

Unfortunately, the speaking of indigenous languages is sometimes erroneously linked to tribalism (Orwenjo, 2012). In Kenya, politicians exploited long standing ethnic tensions to work up the infamous violence labeled 'tribal clashes' of the 1990s (KHRC, 1998). Some leaders have in their ignorance even attempted to suppress individual ethnic languages in Kenya in the hope of suppressing ethnicity (Manyasa, 2005; Yieke, 2011). But it should be pointed out that tribalism is not synonymous with ethnicity but the closest tribalism can get to ethnicity is when we think of negative ethnicity (Wa Wamwere, 2008), which in effect is tribalism and ceases to be ethnicity but ethnocentrism (Manyasa, 2005).

Tribalism is more about politics than language and the political elite would actually use the whole idea of tribalism to protect and safeguard their political interests. After the 2007 post-

election violence (PEV) in Kenya, and even earlier, speaking indigenous languages in public places to some extent became politicized as different communities became suspicious of other communities. Speaking indigenous languages in government offices in Kenya was banned and everyone is expected to speak in either English or Swahili in government offices (Orwenjo, 2012). Even prior to the outlawing of vernacular languages in government offices, in some cases, especially in cities where there is a mix of workers from different linguistic backgrounds, speaking indigenous languages in the work environment is also sometimes frowned upon.

The ever perpetuated myth that African languages are the cause of the problem of tribalism in Kenya is therefore not only false but also damaging to the country, as it creates negative ideologies about these languages, which then prevents schools and teachers from exploring the possibilities of using these languages to enhance students' learning (Orwenjo, 2012). In Kenya, therefore, citizens experience a hierarchy of languages in the public domain in Kenya, which exalt English as the language of social, academic and economic success, while downgrading and devaluing Swahili and other African languages as being less useful and less desirable and even accused of promoting tribalism and other negative feelings among citizens. If this is a myth that can be deconstructed as seen as false, then how can we use our diversities in terms of multi-ethnicities and multilingualism for national development?

Fortunately, ethnicity is not an inherently negative phenomenon. It has positive qualities which can become a powerful resource for national development when its potentiality is fully recognized and developed. In a multi-ethnic and multilingual society, from the point of human philosophy, culture, organization and technical knowhow, each ethnic community has its own strengths and weaknesses. For those involved in guiding societal development, the challenge is to mobilize the strengths of the various ethnic groups as the resource or input in the search for the realization of the goals of meaningful development (Yieke, 2011). Such an approach to ethnicity is basically of interest to those politicians who identify the societal interests with those of their own and work towards national development while exploiting this diversity.

Although a positive approach to the issue of ethnicity is rare, it does exist. Malaysia has done this and Kenya could borrow quite a bit from it. The development model from Malaysia integrates the Malays (53.9 per cent), the Chinese (34.9 per cent) and the Indians (10.5 per cent) in a symbiotic relationship between immigrant ethnic communities and indigenous ethnic communities. In this case, the Malay is the indigenous ethnic community whereas the Chinese and the Indians are the immigrant ethnic communities. This developmental model which is referred to by Chien (1984) as the Baba-Ali<sup>1</sup> approach operates on three principles that provide conditions which will reduce the sense of insecurity on the part of the indigenous community and to win the allegiance and loyalty of the immigrant communities so that they will contribute to the development and advancement of the well-being of all people in the country; that utilize as fully as possible the strengths of the various communities; and taps the resources of the economically more aggressive ethnic groups to uplift the well-being of the economically disadvantaged ethnic groups so that development can be meaningful to all ethnic communities. The point is an all-inclusive approach to national development where all

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<sup>1</sup> In the case of Malaysia, 'Baba' is used here unconventionally to include all non-Malay ethnic communities, and 'Ali' to stand for the Malay ethnic community.

ethnicities are involved. In a multilingual set up, it would be an approach to national development where all languages in that context play a significant part in their own ways as part of national development without being in a cut throat competition.

### **What Hope for Mother Tongue in Kenya**

The Kenya Constitution of 2010 gives importance on the place of indigenous languages in a citizen's life and considers it a basic human right. The Constitution addresses language issue and recognises equity and diversity, including cultural diversity. In its preamble, the Constitution states that 'we, the people of Kenya... (are) proud of our ethnic, cultural and religious diversity, and are determined to live in peace and unity as one indivisible sovereign nation'. Further, Chapter 2, Section 7(1), of the Kenyan Constitution (The Republic of Kenya, 2010) states that the national language of the Republic is Kiswahili while 7 (2) stipulates that the official languages of the Republic are Kiswahili and English. Chapter 2, Section 7 (3) also notes that the state has an obligation to promote and protect the diversity of languages of the people of Kenya; and to promote the development and use of indigenous languages...'. This is an indication that although indigenous languages are not recognized as official languages in Kenya, they are entrenched in the Constitution and we can begin to work from here to make them desirable.

Although English provides a unifying voice in the face of diverse ethnicities, it remains an impediment for the promotion of African languages. To counter this, the promotion of indigenous languages would be beneficial to the African in the construction of their cultural and ethnic identities and also for use in various spheres of their lives. So far we have just heard of narratives where the indigenous languages are relegated to the rear in schools despite a clear language policy for the school in the lower classes. It has however been observed in certain studies (see Ngendo, 2016) that there are schools in rural Kenya and their teachers who are successfully using African languages in their classroom to support their students' learning. In lower primary levels, teachers in rural schools drew on the literacies that their students already had in their African languages to support their learning of English and content area subjects. Such efforts would enforce the national language-in-education policy, although there are various challenges to implementation of this policy in Kenyan schools. Such efforts should be encouraged and resources availed to make these realities and success stories.

There is need for awareness and re-education of Kenyan parents, teachers and the general public on the importance of indigenous languages and identities, even as they push for the English language for their children and students. This re-education would potentially emphasize the idea that it is possible for languages to co-exist side by side without dominant colonial languages having to attempt to suppress African languages out of existence. There is actually room for African languages and identities in a world that is increasingly dominated by the English language and western identities. Bi/multilingualism does not have to be subtractive (Ngendo, 2016) where learning the English language means giving up one's other language(s) and identities. In fact, bi/multilingualism and bi/multiculturalism afford one different perspectives that can enrich their learning or teaching experiences and those of all the people around (Ma, 2014; Seloni, 2012; Zheng, 2014).

Acknowledging the value of using mother tongues as the languages of instruction in early classes is thus an important one (UNESCO, 1953). There is therefore need to create awareness among all stakeholders on the important role that mother tongue plays in the lives of young learners and the recognition that it acts as a resource rather than hindrance to learning and is not in any way in competition with the English language learning. It is actually an added advantage to the child.

In recent times, there are many FM stations in Kenya broadcasting in vernacular. This has had the desired effect of promoting the use of vernacular languages in the rural areas and also in the urban areas to a large extent. However, vernacular languages are yet to enjoy the privileges of English and Kiswahili since most of them have no written code and in quite a number of them, the process of codification has not yet even started. In addition, the youth are not even enthusiastic to use vernacular languages regularly in their daily lives, particularly the urban youth.

Although not all countries in Africa are comfortable with Kiswahili, a good number use it in various spheres. As Iraki (2000) notes, 'one would have hoped that Kiswahili would be the unifying glue among East Africans on the political front' although this is not the case because Ugandans for a long time resisted Kiswahili since they viewed it as linguistic imperialism from Kenya. However, Kiswahili remains very influential economically and socially and in business transactions alongside English, especially in the transportation sector and would be a good choice due to the linguistic diversity within the countries.

In Kenya, there are more and more young people, mainly from towns, who are not conversant with their mother tongue. They mostly speak Swahili, Sheng and English even though a number have knowledge of English alone in this mix. This situation may threaten the survival of other African indigenous languages. The launch of vernacular FM radio stations in the early nineties and also the advent of vernacular television stations have been useful in promoting the vernaculars as well as stimulating solidarity among people of the same ethnic backgrounds. Sheng has not been left behind in all this and you have an FM station like Ghetto FM that promotes Sheng. An interesting scenario also unfolds where power relations in Kenya can also be viewed along language lines. Whereas in Kenya, Kiswahili and English enjoy special political positioning in the urban areas, business and politics in the rural scene are dominated by the indigenous languages and further, ethnic communities play a crucial role in determining who rules the country.

Iraki (2010) proposed a structure for linguistic co-existence in Kenya that might inform the language policy of Kenya in future. From our discussions so far, four levels of social and language interaction are envisaged; these are the local, national, regional and global arenas and levels. He argues that English can be promoted as the international language connecting Kenya with the rest of the world at a global level. However, national issues such as politics, education, administration and justice could be dispensed in Kiswahili which is the national language. The cultural identities of Kenya could be promoted through the development and usage of local indigenous languages while Sheng will continue to serve the communication and identity issues of the youth. In this framework, Kiswahili, English, indigenous languages and Sheng have clear and very important roles and should not be seen to be in competition with each other. It

is not desirable that English should dominate all spheres of life in Kenya to the detriment of the other languages. This would no longer be the triglossic situation that linguists talk of in the Kenyan situation but probably quadriglossic where a Kenyan would use have at his/her disposal at least 4 languages: mother tongue, Sheng, Kiswahili and English and additionally have other foreign languages and probably other indigenous Kenyan languages despite having a mother tongue.

In this framework as proposed by Iraki (2010), since each of the four levels – indigenous languages, Sheng, Kiswahili and English – has its own distinctive role, it might be desirable to promote all of them instead of focusing too much on English. The vernacular will enhance cognitive development and serve as a repository of age-old values; Sheng will include and exclude and serve as the identity of the youth; Kiswahili will radiate within and across the country to embrace the East African family and solidify them; and English will be the language for international dialogue (Iraki 2003).

### **Conclusion**

In the Kenyan context, where there are multiple languages pushing to co-exist amidst the politics of language, globalization, and the strategic positioning of English and subsequent suppression of indigenous languages, it is important for teachers, parents, and communities to not lose sight of the benefits of a positive ethnic identity, self-perception and the correct attitudes towards both our indigenous languages and cultures. Despite a four level scenario already discussed that describes the existence of a global sphere, a regional sphere, a national sphere and a local sphere, there is the possibility of a cohesive existence and integration of the English language, Kiswahili, the indigenous languages as well as Sheng in different spheres and not necessarily in competition with each other. In this manner, all the languages can then be promoted and at the very least be tolerated. In such a scenario, the indigenous languages will thrive for a long time to come.

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## The Literary Negation of Coercive Social Power and the Sanitization of Igbo mores in Chimamanda Ngozi

### Adichie's Purple Hibiscus

1Joseph Nderitu Murage, 2Justus Kizito Siboe Makokha

<sup>1</sup>Laikipia University, <sup>2</sup>Kenyatta University

#### **Absract**

This paper established the negativity associated with an exercise of coercive models of social power among literary characters in the familial spaces of the fictional society depicted by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie in *Purple Hibiscus* (Fourth Estate, 2004). The study was justified by the fact that knowledge into how coercive social power affects familial spaces in the study text is important in understanding the author's message on power and familial relations. The study was interpretivist and analytical and employed the qualitative research design, which involved close reading of the novel as well as other related material. The primary data collected was subjectively analysed to determine how and why the use of coercive models of power have a detrimental effect on the relationship between an influencer and an influencee in group interaction. More data was also collected through library reading of critical works on the text as well as scholarly commentary on coercive power and its workings in the shaping of group interaction. The analysis on how and why different characters acquire and exercise coercive power over one another constituted data that was analysed in a descriptive manner. It is hoped that the findings of this paper will help the literary fraternity to understand how and why characters' use of coercive power in the study text fails to achieve the purpose intended by the potential influencer. This study is of use to scholars of literature who have a slant towards West African novels that deal with the question of social power.

**Keywords:** Coercion, Influencee, Influencer, Hegemony, Panopticism, Social power

#### **Introduction**

The text handled in this study, *Purple Hibiscus* (Fourth Estate, 2004) is a bildungsroman work of fiction in which Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie takes the reader through the emotional and physical development of a young girl, known as Kambili. Together with her brother, Jaja, Kambili seeks to free herself from the fundamentalism associated with her father's brand of oppressive and intrusive Catholicism. On his part, their father, Eugene Achike, believes that his family; his wife, Beatrice included, must live within the dictates of religious and social circumscriptions.

This paper is overarched by the philosophical concept of the Foucauldian panopticism. The panopticon, an instrument of enforcing discipline designed by Jeremy Bentham, was meant for use in penal institutions as well as other spaces where some form of surveillance of a subject was desirable. The panopticon is therefore a physical architectural creation whose use has been borrowed by theorists on power, such as Michel Foucault. The study is hence shaped by Michel Foucault's ideas on power, especially his writings on the panopticon as an instrument used in the enforcement of disciplinary power. McHoul & Grace (1993) and Foucault (1975, 1977) explain that the panopticon is a penal architectural structure conceived by the English

philosopher, economist and theoretical jurist, Jeremy Bentham. The design consisted of a circular glass-roofed, tank-like rotunda. Guards posted in the rotunda could easily keep the many prisoners in the surrounding cells under surveillance. It is the mentioned penal architectural facility whose use is extrapolated into this literary study.

The use of panopticism in social studies is supported by Brunon-Ernst (2016), who notes that at the end of the nineteenth century, panopticism had gained a wide metaphorical usage in many areas of human activities, literature included. Gabriele (1998) identifies modern day use of biometrics to identify people as a form of panopticism and surveillance that is designed to get knowledge about a body with the intention of controlling it. Control of one group by another is likewise based on the panoptic principle of omnipresent surveillance that Engelmann (2011) proposes was designed by Jeremy Bentham with the intention that once a subject realised (s)he was under constant surveillance, (s)he would even in the absence of that surveillance continue to exhibit the desired behaviour. With the benefit of panopticism as a theoretical framework, critical excavations are made in this paper to elucidate how characters relegated to the margins of social consequentiality due to an onslaught from influencers using coercive power (re)negotiate for relevance by upsetting the hegemonic state resultant from their former acquiescence.

### **Coercive Social Power and Religious Fundamentalism**

In this paper, it has been identified that religion, viz. Christianity, traditional African beliefs and Islamic faith are contexts in which coercive social power is acquired. This section is therefore used to give the details on how characters' religious orientation becomes a means of exercising coercive social power. In the study text, there are patterns of behaviour where individuals either emotionally or physically abuse others, justifying their actions on religious beliefs. In other instances, unpremeditated actions and courses of conduct are rooted in religious beliefs but the characters involved in them are not privy to this fact. French and Raven cited in Lamanna & Riedmann (1985, p. 352-53) describe coercive social power as "based on the fear by one party that the second one will punish him or her for non-compliance". Such punishment can involve physical assault or other subtle behaviours such as withdrawal of favours, affection or sex. Ultimately, the fear of rejection by one party due to non-compliance with what the second party wants is what makes the second party to exercise coercive social power over the first.

In *Purple Hibiscus*, it is posited that Papa Eugene Achike persecutes his family members, friends and acquaintances by virtue of his stringent adherence to Catholicism. His holier-than-thou attitude leaves no room for negotiation with other characters on what he considers the right conduct. The main characters who suffer as a result of interacting with him are his wife, Beatrice, and his children, Kambili and Jaja. Other members of his extended family are also not spared his wrath when they are seen not to embrace values that he espouses, as a devout Catholic Church follower.

Papa Achike's exercise of coercive power is not always constant. The foregoing is informed by the reality that the effectiveness of the coercive power exercised on a subject varies; sometimes it is almost fully effective while in other instances, it is only marginally effective. Secord & Backman (1974) explain that this variation in the effectiveness of coercive power is informed by several factors. One of them is the range of behaviours for which one party can punish

another. The second one is the strength of coercive power, which is a joint function of the magnitude of the punishment involved and the perceived probability that this punishment will actually be meted if the desired behaviour is not displayed.

This perceived probability of the punishment taking place is also determined by the extent to which the agent believes that he or she is under surveillance by the influencing agent and the past history of the influencing agent either carrying out the punishment or failing to do so in similar situations. Equally, the effectiveness of coercive power depends on how accurately the target gauges what behaviour is punishable by the influencing agent. Finally, the use of coercive social power need not be accompanied by overt imperatives directed towards a subject. Careful removal of choices that are favourable to a target, to leave only the unfavourable ones, would constitute an exercise of coercive power.

In light of the above disputations, the removal of favourable options by Achike takes the form of his understanding of the Bible. Of interest is that Papa Achike's interpretation of Biblical scripture is literal, a fact that makes his association with those who have liberal views on Christianity strained. Ouma (2007) sees Eugene's brand of Christianity as being an aspect of religious fundamentalism shaped by the socio-cultural and political realities that coloured Nigeria at the time the novel is set in. However, in the public sphere Papa Eugene uses a media company that he owns to open up dialogic spaces in the junta regime present in Nigeria at the novel's temporal setting, in his private life, he represses his family's expressiveness. This contradistinctive conduct in the public and private representation has been summed up in the following words:

Papa Eugene is indeed in the public sphere a champion of the freedom and space for dialogue within the public political spaces. The biggest irony of course is that this fundamentalism that manifests itself in the public space as a seeker of truth and "triumphant entries" manifests itself within the familial space as a silencer (Ouma, 2007 p. 30).

Papa Eugene's demand for his family members to subscribe to Catholic values regardless of their own unique drives and desires makes them withdrawn and apathetic and so contributes to an exercise of coercion. Another character who also uses religious convictions to exercise coercive power on others is Father Benedict, the parish priest based at St. Agnes Catholic Church in Enugu, the town in which Achike's family lives.

In the text, it is evident that Eugene uses Catholic dogma as a platform to exercise coercive social power over members of his family as well as the other relatives, the church and community members that he interacts with. Right from the start of *Purple Hibiscus*, he acts in a violent manner because his son Jaja has failed to go for communion. Eugene throws the missal across the living room, in the process breaking the figurines on the étagère. Arguably, adherence and attendance to Catholic rituals is an important aspect of Eugene's lifestyle. Jaja's failure to attend communion is therefore viewed as a transgression of the norms that Eugene subscribes to and is keen to protect. The violent act of hurling the missal across the room instills fear in the family, more so because Eugene uses an artifact associated with worship as a missile (*PH*, p. 3). In forcing Jaja to partake in the holy communion, Achike exercises coercive social power from a panoptic principle. The foregoing avowal is given credence by McHoul and Grace (1993), who write that according to Foucault, although the panopticon was a physical

entity initially designed to aid in the control and surveillance of people in penitentiary institutions, panopticism is a philosophical idea of an individual enjoying a central command position; a person who is able to monitor and censor many other individuals surrounding him. Panopticism therefore aids in the increment of a subject's power and decrease of the object's power. The mentioned position becomes a way through which coercive or disciplinary social power is exercised, that is, by limiting of the competing group's power in order to increase the power of the dominant group (Pishwa & Schulze, 2014). In that respect, panopticism can be extended to other institutions where some form of control, surveillance and domination of one group of people by another is found to be desirable, such as in Achike's family.

Eugene's panoptic attempts to extend his religious idealism to the lives of his children lead to their ostracism from the world of their peers. His requirement that his children subscribe to only those values that he has vetoed as appropriate is read by Ouma (ibid) as a monologue that seeks to silence other voices emanating from inside or outside his family. At Daughters of the Immaculate Heart School where Kambili learns, she is treated by some students as a pariah. This is because she does not mingle and interact with the other girls freely. Her withdrawn nature is misconstrued as being a show of aloofness, brought about by her father's wealth. Her father's assault on her mother makes her lose concentration in school. She, as the narrator, states that every time she tried to read, the words in her books would keep "turning to blood" (PH p.37). Her lack of concentration in school makes her lose the first position at the end of the term to Chinwe Jideze, her teenage nemesis and classmate. Kambili's emotional turmoil is evidence of trauma. She displays some behaviours that are symptomatic of traumatized children. Kamen (2007) identifies such symptoms as being flashbacks, sleep disturbances and nightmares, depression, anxiety among others. Instead of Eugene's religious zeal helping his children to perform well in school, it achieves the opposite effect, that of making Kambili fearful, withdrawn and unable to achieve her best in school.

Kambili and Jaja are in school courtesy of their father's economic ability. Education is hence an important resource that they seek from their father. It is important to note that the amount of coercive social power that individuals are able to exercise over others depends on several factors. One of them is the resource. A resource is a property, conditional state, a possession, appearance, personality trait or attribute that the agent has and which enables him or her to influence the target. The next factor is dependency, that is, the influencee must desire the resource the agent has. Secord and Backman (ibid) write that the situation or context is also important as the dependency or need of a resource is more acute in some situations than in others especially in the absence of an alternative source of the desired resource. It is the position in this paper that Kambili and Jaja are dependent on their father for the education resource within the context of a need for future socio-economic stability. Their situation therefore agrees with what Secord and Backman (ibid) envisage.

### **Cloistered Teenagers and Lowered Self-Esteem**

It is worthy of note that Coercive social power is exercised if one party feels that non-compliance with what the second party wants will earn him or her some punishment. French & Raven cited in Lamanna & Riedmann (1985) opine that such punishment might involve physical assault or something more subtle, such as careful removal of favours. Raven & Rubin (1976) advance that coercive power is dependent on the influencing agent and so it is socially constructed. Compared to informational power, coercive power is weaker as it requires

surveillance by the influencing agent so that the target can continue displaying the desired behaviour. When coercive power is used on a target, "...the target tends to dislike the influencing agent and feels negatively about the situation" (Rubin & Lewicki; Rubin, Lewicki & Dunn; Horai et al. cited in Raven & Rubin 1976, p.48). For the mentioned reason, the effectiveness of coercive power is ephemeral and transient.

With the benefit of the mentioned working of coercive power in mind, it is noted that in *Purple Hibiscus*, Kambili complies with her father's demands, not because she is convinced that her father's autocracy is for her own good but because she fears withdrawal of favours such as those mentioned by French and Raven in Lamanna and Riedmann (ibid). However, the consequence of her compliance to the hegemonic power originating from her father is that she suffers emotional ill health engendered by leading a sequestered life. Healthy development of teenagers requires that they associate freely and productively with their peers. Such association serves the function of raising their self-esteem. Teenagers who do not associate confidently with their peers become withdrawn and isolated from others (Kamen, 2007). Therefore, the fact that Eugene does not appreciate Kambili's uniqueness as his daughter breeds a sense of insecurity and low self-esteem in her. Kambili stands in sharp contrast with Chinwe Jideze, the *de facto* peer leader in Kambili's class. Other girls struggle to emulate Jideze, down to her *isi owu* and cornrows hair dos. Jideze walks with a springy step, her tight skirt clinging to her curvaceous hips. She completely ignores Kambili and does not speak to her even when the two are in the same agricultural science group. By using Catholicism to suppress Kambili's expressiveness, Eugene creates a timid girl out of his daughter, one who is ill at ease when with her peers in school. It is hence posited that Kambili's timidity is a product of the coercive social power exercised over her by her father, a type of power in which an influencing agent unfavourably changes the course of action of an influencee.

From the above-mentioned creation of a hegemonic state, this study is used to argue that coercive social power is one of the six bases of social power in which a relationship between an influencing agent, also known as an influencer, and an influencee subsists. The mentioned social power is a property of a relationship between two or more individuals. The power of an influencing agent is a joint function of his capacity to influence the target relative to the cost the agent incurs. This means that the more the agent can influence the target at a minimal cost to himself, the more coercive social power such an agent has over the influencee. According to Secord and Backman (ibid), an exercise of social power relies less on the agent's characteristics but more on the relationship between the agent and the target and the place of that relationship in the context of the larger social structure. It is therefore desirable to examine Kambili's school, a social structure, with a view to shedding light on how the school is used in the entrenchment of hegemonic control of Kambili by her father.

Daughters of the Immaculate Heart, the school that Kambili attends, is an institution that is steeped in strict religiosity that Eugene uses to suppress, rather than nurture Kambili's potential. Papa Achike has placed Kambili in that school and instead of letting the girl find her own footing, he unfavourably compares her with Chinwe Jideze, the girl who has for the first time come first in class ahead of Kambili. The method used to make Kambili to outdo Jideze is intimidating, rather than encouraging. Like his literary predecessor, Okonkwo, in Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*, Eugene lapses into a diatribe about how his father was a failure, one that he will not stand aside to see replayed in his children. This is what he tells Kambili:

“Why do you think I work so hard to give you and Jaja the best? You have to do something with all these privileges. Because God has given you much, he expects much from you. He expects perfection. I didn’t have a father who sent me to the best schools. My father spent his time worshipping gods of wood and stone. I would be nothing today but for the priests and sisters at the mission... Nobody dropped me off at school. I walked eight miles every day to Nimo until I finished elementary school...” (PH p.47).

From these words, it is concluded that Eugene sees working hard and succeeding in school as a duty that his children should fulfill. This is interpretable as being an absolutist approach to child rearing. For him, the important thing is what is right, regardless of the negative consequences of attempting what he perceives to be the right thing to do. It is therefore clear that Papa Eugene is living by deontological principles. Tyler and Reid (2002, p.137) state this about deontological morality:

Deontological ethical theories are concerned with examining the motivation for an act, not its consequences, and upon that basis establishing whether it is a morally right action. Deontological ethicists take the view that moral principles can be established *a priori*- that is, without experience. They are independent of experience because they are *inherently right*, irrespective of the outcome.

Papa Eugene comes out as being a deontological moralist because he does not realize that Kambili’s industry in school (a morally right action) results to good performance that she does not appreciate (wrong outcome). The consequence of Eugene’s departure from a teleological approach to Kambili’s educational experiences is that Kambili works hard, out of fear rather than a belief in her own abilities. She memorizes what her teachers say, rather than reading books to understand, since her father’s shadow over her impedes her ability to study. Like Nyasha, the lead female character in Dangarembga’s fiction, *Nervous Conditions*, who lives in fear of failing examinations and disappointing her father, Babamukuru, fear and apprehension, akin to a lump of fufu forms in Kambili’s throat every time she takes a test. This is because she fears that her results might be poor. She succeeds in ascending back to the first position in class the next term. Her attainment of position one out of twenty-five is to her not an academic achievement beneficial to her but a fulfillment of God’s purpose in her. Ironically, this is a success of her father’s, rather than her own. For her, the fear of disappointing her father overrides her innate desire to excel academically.

Debatably, besides being a place where children acquire education, a school should also encourage development of other personal skills and nurturance of other talents. This means that children should have playtime when they can hone their skills and abilities. Kamen (2007 p.64) identifies the physical competencies that teenagers should develop in school as inclusive of “improving their gross motor skills and co-ordination, which leads to proficiency in climbing, running, jumping, balancing, hopping, skipping and swimming”. However, Eugene’s brand of Christianity is such that he expects his children to be reserved and to follow strict schedules. As a result, Kambili is required to leave for home immediately the school day comes to an end and so misses out on physical training sessions after classes. At one time, Kevin, Papa Eugene’s family driver, reports that she had taken a few minutes more than was necessary before coming out of the school to be driven home and Eugene reacts by slapping her right and left

cheeks at the same time, leaving huge palm marks on her cheeks and ringing ears for some days (*PH* p.51).

This physical abuse and intimidation that has its roots in Eugene's religious orientation manifests itself more when Jaja and Kambili go to visit Papa-Nnukwu, their paternal grandfather, and Kevin later reports that they had surpassed the time allotted for that visit by ten minutes. Eugene later confronts the children over this incident that one might dismiss as a misdemeanor and the following dialogue interspersed with Kambili's narration ensues:

"Kevin said that you stayed up to twenty-five minutes with your grandfather. Is that what I told you?" Papa's voice was low.

"I wasted time, it was my fault," Jaja said.

"What did you do there? Did you eat food sacrificed to the idols? Did you desecrate your Christian tongue?"

I sat frozen; I did not know that tongues could be Christian, too.

"No," Jaja said.

Papa was walking towards Jaja. He spoke entirely in Igbo now. I thought he would pull at Jaja's ears, that he would tag and yank at the same time as he spoke, that he would slap Jaja's face and his palm would make that sound, like a heavy book falling from the library shelf in school. And then he would reach across and slap me on the face with the casualness of reaching for a pepper shaker. But he said, "I want you to finish that food and go to your rooms and pray for forgiveness, before turning to go back downstairs (*PH* 69).

It is an avowal in this paper that rationing the time children can spend with their grandfather is an intrusion into their lives and serves to sever their ties with members of the extended family. Similarly, reference to food served in Papa-Nnukwu's house as food sacrificed to idols serves to create fear in his children about their own grandfather. That this particular encounter between Eugene and his children almost degenerates into physical abuse serves to show the gravity with which Catholicism has been used by Eugene to terrorize members of his household.

### **Subjugation through Pharisaic Observance of Rituals**

Strict adherence to discipline as required by religious teachings is woven into the general fabric of Kambili and Jaja's lives. It is posited that whereas children's activities involve creativity and spontaneity, Eugene has created some "miniature adults" out of his children by requiring them to adhere to strict schedules. Here, Kambili gives a peek at her life, which is governed by schedules and rules:

I pushed my textbook aside, looked up, and stared at my daily schedule, pasted on the wall above me. *Kambili* was written in bold letters on top of the white sheet of paper, just as *Jaja* was written on the schedule above the desk in his room... Papa liked order. It showed even in the schedules themselves, the way his meticulously drawn lines, in black ink, cut across each day, separating study from siesta, siesta from family time, family time from eating, eating from prayer, prayer from sleep.... (*PH* p.23-24).

With this kind of schedule that seeks to reduce Kambili and Jaja to automatons, what Papa Eugene does for his children is to bog them down with an admixture of religious and secularized rituals that make them dull and melancholic, rather than lively and productive. The result of subjecting the children to this life of routine and drabness is that they become apathetic and withdrawn, unable to freely erupt into fits of laughter or carefree merriment.

The children then become gloomy and unappreciative of the wealth that their father tends to think is all that they need so as to enjoy their childhood. It is the position in this paper that a parent like Papa Achike, who designs many mechanical rules for his children to follow, is shirking his responsibility of providing Family Life Education (F.L.E.) to his children. F.L.E. is:

... the orientation of young people on their physical, emotional and social development as they prepare for adulthood, parenthood, work and tasks that one is expected to accomplish within a family set up. It includes norms on personal conduct, skills, roles and responsibilities (FPAK, 2001. p.59).

F.L.E. therefore necessitates a close and continuous intercourse between a parent and a child, not written, academic instructions for the child to read and follow in a detached and emotionless manner.

In the Ash Wednesday service, one of Catholic's post-Easter festivals, Papa Eugene helps to distribute the ash but his line moves the slowest. This is because he takes more time as he presses hard on the foreheads of the worshippers, so as to make a perfect cross with his ash covered thumb. The zeal with which he performs this religious function points to an individual who believes in the power of religious rituals in the subjugation of believers. The pressure applied on the worshippers' foreheads using the thumb is a physical reminder on the solemnity of the Ash Wednesday ritual. Eugene therefore makes the worshippers in his line feel that the Ash Wednesday is a solemn day, perhaps more so than other Sundays. It is advanced that the excess pressure on the foreheads of the worshippers is uncomfortable and intimidating. With it, Eugene succeeds in instilling feelings of reverence and awe in the worshippers, thereby seeking to control them through scare tactics.

The pressure that Eugene applies on the foreheads of the worshippers invites a discussion on the place of proxemics in the negation for power in social interactions. Edward T. Hall developed the concept of proxemics, a study of how culture dictates the distance that individuals should maintain in their social interactions. Hall proposed that:

... the distances individuals maintain from one another depend on the nature of their mutual involvement and are culture-specific. For example, under normal circumstances, middle-class American adults of northern European heritage make regular use of four proxemics zones, or distances, ranging from intimate to public, each of the zone has a close and far phase (Salzmann et. al 2012, p. 78)

From a proxemics and semiotic level, proximity to what is considered to be a shrine or symbol of religious strength is important to Papa Eugene. He seems to believe that the closer he gets to an artifact of religious signification, then the more profound is the power that he will gain. This study is used to compare the mentioned belief with that practiced from the auditory perspectives, so that a religious message delivered at a high volume with the help of public address systems and amplifiers is thought to be more moving than one intoned in low pitches. It is noted that Eugene has a preserved sitting area in the church, right at the front. He also

undergoes the process of partaking in the Holy Communion in a more ostentatious way than the other worshippers. Here, Kambili analyses her father's mannerisms in the church:

Papa always sat in the front pew for mass, at the end beside the middle aisle, with Mama, Jaja and me sitting next to him. He was the first to receive communion. Most people did not kneel to receive communion at the marble altar, with the blond life-size Virgin Mary mounted nearby, but Papa did. He would hold his eyes shut so hard that his face tightened into a grimace, and then he would stick out his tongue as far as it would go (*PH* p.4).

This excessive display of religious enthusiasm impacts profoundly on Kambili and the rest of Papa Eugene's family. Being the head of the household, Eugene sets standards that he expects his family to conform to, which in essence breeds feelings of fear and inadequacy for those who do not innately share Eugene's zeal. His expectation that his family members should live by idealistic religious standards is contrary to the socially accepted principle of man's fallibility. Ottenberg & Ottenberg (1960 p. 347) write that "all social institutions allow all people a certain falling short from the ideals of behaviour without comment or punishment; but all set more or less rigid limits to their tolerance by stating rules of good manners, of morality, of common sense of law: beyond which if a man fall short, he is condemned 'no gentleman', 'a sinner', 'a fool', or 'a law breaker' by his fellows and by them or by the gods he is punished." In light of the foregoing, it is animadverted that Papa Eugene is contradicting the universal principle of sufferance that humanity should retain for fellow humanity when one falls short of expected ideals. The requirement that his family sit at the front pew is interpretable as raising the bar of religious observance for them, a fact that puts them under pressure to measure up to his expectations.

## Conclusion

This paper has been used to articulate the intellection that social power that is exercised on the basis of one party's fear of retribution from another, should the former fail to live up to the expectations of the latter, has no purchase. The philosophical idea of Foucauldian panopticism, a situation in which an influencer attempts to establish self-imposed discipline on an influencee, has provided the study with a theoretical grounding. Ngozi Adichie's fiction, *Purple hibiscus*, has provided a discursive site for the study. The recommendation made is that scholars interested in (re)reading Adichie's works might find it worthwhile to use panopticism to query how other bases of social power, such as referent, legitimate and informational bases are used to construct hegemonic states.

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Language Maintenance and its Role in Expanding Language Domains in Kenya with Special Reference to  
Kimeru

John Kirimi M'Raiji  
Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology

**Abstract**

The paper provides a general overview of language maintenance with the aim of discussing its contribution in expanding domains of usage in Kenya. It provides an exploratory assessment of previous research the maintenance, revitalization and attempts that have been made in the documentation of endangered languages in Kenya. Special attention and focus are given to achievements made by various scholars in the study of language maintenance and revitalization in Kenya. In regard to Kimeru, this paper observes that Kimeru is a mother language (ML) in which basic domains of usage are continually being enhanced despite the language itself being in competition with other more established languages within its immediate environment and in the country. Some of the expanding usages identified in Kimeru include those in the social, educational, political and economic domains. Other Kimeru language domains that the paper highlights as the salient aspects of its vitalization include mass and social media. The methodology used is a survey based on a generalized assessment of the use of Kimeru as a mother language in broadcast, print and digital media. The paper acknowledges the significant role that Kimeru continues to play in the social-economic development of Meru County through provision of employment and in creating ethnic unity and moiety among users of its dialects. It further demonstrates how a ML operating within a multilingual and triglossic background can be revitalized despite its minority and underprivileged status. It concludes that language maintenance and vitalization through sustained usage contributes to positive attitudes towards MLs which should be harnessed as vehicles of social-economic empowerment.

**Key Words:** Language maintenance (LM), Language shift (LS), Language domains, Language revitalization, mother language(s) (MLs)

**Introduction**

Language maintenance is variously defined by scholars to refer to the continued use of a language despite its coming into contact with a more dominant language or languages. This means that a language that continues to thrive despite being in contact with another or other languages depicts evidence of language maintenance. Most mother languages in Kenya belong in this category by maintaining their place despite being in a multilingual environment with some languages, such as Kiswahili, being promoted through schooling and lingua franca usage.

The domains ascribed to Kiswahili are in competition for dominance with mother languages in the school, the marketplace, in places of worship and in homes; to the extent that, in some instances, parents and teachers discourage the use of the prevailing mother languages. This language use scenario mirrors Pauwels (2004) definition of language maintenance as a situation in which speakers or speech communities continue to use their language in some or all spheres of life despite the pressure from a dominant language or majority language.

Most mother languages in Kenya can resist pressure from more established languages as evidenced by the fairly small number of dying mother languages in the country.

Language maintenance denotes a sustained use of a language by its speakers despite competition from more economically and socially powerful languages within its environment. From the foregoing, therefore, language situation in most parts of Kenya reflects Batibo's (2005) perspective that defines language maintenance in relation to its resilience, strength and degree of resistance to withstand pressure from dominant language(s).

A language that is incapable of the resisting pressure from dominant languages may be replaced in the final analysis. Language replacement is the total or partial assimilation of a language during contact with another superior or dominant language(s) whereby speakers shift or adapt a different language. Language replacement is also variously called language shift is a gradual process that occurs over a long period of time. In essence, language shift is the process by which a language population departs from using one language (often the ML): for a more vitalized or dominant language within the linguistic environment. However, language shift does not include cases in which a language develops from its older versions to newer forms or variants.

Reasons for language shift include social, economic, political, demographic and attitudes to the languages prevailing within a region leading to either subconscious or deliberate choices that speakers use in different domains. Language shift therefore occurs in situations of language contact such as in bilingual, triglossia or multilingual settings. In reality, ML speakers gradually reduce the areas (domains) in which they use a language in communication. Moreover, the ML ceases to expand its functions in emerging domains such as in written literature, music, advertising, in broadcast and print media among other modern usages.

As a linguistic discipline, Pauwels posits that LM and LS emerged from Joshua Fishman's 1964 paper "Language maintenance and language shift as a field of enquiry". Although the initial inquiry focused majorly on language dynamics due to the migrations taking place at the time, a study of LM and LS in Kenya points to more stable language contacts and in environments where education is a key factor leading to changes attitudes to MLs.

Cavallaro (2005) notes that the concept of language maintenance emanates from a linguistic study of languages in contact and multilingualism; hence promoting the notion that one cannot separate LM and LS. In this regard, Cavallaro echoes Fishman's (1964: 35) observation that "language maintenance and language shift is concerned with the relationship between change (and stability) in habitual language use, on the one hand, and ongoing psychological, social or cultural processes, on the other hand, when populations differing in language are in contact with each other."

To some scholars, LM denotes a situation whereby the speakers of a language nurture and retain its usage within certain (specific) domains such as in school, at home, in market places, and in religious worship (Baker, 2011: 72) even when it is not accorded mainstream domains such as being used as a language of instruction in schools, or in formal communications such as in official government and business documents. Consequently, LM has continuously been seen as a reaction to perceived threat from a more politically and socially powerful language within

the region. For instance, a general observation of the use of MLs in Kenya indicates that most, if not all, are used only in informal domains. Despite MLs being taught with various degrees of emphasis in the first three years of schooling in the rural areas in Kenya; Kiswahili and English predominate official and business sectors with varying degrees of vitality.

### **Mother language**

The term ML is usually designated to refer to the language that a person learnt as a child. It is mostly the first language that one acquires from the parents within the family setup. ML is also variously referred to as a mother tongue, native language, and sometimes; an indigenous language. Viewed this way, therefore, every spoken language is a ML. This includes internationally spoken languages such as English and French because they are MLs to their native speakers. Due to the centrality of languages in human relations and development, the UNESCO has designated 21<sup>st</sup> February as The International Mother Language Day to promote awareness of linguistic and cultural diversity and to promote multilingualism <https://en.unesco.org/commemorations/motherlanguageday>.

### **The case for LM**

Many scholars and linguists have argued for the maintenance of languages around the world. For instance, Clyne (1982, 1991), Fishman (1977, 1996) have given reasons as to why languages should be maintained. The UNESCO has taken up the LM agenda with its Endangered Language Programme created in 1996 with the aim of supporting stakeholders in preserving and promoting endangered languages. This initiative has ensured that efforts to maintain and revitalize languages are well received and embraced around the world. LM is mainly concerned with the broad agenda of ensuring that the cultural factors that ensure the survival of a language are maintained alongside the target language. Languages are vehicles through which cultures are produced, disseminated and preserved for future generations. Consequently, the reasons advanced for LM are also true to the (re)vitalization of MLs.

Some of the reasons advanced in favour of LM include enhancing group membership and integration. The concept of integration refers to the factors that identify and keep groups together. It also refers to a sense of belonging within a group where members with certain characteristics and features identify themselves as being part of a particular group. Membership in an ethnic group may include physiognomy, ancestry, religion and other aspects of social-culture and behavior (Fishman,1977). For instance, since most ethnic groups in Kenya have a distinct language or dialect. We can therefore surmise that a ML is a key criterion for ethnic group membership. Some of the unifying factors of ethnic groups include, but are not limited to; a common language, shared beliefs or religion, traditions such as foods, clothing, shared histories or ancestries. However, language seems to be the irreducible minimum in human identity (Weber, 1968).

It has been argued that language is a strong carrier of a group's cultural heritage. Language maintenance entails the maintaining of one's cultural heritage as a marker of group identity. Gunew (1994: 2) argues for an inclusive definition of culture that includes the sociological or anthropological definition that encapsulates "every aspect of life" to include the various elements of everyday life such as foods, religious worship, rituals, sports and games.

The most common definition of culture considers it to be a way of life followed by a community or society or the mode of life in respective social groups (Tanase, 1959: 18-19). This definition of culture also includes a community's practices such as the arts. It also includes a community's methods of communication and representation and which may have relative autonomy from the economic, social, and political domains (Said, 1994). In similar vein, Carley (1991) considers culture as the communication of ideas, information, concepts, beliefs, technical knowledge and symbols within a culturally homogenous group like the Meru. In addition, communication as a component of culture suggests that culture is distributed from one individual to another, from one family to another or from one generation to another. Modern communication technology such as through radio, television and digital platforms has expedited the sharing of culture.

Communication can be divided into verbal (the use of words with specific meaning); paraverbal (tone of the voice); and non-verbal communication. Language used in verbal communication is not a universal means, but it is, according to Hargie and Dickson (2004), deeply rooted in a particular culture because members of that society have acquired it through instruction or imitation. This perspective suggests that culture is acquired and shared through communication and imitation. Consequently, culture and language bind communities together but may it also separate them into different communities.

Gunew (1994) expands the definition of culture by observing that it involves the arts such as heritage and tradition "or what a culture wishes to preserve as manifestations of its imaginative and intellectual life" expressed through the use of language in communication. Fishman (1996) buttresses this view when he argues that language is the vehicle through which culture is created and expressed. Fishman (ibid: 7) further opines that there is a symbolic relationship between language and culture in that "...language stands for that whole culture. It represents it in the minds of the speakers and the minds of outsiders. It just stands for it and sums it up for them—the whole economy, religion, health care system, philosophy, all of that together is represented by the language."

Language maintenance can to the revitalization of dying cultures especially among minority, languages and subaltern cultures to stem cultural assimilation (Wardhaugh, 1983). Cultural assimilation refers to cases where a minority group identifies with the dominant culture thereby giving up some if not all of its significant traits in favour of adopting those of the more dominant and powerful culture. It is conceivable that a dominant group may not necessarily discriminate against the minority group in any way. The more powerful group may give unfettered access to opportunities within it by allowing the minority group to benefit from the relationship. For instance, a language group might adopt the music of a dominant group and compromise developing its own genres; or may at best modify its genres alongside those of the dominant group leading to a shared set of characteristics for the society as a whole. However, minorities may at times influence the majority and other minority groups to create a blended culture. Such rare cases of structural assimilation can only occur in a truly multicultural society.

Another reason for LM is the generally accepted theory that speaking more than one language leads to enhanced cognitive abilities. Although earlier studies led by researchers such as Darcy,

1953; Jensen, 1962; Saer,1923; Smith, 1923 promoted the view that being bilingual or multilingual results in cognitive deficiencies.

However, more recent and convincing studies by Ben-Zeev (1977); Cahill (1987); Hakuta (1986); Landry (1974); Peal & Lambert (1962); Hakuta & Díaz (1984) and Lambert (1980) among others: have argued bilingual or multilingual learners are more flexible and capable of divergent thinking than their monolingual counterparts.

Studies that have been carried out to determine how the academic achievement of bilinguals compared with that of monolinguals seem to vouch for the benefits of bilingual education over monolingual education. Ultimately, researchers such as Greene (1998) and Thomas & Collier (2002) have reached the conclusion that there is a positive effect of bilingual education on the academic achievement of bilinguals to further support why languages should be maintained. This paper looks at some of the mechanisms that contribute in reversing language shift by discussing some ways of promoting the maintenance of Kimeru.

### **An Overview of Language Maintenance and Language Shift in Kenya**

Kembo-Sure's (1994) thesis titled "Survey of language use and attitudes towards language in Kenya and their effects on English language proficiency" provides a brief overview of the status and functions of MLs in Kenya. MLs "enjoy official support as media of instruction in the first three years of primary education" partly due to "the UNESCO 1953 recommendation on "The Use of Vernacular Languages in Education" which advocated for the use of mother tongue in education (Kembo-Sure, 1994:31). However, Kembo-Sure observes that there were instances where the directive was ignored in favour of promoting English and hence "a lot should be done to teach mother tongue languages and not just to use them as media of teaching other subjects." (ibid). This point of view is shared by Mberia (2014).

The author also notes that besides the promotion of MLs through poetry, drama, song and dance; there were also "encouraging attempts to write in these languages." (ibid). Kembo Sure mainly discusses the use of English within a multilingual context by analysing learners' attitudes towards English and how they impact on the linguistic competence and proficiency within the classroom. Kembo-Sure concludes that although English was "gaining greater vitality and acceptability among Kenyans as its functional distribution keeps expanding [and that] Kenyans respect the Kenyan languages and their present roles [but nevertheless] they seem to want to keep English as medium of education and the language to use in the civil service." (Kembo-Sure, 211).

The support of the community is important in ensuring that the revitalization of a language succeeds. Consequently, a community needs to be sensitized so as to understand the importance and therefore to own efforts to revitalize their language. As Obiero (2008) argues, however, the revitalization of Suba has faced challenges from the very community it is meant to serve. Obiero discusses the challenges posed by the community in the revitalization of MLs despite its central role in determining its success. Efforts to revitalize the Suba language in Kenya "will most likely persist...partly due to factors that may be local, but well beyond the community's control." (Obiero, 2008: 1).

Five of the six factors for LM as expounded by Crystal (2000) and Fishman (1991) underscore the importance of community involvement through a bottom up campaign.

This campaign is geared towards eliciting their support and participation in an effort to revive and expand the domains and functions of the endangered language. Obiero (2008: 6) further points out that there appears to be no tangible gains derived from thirteen years of the Suba revitalization programme owing to a poor design and implementation model more so in regard to advocacy, sensitization regarding the project. According to Obiero (2008: 10), failure in implementing the revitalization program among the Suba is further compounded by lack of “financial resources...money to fund teaching materials, to pay teachers, to outfit schools...” The report points out that it is difficult for poor communities to prioritize LM and revitalization efforts. Moreover, Obiero (2008: 3) “nearly all language revitalization programmes regarded as largely successful began with and were based on a strong community” which, obviously, the Suba isn’t.

On the other hand, Michieka (2012) investigates LM and LS among university students in Kenya and concludes that there exists a gradual language shift in regard to MLs among university students in Kenya. She points out that her findings collaborate other studies by Kamwangamalu (2003, a), Kamwangamalu, (2003, b), Michieka, (2005), Mugane (2003) and Mugambi (2002) which indicated that MLs were being “threatened especially in most urban settings” leading to their endangerment and further cites other factors that may result in language loss such as industrialization and threat from other cultures (Michieka, 2002 : 165).

Wamalwa & Oluoch (2013) report that despite their obvious benefits as vehicles for socialization, cultural identity, preservation and transmission of culture, several MLs in Kenya are endangered; hence the need for their preservation from ultimate loss. They, therefore, propose the use of digital technology in the maintenance and (re)vitalization of MLs through an “active and protracted program of language documentation [and]...a systematic description and codification of the indigenous languages” in line with similar suggestions that have been mooted by scholars such as Kube (2006) and Batibo (2009). This recommendation is also among interventions that have been proposed under the auspices of the African Union’s (AU) ACALAN (Wamalwa & Oluoch, 2013: 7).

Oduor’s (2015) study titled “Towards a practical proposal for multilingualism in education in Kenya” proposes that indigenous languages should be used more in education and that they should have an economic value. Oduor argues that multilingualism in education whereby MLs are used alongside English as the media of instruction as well as in the teaching of some subjects in schools would go a long way in changing learners’ attitudes towards indigenous languages hence promote language maintenance. This recommendation resonates with the outcomes of the expansion of language use domains in Kimeru.

Kimani, et al (2018) in “Nexus between gender and language shift among the youth in Nairobi” explores the language attitudes and language use patterns from a gender perspective. The findings of the study indicate that female students are more likely to use English while male students are more likely to use sheng. Whereas the study shows that Kiswahili is used equally among both male and female students MLs are not used at all. The study concludes that gender plays a significant role in language shift among the youth in Kenya. This study is a confirmation

that language attitudes as well as the ascription of status and domains of language use abound among the youth.

A renewed interest by the youth in Meru in the entertainment sector has notably led to an explosion in the creative industry whose target is fellow youth through radio, television and social media platforms such as Facebook, YouTube, WhatsApp and Instagram.

Kimani's findings also mirror the results from Letsolo's (2009) language use study among the youth in Botswana which; based on attitudes of 17-25year olds: indicated that Ikalanga youths use Setswana even in domains they could use Ikalanga, which is their ML. Such indications of Language use are partly based on the fact that Setswana is the national language alongside English. Setswana is also taught across Botswana and has consequently acquired a higher status in relation to other minority languages in Botswana. Letsolo reports that Ikalanga youths have developed negative attitudes towards their ML as not to use it among their peers is a pointer to the challenges in language maintenance in most African countries. Research has shown that positive language attitudes are a well-known condition for language maintenance and that language loyalty is closely correlated with language maintenance (Wolfgang Wölck, 2003: 6). Whereas there is need for concerted efforts to vitalize MLs to stem their emasculation by the more dominant languages, this paper asserts that language maintenance and revitalization can and should be undertaken even before MLs start facing serious threats from dominant languages. This assertion is based on the positive gains gleaned from the expansion of Kimeru usage.

Sangili, N, Mohochi, S & Nyandiba, C (2019) in a paper titled "Women, politics, language shift and maintenance in Kenya: Case of Lullogoli in diglossic Uriri Sub-county, Kenya" examine the role of women and politics in both language maintenance and shift. According to the study, women and politics have played a critical role in determining either positive or negative language shifts among the Maragoli. The paper concludes that Lullogoli has remained a stable language and despite several intermarriages between the Lullogoli and Dholuo speakers due to the Maragoli positive attitude towards their language. On the other hand, peaceful coexistence between the speakers of two different languages has ensured that both languages thrived and maintained themselves.

### **Language (Re)vitalization through Documentation and Digitalization of MLs**

According to Fishman (1991) cited in the UNESCO (2003:9) "Ad Hoc Expert Group on Endangered Languages" the basic criteria in evaluating "the vitality of a language is whether or not it is being transmitted from one generation to the next." Simply put, language vitality is the opposite of language endangerment. Endangered languages can be salvaged through a systematic intervention program that includes the involvement of the speech communities working with governments, NGOs and external language experts and professionals. Among a multi-pronged approach to language vitalization, one of the methods used include through promoting literacy and documentation of the endangered language.

UNESCO's Atlas of the World's Languages in Danger has categorized 2,473 languages as endangered with five Kenyan languages of El Molo, Yaaku, Ogiek, Omotik and Suba in the category. However, there are several other languages such as the Burji, Dahalo, Bong'om and

Omotik that are considered vulnerable or in different stages of endangerment while Suba language is under a vitalization program.

In “Documenting narrations of personal experiences of the process of initiation into manhood in Terik language of Kenya”, Ojwang (2016:1) documents the rituals of one of Kenya’s endangered language groups because “Terik is classified in the UNESCO Red Book of Extinct and Endangered Languages as a language in danger of disappearing because the youngest speakers of the language have either reached or passed middle age”. According to Ojwang, Terik speakers numbering 20,000 are sequestered between more populous language communities who speak different languages with the Luo who speak Dholuo in the South, Lulogooli speakers in the North and the Nandi speakers in the East.

Ojwang (ibid) further reports that Terik speakers are at different stages of “linguistic and cultural assimilation” due to many years of language contact, trade and intermarriages among other sociocultural contact and, therefore, “some Terik speakers have become multilingual and can switch easily between Terik, Nandi, Dholuo, (Luo), Luhya and Kiswahili” leading to continued loss of their language, identity and culture. It is clear that Terik is in dire need of language maintenance interventions to vitalize it. Ojwang’s audio and video documentation and narrations of the Terik circumcision ritual is therefore a worthy linguistic and cultural undertaking. The corpus from the research is archived at the Endangered Languages Documentation Project (ELDP) at SOAS University of London for future reference and analysis. Although language contact, maintenance and shift in Kenya are not a new phenomenon, it is only recently that Kenyan scholars have taken interest in investigating language attitudes, language contact, language shift and language maintenance (Sangili et al, 2019; Wamalwa & Oluoch, 2013; Orcutt-Gachiri, 2009; Mberia 2014; Wanjala 2009; Obiero, 2008; Kipsisey, 2009; Fink, 2002). The reason for this could be partly because only a few Kenyan languages have been identified as being endangered or dying. However, it is the position of this paper that MLs operating within bilingual, triglossic or multilingual environments need to expand its usage domains.

Another observation regarding language maintenance in Kenya is the role that Kenya’s political leadership, aided by the enactment of a new constitution in 2010, has ensured that MLs have a role to play through public participation in development. Moreover, there has been an upsurge in broadcast media and digital technology that has promoted the use of MLs at the grassroots. Consequently, the digitization of MLs among Kenyan linguists in the investigation of various aspects of language contact is visible. As a result, Kenyan scholars as evidenced in the digitization of endangered languages such as Terik and Suba are welcome developments. However, there is still a lot to be done.

For instance, there exists numerous opportunities to document not only the endangered languages but to also pay attention to others that may appear safe from the vagaries of language contact. For instance, most of Kenya’s MLs do not have standardized orthographies and a majority of ML speakers only use their languages for oral communication. This is to say that most Kenyans, despite being experts in the spoken word, cannot read or write in the same languages. MLs have therefore stagnated insofar as the written word is concerned.

There is also need to not only document our MLs through foreign owned archives but to endeavor to fund our own local research in Kenya and the rest of Africa. Such documentation should go beyond folklore and rituals which may be of interest and benefit to foreign institutions.

This would help to address local cultural challenges such as indigenous knowledge which is available to only a few cultural experts. A case in point includes knowledge relating to medicinal plants, wild fruits and vegetables.

A lot of Africa's indigenous knowledge and expertise remains a preserve of a few elderly people and may not be passed on to future generations. According to Abukutsa-Onyango (2010), that there are well over four hundred (400) types of edible wild vegetables in Kenya. However, only four (4) have been fully domesticated for sustainable consumption. The remaining vegetables are out there in the bushes and forests. Only a few old people actually know and consume them from time to time. The same case applies to the medicinal plants that are unknown but to a few elderly ML speakers. Consequently, collaborative efforts between linguists and other stakeholders such as scientists, nutritionists, indigenous medicine practitioners and communities are required to identify the useful plants for posterity. This can be achieved through the use of digital technology applications. It is not enough to maintain or revitalize our languages but to also endeavor to preserve our heritage for our own survival. We need to find similarly innovative ways to maintain or preserve all aspects of our cultural heritage. It is imperative that Kenyan scholars and researchers need to apply multi-disciplinary approaches to the unique challenges facing MLs even before they become endangered. For instance, the Suba language project has shown that it is an arduous task to resuscitate a dead or dying language (Obiero, 2008). Prevention is better than cure. It is therefore prudent that MLs are protected from endangerment instead of waiting until they are different stages of language death. This realization informs our assessment of how Kimeru is expanding domains of usage and therefore (re)vitalizing itself within a multi-lingual setting.

### **Kimeru: The Maintaining of a ML**

A ML can also be defined as a language that is native to a country. For instance, Kiswahili is a ML to its native speakers especially in coastal Kenya, Tanzania and the Islands; as well as to children who learn it as their first language and within the confines of the home and their immediate environment. On the other hand, Kimeru is a Bantu language belonging to the Niger-Congo language family and native to Meru people who inhabit the Eastern and northern slopes of Mount Kenya and the Nyambene hills in Meru County. Meru people identify themselves as Ameru (people of Meru); and their language as Kimeru. Kimeru is classified as ISO 639-3 language <https://glottolog.org/resource/languoid/id/meru1245>

Kimeru is a Bantu language consisting of several linguistically and culturally homogenous regional. However, scholars have differed over the actual number of Kimeru dialects. For instance, Bennet (1971) identifies six (6) dialects: the Chuka, the Egoji, the Mwimbi, the Imenti, the Tigania and Tharaka. On the other hand, Marete (1981) lists five (5) regional varieties consisting of Ki-tharaka, Gi-tigania, Gi-chuka, Ki-mwimbi and Ki-imenti. More recent research by Gacunku (2005) further isolates eight (8) dialects by arguing that Ki-igembe, Gi-tigania, Gi-chuka, Ki-muthambi, Ki-mwimbi, Ki-igoji, Ki-imenti and Ki-miutine constitute the Kimeru

language family. In contrast to the homogenous perspective adopted by other scholars, Mberia (1981) isolates Ki-tharaka from the other Kimeru dialects to identify it as an independent language. Despite little differences and disparities in intonation and accent, Kimeru dialects are intelligible to speakers in all the sub-tribes.

Kimeru speakers also communicate intelligibly with their Niger-Congo Bantu neighbours; the Kikuyu, Embu and Kamba. However, communication between their Cushite neighbours such as the Boran, Somali and Samburu are done through Kiswahili or English because they belong to a different language family.

### **Traditional Domains of Kimeru**

Language is intrinsic to all cultural groups. Language is one of the most basic of human existence that it is often taken for granted unless one develops deficiencies in using it due to a disability such as mental retardation, deafness and/or dumbness. A child is expected to be receptive to various forms of language use from birth. Whereas language is a method of communication, not all communication is done through language. Other forms of language and communication may include touch, gestures, music, noise and the like. However, it is generally acknowledged that language in the form of verbal communication through conversations plays a significant role in human interactions, language learning and development.

The acquisition and development of linguistic competency begins with the most basic components of communication in the learning of a language. Language acquisition begins with listening and speaking. This means that a child combines both receptive (by listening) and productive (through speaking) aspects of language learning at the formative stage. These skills are further developed through schooling when a child again applies receptive (through reading) and productive (through writing) as the linguistic competency improves and as the speaker develops the ability to comprehend more complex communication discourses that may include elaborate use of diction, metaphor, proverbs and other figures of speech. Oratorical skills were, and are still valued; among Kimeru speaker. According to Fadiman (2012: 132), spokesmen (*agambi*) of the council of elders were usually gifted speakers who represented the group especially when dealing with outsiders. Whereas the traditional spokesmen mediated and canvassed issues through the spoken word, changes wrought by literacy have transformed the modern *agambi* into writers, lawyers, teachers, politicians, clergy, motivational speakers, reporters and other aspects of oratory.

Kenya's education policy has upheld that primary schools use the catchment area's MLs as the language of instruction for the first three years of primary education. Kimeru is supposed to be used in rural schools within the county. However, the language has no standardized dialect. Books used in school are mainly in the Ki-imenti dialect. The first translation of the Bible in Kimeru was done in 1964 in the Ki-imenti dialect. There is a disconnect between the dominant dialect (Ki-imenti) and the other dialect when it comes to writing and literacy. However, this imbalance is mitigated by the fact that all the regional dialects are understood across Meru county. There is no dialect called 'Ki-Meru'. Consequently, Kimeru is an umbrella term that refers to all the regional dialects and, therefore, the spoken language in all regions is usually the spoken dialect or variety of the region.

One can argue that Kimeru dialects are used in social interactions across the county. It is used in homes, churches and schools. It is the language that locals use to communicate with one another in the shopping centers in the course of carrying out various business activities. The same applies within the public transport sector and roadside market places.

Some business premises and activities are also named in Kimeru. Kimeru can therefore be said to be actively involved in undertaking commercial activities within the county.

Most inhabitants of Meru county are involved in small-scale farming activities. Agricultural extension and veterinary services and training are usually carried out in Kimeru. These services include the use of both oral and written methods of communication. This mode of communication is also used in imparting messages on health and hygiene in hospitals through the use of brochures which are usually translated from English to Kimeru, and sometimes; into Kiswahili as well. Kimeru within a multilingual set-up navigates between the dialects and the national and official languages that one finds being used in offices, the law courts and in the Meru County parliament.

Kimeru in all its variants is also vibrant during political mobilization during rallies and campaigns. It is during such gatherings that politicians regale audiences with their oratorical skills through the use of metaphors, proverbs and riddles. Moreover, songs are composed for the candidates to mobilize and sensitize people to support or reject opponents and their agenda. During elections, campaign posters are usually designed in Kimeru to solicit for votes. However, there appears to be more use of English and Kiswahili to augment Kimeru during official deliberations such as in cooperative society and public participation meetings. There seems to be an unwritten rule that “serious official matters” be carried out in the official and national languages. This dichotomy is also witnessed in Police Stations, the Sub-county and the County Commissioners’ offices where officers are mainly non-Kimeru speakers. Interpretation from Kimeru to Kiswahili or English may suffice because official records are usually in English especially at the Police Stations. This is in contrast to the language used in the sub-chief’s and chiefs’ offices where Kimeru predominates. These trends are an indication that a fairly large of inhabitants in the region may not be in a position to communicate in either Kiswahili or English as evidenced by data from the Meru County Government’s Department of Education indicating that the literacy level in county stood at only 53% in 2012 against a national level of 78.73% (<http://meru.go.ke/departments.php?com=2&com2=10&com3=48&com4=&tab=105&item=23> ).

The County Government of Meru supports the preservation, maintenance and revitalization of Ameru culture. According to Kinyua (2019), the Meru County Cultural Board is tasked with establishing an Annual Kimeru Cultural Festival and a Cultural Center and Institute. <http://meru.go.ke/content.php?com=6&com2=31&item=471>.

The cultural activities complement other efforts by the county government to promote literacy and expand domains in which Kimeru can be used. This includes the compilation of a bilingual Kimeru-English dictionary as reported by Kimanthi (2014) <https://www.businessdailyafrica.com/news/County-to-write-dictionary-to-boost-Kimeru-language/539546-2414508-twjwv7/index.html>

Kimeru is rapidly expanding in other domains of usage especially due to growth in the communication and information technology sector. Enormous growth has been realized in the sector since the late 1990s following the repeal of the Kenyan constitution and the attendant liberalization of the airwaves.

For instance, there are about seven (7) radio stations and four (4) television channels that broadcast in Kimeru with a coverage of Meru, Tharaka Nithi and some parts of Isiolo and Embu counties. This development is evidence that Kimeru is gaining vitality in the area of broadcasting.

Based on their programs including coverage of news in the region, the talk shows on various issues of regional and national concern, entertainment in the form of music and comedy; the channels have strengthened Kimeru language and culture. The stations use all the dialects in their news coverage such that no speakers of any dialect feel linguistically left out or culturally discriminated against. Mass media, especially through radio; has a wide outreach. Kimeru speakers are able to consume information, news and entertainment from all corners of the region whether they are in homes, on motorcycles, or in private or public transport vehicles.

In addition, broadcast media such as radio, television, film, CDs, DVDs transmit their material electronically with the aid of cameras, video consoles and mobile phones. The ease of communication has further resulted in the real-time sharing of material through various blogs and on social media. Some of the popular digital platforms where material in Kimeru is shared include Facebook, WhatsApp and Instagram. There are profiles by all population categories sharing and discussing all manner of topics in Meru politics, literature, entertainment, foods and farming activities.

Affordable means of acquiring information have contributed immensely in the socio-economic life in Meru with noticeable impacts on various population segments such as women, youth and adults. According to Okoth (2015), radio stations in MLs have had a positive impact on rural livelihoods and economies with great potential to bring sustainable changes among indigents.

Okoth further notes that media has also created employment for the youth by providing employment as journalists, reporters, advertising agents, creative artists, actors, songwriters, comedians and musicians. The scenario that Okoth describes is noticeable in Meru County where the youth are actively involved in all categories. Most notable, however, is an explosion in both secular and gospel music composition in a region that had lagged behind in embracing the music industry as an economic enterprise. The perception that the Meru do not know how to sing, dance or to engage in performing arts has changed with the emergence of performing artists like Kamanu who blends both traditional and modern Meru music (<https://www.ameru.co.ke/kamanu/>).

Namasaka (2012) and Kipoma (2014) both observe that vernacular radio plays a significant role in promoting regional and national cohesion. There are few cases of hate speech or content or defamation that have been filed in courts of law in regard to the radio stations broadcasting in MLs. The same applies to the television stations.

## **5.0 Conclusion**

I have provided an overview of language maintenance in Kenya against the backdrop of the revitalization of a ML that is not facing any serious threats nor facing endangerment. The paper has made reference to Kimeru to demonstrate that it is important for communities to proactively use their MLs to ensure that they remain relevant and that they expand their domains of usage.

In my argument, I have adduced evidence that Kimeru is gaining more support especially among the youth who have realized its potential in offering economic gains in the form of employment especially in using the language in mass and social media platforms. This proves that sustained usage of MLs leads to the development of positive attitudes among language user. Consequently, MLs should be harnessed by County governments as vehicles of social-economic empowerment in Kenya.

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Tense Marking in Lubukusu

Aggrey Wafula Watulo  
Laikipia University

### **Abstract**

This paper investigates the realization of tense in Lubukusu. The main thrust is an analysis of tense system in Lubukusu dialect of Luhya language of Western Kenya. Tense system is intricately complex because of the manner in which it is realized. It is morphologically and

tonally marked. In this paper, data was collected through the native speaker's intuitions and checked by two proficient native speakers in terms grammaticality. The phonological analysis entailed tone transcription while the inflectional involved description of slot analysis and morphological tense markers. The theory of Paradigm Function Morphology by Stump was used to deduce paradigms into basic inflectional markers. In this paper, it is argued that a tensed verb consists of either a prefinal or final markers with a high tone. In Lubukusu, tense markers come after the subject marker and immediately before the root in case the tensed verb does not have the object marker. Apart from the present tense, Lubukusu comprises of a multiplicity of past and future tenses, which the paper sought to explore in detail in terms of the morphological marking and tone patterns. The past and future tenses are classified into remote, immediate and intermediate. The subcategorization of the two tenses creates such a multiplicity. The agglutinative nature of Lubukusu is closely linked to other Niger Congo Bantu languages with a few differences that involve tone marking and morphemes that mark tense. Such differences include the position of the tone marker on the root and type or position of the inflectional marker attached on the root.

**Keywords:** Agglutinating, Bantu, Tense, Tone, Realization

## **Introduction**

Lewis (2009) argues that 1,532 of the world's 6,909 languages are classified as Niger Congo, of which 522 are categorized as Narrow Bantu. This means that 22% of the languages in the world are Niger-Congo while 7.5% are Bantu languages (Diercks, 2010). Bantu speaking communities live in Africa south from Nigeria along Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC): formerly Zaire, Uganda, and Kenya to Southern Somalia in the east (Nurse and Phillipson, 2003). It is noted that the number of Bantu languages are difficult to name and list with certainty. Guthrie (1967) argues that there are 440 Bantu varieties but contrastingly, Grimes (2000) puts Bantu languages at 501. The recent works by Maho and Mann et al (1987) mention more varieties that are 660 and 680 respectively than the earlier version by Guthrie. This variation in number is attributed to the fact that the languages were continuously being discovered and therefore, the number kept increasing leading to such uncertainty to state the accurate number of the varieties. The Bantu languages are under described with a few having a slightly reasonable grammar and many with an underdeveloped word list (Nurse & Phillipson, 2003). Lubukusu, which is a language under morphological and syntactic investigation, has a wordlist that is currently being developed by scholars of Lubukusu (Watulo, 2019).

Bantu languages are "verby", meaning that they are morphologically agglutinating in nature (Nurse, 2008). The single verb in Bantu comprises of eleven slots centered on the root with the left part of the root having inflectional prefixes that mark negation, subject, tense, aspect and object (Nurse and Phillipson, 2003). The right side of the root has derivational and inflectional affixes (Nurse, 2008). This implies that each affixal marker occupies a discrete slot on a verbal template with the tense marker occupying slot three. It is with these set of morphological markers that the complexity of the verbal template is realized (Zerbian, S 2006). Most Bantu languages have this structure while others such as Lubukusu have a modified structure.

Most Verbs in Bantu languages are classified as activity or dynamic verbs (Lusekelo, 2015). These groups of verbs comprise three features including the onset, coda and nucleus. Such

verbs possess the freedom of occurrence with the Tense Aspect Mood markers (Lusekelo, 2015). The other classifications of verbs include stative Botne et al 2006 and inchoative Kershner (2002). The inchoative verbs comprise items whose semantics indicate change of state or transition while the stative poses a difficulty in tracing the beginning and ending of the situations. The languages are categorized as conservative hence maintaining a high tone versus a low tone (Marlo, 2009). Bantu verbs are classified tonally as underlying high toned versus low toned or toneless. The focus of the paper is to investigate Lubukusu, which encodes tense through morphological marking and tone just like other Bantu.

Nurse (2007) posits that the stem's affixal structure dates back to proto-Niger Congo Bantu languages. Most of these languages consist of a nuclear stem, with the Root-extension whereby the extension and final vowel (FV) are inflectional markers (Nurse, 2007). The final vowel (FV) was originally used to mark aspect. He adds that the modification of the meanings that arise from the root is through the extensions. In this paper, the major concern is to look at the final vowels (FVs) that contribute to tense marking in Lubukusu. The reference of present tense as a zero form is because it is not inflectionally marked. The Bantu languages zero form play roles such as; general, common and generic functions (we play), (we always play football) and (we always write plays). Such forms are defined as general presents (Nurse and Phillipson, 2003). This paper explores the present tense marking based on cross-linguistic similarities in terms of zero morphological marking and highlight the cases when it is utilized.

The Bantu verbal template does not indicate which slots express which categories Nurse and Phillipson, 2006). In Gikuyu language, tense is realized in the tense-aspect slot and aspect within the final vowel. On the other hand, some Bantu languages express tense and aspect by combining TA markers and final vowels (FVs). From the foregoing discussion, the purpose of this paper is to discuss the tense categories/subcategories and define the slots of various forms of tense categories.

The Bantu languages tense system is organized in terms of relative levels, which include (hours, days and months), time spans, (current, adjoining and distal time units) and time scopes (separate mental worlds or domains (Botne, 1999). Nurse and Phillipson (2003) classify past and future tense into time limits. They note that Bantu languages comprise multiple past and half of them with multiple futures. Thera (2011) argue that some Niger Congo Bantu languages have two past tenses which are indicated as hodiernal past (P1) and hodiernal past (P2) referring to earlier situations. They further argue that Lubukusu classifies the past tense into three contrasts, hodiernal, hesternal and Pre-hesternal. She adds that hodiernal refers to the current/present activities while hesternal refers to the events, which took place yesterday/previous day. A pre-hesternal tense, which is also called remote past points at the events that took place prior to yesterday. Nurse & Phillipson (2003) note that at least three quarters of Bantu languages mark past using the [-a]. The Shona language mark the far past through the morpheme [-ka] while the remote past is realized by the use of the morpheme [tʃa-]. Tense markers in Shona are realized as verbal prefixes a situation that contrasts sharply with Lubukusu that realizes tense via suffixes and tone marking apart from the prefixal markers.

Kiswahili is categorized as (G 42) which comprises three tense marking; zero marker (present), [li-] marker for past tense and [-ta-], which marks the future tense. For instance, soma (read)

a-li-soma (he/she read), a-ta-soma (he/she will read) (Botne, 2009). The [-li-] marker indicates a situation that took place before the times of speech while the morpheme [-ta-] following the time of speech. Lubukusu, which is the language under investigation, is categorized as a Niger, Congo, Narrow Bantu under J-30 (Lewis, 2009). The present tense, which is marked by a zero morpheme, covers the moment of speech and does not refer to habitual or ongoing situations (Lindfors 2003). The forms of present tense paradigms without inflectional markers in Kiswahili include *kula* (eat), *tuma* (send) and *lala* (sleep).

Luhya is the second largest ethnic group in Kenya designated as a macro language according to (Lewis, 2013). The language comprises the following 18 dialects; Lutiriki, Lubukusu, Luloogoli, Lunyore, Lukhayo, Lumarachi, Lusamia, Lwitakho, Lushitsa, Lutsotso, Lukabarasi, Lutachoni, Luwanga, Lumarama, Lunyala west, Lunyala east, Lutura and Lwisukha Angogo 1980, Watera, 2013 & Nandelenga, 2014). Lewis (2013) classifies Lubukusu as a Niger Congo narrow Bantu Luhya language. The dialect is spoken majorly in Bungoma, Lugari and parts of Transnzoia and Uasin Gishu. Lugisu, a language spoken in Eastern Uganda is mutually intelligible with Lubukusu than other dialects of Luhya (Sikuku, 2011).

Luhya dialects form a dialect continuum whereby close varieties in terms of geographical space have a higher level of mutual intelligibility (Angogo, 1980). The Luhya dialects are classified as northern, central and southern with Lubukusu categorized as the northern most dialect spoken in Bungoma, Transnzoia, Lugari and parts of Uasin Gishu. On the other hand, those varieties that are a distance away from each other exhibit lower rates of mutual intelligibility, for example, Lubukusu and Luloogoli (Angogo 1980 & Kanyoro, 1983). Lubukusu is mutually intelligible with Lunyore, Lumarama, Lutura and Lukhayo. The level of intelligibility reduces as you move to Luloogoli speaking regions in Vihiga, Chavakali and some parts of Kapsapet.

The Luhya tonal systems are grouped into reversed, predictable, conservative while Lubukusu falling under the reversed (Marlo, 2009). Therefore, a common property of such tonal system is that all the tenses are marked with a melodic high tone (Marlo, 2009). It is unexpected to have two tonal systems in a single macro language such as Luhya. The Luhya tonal variety is a special type that enjoys two tonal systems with the conservative located in the east of the eastern part of Western region and the predictable to the West (Ebarb, 2014). High-toned affixes in Luhya at times trigger alternations in tone properties of the stem (Ebarb, 2014). For instance, in Tachoni, the hortative is marked with a melodic H on the stem's second syllable e.g. [x] [xa-ba] [karáange] (let them fry). The morphosyntactic context determines the high tone attachment on the subject prefixes (Ebarb, 2014). Lubukusu is a tone language and therefore tone plays a grammatical role that contributes to the realization of tense (Savala, 2005). Nasiombe (1986) argues that tone distinguishes tense and aspect hence bringing about differences in mood.

The simplest Bukusu verb takes a subject prefix with a tense marker that may be followed up by an object marker (Nasiombe, 1992). Additionally, the object slot comes between tense/aspect slot and the stem. He notes that in a tensed verb, the object marker is not mandatory while the subject prefix is obligatorily present. A tensed verb can act as a bare verb, verb phrase or a complete sentence. The following is a verbal template structure of Lubukusu tensed verb (Nasiombe 2000, Diercks 2010 & Watulo, 2018)

Slot 1	Slot 2	Slot3	Slot 4	Slot 5	Slot 6	Slot 7	Slot 8	Slot 9
PRE SM	SM	NEG	TAM	OM	ROOT	PRE FV	FV	POST FV
Subject relative/negative	Subject marker	Negative marker	Tense aspect	Object marker	Verbal root	Pre final vowel	Final vowel	Post final vowel

Lubukusu maintains a high/low tone lexical tone pattern contrasts typical of proto-Bantu languages in the verb stems. The infinitive of a toneless verb does not comprise a H tone on the surface level (Nasiombe 2000, Marlo 2009 & Ebarb, 2014). Nasiombe argues that a high-toned verb exhibits a high tone on the prefix and a second high tone on the stem if the stem has at least two syllables. The high and low tones affect the stem's initial vowel and the tense markers hence affecting tense marking and realization. The infinitive shares tone patterns with intermediate future tense (Nasiombe, 2000).

In Lubukusu dialect, most tense marking is realized through prefixation and or suffixation (Nasiombe 2000). Sometimes a tensed verb is marked by a special tone attached to a verb while some other tense marking entails auxiliary verb. The present tense in Lubukusu is not inflectionally marked but realized through a high tone on the stem's initial syllable. Nasiombe (2000) analyzed tense system in Lubukusu and classified tense into the past ((PST) and the future (FUR). The two tenses are subcategorized into remote past/future (REM), intermediate past/future ((INTER) and immediate past/future (IMM) respectively. He adds that the present tense (PRS) does not possess the subcategorizations unlike past and the future.

### **Methodology**

The study was conducted in Bumula constituency in Bungoma County. Bumula is the heartland of Lubukusu speakers, which neighbours Nambale, Teso and Mumias. The data for study was collected through the native speaker's intuitions, which was later checked by two native speakers of the language in terms of grammaticality. Horrocks (1987:11) notes that: 'It is simply absurd to wait for the native speakers to produce utterances which would allow linguists to infer whether some language has a particular grammatical characteristics when it is perfectly possible for the linguist as a native speaker to ask all important questions and answer them himself'. The researcher used convenience sampling to get the two native speakers and paradigms for study. Convenience sampling is an adequate sampling technique since it focuses on subjects that have the most preferred traits for the study. In this study, two participants with the most preferred characteristics were elderly individuals with competence in language. The two were consulted to check grammaticality and acceptability of the verbal paradigms. The researcher descriptively analyzed the data by identifying the underlying and the surface forms. Additionally, the inflectional tense markers were segmented from the root to identify the subject, tense markers and final vowels. This was followed up by partial explanations of the functions of the inflectional markers in a tensed verb and the role of tone in the realization of tense.

### **Present Tense**

The present tense is also called the unmarked present or the zero present because it is not marked using a prefix or a suffix. It is the zero or null realization in the final [a] vowel. Nurse (2008) argues that the zero form means a zero marker in the pre-stem position and vowel [a] in the final position. This tense may replace the habitual aspect (Nasiombe, 2000).

(1) **Singular**

	<b>sm root fv</b>	<b>Surface form</b>	<b>Gloss</b>
1 <sup>st</sup>	/e- ŋgon- a/	[eŋgóna]	I sleep
2 <sup>nd</sup>	/o- koon- a/	[okóna]	you sleep
3 <sup>rd</sup>	/a- koon- a/	[akóna]	he/she sleeps

(2) **Plural**

	<b>sm root fv</b>	<b>Surface form</b>	<b>Gloss</b>
1 <sup>st</sup>	/xuu- kon- a/	[xukóna]	we sleep
2 <sup>nd</sup>	/mu- koon- a/	[mukóna]	you sleep
3 <sup>rd</sup>	/βa- koon- a/	[βakóna]	they sleep

The data in 1 and 2 indicate that the present tense in Lubukusu is not morphologically prefixed but there is always the final vowel [-e] or [-a] at the end of the verbal root. The data indicates the generic/general or the common function. The stem's initial vowel is always high toned in both the singular and plural. The verbal template of the present tense comprises the subject marker, verbal root and the final vowel as indicated above.

**Past Tense**

This is the location of time prior to the present period. It locates the situation in the past time and does not continue to or extend to the present period. Lubukusu past tense is categorized into three periods in the past: intermediate past (pre today), remote past (long ago) and immediate past (today).

**Intermediate Past**

The intermediate past is formed by the prefix [a-] before the root and the suffix [-ile]. This tense is also called the P3 or earlier than hesternal. The intermediate past is also called the recent past.

(3) **Singular**

	<b>sm root TM fv</b>	<b>surface</b>	<b>gloss</b>
1 <sup>st</sup>	/na- koon-il- e/	[nakónile]	I slept
2 <sup>nd</sup>	/wa- koon-il- e/	[wakónile]	you slept
3 <sup>rd</sup>	/ka- koon-il- e/	[kakónile]	he/she slept

(4) **Plural**

	<b>sm root TM fv</b>	<b>surface</b>	<b>gloss</b>
1 <sup>st</sup>	/xwa-a-koon- il- e/	[xwakónile]	we slept
2 <sup>nd</sup>	/mwa-koon- il- e/	[mwakónile]	you slept
3 <sup>rd</sup>	/βa-koon- il- e/	[βakónile]	they slept

As can be observed in the data in 3 and 4 above, the realization of the intermediate past tense in Lubukusu is through final vowels [-il-] and [-e]. The subject markers are obligatorily attached before the root. In the first person singular and plural, the subject prefixes [na-] and [xwa-] are attached immediately before the root. The second person singular involves the subject prefix [wa-] attached immediately before the root while the plural takes the prefix [mu-] before the root. The stem's initial vowel receives a high tone. Lastly, the prefixes [ka-] and [βa-] are attached to the root to mark third person singular and plural respectively.

The structure of the verbal paradigm entails the prefix [a-] being attached before the root and the suffix [-ile] that comes immediately before the root. The subject markers [na-], [xwa-], [wa-], [mu-], [ka-] and [βa-] are placed next to the prefix [a-] as obligatory markers. The underlying forms are not transcribed phonologically but the surface levels, which are the actual realization of paradigms during articulation, are transcribed.

### Remote Past

The remote tense is also called the P1 or Hodiernal. The remote past refers to events that took place long time ago. It is realized through the prefix [a] attached after the subject marker.

#### (5) Singular

	(Underlying)			surface	gloss
	sm	root	fv		
1 <sup>st</sup>	/na-	kon-	a/	[nákona]	I slept
2 <sup>nd</sup>	/wa-	kon-	a/	[wákona]	you slept
3 <sup>rd</sup>	/ka-	kon-	a/	[kákona]	he/she slept

#### (6) Plural

	(Underlying)			surface	gloss
	sm	root	fv		
1 <sup>st</sup>	/xwa-	kon-	a/	[xwákona]	we slept
2 <sup>nd</sup>	/mwa-	kon-	a/	[mwákona]	you slept
3 <sup>rd</sup>	/βa-	kon-	a/	[βákona]	they slept

The data presented in 5 and 6 show that the remote past is formed by the final vowel [-a] which is always placed at the end of the verb root. The subject markers [na-], [wa-] and [ka-] receive high tones on the vowel [a]. The surface level in this case has a high tone on the subject-marker vowel [a] making the entire subject marker high toned.

### Immediate Past

The immediate past, which is also classified as the P2 or hesternal, is used with events that have happened in the last few minutes. It is tonally and morphologically realized.

#### (7) Singular

	sm	root	fv	surface	gloss
1 <sup>st</sup>	/ŋ-gon-	il-	e/	[ŋgónile]	I slept
2 <sup>nd</sup>	/o-kon-	il-	e/	[okónile]	you slept
3 <sup>rd</sup>	/a-kon-	il-	e/	[akónile]	he/she slept

#### (8) Plural

	sm	root	fv	surface	gloss
1 <sup>st</sup>	/xuu-	kon-	il- e/	[xukónile]	we slept

2 <sup>nd</sup>	/mu- kon- il- e/	[mukónile]	you slept
3 <sup>rd</sup>	/βa- kon- il- e/	[βakónile]	they slept

The data above in 7 and 8 confirms that the immediate past tense stem's initial vowel is marked with a high tone within the surface level of each paradigm in singular and plural. This is followed up with the suffix [-il-] and [-e] that attaches at the end of the paradigm. The person markers are attached at the initial position just before the root because the entire verbs formed are tensed.

### Future Tense

The future reference is derived diachronically from the modal expression, for example, desirability. It signals that a given situation is located on the time axis after the time of speaking.

Therefore, the future is more speculative because the future prediction that is made can change based on the intervening event and even our conscious intervention. Lubukusu future tense is divided into the following periods; intermediate future, immediate future and remote future.

### Intermediate Future

The intermediate future is also called the near future or the F2. It refers to the events that will happen in the next few days after the time of speaking. It can also mark events that happen several weeks or months after the time of an utterance.

#### (9) Singular

	sm TM root fv	surface	gloss
1 <sup>st</sup>	/e- xa- kon- e/	[exakone]	I will sleep
2 <sup>nd</sup>	/o- xa- kon- e/	[oxakone]	you will sleep
3 <sup>rd</sup>	/a- xa- kon- e/	[axakone]	he/she will sleep

#### (10) Plural

	sm TM root fv	surface	gloss
1 <sup>st</sup>	/xuu- xa- kon- e/	[xuuxakone]	we will sleep
2 <sup>nd</sup>	/mu- xa- kon- e/	[muxakone]	you will sleep
3 <sup>rd</sup>	/ba- xa- kon- e/	[baxakone]	they will sleep

The data presented in 8 and 9 indicate that the intermediate future paradigms are toneless in both the singular and plural forms. This takes the affix [-xa-] meaning that an action will take place some hours after now during the same day. This is followed up by the final vowel [-e] which attaches at the end of the paradigm. The subject markers are always attached before the tense marker [xa-] as an obligatory marker.

### Immediate Future

The immediate future talks about events that will take place very soon (mostly the same day). The immediate future is also referred to us as the F1. It also denotes the occurrence of events that will take place later on the day of speech (Nasiombe, 2000).

#### (11) Singular

	sm TM root fv	surface	gloss
1 <sup>st</sup>	/N/ da- kon- a/	[ndákona]	I will sleep
2 <sup>nd</sup>	/o- la- kon- a/	[olákóná]	you will sleep
3 <sup>rd</sup>	/a- la- kon- a/	[alákona]	he/she will sleep

(12) **Plural**

	<b>sm</b>	<b>TM</b>	<b>root</b>	<b>fv</b>	<b>surface</b>	<b>gloss</b>
1 <sup>st</sup>	/xuu-	la-	kon-	a/	[xuulákona]	we will sleep
2 <sup>nd</sup>	/mu-	la-	kon-	a/	[mulákona]	you will sleep
3 <sup>rd</sup>	/βa-	la-	kon-	a/	[βalákona]	they will sleep

As we observe in 11 and 12 the immediate future is marked using the tense marker [-la-] although the 1<sup>st</sup> person singular takes the affix [-nd-]. The tense marker [-la-] is high toned. The final vowel [-a] is attached at the end of the verbal root.

**Remote Future/Indefinite Future**

The remote future, which is also categorized as F3, informs us that the events are not expected to take place soon. This means that the events will happen in several months or years to come.

(13) **Singular**

	<b>sm</b>	<b>TM</b>	<b>root</b>	<b>fv</b>	<b>surface</b>	<b>gloss</b>
1 <sup>st</sup>	/nd	i-	kon-	a/	[ndikóna]	I will sleep
2 <sup>nd</sup>	/o-	li-	kon-	a/	[olikóna]	you will sleep
3 <sup>rd</sup>	/a-	li-	kon-	a/	[alikóna]	he/shewillsleep

(14) **Plural**

	<b>sm</b>	<b>TM</b>	<b>root</b>	<b>fv</b>	<b>surface</b>	<b>gloss</b>
1 <sup>st</sup>	/xuu-	li-	kon-	a/	[xulikóna]	we will sleep
2 <sup>nd</sup>	/mu-	li-	kon-	a/	[mulikóna]	you will sleep
3 <sup>rd</sup>	/βa-	li-	kon-	a/	[βalikóna]	they will sleep

The data in 13 and 14 indicates that the realization of remote future is through the tense marker

[-li-] that is attached after the subject marker. After attaching the tense marker the final vowel [-a] is placed immediately after the verbal root. The template for the remote future takes the subject marker, tense marker, the verbal root and the final vowel. The remote future bears a slight resemblance with the present tense because in this case the stem's initial vowel is marked with a high tone making it high toned on the surface level.

**Conclusion**

It is observed from the findings that there are three tenses in Lubukusu with the past and the future having subcategorization. The subcategorizations are; the immediate, intermediate and remote past and future. It is only the present tense that is not classified in categories. Just like other Bantu languages, the past and future tenses are classified according to the time lines and limits

It can be conclusively argued that the language is agglutinating in nature despite utilizing a set of high tone patterns. The agglutinative nature is a state of morphological marking realized as prefixes and suffixes as observed from the foregoing data. The tense system in Lubukusu is a state of tone and morphological marking.

Tense is realized through tone and inflectional marking which involves prefixation and suffixation. The subject marker is obligatorily mandatory in a tensed verb. The subject's and the stem's initial vowels are key in the realization of tone in most Lubukusu tensed verbs.

Most tense markers are located in slot 4, which is a tense aspect position on Lubukusu verbal template. Additionally the final vowels are key in the realization of some tense categories as observed from the data hence patterning with slot 4 to mark tense. The present tense is not prefixed or suffixed but realized through a high tone and final vowel [-a].

Lubukusu bears a resemblance with Swahili, which is a narrow Bantu in terms of zero marking for the present. The tense position slot is static in Bantu languages but the final vowel slot alternates from 8 to 9. For example, in Lubukusu, the final vowel is located in slot 8 while in Swahili it takes slot 9.

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Billian Khalayi Otundo  
Moi University

### **Abstract**

Mother tongue influences Second Language (L2) acquisition. The immediate concern of this paper is to unravel distinctive intonational manifestations of mother tongue in the English spoken by speakers whose mother tongue is Lubukusu. This study is rooted in the Transfer theory, where the Bukusu systematically apply aspects of Lubukusu to the English language system. The data was collected by recording spontaneous speech of 26 Lubukusu speakers. The recorded data was transcribed, annotated with a system developed on the basis of Tone and Break Indices (ToBI), acoustically analysed by use of Praat software, and incorporated in discussions to expose the extent of transfer and interlanguage of intonational contours for different types of utterances. The results reveal transfer of mother tongue for declarative questions, yes/no questions and wh-questions. Additionally, there were forms of interlanguage in some questions and statements. Since studies on intonational phonology in Africa have been highly neglected, these results will be a point of reference for scholars veering into this field. The implications of this study include tolerance, acceptance and the importance of intelligibility concerning varieties of English, given the fact that Kenyan English has developed a mixed system with elements of both indigenous mother tongues and the target language - English.

**Keywords:** Mother tongue; Lubukusu; Language transfer; Interlanguage; Intonation

### **Introduction**

It is reasonable to assume that an individual's mother tongue (which is normally the first language) affects how (s)he speaks different languages acquired later. Mutonya (2008) assumed in his study that those who speak English as a second language (L2) in Africa would demonstrate unique characteristics based on their previous language experience. That refers to the speaker's mother tongue or the language that (s)he utilises the most. One of the significant factors that may have a bearing on Kenyan English is the speaker's mother tongue, since phonology, pronunciation, and grammatical processing may be influenced by it<sup>2</sup>. In this article, I draw illustrations from Lubukusu to reveal how mother tongue intonation patterns are systematically applied to utterances in English. Lubukusu is spoken by the Bukusu ethnic group and is one of the several mother tongues in the richly multilingual Republic of Kenya. The Bukusu ethnic group is classified as a Luhya sub-group of Bantu languages who predominantly inhabit the Western geographical region of Kenya. There are at least twenty-three dialects of the Luhya language. Out of all these dialects, speakers of Lubukusu are the most populous at approximately 1.45 million speakers (Kenya National Bureau of Statistics 2019). What is the language contact between Lubukusu and English? In Kenya, English has been maintained as the official language since the country gained its independence in 1963 (Kembo-Sure 1991a: 245). Only until the year 2010 has Kiswahili, the lingua franca of East Africa, gained status as the second official language of Kenya (Constitution of Kenya 2010: 13). This means that, together

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<sup>2</sup> Melchers and Shaw (2003) also state that word stress is often according to the rules of the mother tongue and figurative expressions as well.

the two languages service the media, law and governance. When it comes to the education sector, however, since 1976 the language policy has stipulated that the mother tongue or the language of the `catchment` area (usually Kiswahili or English) be used as the Medium of Instruction (MoI) in Early Childhood Development (ECD) and lower primary grades (1-3). At the same time, the policy stipulates that MT be taught as a subject alongside English and Kiswahili in lower primary grades. This is, nevertheless, far from the reality. The policy instructs that literacy skills are to be taught in all three languages at these levels. After the first three grades of primary school, an abrupt shift is made and English is given dominance as the language of instruction all through to higher education (colleges and universities), and English and Kiswahili are taught as language subjects (Ministry of Education 2003). In this respect, it goes without saying that manifestation of mother tongue in intonation of English is an inevitable phenomenon. Therefore, this article prosodically reveals how the Bukusu systematically transfer intonation contours of Lubukusu to the target language; English. This intention was governed by two research questions: (i) To which extent do the Bukusu transfer mother tongue substrate intonation to utterances in English? (ii) Which forms of interlanguage are present in the utterances in English by the Bukusu; if any?

### **The Phonology of English and Lubukusu**

To tackle the issue of language transfer, we first need to be familiar with the prosody of the mother tongue and the target language. Although literature pertaining to phonology of Lubukusu is sparse, understanding the prosody of both languages is pertinent in order to expound on how the Bukusu exhibit first language transfer or interlanguage in their utterances in English. English is a stress language unlike Lubukusu, which is a tone language, how does intonation reveal itself? Taylor (1993) believes that it is necessary to distinguish between the two terms “intonation” and “tone”. Pike (1948) classifies languages as tone languages, intonation languages and pitch accent languages. In this regard, as sorted by Van der Hulst and Smith (1988), there are those languages which utilise phonological pitch distinctions within the word and those that utilise the phonological pitch distinctions across longer utterances. The former are the tone and pitch accent languages, while the latter are the intonation languages like English (Van der Hulst and Smith 1988), which is the target language of this study. Phonologists agree that almost all languages use both intonation and tone, but in accordance to each language’s cultural needs and characteristic ways. It should be noted, however, that the term “tone language”, is reserved for those languages where word meanings may be distinguished by means of “tone”. Tone can be described with regard to the fundamental frequency (f<sub>0</sub>) of high (H) and low (L). An example of a “tone language” is Lubukusu, where *kuxu*, for example, may have two different meanings, distinguished by two different tones to mean *kúxù* (HL) “grandmother” and *kúxú* (HH) “big piece of firewood.” What makes English an intonation language, however, is the fact that it does not utilise “tone” in this manner. Although tones are used, they are utilised as part of the characteristic intonation patterns of the English language. This is to say, the English language phonological pitch distinctions function entirely on domains larger than the word. Such linguistically relevant pitch contours can stretch over several syllables or words subsequently forming intonation phrases that have pitch accents and boundary tones. To precision, the falling and rising of tones can be sudden or gradual and, therefore, may be grouped together in various combinations (rising-falling-rising, falling-rising-falling among others). Let us consider this example of a rising-falling-rising intonation contour as displayed on figure 1.

Adopting Beckman and Elam’s (1997) Tone and Break Indices (ToBI) annotation system, a rising-falling-rising contour is identified as L\*+H L- H%, the “scooped” accent with a low-high boundary tone. For illustration, the example “Stein’s not a bad man”, was used from Beckman and Elam (1997) and acoustically transcribed using Prosogram script (Mertens 2004) for Praat software (Boersma and Weenink 2009) as displayed on figure 1.

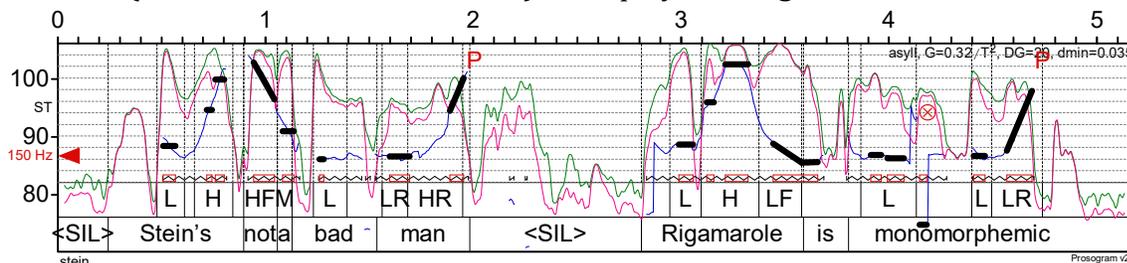


Figure 1: Example of Scooped Accent for *Stein’s not a Bad Man* and *Rigamarole is Monomorphemic*

It is prudent to note that pitch level, pitch movement, and prominence are all relative values. A practical explanation is given by Ranalli (2002) that, “one speaker’s “mid” pitch could be another speaker’s “low” pitch”. Values do vary from speaker to speaker and in conformity to the situational context (Ranalli 2002). For this reason, intonational transfer and interlanguage in this paper is discussed based on pitch movement contours. For clarity, the prosodic structure associated with the utterance of a *wh*-question “who’s it for?” might be represented as on Figure 2.

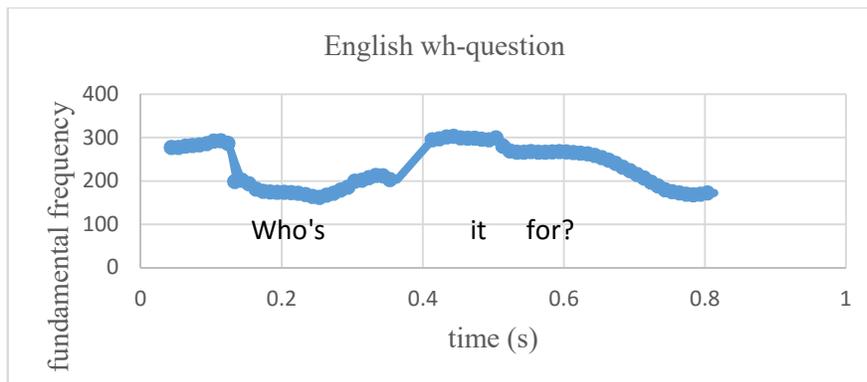


Figure 2: Example of Rising-Falling Contour for “*Who’s it for?*”

The example of a “rising-falling” intonation contour as displayed was made when uttering a *wh*-question adapted from the ToBI manual (Beckman and Elam 1997) and acoustically transcribed using Praat software (Boersma and Weenink 2009). Brazil in Kumaki (2003) asserts that the “rise-fall” tone indicates the speaker’s intention of controlling the discourse, and his/her expectation of a certain reaction from the hearer. This further means that the listener has information that the speaker is lacking (Kumaki 2003). Moreover, Makalela states that there is a remarkable distinction between English and African languages with reference to intonation, prominence and stress (Makalela 2007). He further quotes Kleinhenz and Wissing (2000) who illustrate that Bantu languages in South Africa have a phrase prosodic system so that they are classified as syllable-timed rather than stress-timed (the case of Standard English varieties) languages (Makalela 2007). For annotation purposes, the model of intonational structure of English developed by Beckman and Pierrehumbert (1986) was utilised. In this model, intonation contours are analysed as sequences of high (H) and low (L) tones.

These tones are categorised as one of three types: pitch accents, phrasal tones, and boundary tones. The pitch accent is associated with the stressed syllable of a phrase and this stressed syllable receives pitch prominence. According to Beckman and Pierrehumbert (1986) English has six types of pitch accent. These are shown on Table 1:

Table 1: Six Types of English Pitch Accents

Pitch accent	Description
H*	Peak accent
L*	Low accent
L*+H	Scooped accent
L+H*	Rising peak accent
H*+L	Fall from peak accent
H+L*	Fall onto a low accent

Source: Pierrehumbert and Hirschberg (1990)

Since transcription of the data for this study borrowed from the ToBI system, it is advised by Beckman and Elam (1997) that analysis of the data in terms of the intonational categories in Pierrehumbert's system can recover each H\*+L tone by searching for a downstepped !H\* or !H- marked immediately after a H\* (or !H\*) accent. For example, a plain "hat pattern" (H\* H\* L- L%) or a "downstepped hat" (H\* !H\* L-L%), which would be transcribed as H\*+L H\* L- L% in Pierrehumbert's system.

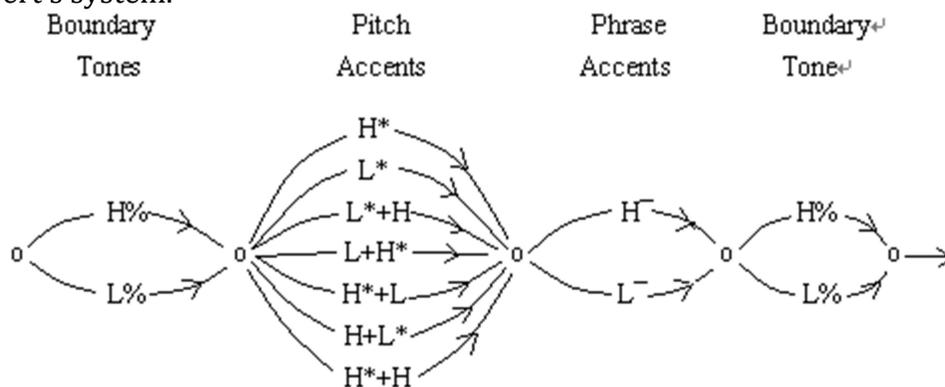


Figure 3: *The Finite-State Grammar of English Intonational Phrase in Pierrehumbert (1980)*

In addition to pitch accents, English also has boundary tones which mark the end of an intonational phrase and phrasal tones which cover the space between the last pitch accent and the boundary tone as on Figure 3. In English there are two types of phrasal tones (L-, H-) and two types of boundary tones (L%, H%). Intonational phrases must have at least one pitch accent (but they may have more). Under this model, Phonological Phrases can have more than one Pitch Accent. When this occurs, the last pitch accent is generally the most prominent and is labelled as the nuclear pitch accent. The main focus of analysis in this study is on nuclear accent placement, nuclear pitch contour and final boundary tones.

### Tone in Lubukusu

Now that we are familiar with the phonology of English, let us expound on how Lubukusu, which is a tone language, manifests itself. Lubukusu has at least a high tone (´) and a low tone (˘), and possibly a falling tone (ˆ) as well. The high tone is considerably rarer than the low tone,

and often only occurs once in a word (Lenski 2002: 2). This somehow resembles the English system of stressed vowels, although Lubukusu tone differs from English stress in that it appears to be “correlated mainly to pitch, less to amplitude, and not at all to vowel length (which is independent and contrastive)” (*ibid.*: 2). As noted by Austen (2003), sentence level intonation in Bukusu is primarily determined by its syntactic structures and the tone patterns of nominals are context sensitive (*ibid.*: 91). He further states that there are two distinct phonological processes, which contribute to the phonetic rendering of a sentence; terracing and crescendo. These two affect the pitch of high tones. Terracing, which Austen (*ibid.*: 91) has defined as the lowering in pitch of a high tone following a low tone in a high-low-high sequence and crescendo, which as the term implies, the pitch of successive high tones becomes slightly higher than the pitch of preceding high tone syllable (*ibid.*: 91). Basing on Austen’s (*ibid.*) observation, examples are shown using Prosogram script in Praat to reveal how crescendo and terracing can acoustically be referenced. An instance of crescendo is:

**Example 1:** /Sàsísómíá táà/ “He no longer teaches.”

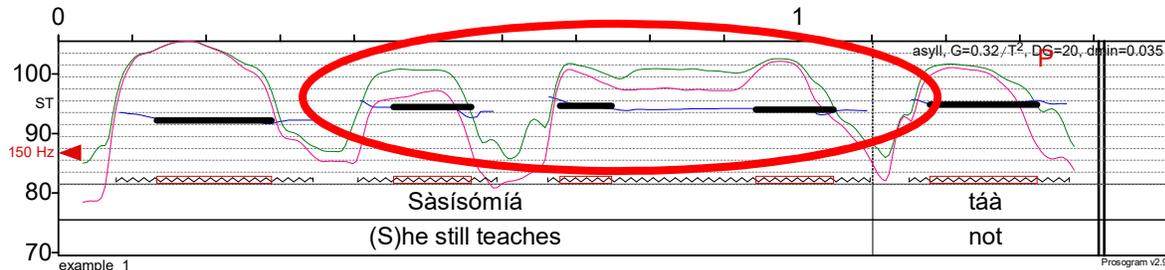


Figure 4: Lubukusu crescendo

According to Austen (*ibid.*: 267), crescendo is not confined within word boundaries but is sensitive to the relative pitches of the preceding word:

**Example 2:** /ʃásórélí ʃáʃófú ʃè:lúúxè/ “The blind boys ran away.”

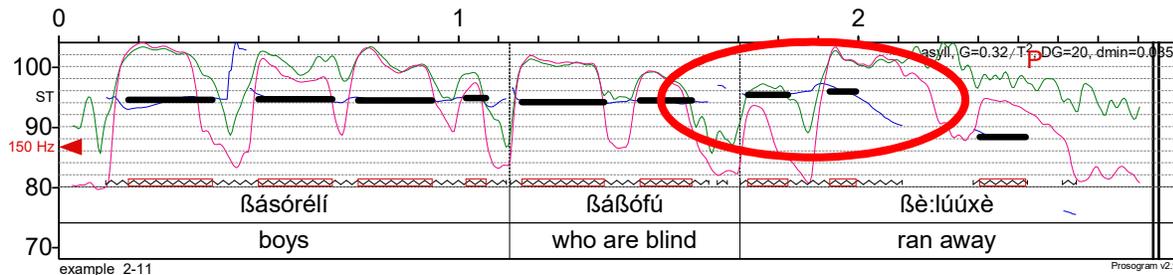


Figure 5: Lubukusu Crescendo not Word-bound

From the example, illustrated on Figure 5, it is apparent when there is a series of three or more words with uninterrupted sequences of high tones, then there is no crescendo:

**Example 3:** /Ómúxàsí kàéélè ʃásórélí ʃáʃófú címbákó címbià/

“The woman gave the blind boys new hoes.”

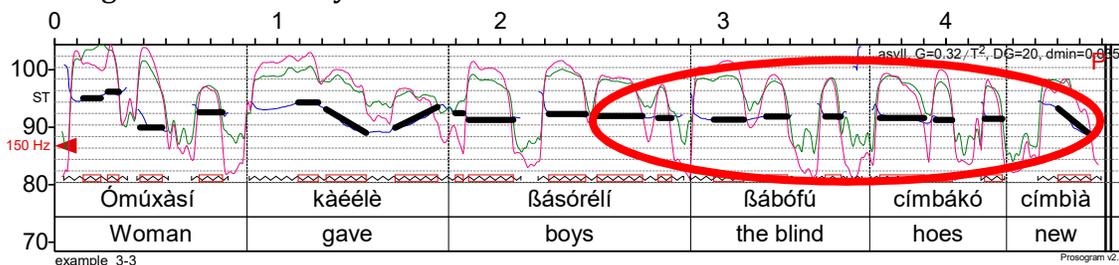


Figure 6: Lubukusu Terracing

Terracing, which corresponds to the known downdrift, does not function like crescendo. It is limited to phonological word boundaries. Thus, only if a word final boundary “between words is deleted in the fusion process will the tone sequences of one-word condition the terracing of the high tones of another”:

                                  /Ómúsórélí àxáxálè ényámá nèndè kúmúβánó/  
 Terracing           /Ómúsórélí àxáxálè ényámá nèndè kúmúβánó/  
 High spread       /Ómúsórélí àxáxálè ényámá nèndè kúmúβánó/  
 Fusions            /Ómúsórélá:xáxálé:nyámá nèndè kúmúβánó/

Consequently, for the syllables marked during the derivation subject to terracing, the high tones are pronounced at a relatively lower pitch level than the preceding highs:

                                  /Ómúsórélá:xáxálé:nyámá nèndè kúmúβánó/  
 “boy he will cut meat with knife” [direct translation]  
 “The boy will cut the meat with a knife.”

If, on the other hand, the word final boundary is retained despite the existence of a HLH tone sequence, terracing will not occur:

                                  /βásórélí βàxáxálè kúmúkáátí/  
 “boy he will cut bread with knife” [direct translation]  
 “The boy will cut the bread with a knife.”

Austen (*ibid.*: 268) mentions that “although the interplay between syntax and phonology contributes to the intonation of a sentence, the processes of crescendo and terracing determines the phonetic rendering of the sentence”. Although Austen (1974) in Miner (1991) names dissimilation as one of the processes of tone formation in Lubukusu that is morphologically conditioned, he does not give detailed formalisation of it. Dissimilation ensures that the infinitive, present participle, and the affirmative forms of the present, remote future, near past, and imperative tenses realise at surface level a “polar” tonal contrast between the underlying tone of the root and the first syllable of the extension. The second mora of the verb root will count as an extension. If the verb root is underlyingly L-toned, a H-tone will be inserted by this rule and associated to the following mora. If the verb root is underlyingly H-toned, this rule will apply vacuously (since all verbal extensions are underlyingly L-toned) (Miner 1991: 19-20). Worth noting, in Lubukusu, boundary tone effects begin with a pause and are then generalised to smaller domains as evidenced in Hyman’s (2007) discussion on High Tone Anticipation (HTA):

- |  |                                       |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| a. /xù-lá-rè <u>m</u> -è <u>r</u> -à <u>n</u> -à/                        | “we will cut for each other”          |
| b. /xù-lá-rè <u>m</u> -é <u>r</u> -à <u>n</u> -à.../ + /músì <u>l</u> ò/ | “we will cut for each other at night” |
| c. /xù-lá-rè <u>m</u> -é <u>r</u> -á <u>n</u> -á/ + H%                   | “will we cut for each other?”         |

In the example, the underlined vowels take a peak accent (H\*), while non-underlined vowels are underlyingly toneless (*ibid.*). Hyman (2007) explains that in (a) we notice the effects of two-tone rules in Lubukusu: First, the last rightmost H\* is deleted before the pause. This affects the first person plural subject prefix xù- in the left column and the verb rém- “cut” in the right. As seen in xù-lá-rèm-èr-àn-à, where the H\* of xù- is not deleted, surviving high tones shift one vowel to the right (*ibid.*). He further states that the forms in (b) show the same verb forms as they are realised before músìlò “at night”: Subsequently, making the high tones on the verbs to all survive and shift one vowel to the right. In (c) he notes that the interrogative high boundary tone (H%) links to all of available toneless vowels. Hyman states that the contrast between (b) and (c) suggests that High Tone Anticipation (HTA) originates from intonational H% in

Lubukusu. In other cases (d), the *-xo* clitic may also be used in interrogatives as a means of making a question less direct, in this case serving a pragmatic function.

d. /xù-lá-rèm-ér-án-á- xó/ + H% “will we cut for each other?”

In his work, Mutonyi (2000) disputes for example, Austen (1974) and De Blois (1975), who traditionally indicated that prosodically, Lubukusu long vowels were separate phonemes. Instead, he (Mutonyi 2000: 145) treats length as a suprasegmental aspect that exists independently of segmental material, where length distinguishes between long and short vowels. He (*ibid.*) gives examples like:

e. [i] /xúusila/ “to be silent” and [ii] /xuusiila/ “to swell”  
 [e] /xuumela/ “to sprout” and [ee] /xúumeela/ “to get drunk”  
 [a] /xuumala/ “to finish” and [aa] /xuumaala / “to smear”  
 [o] /xúurora/ “to pluck vegetable” and [oo] /xúuroora/ “to dream”  
 [u] /xúusuna/ “to jump” and [uu] /xúusuuna/ “to become barren”

Lubukusu vowel sequences also undergo three processes of affixation; glide formation, coalescence, and deletion (Mutonyi 2000: 145). Glide formation changes any [u] or [i] to [w] or [j] before other vowels, for example, /luluika/ to /lúluwiika/ “horn” and /kimiaka/ to /kímyaaka/ “years”. There are also instances of glide formation across word boundaries, for example, /βáxasí aβo/ to /βàaxasjaaβo/ “those women” and /kúmuumú áandze/ to /kùmuumwàandze/ “sunshine outside”. Although coalescence is rare, it occurs when two vowels merge into one vowel that has features of both input vowels but not identical to them (Mutonyi 2000: 158). He (*ibid.*) gives an example of [i] and [o] to yield [u] /ómuxasí ómulayi/ to /ómuxasúumulaji/ “a good woman” among others. The last process, deletion, is where a non-high vowel before another vowel is deleted, for instance, /ómuxaaná akálama/ to /ómuxaanáakálama/ “a girl looks up”. Mutonyi (2000: 151) mentions that the general tendency for non-high vowels before other vowels is deletion rather than gliding as instances of [o] and [e]. Mutonyi (*ibid.*) further indicates that these three processes culminate in the compensatory lengthening of the remaining vowel<sup>3</sup>. In some cases, Lubukusu vowels also undergo shortening in contexts where lengthening fails despite having suitable conditions for it to occur, for example word-final shortening, /xuxulia/ to /xúulja/ “to eat” (Mutonyi 2000: 156). Regarding consonants, those in Lubukusu only appear word initially or medially and at the final position of individual morphemes since the language has no closed syllables (*ibid.*: 165). Further, addressing tone in the verb structure of Lubukusu, Mutonyi (2000: 221-222) indicates that the verbs are either underlyingly H(igh) toned or toneless, where a toneless verb surfaces without a H tone in its infinitive form, for example, /xusaβa/ - /xuusaβa/ “to beg”. Then again, a high-toned verb exhibits one H tone on its prefix, and a second one on the stem in case the stem is at least two syllables long, like in, /xusama/- /xúusamá/ “to bark” (*ibid.*). The lack of H tone on the prefix in toneless infinitives suggests that the infinitive prefix in H toned infinitives originates in the stem (*ibid.*: 222). This predication is independently confirmed by adding an object prefix to the toneless verbs to produce, for instance, /xumusaβa/- /xúumusáβá/ “to beg her” (*ibid.*). Regarding high toned verbs with object prefixes, like, /xumuβukula/- /xúumuβukúlá/ “to take him/her”. Mutonyi (2000: 223) states that the H that comes with the object prefix fails to surface in H toned verbs due to the deletion process that

<sup>3</sup> See Mutonyi (2000) for details into the seven contexts of vowel lengthening including; before nasal-consonant clusters, during prefix hapology, after epenthetic [y] in imperative constructions among others.

eliminates the H. He (*ibid.*) also mentions four other tenses that reveal the same pattern:

f. The immediate future	Toneless	/alasaʃa/-/alasaʃa/ “s/he’ll beg”
	H toned	/alabama/-/alásamá/ “s/he’ll bark”
The intermediate future	Toneless	/axasaʃe/-/axasaʃe/ “s/he’ll beg”
	H tones	/axasame/-/axásamé/ “s/he’ll bark”
The inceptive	Toneless	/aasaʃa/-/aasaʃa/ “there s/he begs”
	H toned	/aasama/-/áásamá/ “there s/he barks”
The recent perfective	Toneless	/aasaʃile/-/aasaʃile/ “s/he has begged”
	H toned	/aasamile/-/áásamílé/ “s/he has barked”

Besides tense, tone assignment is sensitive to two other factors (Mutonyi 2000: 224), which are (a) the underlying tone of the verb and (b) presence or absence of an object prefix:

g. The immediate future	Toneless	/alalusaʃa/-/alálusáʃá/ “s/he’ll beg for it”
	H toned	/alamusaba/-/alámusabá/ “s/he’ll beg him/her”
The intermediate future	Toneless	/axalusaʃe/-/axálusáʃé/ “s/he’ll beg for it”
	H toned	/axamusabe/-/axámusabé/ “s/he’ll beg him/her”
The inceptive	Toneless	/aasaʃa/-/áálusáʃá/ “there s/he begs”
	H toned	/aasaba/-/áámusabá/ “there s/he begs him/her”
The recent perfective	Toneless	/aalusaʃile/-/áálusáʃílé/ “s/he has begged for it”
	H toned	/aamusabile/-/áámusabílé/ “s/he has begged him/her”

Mutonyi (*ibid.*) has categorised these tenses, including the infinitive, as Class One tenses<sup>4</sup>. In Lubukusu, tone markings are also assigned to noun structures. The language has a general rule that assigns a H tone to any word that is followed by another word (Mutonyi 2000: 265). In noun phrases and nouns that are modified by a relative clause or prepositional phrase, the phrasal H tone docks to the preprefix of a noun if it is toneless, has a preprefix and is followed by a “strong” determiner (*ibid.*). Lubukusu nouns, thus, take two rules of H association; Final H Insertion and Preprefix H Insertion. Final H insertion occurs in the following examples (*ibid.*: 267<sup>5</sup>):

Toneless	H toned
h. /omulosi/ “a witch”	/ómuxasi/ “a woman”
/kumulilo/ “fire”	/kúmuxono/ “a hand/arm”
/lulwiiki/ “door”	/lúlwiika/ “a horn”

These nouns keep their tones before a toneless word, as follows (*ibid.*: 268):

Toneless Noun + Toneless Modifier	H Toned Noun + Toneless Modifier
i. /omulosi mulala/ “one witch”	/ómuxasi mulala/ “one woman”
/kumulilo mulala/ “one fire”	/kúmuxono mulala/ “one hand/arm”
/lulwiiki luusiro/ “heavy door”	/lúlwiika lulala/ “one horn”

Nevertheless, a toneless noun acquires a string of H tones covering the whole word when it is followed by a H toned modifier and a H toned noun reflects an additional H on the last syllable as shown in the examples (*ibid.*: 268):

Toneless Noun + H Toned Modifier	H Toned Noun + H Toned Modifier
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<sup>4</sup> Refer to Mutonyi (2000) for insights into the three main verb classes, their high tone derivations and application.

<sup>5</sup> I slightly edited some of Mutonyi’s (2000) transcriptions used as examples in this article for phonetic consistency.

j. /ómúlósí ómurafu / “a fierce witch” /ómuxasí ómurafu/ “fierce woman”  
 /kúmúlíló kúmukali/ “much fire” /kúmuxonó kúmukali/ “a big hand/arm”  
 /lúlwííkí lúuʒoofu/ “big door” /lúlwiiká lúukali/ “a big horn”

On Preprefix H Insertion, Mutonyi (2000: 282) mentions that such a rule exists and that it targets the left edge of the word in contrast to the Final H Insertion. In Lubukusu, it is assumed that the unassociated H tone docks to the leftmost syllable of a word that precedes a demonstrative in case the targeted syllable is toneless (*ibid*: 285)<sup>6</sup>. A few examples given are:

Toneless Noun + Demonstrative

k. /ʒáalosí ʒano/ “these witches”  
 /kímililo kino/ “these fires”  
 /lúlwiika luno/ “this horn”

The rules for Final H Insertion and Preprefix H insertion are in a disjunctive relationship, since only one of them can apply in a given context (Mutonyi 2000: 291). This means that the phrasal H tone is placed at the left edge of a word or on the final syllable (*ibid.*). Nonetheless, Final H Insertion can never apply to contexts that fit the specifications of Preprefix H Insertion, even in cases where Preprefix H Insertion has failed to apply (*ibid.*).

### **On mother tongue influence**

It is crucial to note that English(es) in postcolonial contexts tend to be learned after a preexisting mother tongue has been acquired. Due to this, issues of transfer and influence on the “new” language cannot be ignored. Referring to previous studies (for example, Hancock and Angogo 1982; Schmied 1991), there exist basic patterns of “Africanisation” of vowel systems. This study assumed an existence of basic patterns of “Africanisation” of intonation patterns. Of course, apart from mother tongue transfer, there are other factors that may influence L2 intonation, for instance, interindividual differences and hypercorrection, which are important but not the focus of this study. Let it be noted, however, that Lubukusu phonology is discussed here for purposes of revealing its intonational distinctness and not for direct comparison to English. This is because Lubukusu and English have too different fundamental language rules and systems of sentence construction for their intonation structures to be directly compared. Some inevitable aspects of translation make it problematic to directly compare the intonation patterns of Lubukusu (L1) to that of English (L2). For instance, aspects like the syntactic structure, word length and sentence length change in the course of translation. When these aspects are not considered and translation is done word for word, it consequently renders it almost impossible to retain the exact meaning as intended. Despite these factors, the intonation of utterances in this study is addressed in terms of the substrate influence that may arise from Lubukusu L1. Odlin (1989: 118) describes intonation as “one of the crucial parts of language transfer which foreign language teaching strategies seem not to have taken seriously”. Regarding this statement, the Transfer theory is foundational to comprehending second language (L2) acquisition processes. Transfer from L1 to L2 reveals why Bukusu non-native speakers of English rarely sound native-like in the target language. This theory posits that non-native speakers transfer parts of their L1’s phonological structure into their L2 speech, giving

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<sup>6</sup> Mutonyi (2000) gives a discussion on whether this rule can be expanded to other categories besides demonstratives.

rise to an interlanguage with pronunciation (including intonation) that interplay elements of both the L1 and L2.

### **Methodology**

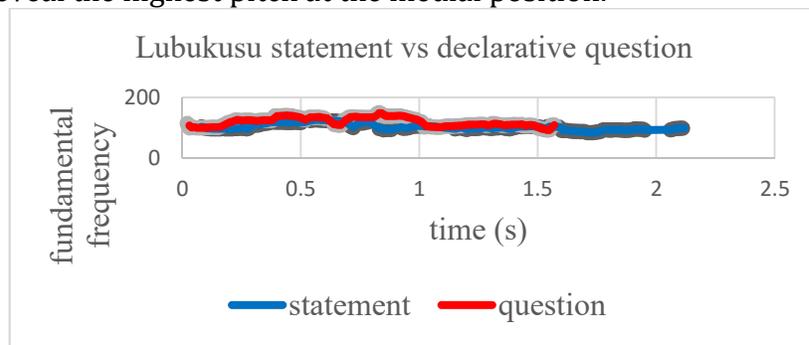
To achieve the aim of this study, suitable research methods were applied, where urban areas were targeted since they harbor the educated who often speak English. Moreover, both urban and rural areas were targeted for institutions of higher learning, since the language of instruction is, as already mentioned, mainly English. Depending on the location, the following were targeted: hospitals, police stations, government offices, among others. Purposive sampling was used and applied to the target population to get subjects who speak English and the mother tongue in question. The study focused on subjects who were currently living in Kenya and had gone through the Kenyan education system up to tertiary level. This is because graduates “from university are almost undistinguishable from speakers of International English, except for their pronunciation” (Seidel 2004: 4). The subject sample was limited to those who spoke English and Lubukusu. Kiswahili was not necessary, although it was expected that all subjects spoke this language by virtue of it being the lingua franca (Nabea 2009: 122) of East Africa. Therefore, the fact that all subjects spoke Kiswahili, it was dismissed as a potential variable for this study. There were twenty-four (24) females and twenty-four (24) male Lubukusu speakers. These subjects had attained tertiary/higher level of education, with an age range of between twenty-five (25) to sixty-eight (68) years and an average of 40.95 years. They had varied occupations, with majority working as administrators or secretaries in the formal sector.

To get the data, subjects were involved in a conversation with the researcher and recorded using a digital voice recorder (Olympus WS-321M). The whole conversations of subjects were transcribed and analysed by the researcher by way of highlighting and selecting only the relevant types of utterances for this study. Both short and long utterances were used from each of the forty-eight (48) subjects. These sentences were transferred into the Praat software version 5.1.05 (Boersma and Weenink 2009) for analysis. Annotation on the basis of Beckman and Elam (1997) Tone and Break Indices (ToBI) was adopted. ToBI provides a method for marking high and low tonal targets in a sentence and distinguishing the varying combinations that may occur. The labelling of intonation patterns was done using a combination of auditory analysis and visual inspection of fundamental frequency traces. Although the intonational phonology model, also known as autosegmental-metrical model of intonation, has not been described for Lubukusu, it was preferred in the annotation because it specifies only distinctive tonal events which are specific to each language or dialect and syllables with no tonal target to receive the pitch value by the interpolation of adjacent target tones. This model of intonation has also been applied to Japanese (Pierrehumbert and Beckman 1988) and Korean (Jun 1993), and has been expanded to many other languages including German (Grice, Baumann and Benz Müller 2005) and Greek (see Jun 2005 for a similar analysis of seven other languages). The categorical nature of this model makes it possible for linguists to study the role of intonation in linguistics and to compare intonation across languages as also opted in this study. For this study where both short and long utterances have been used, to determine whether an utterance has mother tongue influence, only the general intonation contour and terminal pattern at the boundary tone were considered. This is sufficient to distinguish an utterance from being target-like. The results are presented in twofold; evidence of L1 transfer and

interlanguage forms. Given the nature of this research, it was impossible to have exact same sentence utterances from spontaneous speech by the subjects in spite of a somewhat guided dialogue session between the researcher and the subjects. The inclusion of open-ended questions during the dialogue session was suitable for spontaneous speech, which yielded varied utterances that had almost similar structures. These were suitable as supportive evidence of the range of intonation patterns yielded by the speakers to depict transfer and forms of interlanguage.

### Lubukusu Terminal Fall for Declarative Questions

In Lubukusu, declarative questions take a much higher pitch at the beginning of the utterance, unlike in statements as shown on Figure 7 for “*Seli ata eopareszeni ye bung’ali ta*” “It’s not really an operation at all?” uttered as a declarative question and as a statement. Unlike in *wh*-questions, they reveal the highest pitch at the medial position.



Declarative question: *Seli ata eopareszeni ye bung’ali ta?*

Statement: *Seli ata eopareszeni ye bung’ali ta.*

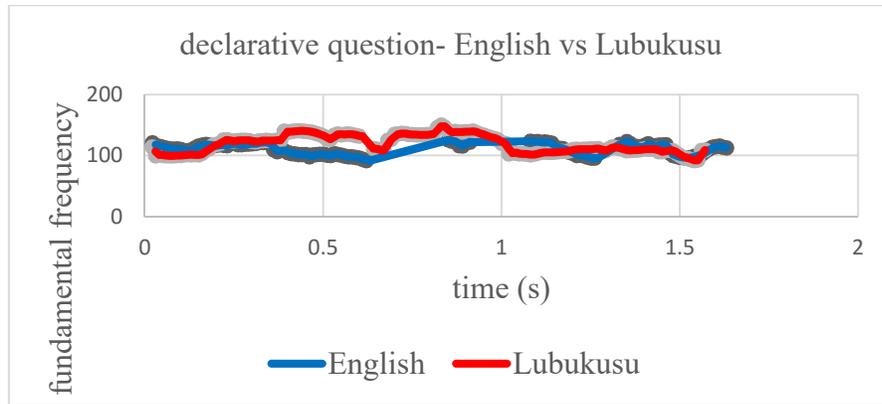
Figure 7: F0 Contour for Lubukusu Statement and Declarative Question

Table 2 shows the range of intonation patterns produced by the Bukusu in the course of uttering declarative questions.

Table 2: Intonation Patterns Produced by Bukusu ESL Speakers in Declarative Questions

Prenuclear	Nuclear Accent	Final Boundary Tone	Weight (Frequency)	Stylisation
	H*	L%	76% (73)	
H*	L*H	H%	20% (19)	
H*L H* H* L	H*	L%	4% (4)	

Evidence of transfer of this intonation patterns is seen on Figure 8 for the translated utterance “It’s not really an operation at all?”



Lubukusu: *Seli ata eopareseni ye bung'ali ta?*  
 H\* !H\* H\*L L%

English: "It's not really an operation at all?"  
 H\*L H\*H\*L H\* L%

Figure 8: F0 Contours for Declarative Question in English and Lubukusu

In English, declarative questions tend to end with a terminal rise. An example adopted from ToBI (Beckman and Elam 1997) is mapped on Figure 9.

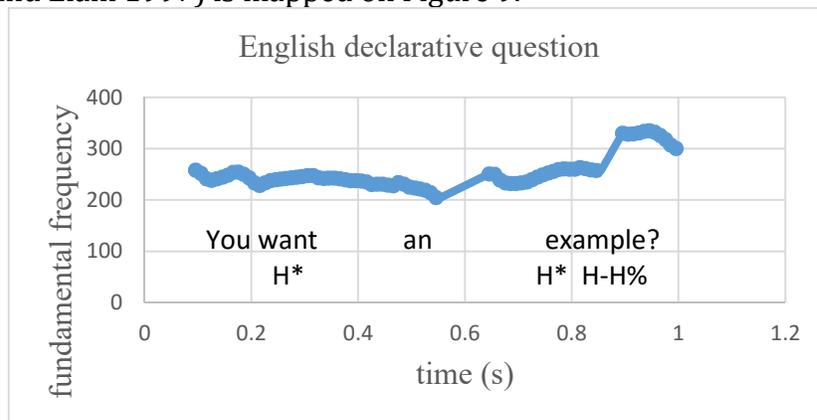


Figure 9: F0 Contour for Declarative Question in English

There were 20% of the instances where Bukusu speakers uttered the English declarative question with its target-like contour. An example is shown on Figure 10 for the utterance "It's not really an operation at all?" with a terminal rise.

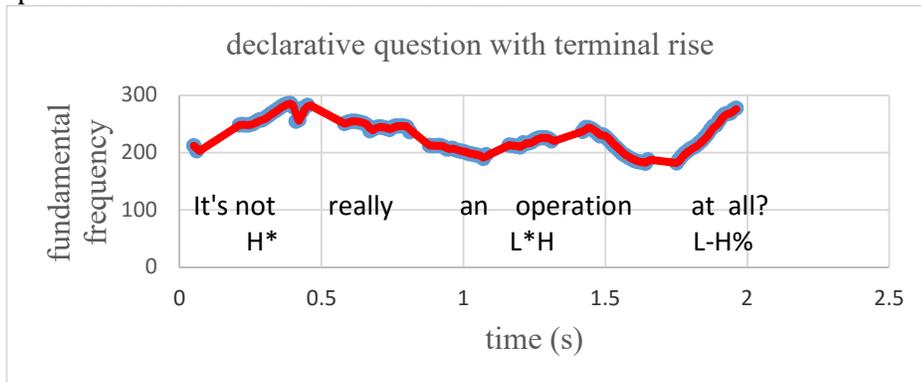


Figure 10: F0 Contour for Declarative Question by Lubukusu Speakers

However, there were 80% of instances where Bukusu non-native speakers of English transfer from Lubukusu the final fall for declarative questions in English. An example is shown on Figure 11 for “It’s not really an operation at all?”

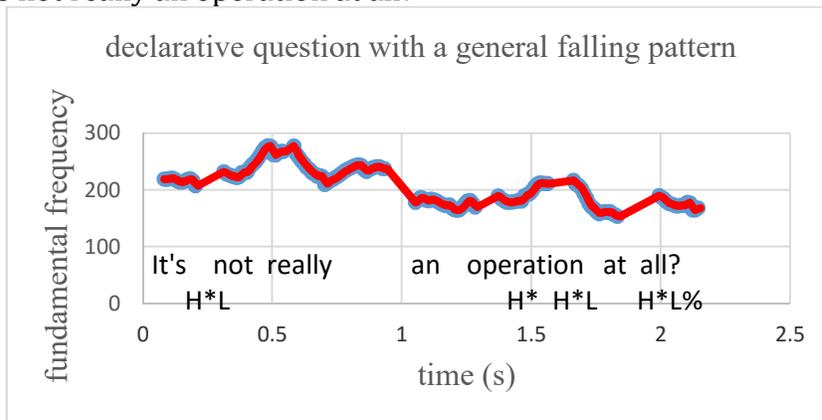


Figure 11: F0 Contour for Declarative Question with Terminal Fall by Bukusu ESL Speakers

**Lubukusu terminal fall for yes/no questions**

In Lubukusu, yes/no questions take a general terminal fall as shown on Figure 12.

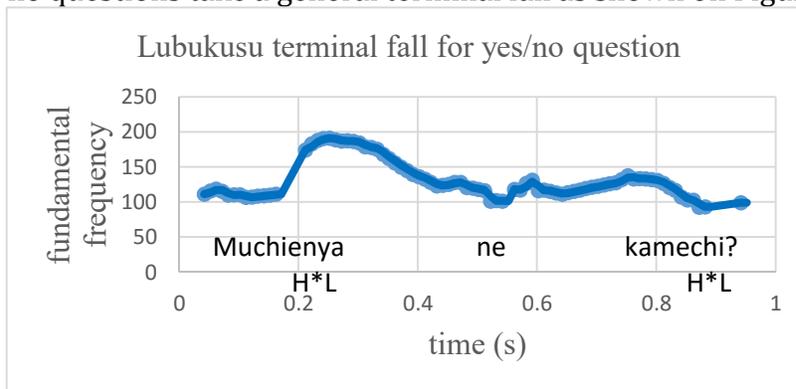


Figure 12: Lubukusu Terminal Fall for Yes/No Question

The terminal fall illustrated here for “muchienya ne kamechi?” translated from the source text “Do you want them with water?”.

Table 3: Range of intonation patterns produced by Bukusu ESL speakers in yes/no questions

Prenuclear	Nuclear Accent	Final Boundary Tone	Weight (Frequency)	Stylisation
H*	L*H	H%	38% (36)	
	L*	H%	35% (34)	
H*	H*	L%	13% (12)	
	L*H	H%	10% (10)	
H*L	L*	H%	4% (4)	

This contour was also applied in 13% of instances by Bukusu in other yes/no questions in English. An example is reflected on Figure 13.

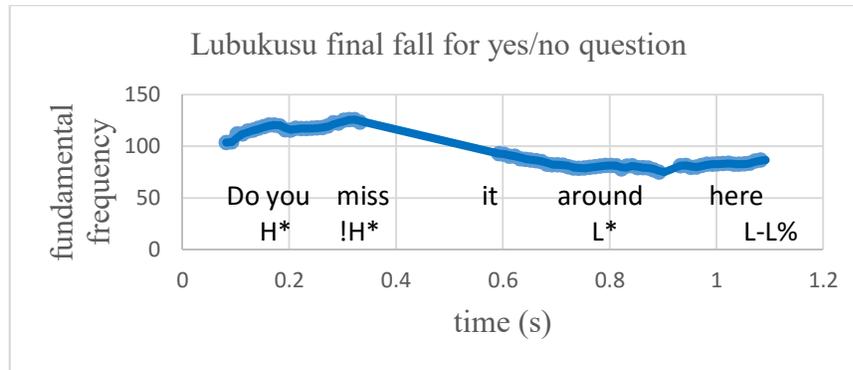


Figure 13: Example of Lubukusu Speakers' Falling Tone at Terminal Position

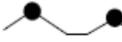
There were 13% of transfer instances, where the Bukusu produced a final fall regardless of the fact that Pierrehumbert (1980: 16, 262) describes yes/no questions in English, as having a rise-plateau-rise. She shows a contour pattern which is commonly used on yes/no questions, where the pitch accent is low, then the contour rises, makes a plateau, and then rises again to a high tone. This rise-plateau-rise is usually seen in the question if the contour is long enough. An example of an unmarked contour for yes/no questions is plotted on Figure 14 as adopted from the ToBI manual (Beckman and Elam 1997).



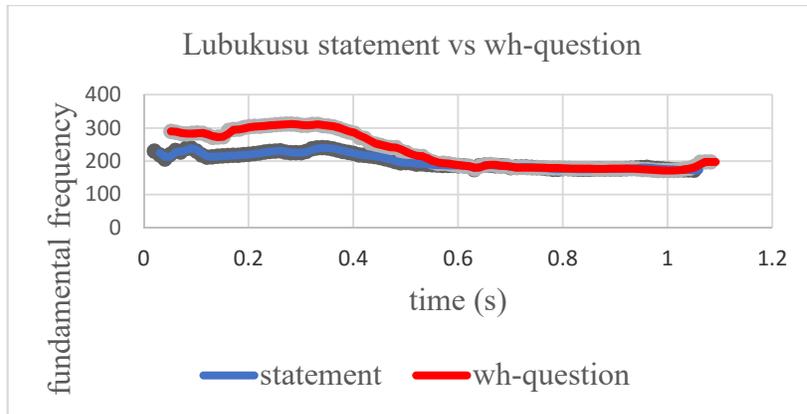
Figure 14: F0 Contour for Yes/No Question in English

#### 4.2 Lubukusu falling contour with nuclear on *wh*-word for *wh*-questions

Table 4: Intonation patterns produced by Bukusu ESL speakers in *wh*-questions

Prenuclear	Nuclear	Final Boundary Tone	Weight (Frequency)	Stylisation
	H*	L%	61% (59)	
H*	L*H	H%	17% (16)	
H*	H*	L%	9% (9)	
H*L	H*	L%	7% (7)	
H*	L*	H%	5% (5)	

Findings from the empirical data reveal that in Lubukusu, the fundamental frequency is generally higher at the beginning of questions compared to statements. An example is illustrated on Figure 15 for the difference between the intonation pattern of a *wh*-question and a statement.

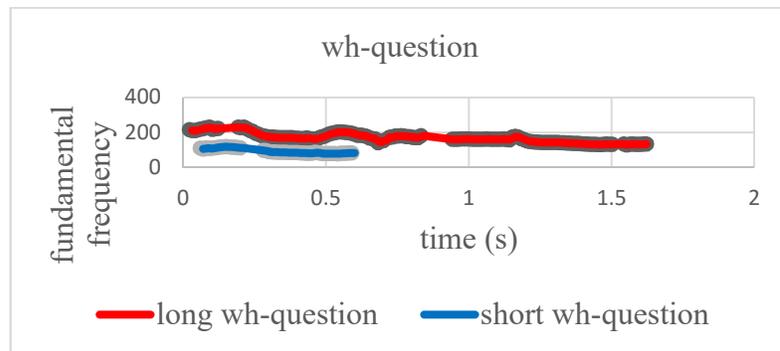


Statement: *xù-lá-rèm-ér-àn-à*. “We will cut for each other.”

Wh-question: *xù-lá-rèm-ér-án-á*? “Will we cut for each other?”

Figure 15: F0 Contour for Lubukusu Statement and Wh-Question

This general falling intonation contour was applied by 61% of Lubukusu speakers for their *wh*-question intonation in English. This means that the *wh*-word at the initial position received the nuclear accent. An illustration is made on Figure 16 for a long and short utterance by Bukusu ESL speakers.

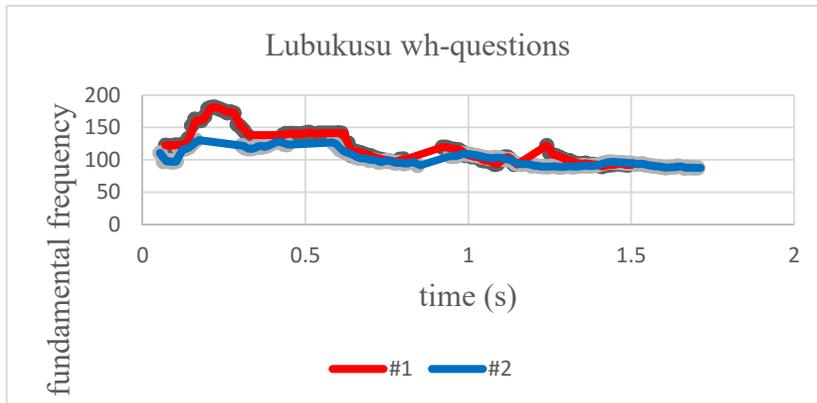


Long: “What will we do afterward?”

Short: “How old are you?”

Figure 16: F0 Contours for Short and Long Wh-Questions in English by the Bukusu

Figure 17 shows two *wh*-questions in Lubukusu. Notice the similarity of the intonation pattern with the English long utterance “What will we do afterward?” translated to Lubukusu “*Xulaxola sina anyuma ao?*”



#1: *Eli nesifuno sina xuiwe?* Back Translation (BT): “It is of what meaning to you?”

Source Text (ST): “What does it mean to you?”  
 #2: Xulaxola sina anyuma ao? BT: “We will do what afterward?”  
 ST: “What will we do afterward?”

Figure 17: F0 Contours for Lubukusu *Wh*-Question Translated from English

There is, therefore, evidence that the Bukusu generally apply a falling contour from Lubukusu for *wh*-questions in English. They further assign the nuclear accent to the *wh*-word at the initial position regardless of the fact that *wh*-words like *sina* (what), *nanu* (who), *wae* (where) do not always take the initial position in Lubukusu or may not even appear in some cases as shown in the aforementioned examples.<sup>7</sup> In English, however, the *wh*-word does not receive the nuclear accent, thus, the general contour for *wh*-questions is a fall-rise-fall. An example is shown on Figure 18.

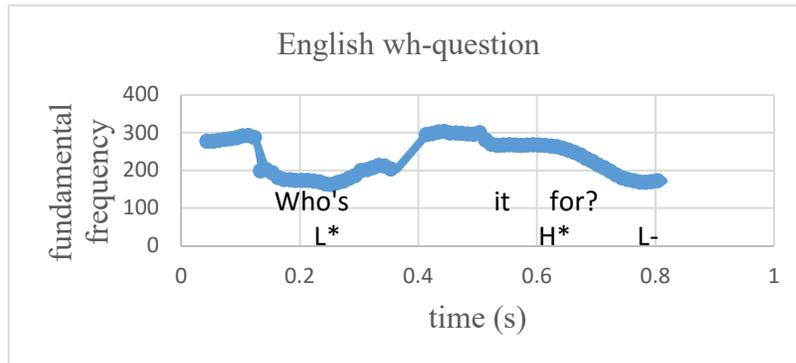


Figure 18: F0 Contour for English *Wh*-Question

### 4.3 Manifestations of Interlanguage Intonation

This Section presents evidence of interlanguage forms, where interlanguage patterns imply those contours that were neither target-like nor native-like.

#### 4.3.1 Lubukusu Terminal Rise for *Wh*-questions

In Lubukusu, *wh*-questions take a falling intonation contour. The fundamental frequencies for *wh*-questions in this language are generally higher at the initial position when compared to statements. *Wh*-questions in English have also been described specifically as having a final (also referred to as terminal) falling tone (Pierrehumbert and Hirshberg 1990). They state that “the H\* L-L% tune used with simple declaratives is also frequently used with *wh*-questions” (*ibid*: 284). The terminal fall is the target-like contour for *wh*-questions. An example of an unmarked *wh*-question contour with a fall-rise-fall in English adopted from ToBI manual (Beckman and Elam 1997) is mapped on Figure 19.

<sup>7</sup> See Wasike (2007) on the three ways of forming *wh*-questions in Lubukusu; the *wh*-insitu strategy, the overt *wh*-movement (clefting) strategy and the pseudo-clefting.

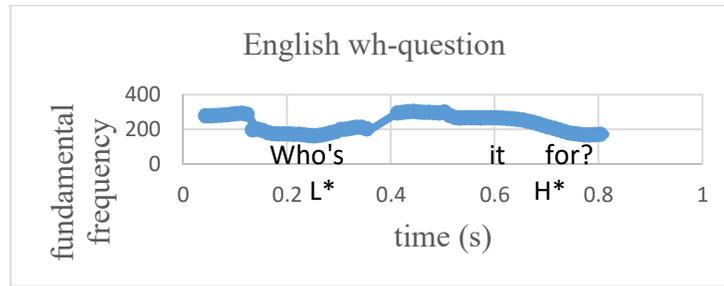


Figure 19: F0 Contour for Wh-Question in English

Nevertheless, 71% of Bukusu speakers yielded the *wh*-question utterances with a terminal rise regardless of the fact that this pattern was neither target-like nor native-like, but rather evidence of interlanguage intonation. An example is reflected on Figure 20.

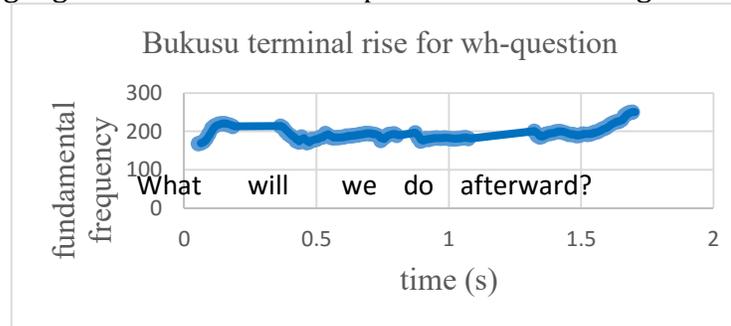


Figure 20: Bukusu Speakers' Terminal Rise for Wh-Question in English

#### 4.4 Lubukusu Terminal Rise for Statements

Table 5: Intonation patterns produced by Bukusu ESL speakers in statements

Prenuclear	Nuclear Accent	Final Boundary Tone	Weight (Frequency)	Stylisation
H* L*H	L*H	L%	41% (39)	
	H*	L%	41% (39)	
H*L	H*	L%	10% (10)	
H*L	L*H	H%	2% (2)	
H* L*H	H*	L%	2% (2)	
H*L H* H*L	H*	L%	2% (2)	
L*H	L*H	L%	1% (1)	
%H H*L	H*	L%	1% (1)	

#### Lubukusu Terminal High-Fall (on nuclear accent) for Declarative Question

In Lubukusu, a falling tone can be applied to the nuclear accent. This principal is however, not applied at the terminal position for declarative questions. The Bukusu nevertheless applied it to English declarative questions, where a high-fall tone on the nuclear accent at terminal position was yielded. An example is shown on Figure 21 for “It’s not really an operation at all”, where the nuclear was at the terminal position and uttered with a high falling boundary tone.

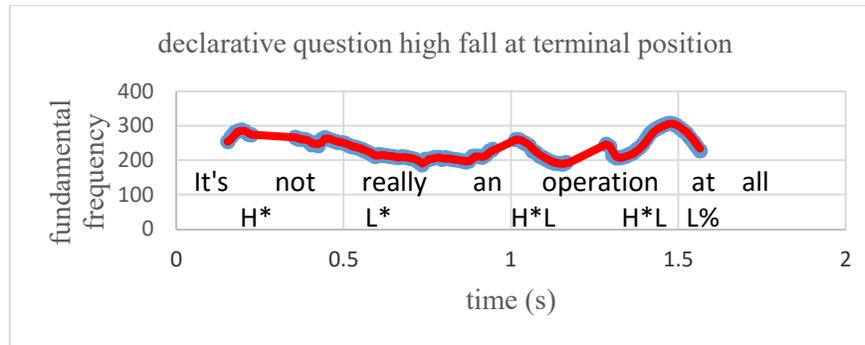


Figure 21: *F0 Contour for Falling Tone on Nuclear by Bukusu Non-Native Speakers*

As mentioned earlier, in English, declarative questions take a default rising intonation at the terminal position and the same applies to Lubukusu declarative questions. These findings therefore, show some form of interlanguage intonation by the Bukusu in their utterances in English.

### Conclusion: Meaning and Implications for ESL Acquisition

Examining Bukusu ESL speakers' production of questions and statements in this study support and show evidence of manifestations of mother tongue (L1) intonation contours in the target language – English. However, there is little indication that L1 intonation continuously recurred throughout all the utterances. In Bukusu ESL speakers, direct transfer of native language properties, as for example the use of tone or the lack of an accentual system, were not found. Conversely, in all types of utterances in English, the Bukusu seem to have developed a mixed system with elements of both the mother tongue and the target language. Moreover, vowel reduction is decreased in comparison to British English (see Hoffmann 2011), but not absent as in the Lubukusu language, which leads to different speech contours. The tonal structure of Bukusu ESL is simpler than in British English with a smaller inventory of pitch accent types, but pitch does not have the high functional load as in a tone language either, but is restricted to the domain of the word. Thus, the tonal structure of Lubukusu resembles that of pitch accent languages. The accentual system in Bukusu ESL, equally, seems to have fewer functions compared to British English, especially in the area of pragmatic use of sentence intonation as evidenced from the findings of this study. The realisation of accents seems tightly associated with tone. Many of the New Englishes are varieties with a similar postcolonial language contact situation and for many of them similar prosodic properties have been described. In Singapore English, for instance, less variability in syllable-to-syllable duration was found compared to British English (Deterding 2001), as well as less variability in successive vowel durations (Low and Grabe 1995). Further, in Singapore English, there is little vowel reduction, given information receives stress, and lexical stress patterns differ, which render Singapore English intonation to be described as sounding “very much like Chinese” which is a tone language (Low and Brown 2003: 100).

Back to the findings of this study, an argument is made that even though the H-H% boundary tone is target-like in English, and L-L% is like Bukusu speakers' mother tongue - Lubukusu, H-L% and L-H% being lower than H-H% are neither native-like nor target-like, but could show evidence of interlanguage because they are lower than H-H%. It is possible that when reading questions, the L1 intonation contour is more often applied.

This could be as a result of placing the focus on reading or pronouncing at the segmental level. Further, the findings here confirm the conclusion that Bukusu ESL speakers might unconsciously “transfer” or “borrow” high-level or high-falling tone from their mother tongue to nuclear accents in their English. These may explain why majority of Bukusu ESL speakers placed the nuclear accent on the *wh*-word in *wh*-questions, which is evidence of possible transfer from mother tongue intonation. For both Lubukusu and English, *wh*-questions tend to have a high pitch at the beginning of the utterances and little to no rise after that. Interestingly, the Bukusu (at 22%) yielded a H% for *wh*-questions, which is a case of interlanguage intonation contour, something neither native-like nor target-like. An argument that may be appended here is that the speakers hypercorrected their utterance and applied the H% of English yes/no questions. These results mean that Bukusu ESL speakers might have accented some words after the nuclear accents without any prosodic boundaries between them. Still, this phenomenon was not prevalent to yes/no questions. However, the mother tongue rule might have been systematically applied to the *wh*-questions instead because of hypercorrection.

Worth noting, the results of this study further reveal the contentions of phonologists, that the profusion of meanings frequently ascribed to one similar contour serves only to show that the contour in itself “means” none of them. For instance, despite the fact that phonologists strongly endorse grammatical intonation; a number of them are inclined to the notion that this function is incapable by itself to provide an adequate account for certain intonation patterns. Blum (2001) in Al-Sibai (2004) as one of the critics, proposes that there is a strong tendency to have rises in “yes/no questions” and falls in “*wh*-questions”, and that they are by no means the only patterns possible. This is evidenced by the range of intonation patterns found in this study. These conventional intonation contours, referred by Blum as “defaults”, may be overridden by various contextual factors and, hence, the interrogative intention must be inferred from other elements present in the utterance. Attitudinal meaning attached to intonation, such as incredulity, amazement, high level of interest or lack of it among others, may also influence the contour and, specifically, the pitch height of the utterance (*ibid.*). Furthermore, informational (discourse) meaning is also important where “intonation signals play a key role in listening, as well as speaking, as they signal a speaker’s assumptions and intentions with regard to the shared ground” (Brazil as cited in Kumaki 2003: 13) introducing the issue of speaker commitment. All the three intonation functions (discussed in depth in the literature of this study) render attaching specific meaning to a certain contour a challenging venture especially for a study like this one, which attempts to bridge the gap between theory and practice. Generally, there was some evidence of mother tongue influence seen from the data such that several Bukusu ESL speakers’ yes-no questions did not have a high-rise boundary tone and a considerable number of them had a nuclear accent on the *wh*-word in *wh*-questions. In English, questions that have a nuclear accent in a place other than the expected focus word move the focus of the utterance and sometimes the meaning, thus creating misunderstanding of intent (Mentcher 1979). Therefore, the transfer of Lubukusu intonation to English utterances is not likely to produce misunderstanding of content so much as a misunderstanding of meaning or intent behind the utterance (*ibid.*: 49). Thus, people can understand the words said, but misunderstand the intention behind them. This partial understanding often leads to a full understanding never being resolved and the communication may seem confusing on one end of the conversation exchange.

Importantly, there were some instances of interlanguage observed in the data, where the intonation contours were neither target-like nor native-like. This is expected in language development. Interlanguage is different from mother tongue (L1) influence because it has intonation contours that are not like the L1 or the target language. One way the interlanguage is evident is in the excessive pitch accents, which can be expected since language learners have no difficulty “in placing prominence on as many words as possible” (Pirt 1990: 152). That is, they are more likely to have a problem in nonprominence, which is one characteristic of non-target-like intonation. There is also more use of level contours, which to a native speaker may show a non-communicative stance. The overuse of prominence and the use of level contours can occur while language learners are speaking word by word rather than by phrase. This can be because second language learners make choices in vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation that are more automatic to native speakers. Pirt (1990) described learners as already having a knowledge of their L1 linguistic paradigm, whereas non-native speakers need to make more linguistic selections while speaking in the same language, their L2. Making more linguistic selections while speaking contributes to interlanguage, or rather intonation contours that are neither native-like nor target-like. Since the subjects of this study yielded native-like (as a result of transfer) or interlanguage intonation, it can be argued that L2 fluency can be improved but not necessarily pronunciation. This can be appended to Derwing and others (2006) study which showed that even when learners’ fluency improved, pronunciation did not change over time. This can be attributed to the lack of explicit instruction in pronunciation since language classes typically focus on grammar and vocabulary so students become communicative with these aspects of language learning. However, previous studies have supported that intonation is also an integral part of communication.

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Amiri Swaleh  
University of Nairobi

### Abstract

This paper seeks to analyze and evaluate selected Kiswahili classic poetry with a view to demonstrate that mother languages serve as repository of a people's culture and identity. Classic Kiswahili poetry has arguably produced some of the greatest and finest pieces of literature that continue to engage literary scholars in debate to date. This paper argues that the Swahili people have used mother languages (dialects) to express and transmit their identity, culture, traditions and customs even before the advent of Standard Kiswahili. I will sample Sayyid Abdalla bin Ali bin Nassir's *Takhmisa ya Liongo* (also known as *Wanjiwanji*) and *Inkishafi*, Mwanakupona binti Mshamu's *Utendi wa Mwanakupona* and Muhammad Kijumwa's *Utenzi wa Fumo\_Liyongo*. All the mentioned verses were written in the Kiamu dialect. These poems are chosen using the purposive sampling model and we believe, they will serve the stated objectives.

**Keywords:** mother language, Kiswahili classic poetry, repository, culture, identity

### Introduction

Kiswahili is spoken in many parts of Eastern and Central Africa. Over the years, it has come to be identified as a lingua franca used in the day to day activities of people of diverse linguistic and ethnic backgrounds. The language is spoken in Kenya, Tanzania mainland and its Indian Ocean islands), Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, Congo (DRC and Brazaville), Zambia, Malawi, parts of Northern Mozambique, the Comoro Islands, South Sudan (owing to the fact that for many years, Kenya has hosted its refugees) and South-Eastern Somalia. Mother-tongue speakers of the language are mainly inhabitants of the Kenyan and Tanzanian Coastal area and Kiswahili mother language speakers who have moved to other areas. The language comprises a number of dialects. No consensus has been arrived as to the exact number of dialects of the language. A number of scholars have put the number between 15 and 20. Polome (1967) says they are 17, Heine (1970) regards them to be 20 while Chiraghadin and Mnyampala (1977) are of the opinion they are 20. Bakari (1985) is the most recent scholar who puts the number of Kenyan coastal dialects at 7. The Encyclopedia Britannica (2016) says currently the number of Kiswahili dialects stands at 15. Some of the most mentioned dialects are Kiunguja, Kipemba, Kimrima, Chichfundi, Kijomvu, Kimvita, Kiamu and Kipate. (Omboga and Musau, 1993: 29-30). Kimvita (spoken mainly in Mvita/ Mombasa and its environs) and Kiamu (spoken in Lamu and its environs) have for long been considered the 'literary dialects' and have been used in some of the most prominent classic verses.

Shariff (1973:69) argues that, despite the existence of these dialects, the Swahili people shared a common culture which made the evolution of a common literature possible. In this sense, he asserts, the Swahili people are not only identified as speakers of one of these dialects but also those who share a common culture. On the other hand, Mazrui and Mazrui (1995) assert that the Swahili people have interacted with peoples from Asia and have greatly been influenced by Islam (as evidenced by lifestyle, religion and terminology in classical verse). Despite the fact that the majority of the Swahili people are Muslim, Islam becomes an attribute

accompanying the Waswahili, but not part of the definition. Hence, according to them (Ibid: 21) 'The Waswahili are those people to whom Kiswahili is the mother-tongue and whose culture has been influenced by Islam.' This will be our working definition of the Swahili people.

Identity, on the other hand, is the shared characteristics and aspirations which affirm or deny other characteristics defining an individual or a group sharing historical, biological or sociological factors at any given moment of development (Cabral 1973: 64). Culture will be taken to be the shared patterns of behaviours and interactions, cognitive constructs and understanding that are learned by socialization. Hence a peoples identity will comprise their culture manifested in their beliefs, norms, food, shelter, attire, ceremonies and artifacts.

The paper analyzes the choice verses with a view of capturing those aspects of the Swahili people's lives and the aspects of their interactions in their day to day life that reveal their traditions, customs and beliefs. The paper will then conclude by reviewing what aspects of these verses reveal the poet's (and by extension, the Swahili people's identity), being a member of this society), and how it is key to reinforcing and maintaining their cultural identity.

### **Sayyid Abdallah bin Ali bin Nassir's *Takhmisa ya Liyongo and Inkishafi***

This section analyzes one of the most prominent classic poet's works *Takhmisa ya Liyongo (Wanjiwanji)* and *Inkishafi (Al-Inkishafi)*. Sayyid Abdallah bin Ali bin Nassir is believed to have lived in Pate between 1718-1815. He is reputed to have been a great Islamic scholar, jurist and poet and is thought to descend from Prophet Muhammad's (PBUH) lineage. Mulokozi (1999: iii) is of the opinion that this and the other poems that will be analyzed, are considered classic as they were written over a century ago and are an important source of the history of the Swahili people and their culture, their language ( in their different dialects) , other people of the East African coast and the immigrants; and is considered an important reference point for any researcher of Kiswahili literature.

### **Takhmisa ya Liyongo (Wanjiwanji )**

This verse is about the Swahili hero Fumo Liyongo. There is debate and controversy as to exactly when Liyongo lived. Some scholars believe he lived in the Ninth Century A.D. ( Mbele 1986, Nabhany 1987). Others like Chiraghdin (1977) say he lived between 1160 – 1204, while Knappert (1983) believes he lived around 1600 (A.D.). However, the most accepted date by most Kiswahili literary scholars, is between the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> Centuries.

The Fumo Liyongo tradition is derived from Swahili oral poetry and has occupied the same lofty place among the Swahili people that national epics like Sundiata of old Mali, the Kalevala of the Finnish people and other people around the world do. In the same vein, Fumo Liyongo as a national hero of the Swahili people, is a product of both their oral and written traditions (Mbele 1986: 128-9). Sayyid Abdall bin Ali bin Nassir, is reputed to be one of the earliest poets to write about Fumo Liyongo from oral tradition.

In this poem, Nassir adopts the point of view (persona) of Liyongo the Swahili hero in which some of Liyongo's attributes come to the fore as well as solidifying the Swahili people's valiant nature, their perseverance in times of need, their seeking of justice, their meting out revenge in the same measure as meted out to them, their unwavering belief in the will of Allah/ God and above all else, never retreating.

The verse comprises 28 stanzas. Normally, a traditional (or prosodic) verse is divided into three parts: the introduction or preamble, the main body in which the poem delves into the main issues at hand and finally, the conclusion. The preamble normally contains invocations; mention of the name of Allah/ God and salutations to Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and his companions.

Then follows the main body of the poem and finally the conclusion in which invocations, the name and lineage of the poet are revealed. This 'formula' is an essential aspect of the Swahili people's customs and beliefs. Being Muslim, any undertaking is almost always preceded by the invocation 'In the name of Allah, Beneficent, Merciful' or any other supplication of the same weight and meaning.

*Takhmisa ya Liyongo* does not follow this tradition in its first stanza but sticks to it in the concluding stanzas 26, 27 and 28. This deviation (or disparity) also finds compensation in a number of stanzas in which Allah's / God's attributes are mentioned either in supplication or to confirm some custom or belief.

The Swahili people (Muslims) not only believe in the Qur'an as Allah's/ God's revelation, but also in the 'Injeel' (Bible) and 'Zabur' (the Psalms). This is contained in stanza 4 in which the poet says:

*Naapa kwa Anjili na Zaburi ili kiapo,  
Simkengeufu pindi shari liwagazapo  
Nayekeeza moyo katokoza shari lilipo  
Mtetea cheo mwenye cheo ateteapo,  
Haambiwi ni mawi hatta roho nengakoma (st. 4)*

I do swear by the Bible and the Psalms  
For they are worthy of swearing  
I do not retreat once evil is widespread  
I take heart and combat it headlong  
One who fights for his position which he deserves  
Will not be held in blame till his breath stops \* (This translation and the consequent ones of the poems, are mine and were confirmed by some colleagues in the Department of Kiswahili, University of Nairobi.

In stanza 1, Liyongo's attribute is that he is the undisputed Swahili hero. His reputation and character, covers the whole of Swahili land:

*Natunga Kawafi takhamisi kidiriji  
Niwadhihishe izagale kama siraji  
Ili kufuasa ya Liyongo simba wa miji...*

I hereby compose stanzas of five lines  
So it may illuminate like a lantern  
In narrating about Liyongo, lion of the cities...

In this verse, the persona is the poet, who speaks in Liyongo, the hero's voice, mimicking his endeavor to fight injustice, fight corruption, and fight for his right. In this sense, the verse provides an image of a real national hero in whom the Swahili people (especially of the Kenya coastal area) identify with and cherish.

The majority of the Swahili are Muslim. This aspect is well captured in the beginning lines of stanzas 8, 9 and 12 in which the hero Liyongo, swears by God that his mission is just and hence, justifiable. Stanza 8 reads;

*Naapa kwa Mungu na Mungu ili kiapo...*

I do swear by God, God being deserving of my oath....

In stanza 12, the poet refers to the Qur'an as the Holy Book by which Muslims make oath;

*Ningashahadize Korani yangu Kalima...*

I do swear by the Qur'an, it being my pronouncement (of oath)...

This reinforces the fact that the Swahili people, would not undertake any action unless it is sanctioned by and strictly adheres to God's word and is carried within the specified limits. Images of Liyongo as he fights for his rights and the upholding of justice, present to us some of the weapons the Swahili use in defending themselves. Stanza 11 reads;

*Ningatindangile kwa sayufi na kwa sakini,*

*Na msu mkali kiupeka juu na tini...*

I would have slaughtered them with my sword and knife,

And using a sharp sword, swinging it up and down....

That a Swahili person would not perpetuate injustice even while seeking revenge, is well captured in stanza 14,

*kama chambilecho chuonimwe altama,*

*"wa in akabitum, fahakibubi mithli maa..."*

.... Just as the Lord Most high pronounces,

"And when you seek revenge, seek it in equal measure."

Stanzas 21, 22 and 23, succinctly describe Liyongo's bravery. This is a universal trait that is celebrated in all traditional heroes. Stanza 21 reads,

*Ana ndimi shujaa samba ndole mwondoa 'ari...*

I am, the warrior, the lion with sharp claws who fights evil...

Stanza 22 also tells us about Liyongo's demeanor and his mission in life,

*Ana ndimi samba mfiliya jaha na cheo...*

I am the lion, who would die fighting for my repute and status...

Stanza 23 also describes Liyongo's character as well as pit or compare him with other heroes or warriors,

*Ndimi akabiri uteteao wangu murua...*

I am the greatest, agitating for my respect...

That the Swahili disregard the temporal life in place of eternal life ('akhira' – hereafter) is well-captured in stanza 18,

*Bolewe mchayi kufa asofikiria  
Na kufa si suna ni farathi ya mkadara...*

Woe unto him that fears death without thought,  
And death is not a choice but an obligation

The words *suna* and *faradhi* bear great significance in Islamic religious dogma. *Suna* refers to those acts that were carried out by the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and God compensates one who carries them out as they reinforce one's faith. *Faradhi* on the other hand, are obligations, those acts whose omission, is sinful, and their commission leads to compensation.

Stanzas 26, 27 and 287 conclude the poem. The poet's name and lineage is expressed in stanza 27. This is customary of classic/traditional Kiswahili poetry which set it apart from the poetry of other communities and hence, is an aspect of their customs and identity. It reads,

*Na mwenye kutunga mbaarifu yake isimu,  
Ni Abdallah Muyuweni mumfahamu,  
Ibun Ali bun Nasiri mwenye makamu,  
Farii ya Makka, Shimukati la Farimu;  
Fungu la Mutharu, Mutalibu na Hashima*

And the writer I, will tell you his name,  
It is Abdallah, know ye him,  
Son of Ali, son of Nassir the glorious  
A branch of Makka, sprouting from Farimu: descendants  
Of Muthar, Mutalib and Hashim.

From the foregone, it is apparent that *Takhmisa ya Liyongo*, derived from Swahili oral tradition, presents to us some aspects of Swahili culture, customs, traditions and hence, their identity. Though the verse basically celebrates the Swahili people's traditional hero Fumo Liyongo, it is at the same time a window through which we glance at them as a people. Their identity is informed by God-wariness, patience, bravery, justice as well as enumerate some items of their material culture as their weapons, non-material culture like unwavering belief in Allah in all affairs and a strong sense of self-esteem. In this sense, the verse becomes an important source of information about the Swahili people's culture and identity.

### **Inkishafi ( also Al-Inkishafi)**

This is one of the most celebrated poems in Kiswahili literature (Mazrui, 1977; Allen 1977, Mlamali, 1980). Mberia (2015), delves into an exploration of the poem's thematic concerns and their relevance in this time and age, its language and the controversies as to whether or not, the poem is complete, and whether it is just a mere piece of religious 'sermon'. Although this paper also explores the themes, it relates them to the Swahili peoples identity and not how relevant they are or may not be, to modern society. Mlamali (1980: xii asserts, it is comparable to the ancient Roman *Aeneid* written by Virgil, the Persians' *Rustom and Sohrab* written by Firdaws

and *Yusuf and Zulaykha* by Jami. Mlamali further asserts that *Inkishafi's* greatness is comparable to John Milton's *Paradise Lost* and *Faust* by Goethe. Allen (1977:14) says,

The poem is homiletic. It stands squarely in the didactic tradition, one of the commonest types in Swahili literature, and is designed to instruct its hearers and to secure their moral improvement.

From the onset, we wish to make it clear that though there is controversy and debate as to the actual number of stanzas in *Inkishafi*, this paper will adopt the 77 stanza version. This debate accrues from the fact that all classic/ traditional Kiswahili poems were first transcribed and transliterated (mostly by European scholars) from the original Arabic script to the Roman/Latin and hence, the many discrepancies.

*'Inkishafi* ( this being the actual name of the verse as mentioned in stanza 8), is in a dialogue between the poet and his soul. The poet '~~in fact~~, adjuring his soul, his *moyo*, that it, and hence presumably he himself, his body-may be saved from disillusionment and damnation.' (Allen, 1977: 14). The poem derives its driving force from the Qur'an and uses brilliant imagery to paint contrasting portraits of Pate (The poet's hometown); one in the heydays of its glamour and greatness and the other, after its downfall.

Like other traditional Swahili classic poems, the writer reserves the first five stanzas to supplication. The name of Allah/ God and his attributes, prayers upon Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and the four (rightly-guided) Caliphs Abu Bakar, Umar, Uthman and Ali. These invocations identify the author as a true Muslim who is well aware of the rules governing any undertaking in life. Stanza 1 reads,

*Bismillahi naiqadimu*  
*Hali ya kutunga hino nudhumu*  
*Na Arrahmani kiirasimu*  
*Basi Arahimi nyuma ikae*

Foremost, I invoke the name of Allah  
As I compose this here verse  
First I write the Beneficent, then  
The Merciful should follow

His objective for the composition is expressed in stanzas 7 and 8. He asserts that he wished to...*tatunga kifungo kwa kukisafi, nikipange lulu kula tarafi...* 'string a necklace of pearls, to form a valuable pendant'; this he does so that the dark clouds (sin) of ignorance may vanish. In this sense, *Inkishafi* is intended at cleansing the soul with sound counsel, God's word and immediate examples of the temporal nature of the worldly life. To a great extent, the poet uses antithesis pitting Pate in its days of glory and the squalor, after its fall.

The poet uses similes and metaphor to draw images of the temporality of life on earth.

Stanza 13 – *Suu ulimwengu bahari tesi...*

The world is like the sea in a great storm

Stanza 15 – *Au vumbi la mwangaza...*

Or the dust in the sun's light

Stanza 19 – *Dunia ni jifa siikaribu haipendi mtu ila kilabu...*

The world is carrion, do not approach it. It is only the dogs that crave for it...

In stanza 30, the poet admonishes as well as exhort his *moyo*/ soul to prostrate at the grandeur of Allah/ God and ask for forgiveness. This is the peak of a Muslim's humility to the Maker,

*Ewe, moyo nenda sijida Yake  
Hela tafadhali unabihike  
Shetani Rajimi asikuteke  
Kesho kakuona kuwa kamaye*

My soul! Prostrate yourself (before Allah)  
But please follow what is right  
Let not the accursed Satan claim you  
So he sees you as his own in the Hereafter

After painting these disturbing images of life and all that man craves for in the world, the poet proceeds to make a vivid portrayal of Pate during the days of its glory. But before he does this, he admonishes his *moyo*/ soul thus in stanza 31;

*Suu ulimwengu utakao  
Emale ni lipi upendeyao?  
Hauna dawamu hudumu nao  
Ukimilikishwa wautendaye?*

This world you so crave,  
Of what good is it (to you?)  
It is not eternal, you too won't last  
Were it all yours, what would you do with it?

This is the stark reality of life on earth. The poet then proceeds to paint a glorious picture of great prophets of God like Solomon and other greats of Pate who were overtaken by death. Stanza 32 reads,

*Hakuwa Mtumi Suleimani  
Maliki wa insi na ajinani  
Ulimfutuye ukamukhini  
Akawa mwingine wamtendaye?*

Was not Allah's/ God's prophet Solomon, the great  
Ruling over men and the jinn's too?  
Yet he too, was overtaken (by death) in his turn,  
Does anyone else have a chance where he surrendered?

Stanza 34 paints a vivid image of the elite of Pate but they too, succumbed to death – the ultimate equalizer or leveller. We read;

*Uwene wangapi watu wakwasi  
Walo wakiwaa kama shamsi*

*Wamuluku zana za adhursi  
Dhahabu na fedha wakhiziniye*

How may wealthy people have you seen?  
Who in their splendor, shone like the sun  
Owners of expensive items made from ivory  
Proud in their stocks of gold and silver?

An antithesis of the these nobles/ elites is provided in stanzas 44-55 in which the poet, insists, they were overtaken by death (St. 44), leaving behind all that glory ... *mtanga na fusi ziwafusiye* (...dust and sand covers them).

In stanzas 58, 59 and 60 the poet uses parallelism to paint a grim picture of the final resting place of these rich nobles – the grave; deprived of all their worldly glory and splendor.

St. 58 – *Watiziwe nyumba za jiza jiza...*  
They have been thrust in darkened dungeons.  
St. 59 – *Walaliye nyumba za vumbi vumbi...*  
They now sleep in their dusty aboards....  
St. 60 – *Wengiziwe nyumba za tanga tanga...*  
They are locked up in jails of sand

Finally, stanzas 66 – 77 tell of the Day of Judgment, when all people will assemble before Allah/ God...*tafakari siku ya kwima kondo, ya kuaridhiwa, kula kitendo* (forget not when multitudes will assemble, every deed to be revealed). For those that will not have good deeds, will they be cast headlong into the deepest pits of Hell. They will be punished in the fires of *Hawiya, Ladha, Hutama, Jahanamu, Sairi and Jahanamu*. It is only *Saqari* that is not mentioned in this poem.

From the foregone analysis, it is apparent the Swahili people can be identified by their deep belief in Allah/ God, that the world is temporary and that life in this world, is a cultivating ground for the Hereafter. Life is philosophized using real-life situations of Pate during its heydays and after its downfall. The poet succeeds in painting a daunting image emanating from his society's environment. It draws from history, religious belief (Islam) and psychology. In this sense, one could argue that the poem presents aspects of Swahili beliefs that inform their identity.

### **Mwanakupona Binti Mshamu's *Utendi wa Mwanakupona***

Mwanakupona Binti Mshamu, the writer of this poem was born in Pate in 1810 (Werner and Harries, 1934, Harries 1967). Allen (1971) believes she lived between the years 1810-1860 while Chiraghdin (1987) says she lived between 1790 and 1860. However, the most agreed upon date is 1810. She was married to Shee Mataka of Siu in 1836. They were blessed with two children : a daughter, Mwana Hashima binti Shee (1841-1933) and Muhammad bin Mataka (1856-1858).

This verse is didactic and represents Swahili culture (and especially matters pertaining to marriage) and general counsel given by parents to their children. It is one of the most

celebrated cultural pieces amongst the Swahili and is used in their rite of passage known as *Unyago*, where young maidens are secluded and taught about matters pertaining to marriage. Because of this poem's import, other poets have written in Mwanakupona's style especially in thematic thrust. Shaaban Robert (1966) wrote 'Utenzi wa Hati' and 'Utenzi wa Adili', Semghanga (1971) wrote 'Kidani cha Huba', Karama (1983) penned 'Wasia wa Baba' and Zainab bint Humid wrote 'Howani Mwana Howani'(1983). For instance, we find parallels in Shaaban Robert's 'Utenzi wa Hati' and Mwanakupona's *Utendi wa Mwanakupona* thus,

St. 1- *Utendi wa Mwanakupona*

*Negema wangu binti*  
*Mchachefu wa sanati*  
*Upulike wasiati*  
*Asaa ukazingtia*

Come near my daughter  
You of young age  
Listen to my advice  
So that you may heed

St. 1- 'Utenzi wa Hati'

*Leo nataka binti*  
*Ukae juu ya kiti*  
*Ili uandike hati*  
*Ndogo ya wasia*

Today my daughter  
Come sit on this chair  
So you may write this letter  
Though it be brief, it will advice

The greater part of this poem insists on the need to adhere to religious (Islamic) teachings, to conduct oneself well, to love and emulate the prophet, to obey the parents, to love and maintain a harmonious relationship with kin and fellow muslims and to respect the husband. Stanza 1 exhorts Mwanahashina to be a good Muslim,

*La kwanda kamati dini*  
*Faradhi usiikhini*  
*Na sunna ikimkini*  
*Ni wajibu kuitia*

Foremost, stick to the religion  
Do not shun *faradhi* duty/obligation  
And when possible the *sunna*/customs  
Must you observe

The poet seems to allude to the fact that, a person becomes whole/ better if they observed religion. That both the obligatory and customary deeds reinforce one's faith. Stanza 13 reads,

*Pili uwe na adabu*

*Na ulimi wa thawabu*

*Na uwe mtu mahabubu*

*Kula utakapongia*

Secondly maintain good manners

And a tongue that only utters good

So that you may be loved

Wherever you may find yourself

Thirdly, stanza 3 continues in advising on building a good character. It reads,

*La tatu uwe sadiqi*

*Wambiwao ulithiqi*

*Mtu ashoshika haqi*

*Sandamane naye ndia*

Thirdly be a truthful person

Do whatever you are advised

And any unjust person

Should never accompany you

These three stanzas are founded in religious teachings. A Swahili person's character are founded on faith in Allah, good manners an upright moral character and finally, truthfulness is justice. These are the three tenets upon which a Swahili person should be grounded upon in order to build his/her identity

Werner and Hitchens (1934) dwell on the theme of wifely duty as being the objective of this poem. While it may be true, we may add that it is also bent on creating a morally-upright and God-fearing, faithful spouse/bride in a traditional Swahili society. The advice Mwanakupona gives to her daughter is still given to young women during the *unyango* rite of passage as they get ready to enter into marriage. This is the reason stanza 23 exhorts thus,

*Nda Mungu na mtumewe*

*Baba na mama wayuwe*

*Na ya tano nda mumewe*

*Mno imekaririwa*

First should be God and his prophet

Then mother and father you should know

And the fifth is your husband

So it has been laid down

Though the poem was written by a woman for her daughter and hence, addresses the duties of a wife in marriage, it is assumed that men are also advised accordingly on matters marriage. Stanza 24-36 advice Mwanahashima of her duties toward the husband. The husband should be satisfied (st.24), she should not argue or deny him anything (st.29), she should bid him farewell whenever he goes out and when he returns, she should welcome him warmly and make sure he has an appropriate place to rest (st.30) and finally, she should make sure he is well-groomed

and presentable. Stanza 36 advises Mwanahashima to obey the husband and if he were the source of any ill, then God will surely recompense the wife.

The second part of the poem (stanzas 42-50), advises that a wife should be clean ; she should clean herself and house (st.38) ,she should plait her hair and adorn it well with flowers (st.38), she should wear beautiful clothing (cf. the Swahili proverb *Mwanamume ni kazi, mwanamke ni vazi/nguo* ...A man's duty is to work, a woman to adorn herself?) , she should put on earrings , a nose ring ,bracelets as well as use perfume ,she should not be without rings on her fingers and she should apply henna on her legs (st.41), her house should be clean and she should hold her husband in high esteem (st.42).

The above mentioned stanzas are meant to import the message of how a harmonious marriage is cultivated and maintained. It is founded on the wife (and husband) performing their duties to the letter (ideally) by being humane, loving, clean and welcoming.

Stanza 44 to 50 dwell on the need of a wife to be careful of her movements and socialization. Whenever she wishes to go out she should seek the husband's permission and when it is granted, she should hasten to return home (st.44), she should not gossip on the way and should cover her hair, lower her gaze (lest lusty men are attracted to her) (st.56).

In a marriage, satisfaction is crucial. This is why Mwanakupona tells her daughter (st. 49) *akupacho mpokee na moyo ufurahie* (whatever he provides receive it gladly). And this is the formula Mwanahashima's parents used to maintain a happy marriage ....*alinioa babako tusondoleane mbeko* , ( I was married to your farther .... Never did we disagree).This in essence, means, whatever advice/counsel Mwanakupona gives her daughter, is a tradition, passed from mother to daughter, through time.

Lastly, Mwanakupona advises her daughter to maintain good relations with her kith and kin (st.58), she should love fellow Muslims and shun two-faced people (st.61) and she should always help the less-fortunate (st.64). Stanzas 67-96 are supplications; for Mwanakupona wrote the piece while unwell.

From this analysis, some important aspects of the Swahili people's customs, traditions and beliefs have been brought to the fore. It is apparent that Swahili parents desire their children to be religious/ God fearing, they should love the Prophet, they should behave well with their husband, maintain etiquette and cleanliness, be respectful and be persevering in order to maintain a marriage. In this sense then, these are essential aspects of the Swahili people's non-material culture which also inform their identity.

### **Muhammad Kijumwa's Utenzi wa Fumo Liyongo**

This epic was written by Muhammad Abubakar bin Umar al-Bakry better known as Muhammad Kijumwa in 1913. It is an adoption from Swahili folklore about Fumo Liyongo, the Swahili people's (of the Kenyan coast) national hero . He is both a historical and cultural personality as he has elicited debate and controversy as to when he lived, whether he was a Muslim or a Christian, whether or not he was a poet (see section 2.1).

The story of Liyongo is believed to be hinged on a conflict between him and his elder brother who ruled Pate. In this verse he is not addressed by name but in other sources he is called Daudi Mringwari. The story opens when Liyongo is a young man whose reputation of strength and bravery had reached all corners of Swahili land. His home is in Ungwana wa/ya Mashaha (in Shaka, a region of Ozi). A delegation of the Galla people arrives in Pate to visit the Sultan (Daudi Mringwari).

The sultan / ruler utters words of praise about Liyongo. The Galla do not believe him. He decides to send Liyongo a letter inviting him to Pate so they may see him. When Liyongo receives the letter, he prepares his luggage and sets off for Pate. It is a four-day journey but Liyongo travels in two. He arrives at the gates of the Pate, blows his horn, it shatters. He blows on a second which also shatters. He blows on a third and the guards lead him to the Sultan's court. By now the entire town is aware of his arrival and gather in groups, eager to glance at him.

He unloads his luggage and they behold it is a houseful! The Galla people are awestruck. They request the Sultan to ask Liyongo if he was willing to give them his seed / lineage.

Liyongo agrees and is given a Gala girl in marriage and soon after, the wife bears him a baby boy. Liyongo gives the baby boy good upbringing till he becomes strong young man. Liyongo's fame spreads like wildfire all over Swahili land and so does the Sultan's envy and jealousy intensify. He suspects that Liyongo may remove him from his rule. The Sultan after consultation, decides to kill him. When Liyongo knows about the sultan's plan, he leaves Pate and goes to live amongst the Sanye and the Dahalo of the surrounding areas. The sultan convinces the Sanye and Dahalo to kill Liyongo in the woods promising to reward them 100 riyals if they succeed in their mission. The Sanye and the Dahalo befriend Liyongo and convince him to have *kikoa* (eating together) with them. They decide on *kikoa* of doum tree fruit. When it is Liyongo's turn to pick the fruit, of the tall tree they had chosen, they intended to kill him with arrows. Intuitively, Liyongo becomes aware of the evil scheme and uses arrows to drop the fruits down. Their plan fails. They tell the Sultan that it has become impossible to kill Liyongo. He tells them to return to the mainland and inform Liyongo there was no longer danger, that they should visit Pate town with him. Liyongo trusts them and they and revert to Pate town together. After a while, the Sultan prepares a *gungu* and *mwao* dance inviting all the great dancers. Liyongo too, is invited. As the dance proceeded, soldiers overpower Liyongo and lock him up in jail. It is decided that he be killed. As the day approaches for the death penalty to be carried out, Liyongo is asked to make a death-wish. He requests for a *Gungu* and *Mwao* dance. As the dance is being prepared, Liyongo sends a message to his mother through their maid-servant Saada, who had been taking food to Liyongo in jail. That day, Liyongo specially requested for coarse wholemeal bread and asked the mother to hide a file therein. The guards take the good bread and allow Saada to take the coarse wholemeal bread to Liyongo. When the *gungu* and *Mwao* dance is at its apex, Liyongo proceeded to file away at his shackles in rhythm with the drums and other musical instruments, breaks down the door and runs away into the woods once again.

Finally the Sultan, after all attempts at killing Liyongo fail, decides to send Liyongo's son to his father in order to find out from him, what was his Achilles' heel. He promises to make him a minister and marry his daughter to him. Liyongo's son travels to Shaka and poses the question

to his father. Though Liyongo knows the son has been sent by his enemy, he divulges the secret to him. Liyongo tells him that he would die by a copper needle driven into his navel. The son returns to the Sultan with the news he gives the son the copper needle and instructs him to go kill his father. Liyongo's son returns to Shaka, patiently waits till the father is dead asleep and drives the needle into Liyongo's navel. Liyongo awakens full of pain and rage, picks up his bow and arrows, proceeds to the well, kneels down, puts an arrow into the bow, faces the town and breathes his last. When people see him thus, they think he was still alive and for five days are afraid to draw water from the only communal well. Finally, they send Liyongo's mother to beseech his son to let the people draw water from the well. The mother goes to the well and sweet-talks him for days without success. It's when Liyongo's corpse falls to the ground that the people realize that he had died.

When the news of Liyongo's death reaches the Sultan, he is elated. He gives Liyongo's son the news. The son laughs in glee and shows no remorse whatsoever at the demise of his father. That is when the Sultan gets infuriated and banishes the young man from his palace and Pate. He runs off into the woods in Gala land where he dies from remorse and loneliness.

*Utezi wa Fumo* Liyongo is a true African epic possessing all the qualities that define epics. It is narrated, it is a poem or bears verse form, it concern itself with important or great events or societies, it is about a hero (Fumo Liyongo) and finally an epic is related to a particular environment/society and its depiction of that society (Mulokozi, 1999:11).

This epic gives a clearer picture of this Swahili hero than *Takhmisa* (see section 2.1).\_What aspects of Swahili culture and identity are revealed in this verse? Being a Swahili traditional poem in form, it follows in the formulaic arrangement of preamble (salutations), the story and the conclusion. It comprises 232 stanzas.

Stanzas 27-39, tell us about some items of Swahili material culture like the *panda*/blowhorn (st.27-31), the mortar and pestle (st.37-8), pots and fire stones (st 37-8). It is also apparent that the upper class Swahili (*wangwana*) lived in towns while their neighbours like the Gala, Sanye and Dahalo lived in the harsh, rural environs of the interior woodlands. The town (Pate) was the administrative capital where the Sultan/king had his headquarters.

The Waswahili are also identified by their tradition of *kikoa*, where a group of people decide to be eating in turns (st.57-67). The Sanye and Dahalo try to kill Liyongo when they had *kikoa* of doum palm fruits but he outwits them.

Another important aspect of Swahili culture is the *gungu* and *mwao* dance which the Sultan uses to entice Liyongo into a trap. In stanza 86, weaponry used by the Swahili is enumerated. There is the *mafumo* (spears), *zembe* (bows and arrows), *zigongo* (clubs). These are used to overpower Liyongo and cast him into jail.

In Swahili society, fathers do cook, do household chores as we see Liyongo take care of his son when he visits him. Stanza 131 reads,

*Babake kafurahika*  
*Akanena akiteka*

*Wali mwema kaupika  
Maana wale pamoja*

The father was happy  
Said he laughing  
Cooked good rice  
So they may eat together

In stanza 232, we are given a glimpse into Swahili architecture –that they built in stone (especially in the towns like Pate). We read,

*Mui walioamirika  
Nyumba za mawe hakika  
Mayiwe waliyoweka  
Na misikiti pamoja*

Great towns they built  
With stones they did  
Stone houses were put up  
As well as mosques

Thus, it is evident, *Utenzi wa Fumo Liyongo*, is indeed an important source from which Swahili culture and identity is divulged, for it is set against a traditional Swahili background.

## **Conclusion**

This paper has analyzed selected Kiswahili classic verses : *Takhmisa ya liyongo*, *Inkishafi*, *Utendi wa Mwanakupona* and *Utenzi wa Fumo Liyongo*, all written in the Kiamu dialect. It has been found that, a people's culture and identity is intrinsically related to language. Being one of the mother-tongues of the Kiswahili language, Kiamu has been successful in relating some aspects of Swahili cultural aspects i.e their customs and traditions which can be used to define the Swahili people.

In *Takhmisa ya liyongo*, it was possible to find the source of the Swahili people's pride as a community. Their traditional and cultural hero and ~~warrior and~~ warrior Fumo Liyongo, seems to provide that identity of a religious people, valiant, just, peaceful (but not cowardly) and who will not let anyone or anything usurp their freedom since they solely believe in the benevolence of Allah/God. The poem provides an insight into some important aspects of Swahili customs, some of which derive from Islamic teachings. The incumbent duty to fight for one's rights and also to take revenge, are the most important themes discussed in the poem. Aspects of material culture like the weapons used in combat, are also highlighted.

*Inkishafi* is also a great piece of Swahili classic poetry providing an avenue into understanding and explaining aspects of their beliefs and customs. Though the verse draws its inspiration from religious teachings that man must strive to serve only Allah/God in this life and cultivate good deeds (*thawabu*) for the hereafter, it is a philosophical glimpse into the Swahili peoples history, culture and identity. The poem has elucidated and insisted on doing well. That Swahili

society was/is stratified, that the Swahili people are contemplative; they can be identified as a people driven by morals and uprightness. This is the sure formula for a good, fulfilling life here on earth and in the Hereafter. The poem highlights the Swahili people's belief in the Hereafter and that a person's good deeds on earth will be compensated likewise with good in the Hereafter, and vice versa. It captures well their religious beliefs.

*Utendi wa Mwanakupona*, though basically a mother's advice to her daughter, has enabled us to see how the Swahili treat the institution of marriage. It is apparent that Mwanakupona believes a good and successful marriage should be driven by God-wariness, respect and mutual love for spouse, performance of each the spouse's duties and having love and respect for parents, relatives, fellow Muslims and (even non-Muslims) and perseverance. This poem has been an inspiration to the Swahili people for many generations since its message would appear to be relevant at all times. This poem captures in detail a Swahili/ Islamic marriage. Though it concentrates in outlining a wife's duties and obligations in marriage, it is assumed that a husband's duties are subsumed within the wife's. This is because the Swahili believe, good only begets good in an ideal setting; though variations will be the norm rather than the exception in real-life situations.

The story of the Swahili hero/warrior is told in great detail in *Utenzi wa Fumo Liyongo*. It is an important source of information about the Swahili people. That the Swahili people had a ruler (Sultan) whose administration was very developed with ministers, courtiers, guards and that it was housed in a fort-like building. The verse also confirms the Swahili used *mafumo* (spears) *zembe* (bows and arrows), *zigongo* (clubs) to fight. That the Swahili practiced inter-marriages is confirmed when Liyongo marries a Gala girl. The Swahili people also took pride in their *Gungu* and *Mwao* dances, which confirms they too, participated in cultural activities during different occasions. In this regard, one is tempted to use Knappert's (1967:63) words to describe the Swahili people. He says the Swahili are driven and live by '...principals of mercy, justice, patience, duty and peace of mind create a type of people that will be gentle and contemplative.' It was found out that each one of the characteristics mentioned by Knappert above, forms some of the thematic engagements of the poems.

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## Are the Batura a Bukusu clan? A Linguistic Indexing of the Batura Identity

1Sarah Nakhone, 2Evelyne Kisembe  
Moi University

### Abstract

This study sought to establish the identity of the Batura. The main aim of the study was to examine the Lubukusu and Tura dialects in order to ascertain whether there are any significant variations at the phonemic, morpho-phonological, lexical and semantic levels. The primary data was collected from three native speakers of Tura in Khasoko and three native speakers of Lubukusu in Bokoli. The informants were interviewed and data elicited through a list of 400 words. A comparative analysis of the linguistic repertoires of Tura and Lubukusu was undertaken and the results were presented in tables. The findings of the study revealed that the Tura and Lubukusu vowel systems are similar but their consonant systems vary. It was also disclosed that although many Tura- Lubukusu roots are similar, variations occur in the prefixes and pre-prefixes. Also, some Tura and Lubukusu lexical items used to refer to similar concepts were found to be dissimilar. Apart from that, variations were exhibited at the semantic level. It was concluded that the Batura are a distinct Luhya tribe and not a Bukusu clan.

**Keywords:** dialect, Phonemes, morpho-phonological, lexical, semantic.

### Introduction

The Abaluhya are a Bantu group of people who speak the Luyia language. The majority of the Abaluhya live in the Western part of Kenya which constitutes four Counties namely Bungoma, Kakamega, Vihiga and Busia. Until recently, the Kenyan census and some scholars (e.g Lwangale 2007, Makila 1978: 26, de Wolf 1977: 52) had listed seventeen tribes of the Abaluhya. They are identified as *Batiriki, Babukusu, Bamaragoli, Basamia, Banyala, Batachoni, Bakhayo, Bakisa, Bamarama, Bakabrasi, Bamarachi, Bamasaba, Bawanga, Babesukha, Banyole, Batsotso, Banyala (B) and Banyala (K)*. However, in the current 2019 census and later studies (see Marlo 2008 and Mudogo et al 2016) nineteen tribes of the Abaluhya are listed. Added to the aforementioned seventeen tribes are the Batura and the Basonga. It can be presumed that the Batura are not mentioned in earlier studies as part of the Abaluhya tribes because little is known about them or as Lwangale et al. (2016) suggests, the Batura have largely been assimilated by the Babukusu thus they speak the Lubukusu dialect. Such an oversight may also stem from the fact that “some Bukusu historical accounts lay claim to the Batura as one of the 196 known Babukusu clans, under the magnanimous Bukusu concept of ‘Lirango lie enjofu’” (<https://Abeingo.com/HTML-files/letters.html>).

The Bukusu largely reside in Bungoma County and they speak Lubukusu. According to the 2019 Kenyan census, (<https://www.knbs.or.ke/category/census-2019>) they are the largest Abaluhya tribe. Makila (1978) proposes that the Bukusu could have originated from Esibakele in Northern Sudan. Under the leadership of Mundu, the Bukusu migrated to Esirende where they actively engaged in agriculture. Mundu had two sons namely Kundu and Masaba.

Whereas Kundu parted ways with his family and pitched at Lake Kioga, Masaba left Esirende and settled at Nasibwe which is near Lake Turkana. Later, Masaba relocated to Embaye where

he married and had two sons: Mwambe and Mubukusu. A conflict arose between the two sons thus Mubukusu migrated and settled at the foot of Mount Elgon.

From Mubukusu, there emanated a group of people who referred to themselves as the Babukusu (Baraza 2011). After the demise of Mubukusu, the Babukusu under the leadership of Silikwa moved and settled in a place they named 'Silikwa' in the present Uasin Gishu area. As a result of constant tribal conflicts with their neighbours, the Bukusu again migrated to the Western slopes of Mt Elgon where they settled briefly. Save for the minor groups of the Ng'oma, Lago, and El Kony, the place was hardly inhabited (Baraza 2011). Later, the Bukusu traversed the shores of Lake Victoria. According to Makila (1978) by 1850, the Bukusu had settled in Bungoma, parts of Busia and Western Kakamega County. Presently, the Bukusu predominantly inhabit the Bungoma and Trans Nzoia Counties.

The Batura on the other hand are a minority community within the larger Luhya group. For long, they have been marginalised, having been denied 'their own administrative division and even losing land during the colonial times to the dominant Wanga ethnic group' (Marlo 2008: 154). The 2009 census, placed the Batura at about 30,388 people. These people are scattered across Busia, Mumias, Butere and Bungoma. Supposedly, this dispersal is a major contribution to the mystery surrounding the true identity of the Batura. The informants I interacted with disclosed that the largest group of the Batura live in Khasoko, Bungoma County.

Little has been recorded about the Batura migratory history. One migratory account states that the Batura broke away from the Tiriki of Vihiga County about 500 years ago. This claim is strengthened by the fact that there is a Badura clan among the Tiriki. After breaking away from the Tiriki, the Batura took a southerly path through Isukha/Idakho, Wanga, Marachi, Bukhayo and finally Bukusu (<https://www.academia.edu/19662158/Abatura-culture>).

The map on the Luhya communities and the sketchy Batura migratory history divulge unclear information about the true identity of the Batura. Consequently, it is pertinent to look further than the two sources. A comparative analysis of Tura and Lubukusu can enlighten our understanding of the Batura social identity.

## **Literature Review**

Language is crucial in the development of social identity in general (Eastman, 1985 in Gudykunst and Schmidt 1988, p.1). Individuals use language to categorise themselves and others in order to make sense of their social environment. Therefore, the quintessential role of language as a symbol of ethnicity and by extension, sub-ethnicity, is underscored by many authors.

Some scholars argue that language and ethnicity are coterminous. Fishman (1999) expounds that in some historical, regional and disciplinary viewpoints language has totally been linked to ethnicity. In the same vein, Obeng and Adgbija (1999) claim that language is a storehouse of ethnicity in the sense that 'each ethnic group expresses and identifies itself by the language it speaks, and its cultural paraphernalia is shaped by its language' (Obeng and Adgbija 1999, p. 353). The scholars further espouse that in Africa, the link between language and ethnicity is so strong that talk about language is talk about ethnicity. The two entities, the scholars intensify

their argument, are so intricately interwoven that they are frequently pulled in the same direction. Succinctly put, language is indexical of ethnicity and vice versa.

The language ethnicity bond is ubiquitous in many parts of Africa. Before colonialism, ethnic groups were independent of each other. Each ethnic group not only had its individual government but also cultural values. Most important, ethnic groups coalesced on the grounds of commonness in language. Language served the purposes of intra-ethnic communication and ethnic identification. Obeng and Adgbija cite the example of the Akan in Ghana. The Akan language brought together the Akan people into a 'state' and distinguished them from other ethnic groups speaking different languages (1999, p.355). In Kenya too, people coalesce into ethnic and sub-ethnic groups along language and dialect lines. For instance, within the umbrella Luhya linguistic group, there are dialects including Lutirichi, Lubukusu, Lusaamia, Lutachoni, Luwanga and Lulogoli. These dialects are indexical of smaller sub-ethnic groups within the larger Luhya ethnic group. These are the Tiriki, Bukusu, Saamia, Tachoni, Wanga and Maragoli. Clearly, dialects names are indexical of the sub-ethnic group names. It is almost impossible to identify a dialect without conjuring up the group which speaks it.

Unity in language to a great extent engenders feelings of solidarity that glue people into ethnic groupings. However, it has been argued that ethnicity should not only be conceivable in terms of the language a group speaks but also with respect to how the language distinguishes the group from other groups. In other words, ethnicity should be gauged in terms of language opposition. Sameness and differences in the structure of a language or a dialect provide a basis of determining if individuals are in-group or out-group members. The structure of a language plays a major role in setting ethnic boundaries as emphasised by McAll:

'it is central to the linguistic theory that identity is only conceivable in terms of opposition. Whether one thinks of the particular range of sounds that are useful in a given language to construct semantic units or the range of semantic units itself that constitutes the basic vocabulary, in each case the identity of the phonemes or the identity of the semantic units is established by their being opposed to or differentiated from all other sounds or units within the closed system of language. In other words, identity is not something essential to the phoneme or the semantic unit itself but only exists in opposition.'

McAll (1990: p.99):

The role of language as an ethnic frontier is also exploited by Fishman's (1977) in the concept of 'contrasting self-definition'. According to Fishman, language serves as a means of uniting a speech community and at the same time contrasting it with other speech communities. Steinberg (2001) adds that people use their language as symbols of their culture so as to distinguish themselves from others. One's native language therefore, sets a boundary between one's ethnic group and another. In speech, a speaker applies specific structural features that indicate his or her ethnic identity. The numerous phonological, morphological, syntactic and grammatical features not only distinguish language varieties but also ethnic varieties. Like the Australians who marginalise the Aboriginal people by using a restrictive lexicon (Muecke 1982 in Spencer 2006, p 100), all people use language that embodies categories that can exclude and include (Spencer 2006, p. 100).

It is no longer rare to find ethnic minorities deliberately using a linguistic variety to distinguish themselves from others in the society. A majority of African Americans for instance, identify themselves as such by using the African-American Vernacular English (AAVE). AAVE has characteristic features that distinguish it from the standard American English mainly spoken by the white Americans. Indeed, language serves as a means of uniting a speech community and at the same time contrasting it with other speech communities. This also holds true for endangered minority groups faced with identity crisis. Baraza (2011, p.10) states that 'all members of the Bukusu clans speak the same language and share one culture.' Since linguistic characteristics are the most defining criteria for ethnic grouping, in our study, the Batura identity can be deduced by comparing the Tura-Lubukusu phonemes, lexemes and semantic structures.

## **Methodology**

The data provided in this study was elicited from three native speakers of Tura in Khasoko and three native speakers of Lubukusu in Bokoli. Both sub-counties are located in Bungoma County. Following Pelkey (2011: 60), each respondent was purposively sampled and selected through a brief interview eliciting information in the following prescribed criteria:

1. Personal history and demographic such as age, birthplace, marital status and education level.
2. Individual history: frequency and locations of outside travel; length of time (if lived away from home village and location of outside stay).
3. Language use: other languages spoken and estimated proficiency.

The consultants were selected on the basis of being adults, native speakers of the dialects in question, being conversant with the English language and not having lived out of the host sub-counties for a long period of time.

The lexical and phonological data was elicited through a list of 400 words. The initial master wordlist was constructed from the Swadesh 200-item wordlist. The list was adopted in the interest of attending to concerns such as covering of major word classes. However, modern items likely to glean Lubukusu and Tura loans were excluded. For a broader comparison of Tura and Lubukusu, additional items in the various word classes were incorporated. Lastly, in order to widen an understanding of the ethnical aspects of the Tura and Bukusu, further material cultural items denoting rites such as circumcision and funeral were added.

## **Results and Discussion**

This part entails a comparative analysis of the linguistic repertoires of Tura and Lubukusu that will enable us determine whether the Tura have a distinct identity. The findings are tabulated as shown in the subsections hereunder.

### **The Tura and Lubukusu Phonemes**

#### **Vowels**

The five basic vocalic sounds as they occur in the initial, middle and final positions in words are presented in table 1. However, following Mutonyi (2000) who argues that length should be

treated as a supra segmental unit, the long vowels herein were not treated as separate phonemes.

**Table 1: The Tura and Lubukusu Vowels**

IPA Symbol	Vowel	Tura Words	Gloss.	English	Lubukusu Words	Gloss	English
/a/	a	Akhaasi	/axa:si/	Cousin	atayi	/ataji/	Far
		Papa	/papa/	Father	lusala	/Lusala/	Stick
		Mukhira	/muxiɾa/	Tail	omusecha	/omusetʃa/	Man
/e/	e	Esie	/esie/	l	enyama	/ejama/	Meat
		Omwesi	/omwesi/	moon	endemu	/endemu/	Snake
		ing'ombe	/iŋombe/	Cow	lichune	/litʃune/	Hair
/i/	i	Isiimba	/isi:mba/	Lion	ingiila	/iŋgi:la/	Enter
		Rikhumbo	/rixumbo/	Arm	sibofu	/siβofu/	Big
		Omuusi	/omu:si/	Root	lia	/lia/	Eat
/o/	o	Omunwa	/omunwa/	Mouth	omukhebi	/omuxeβi/	Circumciser
		Rikokhe	/rikoxe/	Ash	biosi	/βiosi/	All
		Sikalabo	/sikalaβo/	Palm	sisiro	/sisiɾo/	Knife
/u/	u	Urira	/urira/	Hear	Ulila	/ulila/	Hear
		Musiani	/musiani/	Boy	Nyuaa	/ɲua:/	Drink
		Instofu	/instofu/	elephant	chitaru	/tʃitaɾu/	Three

From table 1, it is clear that Tura and Lubukusu each consist of a five vowel system (a, e, i, o, u). This is typical of the vowel system of the Bantu language family (Anderson 2001). In addition, the short vowels were found to have their long counterparts which were similar in both dialects.

### The Tura- Lubukusu consonants

Tura exhibits a total of fifteen pure consonants and two glides. Apart from the pure consonants, there are four compound consonant nasals. Lubukusu on the other hand has a total of fourteen pure consonants, two glides and four compound consonant nasals. The following table illustrates an orthographic representation (O.R) of the Tura-Lubukusu consonants together with their corresponding IPA equivalents. Examples of the consonants in words followed by a translation into English are also furnished.

**Table 2 Tura-Lubukusu Consonants Comparison**

TURA O.R	TURA IPA	TURA WORD	ENGLISH	LUBUKUSU O.R	L. IPA	L.WORD	ENGLISH
p	p	/xupa:ra/	think	p	p	/pa:pa/	father
b	β	/luβuβi/	spider	b	β	/bu:nyasi/	grass
t	t	/site:re/	day	t	t	/li:turu/	breast
k	k	/luika/	horn	k	k	/likoxe/	ash
m	m	/imo:ni/	eye	m	m	/simufu/	full
n	n	/eri:no/	tooth	n	n	/sino/	this
ny	ɲ	/iɲa:ntsa/	lake	ny	ɲ	/siɲifu/	wet
ng'	ŋ	/iŋombe/	cow	ng'	ŋ	/siŋe'ŋe'/	mosquito
f	f	/fu:tʃa/	spit	f	f	/exafu/	cow
s	s	/isu:na/	mosquito	s	s	/si:ni/	liver
kh	x	/xuria/	eat	kh	x	/tʃexa/	laugh
y	j	/rijoni/	bird	y	j	/sixa:ja/	empty
ts	ts	/itsuri/	morning				
ch	tʃ	/omukatʃi/	sugar cane	ch	tʃ	/omusetʃa/	man
r	ɾ	/ɾiua/	flower	r	ɾ	/mukaɾi/	in
l	l	/ifu:la/	rain	l	l	/ndala/	one
w	w	/lwa:la/	finger	w	w	/wa:ndaji/	brother
mb	mb	/siɾambi/	long	mb	mb	siku:mba/	bone
nd	nd	/i:nda/	louse	nd	nd	/kamandu/	rubbish
ng	ŋg	/sixoŋgo/	big	ng	ŋg	/ε:ŋgoxo/	chicken
				nj	ɲdʒ	/eɲdʒuxa/	snake
nst	nst	/instofu/	elephant				

Table 2 above illustrates that Tura and Lubukusu share fourteen pure consonants, two glides and four compound consonants. These are:

p	t	ʃt	k	<b>Stops</b>
(mb)	(nd)	(ɲj)	(ŋg)	
f	s	x		<b>Fricatives</b>
β				
m	n	ɲ	ŋ	<b>Nasals</b>
l	ɾ			<b>Liquids</b>
w	j			<b>Glides</b>

It is also worth noting from table two that in addition to the fourteen pure consonants, Tura exhibits the distinctive consonant /ts/ that is absent in Lubukusu. More so, Tura has an additional compound consonant /nst/ that is lacking in Lubukusu.

### Morpho-Phonemic Comparisons

In this part, a comparative analysis of the morphophonemic features of Tura and Lubukusu is presented. In particular, striking differences and similarities in the Tura-Lubukusu prefixes in words are shown. In addition, variations in the phonemes in the roots of words are supplied.

### Prefix Variation

It was revealed that although some Tura- Lubukusu roots are similar, some noun and adjectives prefixes vary. The variation is captured as follows in tables 3, 4, 5 and 6.

#### /i/, /e/ Noun prefix variation

**Table 3: Tura-Lubukusu /i/, /e/ Prefix Variation**

English	Tura Word	Gloss	Lubukusu Word	Gloss	Prefix Contrast
Louse	iinda	/i:nda/	eenda	/e:nda/	i e
Fish	ing'eni	/ipeni/	eng'eni	/epeni/	i e
Goat	imbuusi	/imbu:si/	embusi	/embusi/	i e
Dog	iimbwa	/i:mbwa/	eembwa	/e:mbwa/	i e
chicken	iingokho	/i:ngoxo/	eengokho	/e:ngoxo/	i e

Table 3 above indicates the similarities in some of the roots in Tura and Lubukusu. This is a pointer to the fact that the two dialects are genealogically related. However, there is /i/, /e/variation in the prefixes in the presented words which fall under noun class 9. For instance, whereas the Tura refer to fish as /ipeni/, the Bukusu refer to it as /epeni/.

#### /ri/ /li/ Noun Prefix Variation

**Table 4: Tura- Lubukusu /ri/ /li/ Noun Prefix Variation**

English	Tura Word	Gloss	Lubukusu Word	Gloss	Prefix Contrast
Fruit	rituunda	/ritu:pda/	Lituunda	/litu:nda/	ri li
Nose	riolu	/riolu/	Liolu	/liolu/	
Tooth	riino	/ri:ni/	Liino	/li:no/	
Knee	risikamo	/risikamo/	lisikaamo	/lisika:mo/	
Neck	rikoosi	/riko:si/	Likoosi	/liko:si/	
Ash	rikokhe	/rikoxe/	Likokhe	/likoxe/	

Table 4 illustrates that there is a difference in some Tura- Lubukusu noun class 3 prefixes. As in the case of table 3, the roots in both dialects are the same. Nevertheless, the prefixes attached to the roots have a /li/, /ri/ variation. For example, the Tura word for nose is /riolu/ while that of Lubukusu is /liolu/.

#### /o/ /ku/ prefix variation

**Table 5: Tura-Lubukusu /o/ /ku/ Pre prefix Variation**

English	Tura Word	Gloss	Lubukusu Word	Gloss	Prefix Contrast
Head	omurwe	/omurwe/	kumurwe	/kumurwe/	o ku
Hand	omukhono	/omuxono/	kumukhono	/kumuxono/	
Mouth	omunwa	/omunwa/	kumunwa	/kumunwa/	
Back	omukoongo	/omukongo/	kumukoongo	/kumuko:ngo/	

Tree	omusala	/omusala/	kumusala	/kumusa/
Fire	omuriro	/omuriro/	Kumulilo	/kumulilo/

Table 5 clearly exhibits /o/, /ku/ pre-prefix variation in the Tura- Lubukusu words equivalent to the English words for body parts such as head, hand, mouth and back. For example, the Tura word for head is /**o**murwe/, while that of Lubukusu is /**ku**murwe/. Further distinctions in the pre prefix are illustrated in the corresponding Tura- Lubukusu words for tree and fire.

### **/βi/ /tʃi/ Adjective prefix variation**

**Table 6: Tura- Lubukusu /βi/, /tʃi/ prefix variation**

<b>English</b>	<b>Tura</b>	<b>Gloss</b>	<b>Lubukusu</b>	<b>Gloss</b>	<b>Prefix contrast</b>
Two	bibiri	/βiβiri/	chibili	/tʃiβili/	/βi/, /tʃi/
three	bitaru	/βitaru/	chitaru	/tʃitaru/	
four	biine	/βi:ne/	chine	/tʃi:ne/	
five	birano	/βirano/	chirano	/tʃirano/	

Apart from noun pre prefix and prefix variations, table 6 illustrates distinctions in the prefixes of corresponding Tura- Lubukusu adjectives denoting number. The Tura corresponding word for number 'two' is /**βi**βiri/ while that of Lubukusu is /**tʃi**βili/. This /βi/, /tʃi/ prefix variation is also exhibited in Tura- Lubukusu corresponding words for three, four and five as shown in table six.

### **Verb prefix comparison**

**Table 7: Tura- Lubukusu /xu/ verb prefix**

<b>English</b>	<b>Tura</b>	<b>Gloss</b>	<b>Lubukusu</b>	<b>Gloss</b>	<b>Verb Prefix</b>
carry	khukiinga	/xuki:ŋga/	khusuta	/xusuta/	/xu/
think	khupaara	/xupa:ra/	khupaara	/xupa:ra/	
dig	khurima	/xurima/	khulima	/xulima/	
stand	khuema	/xuema/	khuima	/xuima/	
sleep	khukoona	/xuko:na/	khukoona	/xuko:na/	

From table 7, we surmise that the prefix /xu/, the equivalent of infinitive 'to' is present in both the Tura and Lubukusu verb roots. In this regard, the two dialects are similar.

### **Phonemic Variations in Roots**

**Table 8: Tura-Lubukusu morphophonemic differences**

<b>English Word</b>	<b>Tura Word</b>	<b>Gloss</b>	<b>Lubukusu Word</b>	<b>Gloss</b>	<b>Phoneme Contrast</b>
Cockroach	lisiriri	/lisiri:ri/	Lisilili	/lisilili/	r l
Tongue	lurimi	/luɾimi/	Lulimi	/lulimi/	
Night	esi:ro	/esi:ɾo/	Siilo	/si:lo/	
breathe	khuyeera	/xuye:ɾa/	Khuyeela	/xuye:la/	
hear	khuurira	/xuɾira/	Khuulila	/xu:lila/	
bee	instukhi	/instuxi/	Enjukhi	/eŋɟuxi/	nst ɱɟ

elephant	instofu	/instofu/	Enjoofu	/eɲdʒo:fu/		
hunger	instaala	insta:la/	Enjaala	/eɲdʒa:la/		
lake	inyaansta	/iɲa:sta/	Enyaanja	/eɲa:ɲdʒa/		
man	musatsa	/musatsa	Musecha	/musetʃa/	ts	tʃ
spit	fuutsa	/fu:tʃa/	Fuucha	/fu:tʃa/		
laugh	tsekha	/tsexa/	Chekha	/tʃexa/		
come	itsaa	/itsa:/	Ichaa	/itʃa:/		
full	sitsuure	/sitsu:re/	Sichuule	/sitʃu:le/		
water	amaatsi	/ama:tsi/	Kamechi	/kametʃi/		

Noteworthy from table eight are three phonemic variations in various Tura and Lubukusu root words. The variation involving the Tura -Lubukusu words for 'cockroach', 'tongue', 'night', 'breathe' and 'hear' is in the consonant sounds /r/ and /l/. In the words for cockroach for instance, while the Tura use /r/ as in /lisiriɾi/, the Bukusu use /l/ 'lisilili/. Furthermore, there is a distinction in the /nst/ and /ɲdʒ/ compound consonants. Whereas the Tura utilize /nst/ in words such as 'instaala' and 'instukhi', the Bukusu employ /ɲdʒ/ in the equivalents 'enjaala' and 'enjukhi' respectively. Lastly, the Tura use the consonant clusters /ts/ in words such as 'tsekha' and 'itsaa' while their Bukusu counterparts make use of /tʃ/ in the corresponding words 'chekha' and 'ichaa'.

### Core Lexical Comparisons

An analysis of the Tura and Lubukusu lexical items revealed words which are completely different but used to refer to the same concept. Besides, there are similar words in both Tura and Lubukusu that denote similar concepts. These findings are tabulated in the following two parts.

### Lexical Variation

In this study, lexical variation is perceived as words that are completely different but used to name a similar concept. Lexical variations in Tura and Lubukusu are illustrated in table 9 below:

**Table 9: Tura-Lubukusu Lexical Variation.**

<b>word class</b>	<b>English</b>	<b>Tura</b>	<b>Lubukusu</b>
<b>nouns</b>	Name	erita	lisina
	mother	maama	mayi
	Sweat	luuya	lukeesi
	Breast	lubeere	liituru
	Cow	ingo'mbe	eekhafu
	Sheep	rikoondi	likheese
	Snake	instukha	endeemu
	Lion	isiimba	etaalang'i
	mosquito	isuna	singe'nge'
	Seed	obuufwa	lumiicho
	sugarcane	omukaachi	kumwiiba
	Banana	litemwa	litore

	Knife	rikhaande	kumubano
	Stone	rikina	libaale
<b>verbs</b>			
	remember	khuitsurira	khukhebulila
	Serve	khuinula	khuomola
	Vomit	khusala	khurusia
	Plant	khuraaka	khubiala
	Burn	khusambaa	khuosia
	Turn	khukalukhaana	khuyukha
	Squeeze	khufuinyaa	khukhamulula
<b>Adjectives</b>			
	Big	sikhongo	sibofu
	Red	siakhanya	sibeeseemu
	White	silaaфу	siwanga
	Soft	sitorotoro	siolaole

Table 9 illustrates that Tura and Lubukusu exhibit lexical variation at the different grammatical levels including nouns, verbs and adjectives. The Tura for instance refer to an 'egg' as 'ribuuyu' while the Bukusu use the term 'liiki'. In addition, the Tura name a monkey 'likheene' whereas the Bukusu refer to it as 'ekhima'. Lastly, with reference to verbs, the Tura say 'khusambaa' while the Bukusu say 'khuosia' to refer to 'burn'.

### Similar Lexical Items

In as much as Tura and Lubukusu demonstrate variation in certain lexical items, there is also evidence of similar words which are used to represent similar concepts. This similarity in lexical items may be adduced to the fact that the two share a parent language. Language contact can also be an additional reason for the similarity. My informants disclosed that formerly, the Batura did not circumcise their boys. However, when they came into contact with the Bukusu, they adopted the circumcision rites. Since culture and language are intertwined, the Tura lexical items that denote the various circumcision aspects are akin those of the Bukusu circumcision cultural terms.

In both Tura and Lubukusu, the concept for 'grandmother' and 'grandfather' are 'kuukhu' and 'kuuka' respectively. One's paternal aunt is referred to as 'seenge' while a maternal aunt is called 'maama'. In addition, a village is called 'lukoongo', 'heavy' is 'sisiro', 'wet' is 'sinyifu', 'good' is 'silayi', 'here' referred to as 'anoo', 'there' as 'aao' and 'this' as 'sino'.

With regard to the circumcision rites concepts, it was revealed that the Batura and Bukusu refer to an uncircumcised boy as 'musiinde' and the singing and dancing of the uncircumcised boy together with his entourage is referred to as 'khumiinya'. More so, metal rings worn by the uncircumcised boy are called 'birere', the blade of grass that graces the initiate's head is 'ututu' a not yet healed circumcised boy is 'mufulu', the circumciser is 'mukhebi' and finally, a woman who cooks for the circumcised boy is called 'namachengeche'.

### Semantic Analysis

The study revealed that the word 'khukhoonya' in Lubukusu means to kill or strangle whereas the same word in Tura means to help. In addition, the word 'khubaaya' in Lubukusu means to rear animals while it means 'play' in Tura. It was also established that the Bukusu use the term 'khusala' to refer to making cuts on the body, ornamentation on pots and printing in books (Wasike and Marlo 2008 ). The Batura on the other hand use 'khusala' to refer to 'vomit'. Lastly, the word 'kamalasure' in Lubukusu means 'animal blood, especially drawn for a live cow for food.' The same word in Tura holds a wider semantic scope as it refers to both human and animal blood.

## Conclusion

An in depth examination of the Tura and Lubukusu linguistic variables has ascertained that Tura is a distinctive Luhya dialect, different from Lubukusu. Consequently, the Batura can be said to have unique and distinctive sub-ethnic identity. The study revealed that Tura and Lubukusu register variations at the consonantal, morpho-phonological (pre-prefixes and prefixes), lexical and the semantic levels. All in all, the striking resemblances of many of the Tura and Lubukusu roots indicate that the two dialects share a common parent language. Lastly, since the Batura are a minority community scattered across Busia, Mumias, Butere and Bungoma, it is recommended that a study be carried out to explore the Batura ethno-linguistic vitality.

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Beth Njeri Ngugi  
Murang'a University of Technology

### **Abstract**

Language plays a fundamental role in the development outcomes of a country. The study has addressed the critical role of indigenous language in both transmission and preservation of knowledge for sustainable development. Despite international efforts to end poverty and improve the well-being of a people through global plans such as the Sustainable Development Goals, majority of African countries still fall under the category of least developed counties. Majority of the population in these countries remain economically disadvantaged with minimal capacity to make significant contribution towards improving their lives and that of their communities. This, therefore, calls for an analysis of the drivers to sustainable development and specifically the extent to which indigenous languages contribute to a lifelong learning for sustainable development in Africa to be achieved. This analysis was achieved through two objectives: finding out the effectiveness of indigenous languages in transmitting information and establishing the ways in which mother language may be used to pass information for lifelong learning. Document analysis, interview and observation during English lesson provided secondary and primary data. Purposive sampling techniques were used to select schools where learners used their mother language as a medium of instruction. The study established that use of mother language enhanced the processing of information as learners performed well on words explained in an indigenous language. Further, to achieve long-life learning, mother tongue may be used in various ways including: explaining new words, discussing complex instructions and paraphrasing statements. In conclusion, the study established that for sustainable development to be realized, indigenous languages may be used in passing knowledge to all throughout their life.

**Keywords:** indigenous language, sustainable development, lifelong learning, code-switching.

### **Introduction**

Sustainable development (SD) has been defined differently depending on aspect of focus. For instance, Schmuck, P & P. Wesley (2002) view SD as human progress that places much emphasis on how needs of the present generation are met without depletion of natural resources for future generation. This gives SD an economic approach as the focus is on how the available resources are used. Bossel (1999) views SD as human activities that nurture and propagate the historical fulfilment of the whole community of life on earth. As such, SD takes a humanity aspect as area of focus. Consequently, different approaches to sustainable development will be used. What is not in contention in all these views is the central role that education plays in the general improvements of peoples' lives. It is for this reason that Kenya's Vision 2030 singles out education as the vehicle that will drive Kenya into becoming a middle-economy. Indeed, in line with Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4) all countries are expected to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education. This calls for education that does not exclude others because of gender, language or age but one that promote a lifelong learning.

## **Lifelong Learning**

Education is a major instrument of development as it aids in passing of knowledge not only between but also across generations. Through education people are able to master new skills, and acquire new knowledge that enable them to be free to contribute meaningfully to the society. Ngugi et.al (2017) notes that one of the key targets in SDG 4 is to ensure that by 2030, all girls and boys have an access to complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes. However, if SD is to be achieved, people should be given an opportunity to acquire knowledge not only at primary and secondary school level but also throughout their life – also called Lifelong learning (LLL).

In an ever changing, world there is need to learn and adapt to the new skills and knowledge through lifelong learning. This will, therefore, entail formal, non-formal and informal learning. In doing so, opportunity for constant learning to all individuals is provided because learning is flexible, varied and accessible at different times of life. In support of this, the government of Kenya through the National Education Sector Strategic Plan (2018-2022) is seeking to provide and promote competence based and equitable learner centered education, training and research for sustainable development (MoE, 2019).) Some of the anticipated benefits include amongst others, economically empowered society that is able to make the right decisions and claim their rights as well as have positive attitudes and values. The implication is that for SD to be achieved, lifelong learning is necessary.

A fundamental concern of any relevant education system must therefore be the choice of language of instruction especially in a multilingual society such as Kenya. Consequently, the language choice at both entry level -where the foundation for education is laid- as well as beyond school is crucial. This raises the question of how best primary education (formal learning) and also non- formal learning would be provided so that learners are equipped for the different roles in the society in a bilingual society.

Studies show that in classes where bilingual education is allowed, code- switching is used as one of the communicative strategies not only during English language lessons but also during instruction of other subjects (Di Pietro 1977; Nthiga 2003; Fakeye 2012; Mubia 2013). For instance, Nthiga (2003) contends that the teachers who insist on using English language alone fail to communicate to the children fully. Similarly, Di Pietro (1977:6) affirms to this when he says:

....all people regardless of the language they speak, possess certain verbal skills upon which they rely on to influence the outcomes of their conversation with others, and that code-switching provides a basis for these strategies.

Lifelong learning for sustainable development can be achieved if code- switching is used as a communicative strategy. Code-switching will allow alternative use of languages when passing information especially in areas where language used as the medium of instruction is not learners'L1. The strategy, allow indigenous languages to be used alternatively with other language used globally. This not only helps learner understand concept but also makes it easier for person relaying the information.

Different researchers are of the view that teachers use code-switching so that they can achieve their set objectives in the lesson. The objective may be to help learners understand the content or allow learners to participate among other functions that communication plays.

### **Theoretical Framework**

Baker and Westrup (2000) propose three main steps of presenting content during an English lesson. These steps are also referred to as the three main tenets of PPP framework. They are: Presentation, Practice and Production phase. It is at presentation phase that teachers guide learners on items of focus and what exactly they are expected to do during the lesson (Wardhaugh, 2006). Further, the teacher engages learners in activities geared towards understanding the word structure and the meaning. For instance, Mwangi et al. (2009) identify imitation drills as some of activities teachers use until learners become confident with newly taught items. Code-switching is observed to enhance learning and learners' performance in a given language activity.

During practice, learners are engaged in plenty of activities that will help them practise new words or concepts that the teacher had focused in the lesson. Baker and Westrup (2000) propose that one way a teacher may help learners process and internalize the concepts taught is by practice. Finally, at production phase, pupils are engaged in activities which allow learners free language production during the English lesson. The learners may have to do some of the activities when they leave the classroom, for example, writing a composition or attempting questions individually from textbooks. The Production phase of the PPP framework provided guidance on what was used to assess the impacts of use of mother tongue during vocabulary lessons. Thus, although there were different language activities observed during the lesson only the language activities at the production phase were used in current study.

Steadman (1998) asserts that classroom assessment may be used by teachers to establish the effectiveness of a teaching method. Learners' performance on language activities that were given at production stage allowed the current study to evaluate not only learners' understanding of concepts taught but also the teaching method strategy used: code-switching as a teaching strategy. Nunan (1987) posits that language used in the classroom may influence learners' performance on what is being taught. It was the interest of the study to establish the effects of code-switching during the lesson by assessing whether the learners were able to use those words correctly in different contexts.

### **Research Methodology**

A descriptive research design was adopted in this study. Wimmer et al. (2006) note that, a descriptive design attempts to describe a current condition in any given area of study. A descriptive design describes behaviour of a particular group or individuals.

The study was carried out in Kasarani Sub-county in Nairobi, Kenya. Non probability sampling was used to select the area of study. Burns and Grove (2003) note that in non-probability sampling a researcher uses their own judgement to select subjects to be included in their study based on their knowledge in the phenomenon. The focus of the study was in multilingual

classrooms; therefore, the choice of the place of study was determined by its plurilingual nature. Data for this research was from teachers and learners who use more than one language during English lessons.

Purposive sampling was used to select three schools in Kasarani. The 3 schools were more than 10 percent of the number of public schools in the target location. Gay (1981) argues that 10 percent of an accessible population is enough for a sample in a descriptive study. In each school, further sampling of 3 classes was done to arrive at a sample of nine classes. Random sampling was used to select grade one, two and three classes in schools which had more than one stream while in one streamed schools the data was from grade one, two and three.

Three teachers were selected from each of the sampled schools using purposive sampling. In total, 9 teachers were observed during English language lessons. The researcher interviewed the teachers who had been observed during the lessons to establish whether there were any discrepancies between what they said and what they did during the English lesson. Mackay and Gass (2005) note that in research a participant may be allowed to comment on their action through a verbal report. Use of the same teachers enabled the researcher get some clarification for observations made during English lessons.

A total of 135 learners were in the three classes where code-switching was observed during the lesson. Random sampling was used to select 45 exercise books from three classes observed during the study. In every class the third student's exercise book was picked to be used in assessment of the learners' performance in a learning exercise after the lesson. A total of 45 exercise books were used in the study to find out how learners performed in words that were explained in a language different from the target language. The assessment was used to establish whether code-switching had a positive impact during vocabulary lessons.

The study employed audio-video recording as the main tool of data collection which was supplemented by interviews, observation notes, note taking and document analysis. The use of different tools is supported by Silverman (2010) who argues that use of multi-methods gives different perspectives of the issue being investigated. The multiple data gathering method helped the researcher in triangulating the evidence. Interview and audio-video recording provided the study with the primary data (**Appendix 4**)

### **Effectiveness of using an Indigenous Language in Passing Information**

The study was interested in finding out whether the use of indigenous language assisted in passing knowledge. In order to achieve this, observations were made in three out of nine lessons observed. A list of words whose meaning was explained in a language different from the target language was developed. Three different activities were observed during the three lessons. The activities are presented in appendices (**Appendix 1, 2 & 3**) The results on learners' performance on every question in each of the classes are presented in **table 1.1**.

#### **a) Lesson I**

In lesson one, a discussion of words not familiar to the learners was done before reading a comprehension passage on 'Rice and fish'. The new words included: *parents, beans, food, rice, table, want* and *have*. Teachers were observed to use Kiswahili as they explained the English words that were unfamiliar to the learners. The learners were allowed to attempt language activity (**appendix 1**)

**b) Lesson II**

In lesson II, the class was discussing the continuous forms of verbs. A phrase to be completed by using a verb in its continuous aspect was provided to the learners. Each of the sentences began with the phrase '*they must keep.....*'. Next to the phrase was a picture showing different actions. The learners were presented with different pictures and expected to complete the sentences by adding the suffix '-ing' to the root verb to complete the sentence. The class first discussed the relevant pictures showing different activities as presented using Kiswahili language. Later on, learners attempted a related exercise (**Appendix 2**)

**c) Lesson III**

The third lesson like the first one was a comprehension lesson. The class discussed the passage '*The champion*'. In the lesson the teacher discussed different new words that learners were expected to encounter in their reading of the passage. The words included: *whistle, referee, scores, champion, stadium and tickets*. In the discussion of the meaning of each of the words, code-switching was used learners were expected to attempt questions related to the passage. (**Appendix 3**)

The learners answered the questions individually in their books. The researcher marked learners' exercise books after each lesson to find out how they had performed in the different activities. In each question the number of learners that wrote the correct answer is given and a percentage in relation to the total number of the respondents per class. Similarly an average of learners' performance per lesson is provided next to the lesson in table 1.

**Table 1: A Summary of Learners' Scores in Each Word per Class**

LESSON/P ERCENT	LESSON I 67%		LESSON II 53%		LESSON III 82%	
Question	Freq.	(%)	Freq.	(%)	Freq.	(%)
1	8	53	7	46	14	93
2	11	73	9	60	12	80
3	9	60	8	53	15	100
4	12	80	6	40	11	73
5	10	67	10	67	13	86
6					10	62

The study used three classes in order to establish whether similar results would be observed consistently under similar circumstances. The data shows that for each class the average performance was over fifty percent with lesson I having **67 percent** while II and III had **53**

**percent** and **82 percent** respectively. Performance per word had varying scores and in some cases all the students got some questions correctly (lesson III question 3). However, in some of the words learners got as low as 40 percent in lesson III. The performance was encouraging despite the score as the teacher indicated that the class belonged to either slow learners or learners who had reported late.

The results in **Table 1** show that the learners were able to perform well in most of the lessons after Kiswahili was used to explain. Swain et al. (2013) point out that a teacher may use performance of learners on activities to provide feedback. Learners' ability to use a word in a sentence correctly was an indication that the learner had understood the meaning of the word. It is very clear that use of our indigenous languages during English lesson help the learners understand the concepts that they are learning. The result agrees with other studies that have shown that the role of indigenous languages in second language development cannot be ignored. UNICEF (2003:77) states that

“pupils learn better in their own mother tongue as a prelude to and complement of bilingual education approaches”.

This was in support of a report by UNESCO that had proposed development of a lingua franca in classroom which was not to substitute mother tongue unless pupils could use it before going to school. This gives our indigenous languages a double edged role in education: to provide a foundation for education and as a bridge to acquisition of the second language (Ngugi,et.al, 2017)). Mastery of English is a positive characterization of globalization.

### **Role of Indigenous Languages in Teaching**

Fairclough (1989) posits that discourse allows a critical analysis of language at a social level and the impact it has on relationships. The implication is that any information in the dialogue has possible effects or functions.

Since Wei (2005) identifies code-switching as a discourse strategy, to achieve certain interactions at specific points during conversation, it was necessary to establish its impact. The study found out that the code-switched utterances whether a question, statement or a reiteration had different roles in the learning process. Teachers used different forms of code-switching for different purposes.

#### **i) Explanation of Meaning**

In text 4.1, the teacher is observed to use a Kiswahili relative clause to explain the meaning of the word referee.

#### **Text 4.1**

- T: Now, we have the word referee.  
Referee *ni mtu ambaye huanzisha* game. Those who  
'a person who starts...'  
start the games are called referees. They are called.....
- L: Referees.

In text 4.1, the teacher explained the meaning of the word referee in Kiswahili language. Similarly, in text 4.2 the teacher introduced a new word 'whistle'. She then asked the learners to give the meaning of the same. A learner was observed to switch to Kiswahili while explaining the meaning as illustrated in text 4.2 below.

#### **Text 4.2**

T: Next is the word 'whistle', who can tell us the meaning of the word whistle? John

L: A whistle is *kitu kinachotumiwa* to start and to end a game  
'something used'

T: A whistle *hutumiwa kuanzisha nini?*  
'what is it used to start?'

L: *Mchezo.*  
'Game'

Jingxia (2010) posits that one of the major problems that teachers encounter in EFL classrooms is how to convey the meanings of L2 to a learner. In reference to Grammar translation method, a teacher may translate a word or a phrase. Cook (2001) suggests that code-switching is an important tool that can be used to give an explanation. The teacher may use L1 to give a translation of a word or a synonym and even contextualize the word. Atkinson (1993) notes, that translation helps the learners to make sense of the new information. Jingxia (2010) adds that conveying the meaning of a foreign language through translation may help the learner feel natural in an EFL classroom. The natural feeling in class may have influenced positive understanding of the words in the discussion.

#### **ii) Paraphrase**

Code-switching is used to repeat what has been said in a different language as illustrated in text 4.3.

#### **Text 4.3**

T: Who is a champion?

L: A champion is a person who wins in a game.

T: A champion ni *Mtu ambaye hushinda.*  
'a person who wins'

*Mtu ambaye hufanya nini?*

'What does this person do?'

L: *Mtu ambaye hushinda.*

'A person who wins'

T: Who is the champion in this story? Nyamboke....

L: Kirui

T: Kirui is the.....

L: champion.

In text 4.3, a learner provided a correct answer in English. The teacher used Kiswahili to explain to the whole class the meaning of the word 'champion'. The teacher further asked the learners to repeat what she had said in Kiswahili before asking them to identify the champion

in the story. The teacher used Kiswahili to stress the meaning of the word 'champion'. Sert (2005) points out that the use of such repetitions is good in emphasizing what the learners have discussed. Celik (2008) correctly argues that a paraphrase of a concept or a word helps in clarifying the meaning. Further, the use of L1 helps in establishing relationships as it brings in a less formal relationship between the participants (Creese and Blackledge 2010). In so doing, participants are able to communicate ideas with ease which created a favourable environment for learning.

### iii) Evaluate Understanding of a Concept

In text 4.4 the meaning of the word 'stadium' was given in Kiswahili as illustrated.

#### Text 4.4

L: The meaning of word *stadium*.

T: *Nani ataelezea* Juliet the meaning of the word stadium. Ann  
'Who will explain.'

L: *Mahali unakaa as you* watch game  
'A place where you sit'

In text 4.4, Juliet - one of the learners - sought from the teacher the meaning of the word stadium. The teacher requested the learners to attempt an answer. It was only after one of the learners provided the answer that the teacher reiterated the answer in English. She further used code-switching to enquire whether learners understood the answer. Willis (1998) argues that teachers may use L1 during the lesson to check learners' understanding of what they have read or discussed. The positive response given by the learners is a sign that use of the L1 had helps in understand of the meaning of the word(s).

### iv) Classroom Management

In a classroom discourse participants use code-switching to manage the class as illustrated in text 4.5.

#### Text 4.5

T: our next word is 'have'. What is the meaning of the  
word 'have'? *John keti vizuri*  
'sit properly'

Who can tell us the meaning of the word 'have'. Yes, what is the meaning of the word  
have? (silence)

T: Now, let me tell you the meaning of the word  
'have'. Have *ni kule kuwa na kitu*. For example  
'is to possess something'

For example, I have a chalk. (Learners lift up their hands).

T: Yes, Wambua.

L: I have a book.

In text 4.5 the class was discussing the new word 'have'. The teacher used Kiswahili to reprimand the learner who was misbehaving 'John sit properly'. Celik (2008) and Lin (2013) argue that L1 is very useful in classroom management because instructions are given in a language that learners understand. As a result of use of L1, lesser time is used as compared to when L2 would have been used.

In addition, complex instructions were discussed in a language familiar to the learners as exemplified in the next paragraph.

#### v) Discussion of Complex Instructions

Code-switching was also used to explain complex instructions to the learners as illustrated in text 4.6

#### Text 4.6

T: Look at the first picture now, what can you see? Kelvin

L: *watu*

'people'

T: Yes, that is good. The instructions require us to say what those people are doing.

Tell us, *watu hao wanafanya nini?*

*'what are those people doing'*

L: *Wanapanda*

'planting'

T: Yes, *wanapanda*. We say, they are planting

'they are planting'

(The teacher writes the sentence on the chalkboard.) Let us read.

L: They are planting.

**Text 4.6.** Shows how a code-switched expression during the English language lesson was used to explain instructions that were in a language beyond the level of learners. The teacher used Kiswahili to find out the activities which were observed by learners from the pictures provided. The teacher used Kiswahili to discuss the instructions after realising the learners might not get the correct answer to: 'tell us, what are those people doing'. After the instructions were clear to the learners, they gave a correct answer 'planting' in Kiswahili. Mwangi et al. (2009) argue that L1 may be used when instructions on a particular activity are given in a language that is beyond pupils' understanding. Code-switching reduces complex procedures that are followed when the target language is used, as illustrated in text 4.7.

#### vi) Replace Long Complex steps of Content Delivery

In cases where a teacher used the English language only teachers were observed to follow several steps. This is because the teacher was expected to display a new word, ask learners the meaning, describe and demonstrate, among other activities. Code-switching during English lessons enabled teachers to reduce the number of steps involved in learning vocabulary. This was achieved because a Kiswahili word helped learners know whatever item of discussion was. Thus, it was easier for a teacher to code-switch by giving a Kiswahili synonym of the word

being discussed during the lesson than follow the complex laid out procedure in the target language to explain some new language items.

Lin (2013) and Jingxia (2010) argue that use of the target language to explain the meaning of a word to learners may take more time than giving an equivalent in L1. Code-switching allows a teacher to take a shorter time when explaining the meaning of a word and still achieve the intended objective. Macaro (2012) also observes that teachers code-switched to L1 grammar when teaching vocabulary. Use of L1 facilitates the connection between learners' knowledge and the target language (Macaro, 2001). In addition, Ellis (1994) posits that a teacher may modify his or her language in order to make pupils understand the meaning of new words or make the input comprehensible. Thus, the teachers may use code-switching to help learners understand concepts in a shorter time.

The use of code-switching was supported by teachers as exemplified in text 4.7. Teachers found it easier to use Kiswahili to explain new words because the words were already in the learners' knowledge (L1).

#### **Text 4.7**

T: Sometimes, the learners know a word in their L1 but they cannot directly relate it to an English word. For instance, I was teaching a word 'bicycle' in one of the lessons, I tried to explain the meaning but realised it was either I draw the item or use the Kiswahili equivalent. Immediately, I mentioned 'baiskeli' the  
'bicycle'

learners lifted their hands up. One learner said that the father had a bicycle while another one said that he knew how to ride a bicycle.

In text 4.7, it was observed that the learners' failure to give the correct response may not have been necessarily because of lack of information.

This could have resulted from limited comprehension of the new words in the target language. It was possible to enhance learners' comprehension of the target language, by using learners' L1 knowledge through code-switching.

#### **Conclusion**

In this study, analysis of texts from recorded data revealed that teachers use of indigenous language enhances understanding of concepts. The teachers were observed to direct learners to the new knowledge by using the learners' L1. The switch of languages acted as a bridge from the known to the unknown. The use of L1 during English lessons led to a better understanding of concepts and an overall good performance in learning activities. It was observed that, the pupils were able to use most of the words explained in Kiswahili in sentences. Teachers used L1 during English lesson for several functions including: explanation of meaning of words in a clear way, provision of relevant input in new words especially where synonyms were used instead of using many words to explain the same word, class management and saving time among others.

Code-switching – use of L1 knowledge to increase the understanding of L2 - should be viewed as a useful tool during learning as it allows learners to build word knowledge of the target

language by drawing knowledge from their L1. It makes meaning clearer and transfers information in an effective way. In the same way code-switching may be used to pass knowledge not only in classroom situation but also beyond. This enables lifelong learning achievable and sustainable development a reality in Africa, However, for effective use of indigenous language in long life education, they must be well developed.

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## **Appendices**

### **Appendix 1**

Instructions: Choose the correct word to complete the sentences below.

(Parents, beans, food, rice, table, ate, have)

1. Peter and June are eating.....and..... (beans and rice)
- 2.....are not at home. (parents)
3. Rice and beans is ..... (food)
4. I .....a book. (want /have)
5. The food is in the .....(table)

### **Appendix 2**

1. They are -----the chicken (feeding)
2. They are -----the seedlings ( watering)
3. They are-----tomatoes (harvesting)
4. They are ----- trees (planting)
5. They are ----- the hedge( cutting)

( cutting, harvesting, feeding, watering, planting)

### Appendix 3

Fill in the blank spaces using the correct word from the words below.

1. We cannot enter the stadium unless we have-----.
2. The game will start when the -----is ready.
3. The -----was full of spectators.
4. You will win if only you -----
5. The players will continue playing unless they hear the -----
6. You can defeat the -----if you train hard.

(stadium whistle champions tickets referee score)

### Appendix 4

## Transcription of code-switched utterances used by teachers (T) and learners (L)

### Text 4.1

- T: Now, we have the word referee.  
Referee *ni mtu ambaye huanzisha* game. Those who  
'a person who starts...'  
start the games are called referees. They are called.....
- L: Referees.

### Text 4.2

- T: Next is the word 'whistle', who can tell us the meaning of the word whistle? John
- L: A whistle is *kitu kinachotumiwa* to start and to end a game  
'something used'
- T: A whistle *hutumiwa kuanzisha nini?*  
'what is it used to start?'
- L: *Mchezo.*  
'Game'

### Text 4.3

- T: Who is a champion?
- L: A champion is a person who wins in a game.
- T: A champion ni *Mtu ambaye hushinda. Mtu ambaye hufanya nini?*  
'What does this person do?'
- L: *Mtu ambaye hushinda.*  
'A person who wins'
- T: Who is the champion in this story? Nyamboke....
- L: Kirui

T: Kirui is the.....

L: champion.

#### Text 4.4

L: The meaning of word *stadium*.

T: *Nani ataelezea* Juliet the meaning of the word stadium. Ann

'Who will explain.'

L: *Mahali unakaa as you* watch game

'A place where you sit'

#### Text 4.5

T: our next word is 'have'. What is the meaning of the word 'have'? *John keti vizuri*

'sit properly'

Who can tell us the meaning of the word 'have'. Yes, what is the meaning of the word have? (silence)

T: Now, let me tell you the meaning of the word

'have'. Have *ni kule kuwa na kitu*. For example

'is to possess something'

For example, I have a chalk. (Learners lift up their hands).

T: Yes, Wambua.

L: I have a book.

#### Text 4.6

T: Look at the first picture now, what can you see? Kelvin

L: *watu*

'people'

T: Yes, that is good. The instructions require us to say what those people are doing.

Tell us, *watu hao wanafanya nini?*

'what are those people doing'

L: *Wanapanda*

'planting'

T: Yes, *wanapanda*. We say, they are planting

'they are planting'

(The teacher writes the sentence on the chalkboard.) Let us read.

L: They are planting.

#### Text 4.7

....Sometimes, the learners know a word in their L1 one but they cannot directly relate it to an English word. For instance, I was teaching a word 'bicycle' in one of the lesson, I tried to explain the meaning but realised it was either I draw the item or use the Kiswahili equivalent. Immediately, I mentioned 'baiskeli' the learners lifted their hands. One learner said that the father had a bicycle while another one said that he knew how to ride a bicycle.

## Rethinking a Workable Language-in-Education Planning Model in Kenya

Robinson Oduma

Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology

### Abstract

Kenya has an estimated population of 49 million people (KNBS, 2019). Despite the substantial linguistic and ethnic diversity of the country, English has traditionally been the primary medium of instruction in all schools. There are numerous studies that have been done advocating for the use of mother tongue for a longer period in the school system, due to advantages such kind of education offers learners. However, few studies have so far provided a model for the adoption of mother tongues or local languages as languages of instruction. The language in education policy advocates for the use of Kiswahili as a compulsory subject from primary level of education up to the final level four of secondary school education. English, on the other hand, is used as a language of instruction from primary four, through secondary schooling, in tertiary institutions, and in university education. This paper surveys the sociolinguistic situation, examines the attitudes that affect language in education policy, and explores briefly the history of language planning. It finally makes recommendations for a practical framework for the adoption of mother tongue as a language of instruction at all levels of the school system. The paper's findings are that in order to maintain correct and optimal usage of the existing languages in the landscape, an appropriate language plan has to be in place for users of the languages to accrue maximum benefit. The findings of the paper it is hoped will provide new ways of mainstreaming local languages not only as languages of early transitional bilingual education, but as languages for imparting knowledge and skills of a cultural, scientific and technical nature in the era of the competency-based curriculum.

**Keywords:** interdependence, competency, CBC, Language in education policy, mother tongue

### Introduction

Kenya has a diverse population that includes most major ethno-racial and linguistic groups found in Africa. According to the latest census figures, Kenya has an approximate population of 49 million people (KNBS, 2019). There are an estimated 42 different communities, with Bantus (67%) and Nilotes (30%) constituting the majority of local residents. The Cushitic and Arab ethnic minorities speak languages belonging to the separate Afro-Asiatic family, with the Indian and European residents speaking languages from the Indo-European family (Ethnologue, 2010)

According to the CIA World Fact Book, ethnic groups in the nation are represented as follows: Kikuyu 22%, Luhya 14%, Luo 13%, Kalenjin 12%, Kamba 11%, Kisii 6%, Meru 6%, other African 15%, non-African (Asian, European, and Arab) 1%.

The map below shows the geographical distribution of the ethnic languages in the country. In this map, what are considered dialects of a language, are here considered as independent languages and this accounts for the large number of languages appearing on the map.

For example, Luhya has the following dialects, which are considered mutually intelligible varieties of the language, viz; Kisa, Maragoli, Bakhayo, Samia, Marachi, Bukusu, Marama, Batsotso, Banyore, Kabaras, Wanga, Tachoni and Idakho. Kenya's various ethnic groups typically speak their mother tongues within their own communities. It can also be observed that the languages in Kenya are widely distributed and traverse the whole Kenyan landscape. Although the Kenyan ethnic language speakers consist of a majority of speakers, these ethnic languages do not occupy a central role in intercultural communication. Instead, the two official languages, English, a colonial language whose roots are Indo-European, and Swahili, an indigenous language, are used in varying degrees of fluency for communication with other ethnic populations. English is widely used in commerce, schooling and government. Peri-urban and rural dwellers are less multilingual, with many in rural areas speaking only their native languages (Muthwii, 2007). British English is primarily used in the country. Additionally, a distinct local dialect of English known as Kenyan English, exists in the country, and contains features unique to it that are derived from local languages. <sup>18</sup>Sheng is a Swahili-based slang spoken in many urban areas. Primarily consisting of a mixture of Swahili and English, it is an example of linguistic code mixing.

Kenya favoured English as the only official language and language of instruction around the time of independence (Mbaabu, 1996; Owino, 2002). It was argued at that time that English was appropriate and pragmatic for several reasons. One of the reasons was that at the dawn of independence it would expedite learning in all subjects by ensuring smooth transition from

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<sup>8</sup> A Kenyan urban language constantly developing out of a mix of English, Kiswahili and mother tongue. It is common amongst the youth and currently the most dynamic language in the world. (Urban Dictionary)

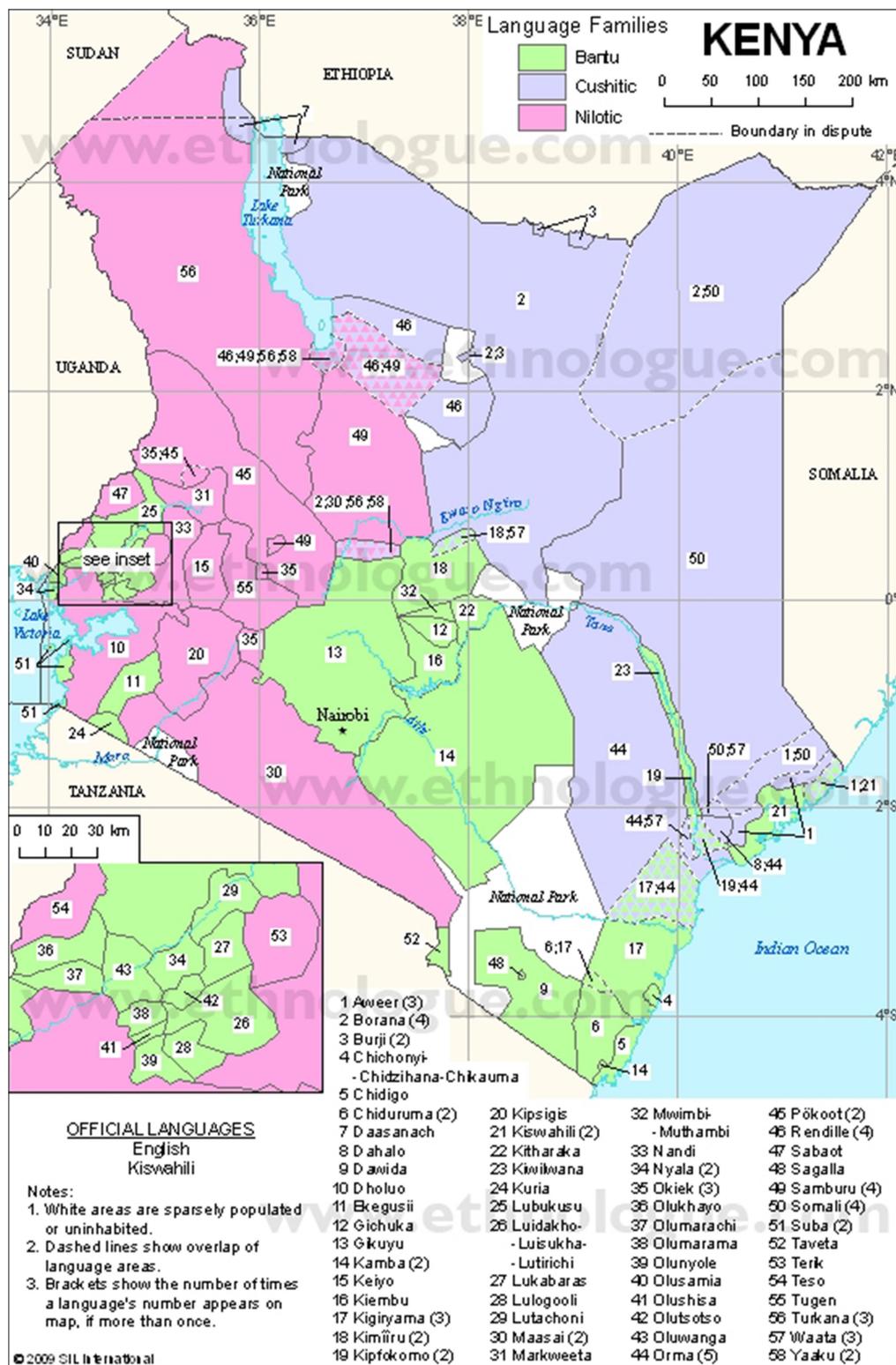


Figure 1. A map of the languages of Kenya (Diercks, 2010)

<sup>9</sup>'vernaculars', owing to its intrinsic resources (Ominde, 1964). Use of local languages was considered divisive, and that is why English, a far much "neutral" language was preferred. However, an evaluation of those reasons today raises pertinent questions about the road Kenya has taken with respect to language planning. One could question, for example, whether Kenyan communities are more united now than then.

Many scholars in Africa today argue that the genesis of the language problems seen in schools or in society at large can be traced back to the type of language policies that African nations have decided upon (Muthwii & Kioko, 2003; Owino, 2002). These include issues of appropriate ways to speak in formal or public situations, the unwillingness some people feel in using their local languages in public places, and the fact that some languages are not adapted to for use in certain domains, such as that of technology.

### **Language Planning in Kenya**

At the introduction of print literacy in Kenya during the colonial period, the language policy guiding education practice revolved around three languages, namely English, Kiswahili and the learner's first language. The language to use as LOI was not initially problematic since it was generally accepted that the language best known and understood by the child on entry to school was the best one to be used for instruction (Mbaabu, 1996; Whiteley, 1974). Most agencies involved in education at the time were undivided on the role of indigenous languages in helping learners acquire literacy (Colony & Protectorate of Kenya, 1949; as cited in Muthwii, 2002b). Moreover, the missionaries who founded most schools (especially those designated for the African population) strongly believed that the people understood the word of God most effectively if their local languages were used. Literacy was therefore offered in the first language in the first three years of schooling. In some schools, Kiswahili was introduced in Class Three but not all authorities wanted Kiswahili in the schools as they viewed it as a foreign language. Similarly, not all institutions believed in offering English in what was termed the 'native schools', but when it was offered it was introduced to Classes Three and Four. Muthwii (2007) identifies the decisions of the Phelps-Stokes Commission of 1924 as the crucial point that 'sorted out' the use of the languages in Kenya.

While recommending the use of the first languages as LOI, the commission argued for the teaching of English as a second language after the mastery of writing and reading in the first language but that Kiswahili should cease to be taught except in the coastal area where it is the vernacular' (Musau, 2002: 94). Further developments following the recommendations of the East African Royal Commission Report of 1953–55 saw English introduced as LOI from Class One in 1958 in some schools (Sifuna, 1980). At independence when the Government took over the mandate to provide education, the strong rationalization that all learners needed to learn in English to produce a skilled labour force to run government and industry was already in place (Mbaabu, 1996). The Ominde Commission of 1964 strengthened this position and instituted English as the language of instruction (LOI) in all schools from Class One. English had now become the nation's official language while Kiswahili was recommended only as a subject in primary schools.

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<sup>9</sup> The term 'vernaculars' is used in this sense to refer to local dialects or languages spoken by people drawn from the locality.

Both moves were choices that shunned the indigenous African languages by refusing to give them status in any public domain, especially in education, government and commerce. Kenya's favouring of English was argued at the time to be appropriate and pragmatic for several reasons: (1) the need to unite into one nation a people who had been independent entities hitherto;(2) the need to access education and the wider world; (3) the fear that if one or two of the indigenous languages were developed, those left out would consider themselves excluded and downgraded in the new nation state (Mbaabu,1996; Owino,2002); and (4) if used in education, the cost of developing all indigenous languages would be enormous and such development was unattainable. Kiswahili, an indigenous language, became compulsory and examinable in both primary and secondary schools only in 1984. No other African language has ever gained recognition in 'official' or 'national' contexts in Kenya. Nevertheless, Kenya is one of the few nations in Africa to accord an indigenous language such a coveted position. As Cline-Bailey (1994) and Mbaabu (1996) indicate, there are many countries in Africa that are yet to make such a basic decision as choosing a national language. Kenya's language policy has been reviewed several times since independence in 1963 (Mbaabu,1996) but these reviews have always been characterised by two factors. First, the indigenous languages have never captured legitimate attention and second, the resulting revisions have been influenced by 'conflicting theories, divergent attitudes, changing political ideologies and aspirations and indecisiveness' (Muthwii, 2002b:2). Indeed, even in the most recent review of education (Republic of Kenya, 1999 – popularly known as the Koech Commission Report), this situation has not changed.

The Koech Commission did extensive work collecting and collating information on how to improve the education system and given the contradictions and problems that Kenya has had with regard to LOI in schools, one would have expected that the language issue would feature prominently in the review. Unfortunately, this latest major review does not address the language issue except to advocate the status quo. As was the case in earlier reviews, the focus is the status of English vis-à-vis Kiswahili and/ or how to develop or effectively acquire these two languages. English is now the LOI from Class Four upwards to the end of university education. Kiswahili continues to be used beside English in parliament and is taught as a compulsory subject in primary and secondary schools. This current language policy, though having benefited from past experiences, still poses tremendous challenges especially concerning language attitudes and acquisition planning. Firstly, the mere fact that English the ex-colonial language has been used in important domains like education and administration has contributed significantly to the attitudes people have towards other languages existing in the Kenyan landscape vis a vis English. Some languages are viewed as fundamental in the acquisition of knowledge (read English) while ethnic languages have been relegated to the back burner; they are treated as languages of ethnic identity as well as transmission of culture. They are thought of as not sophisticated enough to be used in the teaching of what is considered 'complex stuff'. Yet, the truth is that there has never been sufficient development of such ethnic languages through corpus planning. This has led to the marginalisation of these ethnic languages, which although with a majority of speakers, are not considered with high prestige compared to English and Kiswahili.

### **New Insights in Language Teaching under the Competency Based Curriculum**

Language policy experts could learn from the new curriculum (CBC) recently rolled out in Kenya in terms of rejigging the curriculum to make learners benefit optimally from language usage.

The CBC as its name suggests, seeks to exploit the learner's potential, irrespective of which language they know. The focus of the CBC is on learning outcomes, and it seeks to impart in learners the skills needed to perform real-world or practical tasks. Such learning outcomes are described in terms of competencies that learners need in order to perform certain tasks. Research indicates that when a child masters a mother tongue, it is easy to master a second language in what is referred to in linguistics as **interdependence**. A child in primary school, who acquires literacy in a mother tongue while also being taught content knowledge, will outperform those taught in content knowledge in a second language. Learners should be taught to acquire skills needed to perform real world activities. The language the learners use for such purposes should be one that enables seamless acquisition of skills without the language being an impediment (Griffith and Lim, 2014). Although the CBC does not specifically seek to change language policy as currently existing, it offers insights into how language could play a role in the acquisition of skills <sup>10</sup>(competencies) needed for use of language in social contexts (Richards & Rogers, 2001).

A discussion of the identification of language attitudes follows because, an understanding of the functions fulfilled by community attitudes towards language is always a first step for a successful language policy ( Muthwii, 2002b).

### **Language Attitudes and School Practices**

Given the language policy in Kenya in general and language in education policy in particular, what attitudes do Kenyans have towards the languages within their repertoire and what factors have brought these about? There is a lot of documentation and discussion on this subject (Mbaabu, 1996; Musau, 2002; Muthwii, 2002b; Owino, 2002; Whiteley, 1974); all the information indicates that there is enormous pressure for youngsters in Kenya to learn English. Of the several factors that influence language attitudes, two seem most important in Kenya: (1) the high status English is given in schools as the LOI and the language of examination (especially from the upper primary school level), and (2) the 'bottom of the pile' status given to Africans' first language in national/public matters. A Kenyan child, from as young as four when he or she gets into pre-school, experiences the effects of these two positions. Qualifications for most jobs include proficiency in English. Most technologies come dressed-up in this foreign language. It is an international language that is still associated with socio-economic power by most Kenyans (Mazrui, 1992). A person is readily considered 'learned' if s/he exhibits a good mastery of English. The first language is seen as inferior since it is not developed enough to handle discourse in most domains.

Even when it is given some role in the school system, there are a number of unresolved contradictions that a child has to wrestle with all the time at school. For example, there is often a contradiction between the policy of encouraging a child's first language as the language of instruction (LOI) in lower primary school and the reality as the child progresses through the

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<sup>10</sup> A competency refers to 'critical work functions' or tasks in a defined setting (Richards & Roger, 2001)

education system where English completely dominates the indigenous languages; first language is virtually excluded from the syllabus after lower primary school.

While first language is designated the LOI in lower school, the textbooks for content subjects like mathematics, science, social studies and so forth are in English and the examinations on these subject areas are in English as well. The status of the first language is also affected by the practice of punishing children when they speak it at school, an act which itself is a grave violation of their rights (Owino, 2002) and causes further stigmatization of first languages. For most of these second language learners, their fundamental right to feel secure and confident when learning and using a given language in education and the public domain is further threatened by the norms propagated in school (Muthwii & Kioko, 2002) and by the discriminatory practices around the use of code switching. There is a major paradox in Kenya today where the teacher's language cannot serve as a model for the pupils because the teacher is often not in command of the norm demanded by the school system, namely, the Standard British variety of English (ibid). Neither the teacher nor the student is in touch in any meaningful way with this variety. Both teachers and students have great difficulty working their way through the integrated English course syllabus since, on the one hand, there is the teaching of literary works that shows creativity especially in using nativised English, but on the other hand there is the teaching of an English-language component that is not officially allowed to bear a relationship with the actual language-use behaviour. The insistence by the syllabus on the Standard British variety as the norm means that most students find themselves utterly lost in the 'confusing world of what are regarded as innovations, deviations, and mistakes (errors). Because of the demands of such a challenge, some students will need a lot of help to attain acceptable standards of literacy in English while others will find it overwhelming and simply give up trying. In a recent study to find out the extent to which the language policy and the concomitant language practices on LOI encourage or hamper the acquisition of desirable learning competencies in Kenya and Uganda, (Kioko&Muthwii, 2001: 208) it was observed that there is a lot of code-switching in the teaching process, especially in schools that have limited resources for the teaching of mother tongue or first language in lower primary grades (Muthwii, 2002b).

The overwhelming presence of code switching is partly explained as being a direct outcome of attempts to apply a language policy favouring first language instruction in the classroom and a lack of instructional materials written in the first language. The teacher is constantly struggling to translate what is written in English books into a language the children understand. This could be either Kiswahili or the first language. The children on their part are picking up these code-switching habits from the only language model they have (Kioko & Muthwii, 2001). The problem here is that while the teachers are allowed to use code-switching in the teaching process to resolve language problems the learners are forbidden to do the same, especially in examinations. Surely, learners in such circumstances are bound either to acquire imperfect English that is not improved upon at home and in the community or to find themselves simply confronted by what Alexander (2000) calls 'an English that is unassailable but unattainable'. They cannot find the confidence to participate in the world of English. The flipside of this situation is that while this is happening with regard to the language of education, the child's first language knowledge and skills are not developed or nurtured at all at school because school is out of bounds for the first language. For children who experience these dilemmas, there are simply no reciprocal learning environments between school and home, at least in the

sense that is normally taken for granted. Well-resourced schools were found to have language practices quite different from those of poorly resourced schools. Many had controlled code switching whereby limited switching between Kiswahili and English was tolerated, especially outside the classroom (Muthwii, 2002b). A number of them were able to defy the stated language policy and implement their dream for English as LOI throughout the curriculum. Often, the ability to make such a move is commensurate with an ability to find resources to support their decision, without first language featuring at all. Their hallmark is an exhibition of fairly good national examination results; their pupils acquire useful skills in their understanding and use of English, relative to those from poorly resourced and less 'aggressive' schools. It must be emphasised, however, that such schools are in the minority. A majority of schools often do not have such 'muscle', and have very limited resources. They appear to languish in the confusions brought about by paradoxes inherent in the language of education, a situation where the teacher and learner carry a tremendous burden of sorting out the acquisition of the new skills of reading and writing in three different languages simultaneously. From a different perspective, conflicts in attitudes on language policy from group to group can portend a more serious problem in a community. The various groups in a community or nation, holding onto different attitudes and practices, may not have the ability to understand the issues and struggles of one another. They cannot use unity as strength. Not surprisingly, in Kenya this polarization in attitudes and practices has produced a 'first world' that continues to move on with the international community with high literacy levels and a 'third world' that languishes in its semi-literacy and illiteracy. Adegbija (2001) associates these two sides of the planning-literacy tensions of Africa with issues of language shift. He says that 'a positive attitudinal stake in a language is a dominant factor in its maintenance both at the individual and societal level. Conversely, attitudinal problems with respect to a particular language, constitute the principal precipitator of language shift' (Adegbija, 2001: 288).

At an individual level, all the factors seem to conspire to produce a person who says he or she cannot perceive or conceive of education in any other language but English. Many come to sincerely believe that their indigenous languages do not have the capacity to deal with 'complex situations', advanced or abstract concepts. What learners see in the public domain, where in most cases the first language does not feature at all, is reinforced by what they see in the classroom. In most cases, especially in rural Kenya, a child is not sure whether to love or hate his first language because, as Adegbija (2001: 286) says, indigenous languages have 'acquired an inferiority syndrome and complex associated with them'. They are discouraged and sometimes despised by their speakers, but from most people's protests about their first language, one wonders if indeed, the speakers are not, in fact, themselves the ones who feel inferior, despised and discouraged. The ultimate verdict for the first language, therefore, is the same for all members of the community in spite of the fact that monolingual communities are radically different in language practices from multilingual ones (Adegbija, 1994). First language as a language of education is not easily appreciated while English is fanatically pursued. It was mentioned earlier in this study that the stated reason for designating English as the official language and the LOI was to unite all the different ethnic groups into one nation. History has judged this position to be too simplistic. There are in fact a lot of tribal alignments in Kenya today as seen, for example, in the composition of the various political parties. Ryanga (2002: 57) reports that the '... attitudes and beliefs remain firmly held by each language group about

their own language and with regard to other languages spoken by large sections of the Kenyan community, including Kiswahili and English’.

But these have come about in spite of the language policy. It could even be argued that the political associations we see today represent Kenyans celebrating and using their diversity in a positive way to bring about checks and balances in the political arena. Disunity in a nation need not be seen in the light of language but is often brought about by other factors, as has been seen in the case of Rwanda and Somalia, nations which are largely monolingual.

### **Vouching for an Appropriate Language- in- Education Policy for Kenya**

Despite the emphasis on English as a LOI, 77% of Kenyan Standard 6 pupils had not attained the English reading mastery level deemed desirable in order to benefit from classroom interactions in English, according to Makau (2001; Kembo-Sure et al, 2006). This implies that an unacceptably high proportion of learners would, among other things, have difficulties in accessing the curricula in the rest of the primary course and at the secondary education level and beyond. According to Makau (2001:12), ‘respectively, in Kenya, Zimbabwe and Uganda, 35%, 54% and 87% fail to achieve the minimum acceptable level of competency, an indication that these pupils are virtually functionally illiterate in English’ (cf Webb, 2002:187; Kembo-Sure, 1997).

There is, therefore, overwhelming evidence from research to suggest that learners who use a second language in learning are already, at a disadvantage in that they take a longer time to gain communicative competence even before learning important concepts during the learning process (Ogechi et al, 2002; Webb, 2002). Webb (ibid) further notes that Black South African learners, who used English and sometimes, Afrikaans in school generally, performed poorly in literacy assessment tests. Webb (2002) further gives statistical data on Kenyan children’s performance in English proficiency as below average with a mean score of 48% in the language paper, 30% in composition paper at the end of primary school in 1992. The figures do not get any better in secondary school with a mean score of 36.6% in English composition, 31.9% for English Grammar, and 17.6% for Literature in English at the end of secondary school in 1991 (cf. Kembo-Sure, 1997). This in effect means, that, children do not have the prerequisite cognitive academic language proficiency to use English effectively for higher order cognitive development in a learning environment. At the same time, research has proven that children, who first learn in their first language and for a longer period in the education system, understand concepts better even when such concepts are taught later in a second language.

That means that there are benefits in prolonged usage of a first language in learning in a school system. (Cummins, 1984) The acquisition of knowledge and the development of cognitive, affective, and social skills occur primarily through a linguistic communication process (Kembo, 2000). These are high-level processes that presuppose abstract, objective and symbolic thought. As a result, learners require considerable language proficiency in order to realize their individual potentials fully. English, from evidence adduced earlier, does not seem to be an effective instrument of knowledge acquisition and skills development. Serious consideration needs to be given to first languages, here also referred to as mother tongues, if there is to be effective educational attainment in learners. This will help mitigate language problems that

Kenya, and indeed many African states adopting ex-colonial languages as languages of literacy have had. These problems are listed as follows in Webb (2002);

- i) The non-maximal educational development of the majority of citizens of these states in terms of demands for a technologically driven modern world. This means that knowledge and skills have not been democratized, since they are widely available in the ex-colonial language, generally poorly known by a majority in the nation.
- ii) A potential for manipulation, discrimination and exploitation on linguistic grounds.
- iii) The possibility of linguistic and cultural alienation with its attendant consequences on language death and cultural decay.

In Kenya, there are many first languages distributed across the geographical terrain which can be adopted as important languages of instruction in education to mitigate language problems mentioned above. An appropriate language-in –education policy should advocate for the use of our mother tongues in critical domains of use such as education and for a longer period of the education cycle.

### **Language Planning Theories**

Hornberger (2006: 27) in a discussion of language planning and policy models, quotes Haugen, who says, that, “language diversity is not a problem unless it is used as a basis for discrimination.” Therefore, a language plan should identify different languages and their different goals and uses and ensure the development of local and threatened languages in relation to the global and spreading ones.

A language in education policy should promote the principle of additive bilingualism, where first languages do not lose ground in the process of gaining second languages, in this case English and Kiswahili for a majority of speakers in Kenya. This also means the promotion of all the languages of Kenya for learning and teaching in the education system. Cooper (1989; 45) defines language planning as “a deliberate effort to influence the behavior of others with respect to the acquisition, structure, and functional allocations of their language codes.”

Skutnab- Kangas (2006) contends that educational linguistic human rights, especially the right to mother-tongue-medium education, are among the most important rights for any minority. He also notes that without them, “a minority whose children attend school, usually cannot reproduce itself as a minority. It cannot integrate but is forced to assimilate.” This is one good reason why the promotion of local languages, which are by all means a “minority” because of their marginalized status in the education system, is necessary. The United Nations Declaration also vouches for the protection of ethnic, cultural, religious and linguistic identity of minorities within their respective territories...” all languages, therefore, have a basis for their existence, and these declarations foster the acquisition planning aspect of languages, for their continued existence.

The second language planning theoretical trajectory is that of eco-linguistics (Kembo-Sure et al, 2006). It supports the claim that speakers of different languages perceive the world differently, and that different languages “emphasize and filter various aspects of a multi-faceted reality...”

in this connection, then, language planning has to recognize the link between children's linguistic repertoire and their response to their physical and cultural environment.

## Conclusion

This paper has critically examined the Kenyan sociolinguistic landscape as one which supports fully the use of a plurilingual system of education because of its rich linguistic diversity. The paper, therefore, vouches for the use of all the 'minority' languages for the benefit of its speakers and for the positive educational attainment of its people. Eventually, we envisage that learners will benefit more, developmentally, if they used their local languages, here also referred to as mother tongues in education, because they are their first languages, and therefore, a language that they know best. Finally, we propose a model for the use of all languages as languages of instruction at various levels of the education system. We consider this model as the best if our people are to benefit and participate fully in development of their country.

However, in order to benefit fully from this proposed model, some challenges have to be mitigated beforehand. Firstly, educational materials in the local languages have to be adequately prepared. The lexicon of local languages must be expanded so the languages can meet the demands of technical and scientific fields. Teachers must be adequately trained to teach children in mother tongue. Finally, enough teaching/learning materials in mother tongues have to be developed.

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## A Historical Analysis of the Mother Language Crisis in Urban Primary Schools in Uganda 1903-2007: A

Review Paper

Priscilla Asiimire  
Makerere University, Uganda

### Abstract

This documentary analysis paper explores debates since colonial times on mother language absence in school environments, specifically, multilingual urban areas in Uganda. Documentary analysis was done on relevant literature about mother language use in educational contexts. This study is significant because it unveils the mother language situation in multilingual urban primary schools of Uganda and makes suggestions as part of efforts to develop a reading culture. A key finding was that since 1903 during the time of British colonialism in Uganda, there has always been a discrepancy between the language of instruction at school (school language) and the mother language at home. Currently, it is common in urban areas where rural-urban migration attracts people of different language backgrounds and the language of instruction at school is not the mother language spoken by the children. Family literacy practices such as intergenerational reading where older members of the household read for /and with, the younger ones, is most likely to exist and be enhanced when the language used at home is the same as that used by the school for instruction. It is then that parents and guardians, only literate in the mother language can engage with their children in intergenerational literacy tasks related to the school, thus increasing the children's school learning achievements and their own, as adults. When the school language is not the mother language as is the case in Uganda with English use throughout the urban primary school cycle, there is usually a family literacy challenge where most parents/guardians are non-literate in English and literate only in the mother language. The language of instruction and interaction in the urban schools being English throughout the primary cycle creates the mother language crisis. Parents, guardians and older family members not literate in English are inhibited from engaging in reading and writing with their children due to mother language absence in the children's urban schools. The documentary analysis suggests that mother language crisis in multilingual primary school environments can be solved by primary schools using a dominant indigenous language, thereby allowing and strengthening intergenerational literacy in families already literate in the chosen indigenous language.

**Key words:** mother tongue, education crisis, family literacy, intergenerational literacy, Uganda primary schools.

### Introduction

The United Nations Educational Scientific & Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) defines mother language as a language that the child can speak fluently before going to school; one in which the child can operate confidently in all domains relevant to the child's life, (Dyken, 1990). The 1989 United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child emphasises that all children have a right to education and to learn and use the language of the family, thereby binding signatory countries to guarantee this right to its citizens. The 2015-2030 Sustainable Development

Agenda, in particular, goal number four emphasizes the need to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all; language can promote inclusion or exclusion, (Sustainable development knowledge platform, 2015).

All over the world, the languages of former colonies have many times, dominated languages of minority ethnic groups. In Africa, colonial languages have historically been institutionalized especially in schools, with languages like English obtaining and maintaining a celebrated status and identity, (Altinyelken, Moorcroft and Draai, 2013; Ouane and Glanz, 2005). In many countries across the world characterized by linguistic and ethnic diversity, the issue of language of instruction (LOI) in education policies is greatly debated, (Altinyelken et al, 2013). Within Sub-Saharan Africa, several authors such as Fafunwa, Macauley and Soyinka (1989); Prah, (2000); Mazrui, (1996) argue that there is a strong relationship between the use of a foreign language and underdevelopment, showing that a colonial language of instruction does not offer grounding in literacy skills, identity and history needed by the learner, community and the nation. Family literacy practices where older members of the household read for / with, the younger ones, is most likely to exist and be enhanced when the language used at home is the same as that used by the school for instruction. It is then that parents and guardians, only literate in the mother language can engage with their children in intergenerational literacy tasks related to the school, thus increasing the children's school learning achievements and their own, as adults, (Hanemann, McCaffery, Newell-Jones, and Scarpino, 2017). Intergenerational literacy promotes meaningfulness of literacy to the children and increases chances of success at school, (Hanemann, 2015). The research question that guided this review paper was 'to explore the situation of mother language use or absence in primary schools in Uganda since colonial times, especially urban primary schools'. This review paper therefore, offers a historical trace and analysis of the language policy in Uganda with respect to the use/ absence of indigenous languages in primary education.

## **Methodology**

The method used to collect data for this review paper was Documentary analysis of articles and books focusing on the aspect of language of instruction in schools in Uganda within the period of 1903 to 2007. The period of review was set as 1903 till 2007 to be able to cover the colonial period in addition to the post-colonial times, 2007 being the year when the current language policy guidelines took effect in primary schools in Uganda. The selection criteria equally included the fact that the publication to be used in this review had to be relevant to the research question of exploring mother language use or absence in primary schools in Uganda since the British colonial times in Uganda. Using Google search engine and google scholar in particular, I made the search using the key terms listed above. I then identified publications that had titles indicating closeness to the research question and went ahead to read and use those that I found answering the research question. I equally visited the Library at the College of Education and External Studies, Makerere University, checked on the titles on the shelves and picked for reading those publications whose title, preface and contents appeared relevant to answering the research question.

## **Mother-Language use -Absence in Schools during the Colonial Period in Uganda 1903-1962**

Since 1903, various leaders in Uganda, right from the colonial governors, to the African presidents always issued policy statements on the adoption and use of an African language for use as a medium of instruction. It is only Governor Sir William Gowers who reigned from 1925-1932, that ever drew up and tried to implement a programme for teaching such a language and developing its use. Governor Sir William Gowers set up measures such as pronouncing that government would withhold grants to all schools that never complied with the Kiswahili policy and he announced a government plan to discourage Luganda in favor of Kiswahili. However, his efforts were frustrated by missionaries who controlled the schools and yet he had not consulted them on the policy before declaring it. Many policy statements have therefore ended up as footnotes in history due to failure by leaders and presidents to lay out and emphasise thorough planning and resource allocation to the policy statements, (Kasozi, 2000; Namyalo and Nakayiza, 2015).

During the earlier years of British colonial rule in Uganda, Kiswahili was the language preferred in the policy statements regarding local languages, while Luganda, the widely spoken and known of Uganda's indigenous languages was found unfavorable due to Buganda's association with the colonial administration that had created immense unpopularity of the Baganda. The first Ugandan leader who formulated a language policy in favor of Kiswahili language was Governor Sadler in 1903 by making the learning of the language compulsory for all senior colonial officers at the time. A few years later in 1919, the conference of provincial commissioners recommended that Kiswahili be taught in the missionary schools at the time even though the same commissioners reversed their position on Kiswahili language in 1922 having neither allocated resources to the task nor developing teaching and learning resources for the language, (Kasozi, 2000). Christian missionaries were strongly opposed to Kiswahili due to the fear that it would promote the spread of Islam. Between 1948 and 1962, the policy supporting Kiswahili was dropped, with the recommendation of the Nuffield Study Group of 1951-1953 that the teaching of Kiswahili in the Ugandan schools be stopped reasoning that it blocked the learning of English. The teaching and learning of English, its use as the LOI in schools, teacher-training and publication of education materials was henceforth institutionalized by the colonial government as the official language of Uganda, modelling the British public-school system with the aim of producing civil servants for the colonial government, (Ssekamwa, 1997; Kasozi, 2000).

## **Mother-Language absence in Urban Primary Schools in Post-Colonial Uganda 1962-2007**

The post-independence era in Uganda started off with the same language policy situation and the dominance of English amidst debates over a national language that was never to be. The post-colonial Ugandan governments never reflected on the colonial experience of promoting Kiswahili because in 1973, for example, Idi Amin, the then President decreed that Kiswahili be the language of instruction and national language. President Idi Amin, however, neither allocated resources nor attempted to overcome the negative social forces that supported the English language. Amin's decree never got implemented at all, (Altinyelken et al, 2013).

There have been several educational reviews, all recommending the use of indigenous languages in primary schooling, but especially so for the schools located in rural areas. The most prominent policy documents on language in Education in Uganda are; the 1992 White paper on Education and the Thematic curriculum, (National Curriculum Development Centre (NCDC) and Ministry of Education and Sports (MoE&S), 2013).

The language policy in primary schools was refocused and re-examined in 2004 in a curriculum review that led to a thematic curriculum for the primary schools. In 2007, the thematic curriculum was launched nationwide, having within it the local language policy that had been recommended in the 1992 Government White Paper, especially in reference to the first three years of lower primary schooling, but also on the other classes of the primary school cycle. The first three years of primary schooling addressed by the thematic curriculum are Primary 1, 2 and 3. The thematic curriculum is based on the use of indigenous languages as the medium of instruction for the first three years of rural primary schooling, followed by a transitional year as primary four in which the medium of instruction transitions towards the English language that is supposed to follow a subject-based curriculum, rather than a thematic curriculum. Urban schools, on the other hand, use English throughout the primary school cycle, (Government of Uganda, 1992; McGregor, 2000; Altinyelken et al, 2013). Uganda is highly multilingual. Its urban areas are multilingual too due to rural-urban migration where people of different ethnicities move from the different regions with their different mother languages, (Namyalo and Nakayiza, 2015). However, for rural primary schools, the move to using indigenous languages was a great step except for the problems relating to inadequate teacher training on how to teach a mother language, shortage of resource books and materials in mother languages. Whereas the 1992 Government Whitepaper gave a lot of importance to Kiswahili language, no enough resources were allocated to its teaching and learning nor effort made to restructure the social forces and practices that favor English, and as such, the effect of the policy on the practice of Kiswahili is almost unnoticeable, (Kasozi, 2000).

## **Discussion**

The colonial administration's choice of languages in schools was carefully made to provide political stability against clashing ethnic rivalries, while towards independence of the colony, the British became more concerned with ensuring that the colonies developed into Afro-Western elite people who spoke English as well, (Mazrui and Mazrui, 1998). The post-colonial absence of the mother language in urban primary schools, though explained by the multi-lingual nature of urban communities in Uganda, is not convincing as justification for promoting the use of a foreign language only, while marginalizing indigenous languages and totally blocking their existence in such urban primary schools. This absence of the mother language threatens the survival of the indigenous languages in urban settings among that generation of children, the family and community literacy practices, in general.

Literacy is defined differently depending on the context and as such, there are many forms of literacy. UNESCO argues that literacy involves a continuum of learning that is measured at different levels of proficiency, including the ability to identify, understand, interpret, create, communicate and compute, using printed and written materials in varying contexts, (Montoya, 2018). In this paper, I will use the definition of literacy as a basic form given that primary

education in Uganda is largely aimed at enabling learners gain basic literacy skills of reading, writing and using reading and writing to represent numeracy at the minimum level. There is a logical relationship between language and literacy whereby the ability to read and write presupposes language because one becomes literate in a language or languages.

However, basic ability to read and write words is not adequate since critical educators and philosophers such as Freire, for example, argue that only critical literacy has the power to transform individuals and make them desirous of transforming their societies. To be critical, one should be able to engage and question reality beyond the classroom environment and interact with family and society. Literacy learning is not confined to classrooms but is used and developed in different ways across a wide range of life situations at home, at work, in the community and other public and private environments. Language is an important part of the processes of being critical such as dialogue, (Freire, 1982).

Using an indigenous language in school can create and promote opportunities for the use, improvement and retention of literacy skills so as to sustain the acquired skills, (UIL, 2017). As such, the language used at home should be offered space at school and not totally ignored. In Uganda's urban areas, it is unfortunate that there is an apparent lack of choice of which language to use. Effort could be made to teach the most dominant indigenous languages in particular urban areas as opposed to totally focusing on English, while devaluing and marginalising indigenous languages, indigenous knowledge and cultural identities, (Altinyelken et al, 2013). When children start primary education in a foreign language that they do not know, such as English, students are more likely to find learning difficult and overwhelming. When learning new concepts, teachers and pupils are unable to interact naturally and cannot therefore negotiate meaning-symbol relations easily and when children get difficulty in understanding concepts, the teachers cannot easily determine whether the difficulty is about a failure to understand the concept or about the challenges posed by the language of instruction, (Diaz, 1999). In addition, the mother tongue and the respective culture are key sources of identification and self-confidence. Through the use of mother tongue and bilingual literacy education as well as culturally adapted curricula in schools, the knowledge and communicative practices of the individual and his/her community are valued. Literacy education expands under such conditions, thus increasing the learner's possibilities to shape and participate in social interaction, (Ouane and Glanz, 2005).

Uganda as a country must therefore make far more resources available to enhance the teaching of indigenous languages in primary school, (MacGregor, 2000). Language planning must reconsider the social forces within the country that could block implementation of the policy. In colonial Uganda, for example, the Christian missionaries and the Baganda were the two powerful social groups that had historically been opposed to policies recommending Kiswahili use in education and society generally. Protestant missionaries, for example, had a language policy on their own, different from the government one whereby the protestant missionaries aimed at teaching the gospel in the language of their converts and only use English at higher levels of their teaching, (Kasozi, 2000). Therefore Luganda, a mother language of Baganda, and therefore one of the indigenous languages of Uganda was the one preferred in the protestant missionary schools, while the colonial government preferred Kiswahili, and later, English when the Kiswahili policy failed. Luganda would have probably served better then, had it not been for the fears that it would create dissent from other language communities.

The use of English as the medium of instruction is largely related to the fact that Western education was brought to Africa by the European colonial powers and as such eurocentrism was part of the package that former colonies are still struggling with and largely failing to get rid of.

It is important to note that the use of a non-indigenous language like English in school environments in African schools often results in differential educational treatments between urban and rural areas, leading to maintenance or increasing societal inequalities. The children might hardly attain similar achievements in mother language literacy due to the differentiated exposure to mother language literacy. Indigenous African languages should be greatly emphasised in African schools if education is to contribute to the much needed social, economic and political transformation, (Bunyi, 1999).

It must be emphasised that language is both part of culture and is also the medium through which culture is transmitted. Therefore, serious deliberations about the language policy in Uganda as regards the place of indigenous languages in education in urban areas needs rethinking so that they are not totally ignored as is the case. Indigenous mother languages should be given space in the multilingual urban school environments and not pride in using English at the expense of the mother languages of the children as used at home. It would be great to embrace multi-literacies throughout the school cycle, (Ouane and Glanz, 2005).

The district language boards, provided for in the 1992 Uganda Government White Paper were not given the needed attention and funding by central government and yet if they existed and were functional, they would have used their potential to provide support for local language development and use in primary schools and foster the effective implementation of the thematic curriculum generally. Development of orthographies, texts and instructional materials are largely the responsibility of the district language boards, that unfortunately operate as volunteers, where they actually exist, (Altinyelken et al, 2013).

## **Conclusion**

This paper has focused on secondary data got from previous studies conducted largely on mother language / indigenous language use in education and has therefore highlighted a historical situation of mother language use and absence in primary schools in Uganda. It has equally offered a discussion of the issue of mother language in education showing the importance of indigenous languages use in education, for sustainability of literacy skills but also for cultural identity and belongingness. Whereas it is true that some urban families in Uganda use English at home, leading to children not speaking a mother language, there are also homes where a mother language is spoken and so children from such homes would benefit more if they had found that mother language used or taught at school. Uganda risks having a future with a generation that speaks no indigenous language.

It is therefore the conclusion of this paper that effort should be made to teach some indigenous languages in the urban schools, even if it might be complex to use the indigenous languages as the overall language of instruction due to the multilingual nature of the urban school and home environments. The choice would have to be carefully made and enforced better through the Ministry of Education, as opposed to leaving it to the largely privatized urban schools to make the choice because they might not be able to agree with the parents on which indigenous

language to offer. The dominant indigenous language in the location of the urban school environment might be the best choice of language to be taught, given the high language readiness among the children, (Ghee, 2014).

Schools should be guided and facilitated by the Ministry of Education to teach any of the dominant indigenous languages in the urban areas where the schools are located. An indigenous language is important for a sense of identity with one's country and as an important part of the society generally, it strengthens family relationships that are bound to weaken due to the lack of a common language of interaction among family members. Language policies should be reflexive regarding the spaces and importance of different languages both economically, politically and socio-culturally; a good language policy should neither sacrifice children's advancement and mastery of the global English language nor impede education that is culturally relevant and significant in the children's everyday lives, (Altinyelken, et al, 2013; Bunyi, 1999).

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#### Phonological and Lexical Variation in Logooli, Lutirichi and Lumundu

1Kaluhi Everlyn Masolia, 2David Barasa  
Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology

## Abstract

This paper focuses on the lexical and phonological variation in spoken Logooli, Lutirichi and Lumundu languages found in the Western part of Kenya. It intended to indicate that dialects of a language exhibit variation. The current study therefore intends to investigate variation that exist in words and sounds in Logooli, Lutirichi and Lumundu dialects of the Luhya language. The study was guided by the sociolinguistic Variationist framework by (Labov W. , 1963) which was later advanced by (Tagliamonte S. , 2012). Data was elicited through questionnaires, participant observation and interviews. Respondents were purposefully sampled from native speaker of Logooli, Lutirichi and Lumundu living in Vihiga County. There were fifteen respondents from each dialect. The age limit was sixty years. There was equal number of male and female respondents. Data was analysed according to themes and presented in tables followed by discussions. Sociolinguistic Variationist theory which basically accounted for the variation in words and sounds in the three dialects. A qualitative research design was adapted for this study. The findings of the study showed that there is variation in some words used by the speakers of these dialects. The variation was either each dialect having its own word for a given referent or had words that had a sound or sounds bringing variation in the languages. For instance, the noun 'cup' was /kɛkɔmbɛ/ in Logooli, /ʃikɔmbɛ/ in Lutirichi and /kikɔmbɛ/ in Lumundu thus, variation being brought about by differences in sounds. It was further observed that there is a tendency of the Lumundu dialect leaning more towards Logooli than Lutirichi. The findings of this study would be relevant for curriculum planners in Kenya and especially in the competence-based curriculum learning materials.

**Key words:** Logooli, Lutirichi, Lumundu, Phonological, Lexical, Variation

## Introduction

Linguistic variation can either be social, regional or according to context. It can take a sociolinguistic approach where focus is on the relationship between linguistic items and social factors within a speech community (Kebeya , Bwire, Erastus, & Makokha, An intra- dialectal analysis of a dialect of luhya;a backwash effect on Language Teaching and learning ).

Relevant studies carried out on languages in contact reveal that when two speech communities or cultures get in contact for a longer period of time, they present a possibility for language shift. This shift is mainly noticed in the group that is deemed to be 'weaker' although, at times there is a possibility of the powerful group shifting.

Language shift mainly occurs in languages that are mutually unintelligible. However, it may occur in contact languages that are mutually intelligible. When this happens, a new dialect is formed (Raymond, 2003). (Trudgil, 1986) , refers to this dialect as an inter-dialect. This assertion is seen in this study where a Lumundu sub-dialect is formed as a result of contact between Logooli and Lutirichi. This study therefore was set to establish the salient lexical and phonological aspects of variation in Logooli, Lutirichi and Lumundu. The longer the two languages are in contact, the more time there is for speakers or both groups to become bilingual thus prevailing conditions for interference in the structure (Thomason & Kaufman, 1988).If one of the groups in contact is much larger than the other smaller groups language is more likely to acquire features of the larger group's language than if the two groups were roughly of equal size. (Thomason & Kaufman, 1988) The Logooli speakers outnumber Lutirichi speakers. This is according to the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics that was conducted in

1998. (Statistics, 1998). Hence the Lumundu dialect having acquired more linguistic features from Logooli.

The main objective of this study was to identify and describe instances of phonological and lexical variation in spoken Logooli, Lutirichi and Lumundu varieties. The analysis was done within the framework of Variationist Sociolinguistic Theory (Labov W. , 1963), (Tagliamonte S. , 2012). Analysis in this study was done in two broad categories; based on verbs and the other on nouns. Different phonological variables were discussed in nouns and verbs in the three dialects.

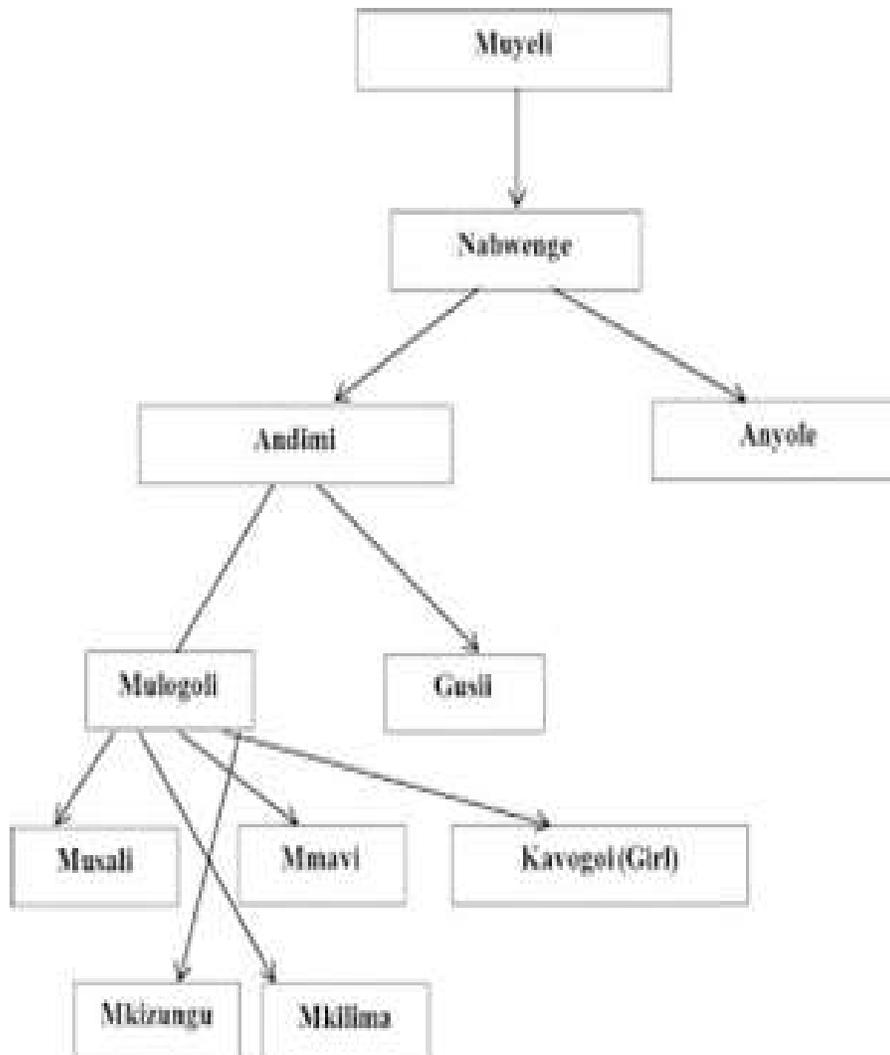
### **The Logooli and Lutirichi languages**

Logooli and, Lutirichi are part of the group of dialects that make up Luhya of the Bantu family of languages. They are among the 17 dialects of Luhya in western Kenya apart from Lumundu that has not been recognized yet. Speakers of these languages can communicate effectively in more than one dialect and they alternate the dialects possibly for various reasons, some of which this study will investigate. Other languages spoken by Abatiriki (Lutirichi speakers) and Abalogooli (Logooli speakers) include Kiswahili and English in addition to other Luhya dialects.

Kiswahili and English being official languages in Kenya, are taught as compulsory subjects in the public schools curriculum without forgetting the sign language. As a result, most Kenyans are either bilingual or multilingual including the Logooli, Lumundu and Lutirichi speakers. In this study, investigations were done to establish language variations in Logooli, Lutirichi and Lumundu

### **Abalogooli People and their Language**

Abalogooli are descendants of Mulogooli, who is the father of Abalogooli. It's one of the sub dialects of Luhya of the larger Bantu group of people. History is told that Mulogooli's ancestors came from Arabian Peninsula and travelled down the Nile in Uganda. They originated from Misri in Egypt (Ndanyi, 2005). The earliest ancestor in the group's genealogy is Omwa, who is believed to have lived in Bunyoro in Uganda. He and his peers moved towards Mt. Elgon where they dispersed. Mulogooli's father settled in Siguli islands in Bondo later Mulogooli and his wife Kayesa gave birth to four sons that make up the Abalogooli's great houses in their clan structure (Ndanyi, 2005).



**Figure 2.1: Maragooli clan structure according to** (Ndanyi, 2005).

Logooli is one among the sub dialects of the seventeen dialects of the Luhya cluster of dialects of the larger Bantu languages. The speakers are found in western Kenya with their degrees of intelligibility varying. Literacy in Logooli was introduced by the Quaker missionaries who settled in Kaimosi. They also introduced formal education to the Logooli. The pioneer students who were Logooli speakers helped in the translation of the bible, (Orege, 2011).

The first book to be written in Logooli was a story book and was published in 1907 by the CMS-Christian Missionary Society press in Kampala. In 1908, part of the New Testament was translated into Logooli. The complete bible was translated into Logooli and published in 1952. This was one of the major works written in Logooli and till recently all the Luhya dialects have been reading the Logooli bible, (Orege, 2011).

### **Tiriki people and their Language**

The Tiriki, also called Abatiriki are said to have originated from Misri in Egypt under the leadership of Mudiriki, whom the people speaking Lutiriki are named Abatiriki. The name Abatiriki is also thought to have come into existence as a result of the bearers being in close contact with the Terik, thereby adopting and bantuising Terik to Abatiriki.

This could be thought true basing on the circumcision rites of the Abatiriki which are similar to those of the Terik. (Anjiji, 2008).

The Terik people are found in western Kenya in Vihiga County, bordering Logooli people on the West and the Kalenjin in the East. They are basically found in Hamisi and Kaimosi where the two distinct varieties of LT emanate. Kaimosi is well known because of being the first place where the missionaries settled. Lutirichi is one of the seventeen dialects of Luhya, the Bantu language. Like all other Bantu languages Lutirichi is an agglutinating language. Basing on the degree of mutual intelligibility and the shared boundaries. The Tiriki people who speak Lutirichi are divided into two categories, Eastern Tiriki and the Western Tiriki. The Tiriki people at Kaimosi area are called *Bagwi* and they speak native Lutirichi. They are on the eastern part of Tiriki referred to as *Ibugwi*. The other group of the Abatirichi occupy the western region-*Imatioli*. This group of Tiriki people do not speak native Lutirichibecause of the influence from Logooli speakers they are in contact with. The Abatirichi people who border the Logooli speakers are said to speak Lumundu sub dialect which is a hybrid of Logooliand Lutirichi (Anjiji, 2008)

Generally, the Tiriki and Maragoli have co-existed for years. One reason for this is because of having a common origin, religion and intermarriage. Statistically, the Logooli speakers outnumber the Lutirichi speakers. Their intense contact has resulted in a dialect called Lumundu

(Thomason & Kaufman, 1988)says that:

It is the sociolinguistic history of the speakers, and not the structure of their language, that is the primary determinant of the linguistic outcome of language contact.

This contact also contributes to variation in the languages used in the area of study which has been investigated in this study. The current study therefore intended to fill that academic gap using the Variationist theory by carrying out a systematic investigation into variation in words and sounds in spoken Logooli Lutirichi and Lumundu. Table 1.0 below illustrates such variations:

**Table 1.0 Examples of formation of Lumundu words.**

<b>LG</b>	<b>LT</b>	<b>LM</b>	<b>GLOSS</b>
Chiriri	Shiriri	Kiriri	Shadow
Nduuki	Nduushe	Nduuki	Reach
Vuswage	Vuswaache	Vuswaaje	Sorghum
Keveere	Shiveere	Kiveere	Udder
Enzoka	Inzukha	Inzoka	Snake
Endeve	Shisako	Indeve	Chair
Imbazi	Ihaywa	Inbazi	Axe

Logooli speakers were the first among the Luhya people to interact with the missionaries, and they translated the bible to Logooli. They were the first Luhya people to get formal education and were among the first African teachers deployed to Tiriki regions. The Lutirichi speakers' shift towards the Logooli dialect, though this needed to be verified (Orege, 2011). A systematic investigation to find out the aspects that lead to the Lumundu dialect leaning towards Logooli has never been done. There is no study done on lexical and phonological variation involving Logooli Lutirichi and Lumundu

### **Literature Review and Theoretical Framework**

All living languages exhibit variation as one of their characteristics. This variation brings about creativity in language and communication (Meyerhoff, 2006). (Anttila, Variation and Phonology Theory, 2004) (Milroy L. , 1980), in her studies on variation and the phonological theory, says that variation is studied by examining the use of external factors such as gender, age, register and social class. Phonology, syntax, lexicon and morphology being internal factors are also crucial in studying linguistic variation. She explains that in many dialects of English consonant clusters that are word final are variably made simple by deleting the coronal stop.eg **cost me** becomes **cos' me**. The same final coronal consonants can be retained if syllabification as part of the following onset is a vowel e.g. *lost Ann* becomes *los.tAnn* but not in *l* like *lost Larry*. A further explanation is given as to how external factors interface with internal factors in variation. Grammars are structural objects built out of innate principles that are universal. External factors show the way these structural objects are used. This means that external factors can be grammar reduced to choices. This is as far as the modular view is concerned. The anti-modular view states that there exist no difference between internal and external factors which fairly interact with each other directly (Chambers, Trudgil, & Natalie, 2004).

(Angogo, 1980) carried out a study of Luhya dialects and its inherent variation. She points out that the Luhya situation is a diversity in unity which is more achievable than if there was only a single language.

Her study was invaluable to the current study because it laid a foundation on which the current study was based. The study differed in the sense that she delved into basically all aspects of language. The current study only focused on phonological and lexical variation.

(Kebeya , Bwire, Erastus, & Makokha, An intra- dialectal analysis of a dialect of Luhya;a backwash effect on Language Teaching and learning ) , studied an intra-dialectal analysis of a dialect of Luhya; a backwash effect on language teaching and learning. Their findings showed that there existed salient phonological variations in the articulation of consonantal variants that are influenced by social factors of geographical region in the spoken Lushicho. The findings therefore necessitated the need for recognizing the two variations to address the need for standardization.

(Nasambu, 2017) , carried out a study on lyrical variation in spoken Lubukusu in Bungoma County. The findings were that nouns recorded a higher variability than verbs. Though dealing with Luhya dialect, it differed from the present study since the current study did not study Lubukusu. This study was important as it provided information about existence of variation in nouns.

(Kisembe, 2005) , studied a linguistic Analysis of Luhya Varieties spoken in Western Kenya. Her findings were that Luhya varieties are expected to be similar in many ways. The Bantu spirantization and the 7-5 vowel merger strongly suggest a shared historical development from an earlier common ancestor the absence of the Bantu spirantization process and the 7-5 merger in Idaxo, Isuxa, Tiriki and Logooli (southern Luhya) distinguishes these varieties from other Luhya varieties. His study was of importance to this study because it gave guidance on the vowel sounds of Logooli, Lushicho and Lumundu dialects. (Nasambu, 2017), studied Lexical Variation in Lubukusu in Bungoma County. These studies are related to the current research in the sense that they study language use in different speech communities. However, they differ from the current study because this study focuses on lexical and phonological variation involving three dialects, Logooli, Lumundu and Lumundu.

The theoretical frameworks adopted for this study was the Variationist Theory. The Variationist Theory was propounded by (Labov W. , 1963). It was chosen because of its capability to explore and account for the linguistic variation that occur among dialects that are in contact, which eventually give rise to new varieties (Labov W. , 1963). Variationist proponents observe that language variation is systematically organized basing on the social behaviour of the speakers. (Labov W. , The design of a sociolinguistic research project. Report of the sociolinguistic workshop, 1972) (Coates, Women, Men and Language: A sociolinguistic Account of Gender Differences in Language, 1993) , also observe that individuals speak in different ways in different contexts. This is a clear implication that languages are not homogeneous and every language consists of a variety of personal speech habits and groups of similar idiolects and each is characterized by more or less identical lexical, phonological and grammatical features, (Oduol, 1990) .

The theory also indicates that the choice of one variant or the other must show variance in a defined way what is referred to as heterogeneity that is structured i.e. variation does not occur randomly rather it is structured, this means that there is a difference but there is structure to it (Labov W. , The design of a sociolinguistic research project. Report of the sociolinguistic

workshop, 1972) (Tagliamonte S. , 2012). Linguists therefore aim at unveiling this orderly heterogeneity. Variability in language is rarely free and features which vary are at times conditioned by a complex of linguistic and social factors.

The theory also explores the different ways of saying more or less the same thing that may occur at every level of grammar in a language, in every style, register of a language, dialect, in every speaker, often in the same discourse in the same sentence. This shows that variation is everywhere all the time hence being referred to as variation that is inherent (Labov W. , The design of a sociolinguistic research project. Report of the sociolinguistic workshop, 1972). Inherent variation is in the individual, group, the community and beyond. This tenet helped in identification of linguistic features that can be studied. Variation can occur in an individual, what is referred to as intra-speaker variation or across a group of speakers what is known as inter-speaker variation, (Tagliamonte S. , 2012) This was appropriate for the study as it enabled the researcher be aware of variation in a speech community as well as variation within an individual where a respondent could communicate comfortably in the three dialects. The choice of a dialect feature can be influenced not only by the independent variables of style, context, class and region but also by the speaker's willingness to accommodate to another dialect.

The sociolinguistic Variationist framework was considered appropriate for the current study because it accounts for how human beings use language. It also indicates that the fundamental goal of the Variationist sociolinguistics is the vernacular as it is considered highly systematic (Tagliamonte S. , 2006) (Milroy J. , 1992). This suits this study because the study investigates variation in the vernacular Logooli, Lutirichi and Lumundu.

There several kinds of variation, namely phonetic variation, phonological variation and semantic variation. Phonetic variation is concerned with pronunciation which does not affect the language at the phonemic level. Phonological variation shows a variation in pronunciation but the variation is at the phoneme level.

### **Phonological variations**

Our main objective of this study was to investigate phonological and lexical variation in Logooli, Lutirichi and Lumundu. Phonological variation is concerned with sounds and the way words are realized in the three dialects. This enabled the researcher to systematically unveil the different realizations of the different variables that exhibit variation in the dialects of study. The phonological variations were investigated in nominal and verbal items.

### **Phonological variations in the Logooli, Lutirichi and Lumundu nominal items**

From the data collected, it was observed that there is systematic variation in the three dialects; Logooli, Lutirichi and Lumundu which conforms to Variationist theory (Labov W. , The design of a sociolinguistic research project. Report of the sociolinguistic workshop, 1972) (Tagliamonte S. , 2012).

### **The variable /ke/**

The variable /ke/ has different realizations as far as the Logooli (LG), Lutirichi (LT) and Lumundu (LM) are concerned. The lexical items presented in table 2 below are examples of the variations in the variable/ke/ in these languages that are in contact within the same geographical location in Vihiga County.

**Table 2.0 : The variable /ke/**

LOGOOLI [kɛ]	IPA	LT [ʃi]	IPA	LM [ki]	IPA	GLOSS
Kerenge	/kɛrɛŋɛ/	Shirenje	/ʃirɛ <sup>n</sup> je/	Kirenge	/kirenge/	Leg
Kedete	/kɛdɛtɛ/	Shitere	/ʃitɛrɛ/	Kidete	/kidete/	Finger
Kemeeme	/kɛmɛ:mɛ/	Shimeeme	/ʃimɛ:me/	Kimeeme	/kimeeme/	Kid
Kemoori	/kɛmo:ri/	Shimoori	/ʃimo:ri/	Kimoori	/kimo:ori/	Calf
Keveere	/kɛve:re/	Shiveere	/ʃive:re/	Kiveere	/kive:re/	Udder
Kekombe	/kɛko <sup>m</sup> bɛ/	Shikhombe	/ʃi <sup>x</sup> o <sup>m</sup> bɛ/	Kikombe	/kiko <sup>m</sup> bɛ/	Cup

Table 3.1 above indicates observable variation in the realization of the variants [kɛ] for Logooli, [ʃi] for Lutirichi and [ki] for Lumundu. Basing on the vowel sounds in these items, it can be observed that the vowel sound in the Logoolivariante is the open-mid vowel sound/ɛ/, Lutirichi has /ɪ/ and Lumundu has /i/in formation of the first syllable in the items presented above. This gives rise to the variants of the variable (ke).

### The variable (k)

The variable (k) defines variation in the Logooli, Lutirichi and Lumundu dialectal pronunciations. /k/ is pronounced as the voiceless velar stop [k] in Logooli and LM while it is realized as a voiceless velar fricative [x] and a voiceless post alveolar fricative [ʃ] in LT dialect. Table 3 demonstrates the occurrence of these variables.

**Table 3.0 : The variable /k/**

LOGOOLI[ k]	IPA	LT[x]	IPA	LM[k]	IPA	GLOSS
Mukono	/mukono/	Mukhono	/mu <sup>x</sup> on o/	Mukono	/mukono /	Hand
Musakuru	/musakuru	Musakhulu	/musa <sup>x</sup> ulu/	Musakulu	/musaku ru/	Old man
Kivara	/kivara/	Shivala	/ʃivala/	Kivara	/kivara/	World
Kaagi	/kaagi/	Khachi	/ <sup>x</sup> atʃi/	Kaagi	/ka:gi/	A small Granary
Mukevi	/mukevi/	Mushevi	/mu <sup>ʃ</sup> evi /	Mukevi	/mukevi /	Circumcise r
Kihaamwa	/kiha: <sup>n</sup> wa /	Shihaanwa	/ʃiha: <sup>n</sup> w //	Kihaanwa	/kiha: <sup>n</sup> w a	Prize

### The variable / r/

The study established that the alveolar trill /r/ has two variables. That is the alveolar trill [r] in Logooli and Lumundu but as the alveolar lateral approximant [l] in Lutirichi. This can be seen in the table 4.

**Table 4.0: The variable /r/**

LG [r]	IPA	LT [l]	IPA	LM [r]	IPA	GLOSS
Marwa	/marwa/	Malwa	/malwa/	Marwa	/marwa/	Alcohol
Romoroma	/rɔmɔrɔm a/	Lumoloma	/lumolom a/	Rumoma	/rumoroma /	Languag e
Imbara	/i <sup>m</sup> bara/	Imbala	/i <sup>m</sup> bala	Imbara	/i <sup>m</sup> bara/	Scar
Inamaara	/inama:ra /	Inamaala	/inama:la/	Inamaar a	/inama:la/	Tick

### The variable /t/

The variable /t/ is present in the three dialects under study in different ways. The variable is realized as the voiceless alveolar [t] in Logooli and Lumundu, alveolar trill [r] and the retroflex [ɽ] in Lutirichi. This occurs in verbs as well as nouns. Table 5 shows these variations

**Table 5.0: The variable /t/**

LG [t]	IPA	LT [r]/[ɽ]	IPA	LM [t]	IPA	GLOSS
Vutuji	/vutudʒi/	Vuruchi	/vurutʃi/	Vutugi	/votugi/	Riches
Mutwi	/mutwi/	Murwi	/murwi/	Mutwi	/mutwi/	Head
Esetwe	/esetwe/	Eserwe	/eserwe/	Isetwe	/isetwe/	Kind of a bird
Ritemwa	/rite <sup>m</sup> wa/	Rirhemwa	/riɽe <sup>m</sup> wa/	Ritemwa	/rite <sup>m</sup> wa/	Banana
Itumbi	/itu <sup>m</sup> bi/	Irhumbi	/iru <sup>m</sup> bi/	Itumbi	/itu <sup>m</sup> bi/	House for initiates
Ritango	/rita <sup>n</sup> go/	Rirhango	/riɽa <sup>n</sup> go/	Ritango	/rita <sup>n</sup> go/	Thigh

### The variable /g/

The variable /g/ exhibits two variants in this study; the velar plosive [g] and the voiceless palatal stop [tʃ]. These variants determine where the person comes from and the proximity to one another. The Lumundu speakers whom though having [e] in the syllable (ge) they show a leaning towards logooli than lutirichi that has [tʃ] as illustrated in Table 6 The occurrence show a definite pattern hence variation does not just occur but it's organized (Tagliamonte S. , 2012)

**Table 6.0 : The variable /g/**

LG[g]	IPA	LT [tʃ]	IPA	LM [g]	IPA	GLOSS
Isigi	/isiɣi/	Isichi	/isitʃi/	Isige	/isige/	Locust
Vuswage	/vuswageɛ/	Vuswache	/vuswatʃe/	Vuswage	/vuswageɛ/	Millet
Vogeeni	/voge:ni/	Vucheeni	/vutʃe:ni/	Vugeeni	/vuge:ni/	Ugali left over
Rigego	/rigεgɔ/	Licheko	/litʃeko/	Rigego	/rigεgɔ/	Molar tooth

### The variable /o/

This variable is realized as the open- mid back [ɔ] in Logooli, close back [u] in Lumundu and close -mid [o] in Lutirichi as shown in table 7 below. This is a case whereby each dialect had its own way of articulating the /o/ variable in different words. The sampled words expose the orderly heterogeneity where the choice of the variable is structured in the speech community as pointed out by (Coates, Women, Men and Language: A sociolinguistic Account of Gender Differences in Language, 1993).

**Table 7.0: The variable /o/**

LG[o]	IPA	LT[u]	IPA	LM[u]	IPA	GLOSS
Koseka	/kɔseka/	Khusekha	/xusexa/	Kuseka	/kuseka/	To laugh
Komoroma	kɔmoroma/	Khumoloma	Xumoloma/	Kumoroma	kumoroma/	To talk
Kohona	/kɔhona/	Khuhona	/xuhona/	Kuhona	/kuhona/	To heal
Koveye	/kɔveje/	Khuri	/xuri/	Kuvee	/kove:/	We're
Kogeenda	/kɔge: <sup>n</sup> de/	Khujenda	/xujenda/	Kugenda	/kuge: <sup>n</sup> da/	To walk

### Phonological variations in the Logooli, Lutirichi and Lumundu verbs.

#### Variable /k/

The variable /k/ has two variants, [k] and [x] as far as far as the three dialects under study are concerned. The variant [k] is realized in Logooli and Lumundu and [x] for Lutirichi as shown in table 8 below. The voiceless velar plosive /k/ in Logooli and Lumundu corresponds to the voiceless velar fricative /x/ in Lutirichi.

**Table 1.0 : Variable /k/**

LG[k]	IPA	LT[kh]	IPA	LM[k]	IPA	GLOSS
Kotema	/kɔtɛma/	Khurema	xurema	Kutema	/kutɛma/	To cut
Kogeenda	/kɔge: <sup>n</sup> da/	Khucheenda	xutʃe: <sup>n</sup> da/	Kugeenda	/kuge: <sup>n</sup> da	To walk
Kusarika	/kusarika/	Khusarikha	/xusarixa/	Kusarika	/kusarika/	Scatter
Kokonyana	/kɔkɔɲana/	Khukhonyana	/xuxɔɲana/	Kukonyana	/kɔkɔɲana/	To help each other

### The variable /t/

The variants for the variable/t/ are the alveolar stop [t], the plosive retroflex [ɽ] and the alveolar trill [r] as shown in table 9.

**Table 2.0 : The variable /t/**

LG[t]	IPA	LT[rh]	IPA	LM[t]	IPA	GLOSS
Kotema	/kɔtɛma/	khurhema	/xuɾɛma/	Kutema	/kutɛma/	To cut
Kutimura	/kutimura/	Khurhimula	/xuɾimula/	Kutimula	/kutimula/	To slash
Koteeva	/kɔte:va	Khurheva	/xuɾeva/	Kuteva	/kuteva/	To ask
Kutumba	/kutumba/	Khurhumba	/xuɾu <sup>m</sup> ba/	Kutumba	/kutu <sup>m</sup> ba/	To refuse

### The variable /z/

The variable /z/ has variants the voiced alveolar fricative [z] and the voiceless dental –alveolar affricate [ts]. Whereas the Logooli and Lumundu speakers had the voiced alveolar fricative [z], Lutirichi speakers had the voiceless dental-alveolar affricate [ts] as shown in the table below.

**Table 10.0 : The variable /z/**

LOGOOLI [z]	IPA	LT [ts]	IPA	LM [z]	IPA	GLOSS
Kuhiiza	/kuhi:za/	Khuhitsa	/xuhi:za/	Kuhiza	/kuhiza/	To hunt
Yaaza	/ja:za/	Yaatsa	/ja:tsa/	Yiiza	/ji:za/	Is coming
Kuziiza	/kuzi:za/	Khutsitsa	/xutsitsa/	Kuziza	/kuziza/	We're going
Kuhuuza	/kuhu:za/	Kuhutsa	/kuhutsa/	Kuhuza	/kuhuza/	To blow

### Lexical variation

Here lexical items were examined to identify variation in words rather than the sounds that make up the words. As earlier indicated, the Variationist sociolinguistics methodology is accessing the vernacular (Tagliamonte S. , 2006) , this study sought to identify variation in the lexical items in the dialects under study. The Maragoli, Tiriki and the Lumundu speaking people exhibit a characteristic of accommodation because of being in contact. This therefore is inevitable for the speakers in these groups to make reasonable attempts to approximate their speech to that of their interlocutors. This is done for number of reasons, among them being to feel accepted in the group (Coupland, Giles, & Justine, 1991).

This therefore brings about linguistic variability which can often be regarded as socially different but linguistically equivalent ways of doing or saying the same thing and occurs at all levels of linguistic analysis, lexical included (Chambers & Trudgill, 1990).

Lexical items here were analysed in terms of a one referent being represented by different forms, those that have borrowed and nativised the forms or modified the pronunciation and those that appear the same but have different pronunciation.

### Lexical items for nominal forms

#### The banana variable

This variable gives a difference in the dialects under study. When articulated, one is able to tell the speech community one belongs to as shown in table 11 below.

**Table 11.0: The banana variable**

LG	IPA	LT	IPA	LM	IPA	GLOSS
Rigomia	/riɡomia/	Rirhemwa	/riɾe <sup>m</sup> wa/	Ritemwa	/rite <sup>m</sup> wa/	Banana

During an interview in a home where the mother was a Maragooli and the father a Tiriki, the children who typically spoke Lumundu referred to the concept banana as ritemwa which the mother said she does the same in order for the children to identify with her. The father on the other hand had to use the same concept as the other family members.

#### **The axe variable**

Like the banana variable, the feature axe defines the three dialects as shown in table 12.

**Table 12.0 : The axe variable**

LOGOOLI	IPA	LT	IPA	LM	IPA	GLOSS
Imbazi	/i <sup>m</sup> bazi/	Ihaywa	/ihajwa/	Imbaze	/i <sup>m</sup> baze/	Axe

The variation here indicates that the Lumundu speakers adopted their referent for an axe from Logooli and modified its form. The word has got no relationship orthographically or in pronunciation with Lutirichi.

#### **The cooking stick variable**

The cooking stick variable distinguishes the three dialects. It is worth noting that the Logooli and Lumundu items referring to the cooking stick are the same and have no relationship with the LT item as indicated in table 3.14 below.

**Table 13.0 : The cooking stick variable**

LOGOOLI	IPA	LT	IPA	LM	IPA	GLOSS
Kivango	/kiva <sup>n</sup> ɡo/	Mwikho	/ <sup>m</sup> wixo/	Kivango	/kiva <sup>n</sup> ɡo/	Cooking stick

The variation observed here indicates that Logooli and Lumundu have the same form for the cooking stick only that the pronunciation is different. The vowel sound [i] in the syllable {ki} is -ATR while that in LM is +ATR.

#### **The chair variable**

The variable chair also defines the three dialects. Again, the trend is that the Logooli and LM items have a difference in the number marker only, where Logooli has front mid-open [ɛ] in *endeve* while Lumundu has the closed front vowel [i] in *indeve*. Despite the variations the two also are different from the same referent item for LT. See table 14.

**Table 14.0: The chair variable**

LOGOOLI	IPA	LT	IPA	LM	IPA	GLOSS
Endeve	/ɛ <sup>n</sup> dɛvɛ/	Shisako	/ʃisako/	Indeve	/i <sup>n</sup> dɛvɛ/	Chair.

### The knife variable

The knife variable also draws a clear distinction among the three dialects in this study. Table 15 illustrates this variation in Logooli, Lumundu and Lutirichi. Here each dialect has its distinct word for the referent 'knife'.

**Table 15.0 : The knife variable**

LOGOOLI	IPA	LT	IPA	LM	IPA	GLOSS
Mmbano	/ <sup>mm</sup> bano/	Ilutwa	/illutwa/	Muvano	/muvano/	Knife

### Lexical items for verbal forms

Here variation was established in terms of the forms that indicate actions. Words were chosen basing on their frequency in use to make the work of both the respondent and the researcher just like the nouns, there were lexical items that had totally different forms in the dialects under study and there were those that inclined towards a specific dialect and modified their form in referring to the same item.

### The fighting variable

This variable defined the three dialects that are in contact as shown in table 3.17 below.

**Table 16.0 : The fighting variable**

LOGOOLI	IPA	LT	IPA	LM	IPA	GLOSS
Kukubana	/kukubana/	Khulwana	/xulwana/	Kukubana	/kukubana/	To fight.

The Lumundu and the Logooli forms are similar only that the vowel sound [u] in Logooli is –ATR while that in LM is|+ATR. The Lutirichi word on the other hand is totally different but referring to the same concept. The trend is the same for the other items as shown.

### The 'I'm working variable

This variable shows that there is variation in Logooli, Lumundu and Lutirichi as far as the concept 'I'm working' is concerned. The three dialects being agglutinating, the singular person marker is the same for Logooli and Lumundu with the vowel sound in the marker [nyi] in Logooli being lax while that in Lumundu is tense. This is different in LT where the singular first-person marker is [mbi] in the expression 'I'm working.' This variable indicate variation in the sense that Logooli and Lumundu have the same way of expressing the act of working. Lutirichi on the other hand replaces the palatal nasal /ɲ/ which occurs in Logooli and Lumundu by nasalizing the voiced bilabial plosive/b/

**Table 17.0 : The 'I'm working variable**

LOGOOLI	IPA	LT	IPA	LM	IPA	GLOSS
Nyinziraa	/ɲi <sup>n</sup> zira:/	Mbinziranga	/ <sup>mbi</sup> n <sup>n</sup> zira <sup>n</sup> ga/	Nyinziraa	/ɲi <sup>n</sup> zira:	Im working

## The 'will come' variable

**Table 18.0 : The 'will come' variable**

LOGOOLI	IPA	LT	IPA	LM	IPA	GLOSS
Uuzi	/u:zi	witse	/witse/	Uuze	/u:ze/	Will come

In table 18 above, the 'will come' variable has three variants with each dialect having its own way of expressing the act. The Lutirichi word is totally different from Logooli and Lumundu that have a similar word for the same referent, although differs in the last sound /i/ and /e/ for Logooli and Lumundu respectively.

### Conclusion

The present study has established salient lexical and phonological variation patterns inherent in the Logooli, Lutirichi and Lumundu dialects. Phonological Variations have been observed in nouns and verbs of the three dialects. There was an emergent pattern in the sound systems in these dialects indicating that phonological variations in Logooli, Lutirichi and Lumundu with regard to the verbal group. Similar observations were made with the items in the nominal class. The phonological differences observed define the three sub-dialects.

In relation to the objective of this study, there is both phonological and lexical variation in the three dialects; Logooli, Lutirichi and Lumundu, that are in contact at Gavudunyi and Hamisi regions of Vihiga County. The key factor for the variation was identified to be phonological with a few lexical variations. The reason for this could be because of the three dialects being mutually intelligible. It was also observed that Lumundu lexical items showed a tendency of leaning more towards Logooli than Lutirichi dialect. The reason to this need to be investigated. Related to this, it is recommended that curriculum material designers to consider the phonological variations established in this study so as not to disadvantage especially the Lumundu speakers.

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## The Role of Women in Development in the Agikuyu Proverbs

1Arthur K. Muhia, 2Simiyu Kisurulia  
University of Kabianga

### Abstract

Any given community uses its language or the language it has learnt, that may not necessarily be its indigenous language, to convey what it is, what it does and the worldview it holds. As such, a community's language can tell a lot about it. This paper focuses on how selected Agikuyu proverbs portray women as active participants in development. Proverbs are an important aspect of language and convey the community's social, political, cultural and economic endeavors. They are a repository of values that have been evolved by a society over time and transmitted from one generation to the other. Therefore, the selected Agikuyu proverbs are a reliable basis for understanding the role of women in development among the Agikuyu. Purposive sampling was used to arrive at relevant proverbs. Guided by the reader response theory, this library based analysis employed textual and content analysis method to arrive at the desired findings. It was established that proper interpretation and understanding of proverbs should involve a discussion of the cultural issues surrounding their formation. It was also noted that the reader response theory can enable one to creatively draw more than the ordinary meaning from a literally text. Lastly, the analyzed proverbs contain a positive memory that can empower women to actively participate in development.

**Keywords:** Women, Development, Agikuyu Proverb.

### Introduction

The term development in this research means gradual attainment of a socially inclusive society where culture will flourish. Traditional African values of family, community and social cohesion will be firmly entrenched. Wa Thiong'o (2009) asserts that a language is a carrier of cultural collective memory bank of a specific society. Therefore, proverbs, as an aspect of language are a repository of values that have been evolved by a society over time and transmitted from one generation to the other. Some of the Agikuyu proverbs reflect on how Agikuyu women participate in various development agendas of this community. These proverbs are herein analyzed. The paper focuses on the positive image of proverbs in bringing out women as active participants in development through social structures namely marriage and procreation, and child rearing and socialization. Proverbs are wise sayings whose meanings summarize a cultural context, event or experience of a specific community. They draw their content from a specific environment or society. Proverbs communicate an idea more deeply than ordinary language. This is because they employ either positive or negative statements to communicate their message (Chesaina, 1997). The negative and positive forms add to the effectiveness of those proverbs by giving them a categorical tone that makes them more persuasive. According to Mwiha (2005), proverbs about women portray an image of who women are, who they should be and how they should be treated in the society. Consequently, proverbs have a lot to tell us about what the place of women in a society.

## **Scope and Limitation**

This library-based research guided by the reader response theory deal with Agikuyu proverbs that perceive women as vital agents of social development through social structures namely marriage and procreation, and child rearing and socialization as outlined in the *1000 Kikuyu Proverbs* text. The proverbs that portray women negatively, those about men and other issues in the same community have not been considered in the research.

## **Reader-Response Theory**

Reader response criticism states that the interpretive activities of readers rather than the author's intention or the text's structure, explains a text's significance and aesthetic value (Habib, 2011). Thus, this theory shifts the critical focus from a text to a reader. It diverts the emphasis away from the text as the sole determiner of meaning to the significance of the reader as an essential participant in the reading process and the creation of meaning. Interpretation and meaning are shaped by analyzing the reader's response. Basically a reader is the one who reads and gives meaning to the literary work. It is in this context that we were able to analyze and expound the message conveyed by the selected proverbs beyond the ordinary meaning.

## **Agikuyu Creation Myth**

According to Wa Thiong'o (2018) and Kenyatta (1938), the Agikuyu oral traditions tell us that God (Mwenenyaga or Ngai) created the first man in the Agikuyu community, Gikuyu, and placed him on top of Mt. Kenya (Mt. Kirinyaga) where he showed him the vast fertile land below the mountain. Gikuyu was instructed to go and begin living in a specific area which contained a groove of fig trees (mikuyu and migumo).

Gikuyu descended the mountain and upon arrival in the place he was instructed to settle, he found a woman, Mumbi, whose name means the creator. They married and made contact with Mwenenyaga by praying while facing Mt. Kenya. Sometimes they made burnt offerings. Gikuyu and Mumbi brought forth ten daughters. When the daughters became of age and yearned to have their own husbands, they asked Mumbi how they could achieve that objective. Mumbi took the challenge to Gikuyu who consulted Mwenenyaga. Upon Gikuyu and the ten daughters offering burnt sacrifice as instructed, Mwenenyaga provided nine young men who married the nine daughters of Gikuyu and Mumbi. These daughters became the mothers of nine plus one Agikuyu clans. Each clan is named after its mother: Wanjiru mother of Anjiru, Wambui mother of Ambui, Wanjiku mother of Agaciku, Wangui mother of Angui or Athiegeni, Waithira mother of Aithirandu or Angeci, Wacera or Njeri mother of Acera, Mwithaga or Nyambura mother of Ethaga, Wairimu mother of Airimu, Wangari mother of Angari, Warigia or Wamuyu mother of Aicakamuyu. The nine plus one Agikuyu clans migrated and settled in various parts of the vast region on the foot of Mt. Kenya where Mwenenyaga had shown Gikuyu. Today the community occupies the central region of Kenya engaging in agriculture and trade as their major economic

activities. This brief history of the origin of Agikuyu portrays women to be at the center of this community.

### **Agikuyu Proverbs about Women**

With reference to Agikuyu proverbs on women, Mwihi (2005) holds that from a theological analysis, the proverbs present negative attitudes against women in the society. Seen from this perception, she proposes that there is need to create positive proverbs and dismantle the old ones, which are designed to distort a woman's image by portraying them as inferior human beings. We have attempted to go beyond this existing literature by applying a new interpretation of the Agikuyu proverbs on women from a reader response point of view. Our research seeks to focus on a new understanding of some of the proverbs that had been assigned negative connotation by this previous study.

In their research, Wanjiru and Kaburi (2015) analysed Agikuyu narratives, proverbs and songs with an aim to uncover gender power relations. They stressed that the proverbs evaluated women's political and social capacities negatively. Although their study is different from our research, they acknowledge that some proverbs may have more than one interpretation. This is relevant to our research. Additionally, proverbs can be applied in many different circumstance and thus acquire new meanings. It is in this context that our research positively examines the perception of Agikuyu proverbs about women's role in development.

Mbiyu (2011) explored social control and gender relations in Agikuyu proverbs from a critical analysis position. She claims that the proverbs echo a dominant social rules and norms concerning women and men's behavior, emphasizing the necessity of men control over women. Therefore, women occupy a marginal status within a male centered system. In the homes, women are often regarded as temporary members and a future loss to their families. Upon marriage, they are viewed as intruders or strangers by their husbands' relatives. This study is relevant to our research as far as the issue of how women are being portrayed in the Agikuyu proverbs; more specifically their role in marriage and procreation. We attempt to restore the dignity of women.

The above literature review has located our research within the already existing literature. This has enabled us to identify a research gap to be filled as far as the Agikuyu proverbs about women are concerned.

### **Research Methodology**

The selected proverbs were sampled purposively from *1000 Kikuyu Proverbs* (Barra G., 2010) because they portray women as active participants in development among the Agikuyu. Data from figures of speech such as imagery, metaphor and folktales in the selected proverbs was collected and analysed qualitatively. That data was subjected to content analysis to arrive at the desired results.

### **Agikuyu proverbs and Role of Women in Marriage and Procreation**

Among African societies, marriage is an official agreement between a man and a woman to begin a family. It can be between one husband and one wife or between one husband and

several wives (Nicholas 2011, Muhia 2019). Additionally, marriage in the African setting is a lifelong institution and divorce is discouraged as portrayed in the proverb below:

*Gutiri mutumia wenjagirwo mbui kwa nyina* (no married woman will have her white hair shaved at her mother's) (*1000 Kikuyu Proverbs* pg. 21).

Metaphorically, the proverb tells us that once a woman leaves her parents' home for her matrimonial one, it is not expected that she will return to her parents' home for any reason whatsoever. Through the reader response theory, we are able to expand the ordinary meaning of this proverb that a married woman should not go back to the parents' home for assistance. Therefore, shaving of white hair in this context means cooperation while solving common challenges in the family. Just as one cannot completely shave oneself, cooperation and unity in the marriage institution is being stressed. Divorce is discouraged through payment of dowry. In an event of divorce, the dowry paid must be returned and it involves a tedious process as portrayed in the following proverb:

*Cira munene ni wa uthoni ugikua* (the breaking of betrothal is not a small matter) (*1000 Kikuyu Proverbs* pg. 7).

Among the Agikuyu, marrying is a gradual process and involves meeting set requirements such as settlement of dowry by the bridegroom's side. Payment of dowry seals the marriage covenant and undoing it is tedious. This goes a long way in ensuring stability of the established family. This ensures stability in the family which is key to any form of development as stressed by aspiration number five of Africa's Agenda 2063 development blueprint (Muhia 2019).

A family is considered indispensable in the African society. It is the essence of existence and the backbone of society. Mbiti (1989) and Nangoli (2002) hold that the families that result from marriage are the basis of existence of a specific community by ensuring that the members of society who have died are replaced by the ones born in the new families. Procreation is termed as a way of ensuring the continuity of a society. The creator of both man and woman requires them to marry and procreate. Members of a society who fail to marry or get married are considered to be cursed (Muhia 2019).

Mwihia (2005) best sums up the role of women in procreation when she stresses that among the Agikuyu, every expectant woman is treated with respect in order to preserve the life that is growing in her womb. This is depicted in the following proverb:

*Itunyagwo mbui ni guciara* (a woman's childhood ends with maternity) (*1000 Kikuyu Proverbs* pg. 39)

In this proverb, a woman is highly valued when she becomes a mother. She is regarded as a source of life because of bringing forth and nurturing human life. Moreover, the first woman to be created among the Agikuyu is called Mumbi, which means the creator. Additionally, the nine plus one clans of the Agikuyu are named after the ten daughters of Gikuyu and Mumbi.

From a reader response point of view, this proverb can be interpreted to mean that pregnancy marks a transition between a woman's childhood and adulthood. Furthermore, it indicates how women are highly held following maternity. Another proverb designed to portray maternity as a vital process among the Agikuyu states that:

*Guciara kunaga irigu ngingo* (A banana plant loses its blossom as soon as it bears fruit) (*1000 Kikuyu Proverbs* pg. 14)

Symbolically, the woman who gives birth to a child is like the banana tree that breaks under the weight of its fruit. This proverb is meant to inform members of the society on the importance of

taking care of a woman who has given birth so that she can regain her initial health status. Special meals are supposed to be prepared for such women and they are exempted from daily chores. Therefore, this proverb authoritatively shapes the attitude of Agikuyu toward maternal health and the wellbeing of the newborns. This is in line with the sustainable development goals.

This subsection brings out the unity, indissolubility of marriage and the value attached to the childbearing role of the woman. From a readers' response point of view, the analyzed proverbs stress the need for unity in marriage, states that marriage cannot be dissolved and that the woman is valued because she adds to members of the society new members.

### **Agikuyu Proverbs on Role of Women in Child Rearing and Socialization**

Proverbs are of paramount importance when it comes to the child rearing and socialization process. This is the process through which members of society are taught and acquire the culture of their society, for example, knowledge, skills, beliefs, morals and behaviors that can enable the members to be integrated, responsible and contributing individuals in that society. Socialization is the mechanism by which the total way of life of a society is transmitted from one member of society to another especially from parents to children. Among the Agikuyu, women are highly held with this responsibility since they are the ones who are actively involved in child rearing as stated in the proverb below:

*Kaana ka ngari gakunyaga ta nyina* (the young one of a leopard scratches like its mother)  
(1000 Kikuyu Proverbs pg. 40)

Symbolically, this proverb is reminding parents specifically mothers about the results of the socialization process, whereby children are socialized by their mother's into their culture through oral traditions. Among the Agikuyu, a mother includes all women who belong to the same age set with the biological mother within the environment that the child is being brought up. Therefore, child rearing is seen as a collective role of women in the society. Furthermore, child rearing and socialization teach children how to think practically beyond theoretical knowledge so that they can develop skills that enable them to effectively have control over their immediate environment. This is best described in the following proverb concerning a woman:

*Ciakorire Wacu mugunda* (the food found Wacu in the field) (1000 Kikuyu Proverbs pg. 17)

Wacu was a legend woman who was the most despised amongst the wives of a rich man. One day, when a banquet was being held at home, she went to work in the field, since she knew that there would be nothing for her at home. In the middle of the banquet, a raven swooped down in the courtyard where the meat was being roasted, snatched a big piece and brought it to Wacu. In this proverb, women are being taught to be courageous, look for solutions instead of sitting on a challenge and finally they will emerge victors. This proverb portrays women as individuals with unusual courage and endurance; representatives of strength and resilience.

Among the Agikuyu, through child rearing and socialization, women assume the responsibility of overseeing the character development of the children by placing emphasis on not only judging morally, but also exercising moral knowledge. It is not the mere acquisition of the moral capacity, but also the actual use of the same as depicted in the proverb below:

*Muici na mundu muka atigaga kieha akua* (he who robbed in company with a woman, will live in fear until she dies) (1000 Kikuyu Proverbs pg. 85)

Metaphorically, this proverb means that crime is despised among the Agikuyu and women spearhead the fight against crime. Women will eventually expose wrong deeds for the wrong doers to be held accountable of their misdeeds. A thief is a disgrace to the entire society. Therefore, members of the society are deterred from engaging in crime in presence of women. Those who despise this role of women are warned about the consequences through the following proverb:

*Karegi nyina gatihonaga* (he who rejects the counsel of their mother perishes) (1000 Kikuyu Proverbs pg.46)

In this proverb, women are considered the custodians of values. They are also considered to be the socialization agents who are supposed to transmit the values to the children. Women are portrayed as individuals who understand that values-free socialization is not only impossible, but also undesirable. Thus, they are determinants of the values that the society should uphold and transmit to children. The process of socialization will not be complete without the noble contribution of women.

Muhia (2019) and Nangoli (2002) observe that during their existence, values struggle with one another; some are victorious and impose themselves in society, while others vanish very quickly. During this struggle, individuals in their social involvement formulate value judgment. The performance of values and ideals within individual and social life requires the complex continuous process of socialization. Therefore, the socialization process is a reflection of those values that society considers the highest at the moment. Consequently, socialization becomes a correct basis for understanding one's self and environment for formation of ideological thinking and worldview.

## Conclusion

From data analysis in the selected proverbs, it was established that firstly, proper interpretation and understanding of proverbs should involve a discussion of the cultural issues surrounding their formation. Secondly, reader response theory can be used to creatively draw more than the ordinary meaning from a literally text. It is from this point of view that we have been able to recapture the lost symbolic value of the Agikuyu proverbs about women. Thirdly, the analysed proverbs contain a positive memory that can empower women to actively participate in development. Additionally, proverbs form a memory bank of a society thus making it despise her proverbs is making that society forget the values carried by those proverbs.

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An Assessment of the Role of Vernacular Radio Stations in Conservation of Culture in Kenya. A Case of  
"Ohigla" Program on Ramogi FM in Kisumu County, Kenya

1Joseph Ouma Muga Othoth, 2Peres Wenje  
Masinde Muliro University of Science & Technology

**Abstract**

Although culture is dynamic, the rate at which our cultural fabric is being eroded by the Western culture has caused great concern in the World, Africa and Kenya in particular. Young people have often been warned by elders that those who abandoned their culture were enslaved through civilization, modernization or technological advancement (internet). Teachers, parents and government functionaries managing the education sector have apportioned the blame of this cultural erosion for the total breakdown on discipline, poor cultural grounding and moral value decadence in schools. This study aimed at assessing the role of radio campaign on Luo cultural values in Kisumu County. The specific objectives were to establish the knowledge level, perceptions and attitudes of the young Luo men and women on the *ohigla* radio programme; to establish the efficacy of *ohigla* programme on the adoption of Luo Cultural values in Kisumu County; and to assess the challenges facing the adoption of Luo Cultural values in Kisumu County. This study employed a mixed method approach and Conceptual framework was Cultural Imperialism theory, Spiral of Silence Theory and Media Dependent theory. This study used a stratified random sampling technique to select the respondents. A sample of 50 youths from Maseno University, Kisumu Campus students was used. Out of which 47 responses were obtained. Quantitative data was generated through questionnaires while qualitative data was generated through in-depth interviews and focus group discussions. The study used thematic and content analysis to analyze qualitative data and the findings were presented in a prose form. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze quantitative data. And software package called statistical package for the social science (SPSS version 21) was used to help capture and tabulate from the questionnaires. Research findings showed that the *ohigla* programme aired on Ramogi radio about the need to conserve Luo cultures was fully understood by most youths in Kisumu County. The study also found that the program had widened Luo youths knowledge about the importance of cultural preservation. The study therefore recommends that the campaign should be a continuous event so as to ensure more people are reached by the message. The study also recommends that several channels of communication should be used in the campaign. This should include use of opinion leaders and elders, chief barazas, use of social media and use of television.

**Keywords:** Culture, Norms, Values, 'Ohigla', Radio, Youth

**Introduction**

This study examined the influence of a popular dholuo radio programme '*ohigla*' on cultural values of urban youths in Kisumu County, Kenya. The study focused on the urban youth considering that they live in a more diverse metropolitan environment with a diversity of culture and channels of communication. Mass media particularly the radio has become an essential part of the lives of many people over a long period of time. Mass media permeates many aspects of our economy, education, political, personal and social lives.

In our economic system, the media plays an indispensable role in manufacturing, transportation, advertisement, and selling of goods and services. The structure of the government system of Kenya would not be what it is today without the media. Through newspapers, journals, magazines, television and radio broadcasts, documentaries and educational films among others, the Kenyan citizen is able to enjoy access to education and programmes of high quality, entertainment, and access of basic information. In addition, media plays a major role towards socializing and transmitting various cultural norms and values among people and also enhancing interpersonal relationships in any society including marriages.

However, on the flip side the media has also been blamed for most of the social ills and advances. The influence of the media has been of concern to mankind for the last several decades. A number of issues have captured the public attention like the relationship between the media and the rise of antisocial behaviors such as violence, alcoholism and drug abuse, and racial/ ethnic stereotyping. In addition media is said to have failed to promote dominant traditional values such as respect for the elderly, use of appropriate language, having a sense of time, sense of community life, having a sense of hospitality, and having a sense of sacredness of life and religion among others.

Consequently, virtually every argument that can be made for harmful or negative effects of the media can also be applied to the ability of the media to do a good job. A number of studies have demonstrated that people, especially children and the youth can and will model the good and the anti- social behavior that they see, hear, or read in the media (Baran, 2001). As a result, the media particularly the radio being the medium of the message tend to influence the behaviors of the youth. The youth rely on the media to know about its society on various aspects like how to dress, communicate, behave in various situations and relate with different people in order to form social acceptable relations.

Kenya has a high number of radio stations, including many regional stations which mean only a few stations have a high share when looking at country-wide data. The following table give a summary of radio landscape in the country based on the language of broadcast.

### Kenya Radio Share Feb 1-14 2019 Summary by Language

	Total	15-24	25-34	35+
English	25%	33%	30%	16%
Kiswahili	44%	43%	42%	46%
Vernacular	31%	24%	28%	38%

Source: Geopoll 2019

Looking at all radio stations in Kenya, Kiswahili remains the preferred language of broadcast nationally, and across different age groups, it is observed that 46% of radio share for listeners aged 35 years is from stations broadcasting in Kiswahili. Vernacular stations command the second highest listenership amongst older listeners aged 35 years and over, having a 38% share. However, we do observe some differences by age group, finding that older listeners are more likely to listen to Kiswahili or vernacular stations, with only 16% of those aged 35 and older listening to English stations. By contrast, 33% of audience share for the youth age group (15-24 years old) is for English-language stations.

Regionally, Ramogi FM is Kenya's leading dholuo FM radio station, with an almost nationwide footprint and an online reach across the whole world. The Station's slogan : *Kar Chuny Jaluo*, simply translates to 'The desires of the Luo' meaning the station is designed to suit Luo desires to the full. Ramogi FM has the highest reach and share of ear in the Lake Region according to the latest GeoPoll findings. The station has been set on a back drop of the Luo culture combined with strong personalities. The station appeals not only to Luos but everybody who understands and appreciates dholuo music, information and entertainment.

### **Lake Region**

<b>Station</b>	<b>Share</b>
Ramogi	21%
Radio Maisha	14%
Radio Citizen	11 %

Source: GeoPoll 2019

Ramogi FM was the first independent vernacular dholuo radio station to be licensed and hit the road running after starting a moving programme, "*Ohigla*" which has done quite well with a huge listenership spread out in Western Kenya and major cities; Kisumu, Nairobi, Mombasa, Nakuru, Eldoret, Kericho among other areas where majority of the Luo live and work.

Every time the program is on air, there are numerous call-ins and messages with listeners urging the management of Ramogi FM to slot in more time for such informative and educative program (*Ohigla*) describing it as an eye opener and a major platform for the Luo to engage on cultural discourse (issues), moral values, Religion, politics and other matters of national importance.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The changes in cultural values among the youth are taking place at an alarming rate. The youth have seemingly disbanded the highly regarded values that shaped our fore-fathers and parents into who they are and quickly adopted the western values. We trace this transformation to their day-to-day life which is highly surrounded by all forms of media. The media has become the 'story-teller' of the family (Gerbner, 1977). The high incidences of erosion of cultural values have been of concern to parents, the government and the society at large. The African himself also is increasingly aware that his daily life in its traditional village setting, characterized by a

stable and well articulated pattern of events, gradually is "falling apart," in famous writer Chinua Achebe's well known phrase.

Of major concern is the growing awareness of peoples' rights including those of learners who have made it impossible for caregivers and teachers charged with nurturing them into responsible citizen have lost hope, leaving them to the vagaries of life. Gone are the days when youth hailed African icons: Nelson Mandela, Jomo Kenyatta, Koffi Anan, Jaramogi Oginga Odinga, Tom Mboya and Prof. Wangari Maathai as role models. They now look up to celebrities, music icons and film actors; World Wrestling Federation (WWF) top wrestlers; John Cena, Booker T, Brock Lesnar, Undertaker, Cain, the Rock, Van Diesel, Van Dam, Chuck Norris and Arnold Schwarzenegger apart from pornographic sites they watched and 'worshipped' in secrecy. Musicians like Lyl Wayne, Chris Brown, Usher, Trey Songz are some of the most trending icons they follow 'religiously' through YouTube, Instagram, Twitter, Facebook and Skype among other platforms to get updated on whatever they do, new productions and ways of life. Little will you hear of past and 'living' legends among Kenyan communities like the towering musicians; Owino Misiani, Joseph Kamaru or Daudi Kabaka and Sukuma Bin Ong'aro whose genre of music the youth consider as old school not worth listening to let alone following on their trail.

The roles of the parents, guardians and other members of the extended family have been replaced by the media due to financial pressure in trying to cope with family obligations, rapid expansion of urban centers and education. This has created the need for families and communities to look for alternatives especially the youths who find the solutions to their challenges through listening to radio programs. Parents have seemingly abandoned their roles as agents of moral development in children and left it to the musicians or celebrities they see or listen to their music or radio programs who aim at making more money and have no educative value or moral development to the children. Community norms are merely received but never subjected to the scrutiny of reason to establish their viability and practicability in the society (Nyasani, 1997).

This is where the rain started 'beating' us literally speaking since our youth have chosen to emulate everything western even though some of the people they 'glorify' and hold on higher pedestal have very little to offer in terms of positive cultural and moral values that could help nurture our youth into responsible people in society. Therefore, this study sought to examine the influence of radio as a channel of communication on cultural values among the urban youth and give recommendations from the media council as a policy maker and regulatory body on the ways to 're-invent the wheel' in accordance to modernization yet not compromising on our sense of cultural values among the urban youth.

### **Review of Literature**

The mass media has become an essential part of life in societies around the world. Its rapid expansion over the last decades has coincided with major changes in societies and politics of many countries. As special channels designed specifically for purposes of communication, the media has played a major role in these changes. The media creates an environment in which

attitudes and values of the individual develop which in turn affect their behavior to follow both pro-social and anti-social.

The mass media plays an important role in shaping the social behavior of the youth. Njenga (2006) noted that the media comes out as a major influence on the decisions young people make especially when it comes to clothing. This influence has been accelerated by the increased amounts of hours the youth spend interacting with the mass media.

The rapid advances in capabilities as well as ranges of devices like the mobile phones and the internet has accelerated the process. The influences in social behavior are realized through changes in attitude, cognition, agenda setting, definition of reality and socialization (Burton, 2002).

Attitude change plays a role in the way we see the world and this modifies how we relate with others as well as how we deal with issues. Cognitive change has effect of altering the way people think, the way they value things thus changing or modifying their beliefs. Agenda setting has the effect of setting up an agenda of important topics through news activities. By interacting with the media, we are made to believe that is what the agenda ought to be. The media also defines social reality for us. Social reality is what we take to be the real, normal and proper way of running our society and the way we set our social relationship with others. Lastly, the media socializes us into the norms, values and accepted' behavior by controlling the consumers through advertisements, promotions and persuasion. The summation of these changes due to media exposure plays a major role in shaping the cultural values of the urban youth.

### **Radio as a Socializing Agent**

Whenever lifestyles are depicted, you will have sociology. This simply means that you cannot have a lifestyle without socialization.

Socialization is the process of developing a sense of self connected to a larger social world through learning and internalizing the values, beliefs, and norms of one's culture. Through socialization we learn to perform certain roles as citizens, friends, lovers, workers, and so forth. Through internalization our culture becomes taken-for-granted. We learn to behave in socially appropriate and acceptable ways (Mills, 2000).

Radio has always stood out as a major socialization agent among the youth. The radio is considered to be the greatest device in Africa for the media because of its usefulness and inexpensive advantage. It is the most popular and widespread means for communication because it is a method of raising public awareness for community needs, opinions, and news. It is also a channel for entertainment, education and an exchange of knowledge and culture. The radio plays a significant role in modern society and in some cases it may be the only means of some regions of the country.

Radio is considered as a socializing agent because it reveals many aspects of the society and elicits cognitive processes among the youth that cultivate their understanding of the real world.(Comstock & Scharrer, 2007). Radio's affordability and high reach of selected target groups make it an excellent supporting medium. In fact, radio may be the most appropriate medium to get a message across in the shortest time possible.

Other than being affordable and boasting of a large audience, radio enjoys the highest popularity amongst the youth because it is easily accessible from their mobile phones. This huge audience demand for radio listenership has led to Audience segmentation/fragmentation by the radio stations. Audience segmentation is a phenomenon that describes the process of partitioning mass audiences into smaller and smaller segments. It is considered as an inevitable outcome of competition in media markets. (McQuail 1997).

Virtually every radio station would like its audience to identify with a unique theme. Ramogi FM sought to deal with issues of family, relationships and marriage because they believe these are more pressing issues than political agendas

Freddy Janam, the lead presenter of Ramogi FM says,

*"Everyone expects you to do politics and hosting politicians. That's great and do that. Knock yourself out if you want to. But not all heroes are the ones who perform these political deeds. We just said that everyone is sick of politics. There are other problems. Drive in traffic and look at the number of couples who don't speak to each other and maybe, they have been like that for over a year. I think that is more pressing than Raila and Ruto(politicians). So address that. "*

The station has strived to remain number one on matters of our cultural values.

### **Media Influence on the Youth by Glen F.. Dawursk, Jr.**

Glen E. Dawursk, Jr. did a study on the media influence among the youth. Although his study mainly focused on TV, noted that The average American child grows up in a home with two TVs, three tape players, three radios, two VCRs, two CD players, one video game player and one computer.

His study also revealed that Pre-teens and teens combined listen to music (including radio, CDs, tapes and music videos) almost 4 hours per day. By their junior year in high school, girls listen to music a half-hour more than boys do each day (Roberts & Christenson, 2001). Around 96% of teenagers listen to the radio weekly (HMR. 1999) and 45% of American teens listen to FM radio (Zollo, 1999). Teenagers consider musicians their real heroes more often than athletes and rate the effect of music on them higher than religious beliefs or literature (Knight-Ridder, 1999).

The study proves that the graphic violence, overt sexuality, morally mixed and negative messages of the media usually pollute the established truths a youth may have learned at school, home and/or church.

What is of importance is that he equates our brains to a sponge. He notes that our brains take in considerable amount of data from a variety of sources. Everyday people are influenced by multiple things and just like a sponge we absorb virtually every factor which contribute toward our values, beliefs and moral judgments - and eventually contribute toward our behavior. People are influenced by multiple things in life including relationships, family, parents, friends, experiences, sexuality, maturity, intellect, education, religious beliefs and convictions.

He however notes that if the ‘Sponge so many different things at the same time, the result would be an ‘unpleasant mess’ if the sponge is wrung out but the same different things may cause a decay to the sponge if they are not cleaned up in good time.

*"If I had a new sponge and chose to clean up a coffee spill, a juice spill, a water spill and a milk spill, when the sponge was rung out, the combination would be an unpleasant mess. If I left the sponge that way, eventually it would begin to smell, mildew and subsequently grow mould. However, if the sponge simply soaked-up four piles of water, it would not smell and the growth of mildew or mold would be less likely. In the same way our brains "soak-up " considerable amounts of data from a variety of sources. Each of these becomes another item "soaking " in our sponge. No one item fills the sponge; instead they all become pooled together within the sponge " He states.*

### **Media Stands Accused over Bad Content (Kenya Today November 1-7, 2010)**

Radio and TV are exposing children to adult content where some of which is quite immoral. This is according to a report done by the Kenya Film Classification Board. (Appendix D). The Stations were accused of airing content which contains foul language, the occult, violence and pornography.

Nigerian movies dominate the screens at the peak hours with scenes depicting witchcraft and violence. The same can be said for morning talk shows.

*"I am appalled by the lack of action by the authorities. What is the purpose of setting up an oversight board to undertake a task and fail to implement its recommendations? The media should not be spared in the fight against impunity in the country. " The writer noted.*

### **Data Presentation, Analysis and Interpretation**

The present generation of urban youth is the majority audience of the ‘ohigla’ radio programme. The cultural values of the urban are being transformed by a wide range of discussions in the late evening show which may either propagate or erode their values. In this regard, the media questions revealed some interesting findings concerning this topic of study with respect to the way respondents gave their views. Fifty questionnaires were distributed among fifty students and 48 of the questionnaires were returned. One questionnaire was totally blank hence a sample of 47 respondents was used for the actual study. This thus contributed to 94% feedback.

#### **Gender**

**Table 1: Gender that participated in the research**

<b>Sex</b>	<b>Frequency (F)</b>	<b>Percentages (%)</b>
Male	23	49%
Female	24	51%
Total	47	100%

**Source: Primary data**

The total achieved sample for this study was 47 respondents. Of the total sample, 49% were males while their female counterparts comprised 51%. The research was gender sensitive so as to elicit the views of the different sex.

## Age

**Table 2: Age range of respondents**

Age group	Frequency (F)	Percentages (%)
Below 18	0	0%
19-21	10	21%
22-24	33	70%
25-27	4	9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>100%</b>

*Source: Primary data*

None of the respondents was age 18 years or below. 70% of the respondents who participated in the survey were within the age group 22-24. This was the majority age group of the study. While only 9% were in the age group 25-27.

## Course of Study

**Table 3: Table of sample Course of study**

Course of Study	Frequency (F)	Percentages (%)
Education	13	28%
Business	3	6%
Media	10	21%
Accounting	11	23%
Sociology	10	21%
<b>Total</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>100%</b>

*Source: Primary data*

Sample distribution by course of study of the respondents shows that most respondents were Education Students.

## 4.2 To determine the Level of Influence of the *Ohigla* Programme on Ramogi FM among the Urban Youth

**Table 4: Table of % frequency of listenership by gender, age and course of study**

		Base	Rarely	Occasionally	Often
Gender	Base	47	13	23	11

	Male	49%	54%	48%	45%
	Female	51%	46%	52%	55%
Age	Base	47	13	23	11
	19-21	21%	8%	30%	18%
	22-24	70%	92%	65%	55%
	25-27	9%	0	4%	27%
Course	Base	47	13	23	11
	Education	28%	46%	26%	9%
	Business	6%	0	4%	18%
	Media	21%	15%	9%	18%
	Accounting	23%	0	9%	0
	Sociology	21%	8%	30%	18%

**Source: Primary data**

On the frequency of listenership by gender, female respondents are the majority of the listeners with 55% while the men listen by 45%. According to the Survey Accounting students rarely listen to the show. Bachelor of Education students are the highest occasional listeners while Media and Business students listen to the show oftenly.

### To Establish Reasons for Listening to 'Ohigla' Show

**Table 5: Table of reasons given for listening to the 'Ohigla' show**

	Frequency (F)	Percentages (%)
It is Entertaining	12	26
When in house at home	11	23
It is Interesting	7	15
It is enlightening	6	13
To pass time	3	6
They play relaxing music	3	6
For Leisure	2	4
Fancy the Show	1	2

**Source: Primary data**

Total percentage of respondents who gave reasons affiliated to Entertainment is 78%. These respondents either reasons such as entertaining, interesting, to pass time, enlightening, relaxing music, for leisure and because they fancy the show. 23% said that they listen when at home/house and the show is on air. 15% did not give any response.

### Modes of Listening to the Show

**Table 6: Table of mode of listening to the show**

	Frequency (F)	Percentages (%)
Base	47	100

At Home/House	28	60
From your mobile	10	21
From Your Personal Phone	7	15
Both at Home and Personal Radio	1	2
No Answer	1	2

**Source: Primary data**

Majority of the respondents (60%) listen to the show while at home/house. Personal mobile is the other mode of listening to the programme.

### **Freddy Janam and Charles Odhiambo as Role Models**

**Table 7: Freddy Janam and Charles Odhiambo are considered as role models**

	Frequency (F)	Percentages (%)
Base	47	100
Yes	41	87
No	6	13

**Source: Primary data**

Eighty seven per cent (87%) of the respondents said that they consider Freddy Janam and Charles Odhiambo as their role models while only 13 respondents said that indeed they consider these radio personalities as not their role models.

### **Freddy Janam and Charles Odhiambo as Role Models by Age & Gender**

**Table 8: Freddy Janam and Charles Odhiambo as Role Model by Gender and Age**

		Base	Yes	No
Gender	Base	47	6	41
	Male	49	50	49
	Female	51	50	51
Age	Base	47	6	41
	19-21	21	50	17
	22-24	70	73	50
	25-27	9	0	10

**Source: Primary data**

Equal % of males and females consider Freddy Janam and Charles Odhiambo as role models. 73% of age category 22-24 do consider Freddy Janam and Charles Odhiambo as their role models

### Conclusion

This study has shown that the urban youth indeed listen to the 'ohigla' radio programme show both occasionally and often with an average percentage of 51% for both males and females. 81% of the respondents enjoy the show. 78% of the respondents listen to the show for entertainment. The study has also established that majority of the respondents listen to station in their hostels/houses. Both males and females equally agree that Freddy Janam and Charles Odhiambo are their role models. Very few respondents contribute to the debates. This could be because they are not yet in the employment bracket thus it is expensive for them to call the station. Only two respondents said they contribute via SMS. one SMS cost 10 Kenya shillings thus can be considered affordable. Majority of the respondents would listen to the programme in the presence of parents or teachers the main reason being that the topics are quite educative.

**Table 2: Summary showing the Cultural Values studied the expectations and the Findings of the study.**

S/No	Cultural Value in Discussion	Expected Response in Ideal Cultural Situation	% Response obtained from the study
1	Head of the Family	The Father	80% of the respondents agree that the Father is the head of the family.
2	Reason for marriage	For Procreation	Only 4% stated for children. Majority stated for companionship, security, children and sex
3	Size of a typical African family	Large family	Only 6% stated above 7 children. Majority stated between 1 and 3.
4	Advocate for polygamy	Highly advocate. Most of the traditional African men are polygamous.	Only 13% supports polygamy.
5	Respect for Partners privacy	What belongs to one	87% do not agree

		person belongs to everyone.	to 'invading' an individual's
		Communion and sharing of valuables.	privacy the reason is because the urban youth trust their partners.
6	Polygamy as solution to unfaithfulness	Unfaithfulness is unacceptable as one is at the liberty to marry as many wives as possible	87% believe that polygamy is not the solution mainly because it is against their religious beliefs
7	Respect for the opinion/advice of the Elder members in the society	The elders should first agree before you proceed to make your own decision	Only 68% value the opinion/advice of the Elder members in the society

Out of the 7 aspects of Cultural Values studied, only 2 aspects has the 'ohigla' show not influence and are in line with the ideal cultural values. 71% of the aspects of Cultural values studied have been influenced by the show.

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Palmgreen. P., Wenner, L. A., & Rayburn

# The Importance of Learning Materials in Mother Tongue Education in the Kenyan Competency Based Curriculum

Joyce Imali Wangia  
Kenyatta University

## Abstract

The quest for mother tongue instruction has always been at the heart of Kenya's language policy. However, no tangible results have been witnessed thus far. This is mainly due to the fact that the policies on paper and the realities on the ground are miles apart. Children learn better and faster when concepts are introduced and explained in a familiar language (Cummins, 2000). Studies have also consistently underscored the overall values of mother tongue education which include, the growth and preservation of the indigenous languages and, the contribution to national development. The revised and newly implemented Competency Based Curriculum (CBC) by the Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD) recognizes the significance of mother tongue instruction in the early grades and have thus given it prominence in the curriculum. This paper looks at the challenges and threats to the successful implementation of this policy by focusing on the status of the learning materials. The policy requires that mother tongue be taught as a language and more importantly, as a language of instruction in the early grades. Learning materials in the mother tongue or local languages are therefore central in the teaching and learning of the languages. On the contrary, there is high deficiency in the availability of such materials. This article explores the benefits of mother tongue in development and addresses the status and/or availability of learning materials for successful implementation of mother tongue instruction. It employs a survey design to establish the status of the learning materials and establish comparative practices of similar initiatives in selected African countries. It highlights the pitfalls/threats to the success of MTE and gives recommendations.

**Key words:** Mother tongue education; Learning materials; Instruction; CBC

## Introduction

The policy on Mother Tongue Education (MTE) is not new in the Kenyan school curriculum. There have been several Commissions informing educational reforms from precolonial times to the present. Each of these commissions has had a recommendation on the inclusion of mother tongue in the educational curriculum as exemplified below

## Policy on Mother Tongue Education in Kenya

The education language policy dates back to the pre-colonial times. Schools in pre-independence Kenya were set up along segregation lines. There were European, Asian and African schools each with a different language policy as Mbaabu, 1996 reports:

*English as the medium of Instruction in the European schools...In the Asian primary schools pupils learnt in one of the major languages of the Asian community namely Gujarati, Punjabi, Hindi and Urdu. English was taught as a subject in the first three years after which it became the medium of instruction. In the African schools 20 mother tongues were used as the media of instruction as recommended by the Becher Report while*

*Kiswahili was used ...where there was heterogeneity. English was taught as a subject from Standard 1 and it became the medium of instruction from standard v. (pp116).*

A major impact of this policy was the elevation of European schools hence English to a superior role (the European schools were superior in infrastructure, well trained teachers, upward mobility, etc.) and African schools, hence mother tongue, to an inferior role. Is it possible that the psychological attitude created by this historical background that English is superior has lived with us to date? The African feels educated and fulfilled when they speak English. Therefore, asking them to use mother tongue in school is always deemed retrogressive. Policy planners and educationists ought to come to terms with this psychological reality that requires a positive mind change for all the stakeholders.

Kenya has had several education commissions that have influenced government education policies. As detailed in Wa Mberia (2016), some of the key commissions that have been undertaken to review education include: the Phelps-Stokes Commission (1924), the Beecher report (1949), the Binns Commission (1952), the Ominde report (1963), the Bessey report (1972), the Gachathi report (1976), the Mackay report (1981), the Kamunge report (1988), the Koech report (1999) and the Odhiambo report (2012).

These commissions made numerous recommendations which have had a bearing on the language policy over the years. Specifically, the reports have shown that indigenous languages are crucial vehicles in the acquisition of education. The Phelps Stokes Commission (1924), for example, recognised the great role of indigenous languages in the development of character and acquisition of life skills in agriculture. The Bessey Commission (1972), on the other hand, noted the many benefits that accrue when a child starts formal learning in a language that he or she understands. On a similar note, the post-colonial commissions such as those of Gachathi (1976), Koech (1999) and Nikiema (2011) recommended the need for a child to be taught using the language of the school's catchment area and for Kiswahili to be used only in schools with a heterogeneous population. The current educational reforms have led to the implementation of the Competency Based Curriculum (CBC) where the language policy for the early years states that the language of instruction (LoI) in pre-primary (PP1 and PP2) and grades 1–3 (G1, G2 and G3) shall be the language of the school's catchment area until Grade 4, after which English shall be the main LoI (KICD, 2017). It is clear that there is no dispute as to whether or not mother tongue should be part of the school curriculum. However, in spite of the good will, implementation of the policy has been and continues to be a challenge. Some of the reasons for these are known but sadly, not addressed. This study, apart from exploring the gains from mother tongue development and use, also endeavours to look at the status and role of learning materials for effective operationalization of the policy on mother tongue education.

### **Challenges to MTE**

Most African countries have challenges with the incorporation of MTE in their language planning policies due to various factors. These arise from the colonization phenomenon that is part of the African history. Although colonization is long gone, the impact lives on.

The intrusion on African cultural values, economic erosion, the psychological brain wash resulting into identity crisis just to mention a few, are evident marks of colonization. The aspect of language choice is a real crisis emanating out of this background. Most African countries have little or no choice but to use the language of their colonizers for official and even

national purposes. In Kenya, English remains the dominant official and instructional language with considerable successful attempts to match Kiswahili to this status.

The desire to elevate the status of indigenous languages has always been seriously expressed and demonstrated by the review of language policies spelling the use of mother tongue in schools at least in the lower grades. However, whereas the policies look very brilliant and achievable on paper, the realities on the ground are far much different. The latest curriculum reforms in Kenya resulting into the Competency Based Curriculum (CBC) have spelt a very strong and promising case in the application of mother tongues or indigenous languages in school. Nevertheless, the lingering question in the minds of many is, 'will we succeed this time round?' As Mandillah (2017) observes, "The poor performance in the numeracy and literacy skills could also be attributed to the failure of the 8-4-4 system to implement the MTE policy", we are prone to wonder, is there a guarantee that the CBC mother tongue policy will succeed? What is it that will make it succeed or fail and what is being done about it? It is imperative to ask all the hard questions and seek solutions. A look at a few African countries listed below reveals that this is not just a Kenyan problem.

### **Language Status and Experiments in Selected African Countries**

**Nigeria:** Approximately 500 languages are spoken in Nigeria (Simire, 2004). English is dominant and three local languages, i.e., Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba are recommended for national use because of the large population of speakers. Anglo Nigerian pidgin (ANP) and Arabic are neutral codes. One Hundred (100) codes have been standardized and reduced to writing.

This should be an encouragement to Kenya which has a 43 languages (or about 70 on the higher side). It is possible to have them all standardized and to develop literacy materials. **Botswana:** Setswana is the common mother tongue spoken by 80% of the population but English has the high status. It is the official language while Setswana is the national language (Bagwasi, 2004).

**Cameroon:** Cameroon has over 250 language varieties (Boulleys, 2014). English and French were adopted as the official languages in 1960 when Cameroon became independent. Cameroon has German, Spanish, Italian, Chinese and Arabic as foreign languages. Cameroon has two systems of education – the English system in the English speaking part of the country and the French system in the French speaking part. In addition, Cameroon has widespread use of Cameroon Pidgin English and "Camfranglais" (a mixed language derived from English, French Pidgin English and some national languages like Duala and used mainly by youths) as contact languages. All the ethnic languages are considered as national languages even though none of them is used in public institutions (Boulleys, 2014).

**Zambia:** Zambia has more than 73 languages (Matafwali & Adriana, 2014) with English as the medium of instruction. The Zambian Ministry of Education in a bid to address poor literacy levels related to language difficulties introduced a primary reading programme (PRP) that was to be initialized in mother tongue and then transition to English. The initial programme was dubbed New Breakthrough to Literacy (NBTL).

This was introduced in seven Zambian languages that are considered familiar in different regions of the country. These were: *Siloze, ChiTonga* for Southern Province; *Lunda, Luvale, Kikaonde* for North Western; *ChiNyanja* for Eastern and Lusaka; *Ichibemba* for Northern,

Luapula, Central and Copperbelt provinces (Matafwali & Adriana, 2014, pp 132). This could provide a good scenario test case for Kenya in terms of what works well and what mistakes to be avoided. **Uganda:** Uganda has over 40 indigenous languages and English is the official language. Uganda rolled out a new curriculum in 2007 named Thematic Programme that saw the enforcement of mother tongue instruction from P1 to P4 (Baleeta & Aslei, 2014). To achieve this, some measures were put in place at community as well as national level. At community level, there was formation of language boards and promotion of local language writers and translation groups to ensure production of instructional materials. At institutional level, there was development of curricular to promote the teaching of local languages at different educational levels. They were also to ensure training of teachers, formation of the language policy, instructional materials development and research. A report by Piper, Brunettee, Jordan, King, & Nabacwa (2019) gives an evaluation of a literacy programme that Uganda implemented in 2013 dubbed, School Health and Reading Program (SHARP). The program ran trials in 12 language communities in a Clustered Randomized Controlled Trial (CRCT). The program provides textbooks to pupils at a one to one ratio, accompanying teaching guides, teacher training and ongoing support to teachers implementing the program. In their evaluation, Piper et al. (2019) report that SHARP had a statistically positive impact on literacy achievement (reading and comprehension) in 9 of the 12 languages.

We can see an attempt by Zambia and Uganda to institute mother tongue literacy programmes. The Uganda experiment in particular is worth learning from. They have run trials in 12 language communities with concerted effort to do it well. For one, they are covering a small section which can be easily managed. Additionally, they provide adequate textbooks, teachers' guides, teacher training and ongoing support.

What is the implication of this section to your study?

### **Indigenous Languages and Development**

A pertinent statement made by Boulleys (2014) about the Cameroon situation captures well the power of language in the building of a nation. This author states,

“Language has a binding force. It is the link between its speakers and their environments...This link is missing in post-independent Cameroon and many other states in Africa. Thus, the dream of ‘national unity’ is highly jeopardized rather than being fostered because there is little or no sense of belonging to the same nation.” (pp196).

Languages matter for development and there is a correlation between language and thought and more importantly, expression of ideas. Multilingualism has been proven to have advantages hence, all is not lost for African nations. The fight should not be to get rid of foreign languages or of multilingualism but how to harness and exploit the multilingual situation for advancement. The argument is that one way of harnessing multilingualism is by developing and promoting the use of indigenous languages. It is important to tip the equilibrium to bring indigenous languages to the fore and the most effective vehicle to achieve this is through the education system. The language situation in Asia and Europe is a testament to this as countries like China, Japan, Korea, Sweden, and Germany have used their languages to build strong economies.

Their children do not struggle in school to learn a language so as to learn. African children who go to study in their schools have to learn their languages in order to learn Kanana (2013)

opines that the use of African languages is essential for development and advocates for the development of regional languages on the African Continent. This argument can be scaled down to individual countries such as Kenya where a decision needs to be made whether we need regional languages or all the languages. This is a debate that needs much interrogation and consultation.

Kenya has instituted the CBC that places more emphasis on learners' mental ability to process issues and proposes a practical framework that nurtures competencies of learners based on their passions and talents. The CBC is aimed at making education responsive to the imperatives of Vision 2030 and the Structural Development Goals (SDGs). It is believed that amongst other factors, MTE as envisaged in the CBC will ensure that learners acquire competencies and skills to meet the human resource aspirations of Kenya's Vision 2030 blueprint for development (Wa Mberia, 2016). A major consideration for instance is Kenya's economic base which relies heavily on two sectors: Agriculture and Tourism. Considering that the majority of Kenyans who drive these sectors terminated their schooling (if any) at primary school level, then it is a must to look at what language they transact their business in. Therefore, while considering factors that drive the economy, language should be at the centre.

Developing nations like Kenya should focus on research based solutions on how to harness indigenous knowledge for innovation and production realizing that indigenous knowledge is driven by indigenous languages. Asian countries for example, have stuck to their languages and they are building strong economies. African countries should realize that it is not just a question of instituting MTE that will build the languages. More importantly, it is the status that is given to those languages. Learning a mother tongue in Grade 1 to 3 or even 7 and then dispensing with it altogether will take the nation nowhere. There are several ways to give prominence to indigenous languages. For example, in signages like roads, in hospitals and business premises situated in the grass root areas..... The use of locally manufactured products for the local market should also be encouraged. If a product emanates from a particular County or region it should bear the local identity, which may include informational leaflets in the local language with a Kiswahili or English translation This can be one way of promoting the use of indigenous languages.

Indigenous languages are also very important in matters of civic education and social issues such as constitutional amendment and referendums. Such issues are so critical that they should be explained in a language that is well understood by the local communities. Similarly, there are many social and environmental issues affecting communities. For instance, the rise in cases of domestic violence, gender based discrimination, alcohol and drug abuse, retrogressive practices like..., road carnage and suicide. In some of the cases, dialogues must be held in mother tongue to touch the core of the problems. When it comes to peace building initiatives in community groups, the language used is critical. Local disputes among local communities are best handled in local languages.

### **Benefits of Mother Tongue Education (MTE)**

Undoubtedly, language is one of, if not the most important resource endowed to humankind. An indisputable fact is that learning starts long before a child starts school. Furthermore, no learning can take place without language whether verbal or nonverbal. However, language planning policies largely do not take cognisance of the family language where communication

and learning starts long before a child goes to school. This is left to the whims and discretion of individual families. Nevertheless, any serious/meaningful consideration of mother tongue education must start with the consideration of the home language in spite of the fact that this presents a very diverse and complex situation.

Many studies have demonstrated that children in all leading countries in the world go through their education in their own mother tongue (Grandish, 2009). There are many gains from a mother tongue based instruction particularly in the early years of school. The most acknowledged and attested benefit to mother tongue education is that it creates a smooth transition from home to school, there is a solid learning foundation from familiar to unfamiliar and, children learn better in their mother tongue (Hovens, 2002; UNESCO, 2005; Moses & Wigglesworth, 2008; Adenyinka, 2014). These facts have been stated for a long time. For example, UNESCO (1953) underscored the importance of educating children in their MT because children are more likely to enrol and succeed in school if they are instructed in the language they best understand.

A further proven benefit of mother tongue formational instruction is that children transition better into a second language and perform better than when they start learning in the second/foreign language. According to Buhmann and Trudell (2008), mother tongue has been found to create an enabling foundation such as. sound recognition and word patterns that helps the learner to use the skills in the acquisition of a second language. Moreover, mother tongue instruction reduces the time teachers spend explaining difficult concepts (Cummins, 2000; Muthwii, 2002; Wa Mberia, 2016).

Several other benefits of MTE that have been identified. First, Learners are more confident. They can engage in group discussions, debates, etc., and there is overall better communication. Naturally, people are shy to express themselves in a language they are not competent in leave alone read and write in that language. But we test our learners' competence on the strength of whether they can read in English (UWEZO, 2013). Secondly, Parents can participate in supporting their children's education e.g. with homework (Benson, 2005). There are many parents who are not conversant with English and therefore cannot assist their children with homework when it is in English. The use of MT also minimizes cases of truancy, grade repetition and dropout rate (Pinnock, 2009). When children are confident learners because they are not struggling with language, they will enjoy being in school. Lastly, MTE will preserve indigenous language, knowledge and culture hence, rich national culture, unity, patriotism and development.

Kenya is therefore on the right track in giving prominence to MTE in the new curriculum, CBC. But what are the chances that this time round the policy will succeed? There have been impediments in the past to the enforcement of the mother tongue policy. Notably among these were: negative attitudes towards mother tongue due to its low status and lack of trained teachers as well as learning materials. The study will focus on the latter.

### **Data on the Status of Learning Materials**

This study emphasises the aspect of learning materials as one pillar that will determine the successful implementation of MTE. A survey conducted with KICD yielded the following information on the availability of learning materials as illustrated in Table 1 below:

**Table 1: Status of learning materials available for implementation of CBC**

<b>Books Developed</b>	<b>Curriculum</b>	<b>Grade</b>	<b>Publisher</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Kiambu	Old Curriculum	Std. 1-3	KICD	
Gikuyu	Old Curriculum & CBC	Std. 1-3/Grade 1-3	KICD/MORAN/KLB	Done
Taveta	Old Curriculum	Std. 1-3	KICD	
Dholuo	Old Curriculum	Std. 1-3	KICD/MORAN	
Pokot	Old Curriculum	Std. 1-3	KICD	
Dholuo	CBC	Grade 1-3	EAEP	Done
Kikamba	Old Curriculum & CBC	Std. 1-3/Grade 1-3	EAEP	Done
Maa	Old Curriculum	Std. 1-3	WERK	Pre-primers and primers. They have been evaluated by KICD as supplementary materials.
Chidigo, Chiduruma, Pokomo, Kitharaka, kigiriama	Old Curriculum	Std. 1-3	SIL/WERK/EAT/Reading Kenya	Materials submitted for evaluation  Readers for ECDE developed by KICD
Ekegusii	CBC	Literacy grades 1 – 3	EAEP	Done
Kigiryama	CBC	Literacy grades 1 – 3	EAEP	Submitted to KICD for vetting

*Source: KICD (2020)*

As a starting point, it was noted that, only 23 out of the 43 recognized indigenous languages in Kenya have standardized orthographies. Thus, the remaining 20 need standardizing before school materials can be produced.

From the table it is notable that; only four languages i.e. Dholuo, Gikuyu, Kikamba and Ekegusii have books published for CBC grade 1 – 3.

This notwithstanding, the programme is already in motion having been rolled out in January 2020. Only 9 languages have literacy material for the old curriculum, but these are not aligned to CBC therefore cannot be relied on as main texts. These considered against a total of 43 or more languages shows a great disparity. This is a major gap that should be addressed by researchers and other stakeholders.

KICD also reported that, the mother tongue materials available have been developed by KICD and NGOs in the past but these are not aligned to the CBC curriculum and therefore are not suitable. At the moment KICD is developing indigenous language course book for grade 4 in 18 languages as preparation for the Grade 4 roll out.

At the onset of CBC there was need to have course books developed in mother tongue in line with the language policy in education, for the implementation of Language activities at PP1 and PP2 and Literacy activities at grades 1-2-3. This has not been realized since the submissions for these subjects are in English and Kiswahili.

KICD developed the grade 4 materials as a publisher of last resort. However, publishers have since been trained by KICD and it is expected that they will be engaged in the development of materials for implementation of indigenous languages in subsequent years for grades 5-6 and later grades 7-8-9 and senior school. There are quite a number of materials developed in indigenous languages. However, these have not been developed against the current curriculum and may only be used as reference materials during implementation. It is envisaged that there will be an adequate supply of required course materials as we continue to prepare curriculum support materials for all learning areas in CBC.

There is also a need to prepare teachers for teaching in the learning area. Indigenous languages have been incorporated in the new Diploma in Teacher Education programme expected to start with the 2020 intake for TTCs. As a stop gap measure, KICD and TSC have identified schools in each of the Counties and languages working with the pilot implementation and have selected one teacher from each of these schools to be trained for the implementation of indigenous languages in grade 4.

## **Discussion**

Developing learning materials for MTE is definitely a daunting task. This study suggests three issues that should be tackled in this regard

## **Attitudes**

There is tension between what is viewed as the value of English over indigenous languages with the notion that:

- Learned people speak English
- English is the language for upward mobility (Muthwii 2004)

Parents in particular, believe that their children are learning by how fast they can express themselves in English and some are willing to pay the cost by putting their children in private schools – “Academies” where this is enforced. Schools generally go out of their way to make pupils speak English in the school environment.

The reality is that many of these learners who purport to speak English never really get to master the language mainly due to poor foundation. This is reflected in the poor performance in English in the national examination (KCPE) at the end of primary school. There is need for evidence based research to show that a good foundation in mother tongue will build a bridge for good performance in English.

The belief that English is the language of upward mobility is indisputable. The examinations are set in English, one needs a good grade in English to enrol into certain professional courses and employers require good performance in English in order to employ one, to mention just a few. Language planners therefore have to acknowledge this and give assurance that the policy in the long run reinforces good mastery of English for the learners while enriching their natural linguistic resources. Attitude is the first hurdle to overcome so as to get a buy in by all stakeholders regarding the importance of mother tongue education. The appreciation for the importance of learning materials in the overall success of the implementation will be largely determined by the right attitude.

### **Cost**

Overwhelming responses towards developing materials in the indigenous languages have been for example that, there are too many languages therefore it is too costly (Kioko et al, 2008) Kenya is often described to have 42 indigenous languages though most scholars count up to 70 languages (Wa Mberia, 2016). The languages have to be standardized and experts engaged to develop the materials not to mention the publication costs. This is not just costly but also a time-consuming venture. Strictly, for effective implementation, there is need for adequate timing with respect to materials development. There is a tendency to want to give up by citing the fact that the languages are too many. There is no doubt that developing material for all the languages is a very costly affair. Nevertheless, when the overall benefits of mother tongue educations are considered and all are convinced, then no cost is too high to pay. Furthermore, standardizing languages for learning materials development is not a recurrent cost and should be considered as one of the investments in education that a nation should make.

### **Status**

Status is an aspect of language planning where languages that are considered prominent are accorded high status as official or national languages while the rest have low or no status at all. Mother tongue or indigenous languages generally have low status for most African countries. They are not used in school as languages of instruction or where they are, they are used mainly in the lower grades and they are not examinable. The fact that they are not examinable makes them periphery and not worth spending much time and effort on. Moreover, these languages do not count for any vocational engagement. All these factors combined contribute to the view held by many that indigenous languages do not add value therefore it is a waste of time and resources (Muthwii, 2004). Both parents and teachers do not see the value of putting energy in

a language that is not examinable and that does not guarantee any employment prospects. The issue of status for indigenous languages should therefore not be glossed over.

## **Infrastructure**

In order for the implementation of MTE policy to succeed, the necessary structures must be put in place. These include, teacher training, syllabus design, learning materials and Stakeholder sensitization. Teacher training is paramount for successful implementation of MTE policy. The training involves or requires learning materials. Organs such as Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD) and their efforts should be encouraged and enhanced. For example, as recorded in section 3 above, there are still many languages that need learning materials developed. This is an area that needs to be enhanced. The success of this policy will therefore require the concerted efforts of all the stake holders - parents, teachers, learners, publishers, community leaders and even employers. This study therefore opines that there is still a lot of ground to be covered for the success of MTE in the newly implemented curriculum (CBC).

## **Recommendations**

From the foregoing arguments, the study makes the following recommendations:

There should be language committees for every local language that will work with KICD and MOE to develop the literacy materials. KICD and MOE on the other hand should work with language experts to develop orthographies and standardize all the local languages before embarking on the development of literacy material. They could network with NGOs like the Bible Society of Kenya, WERK, BTL and SIL who have done some groundwork on this.

The implementation should start with a few experimental schools where thorough and quality implementation of MTE is well implemented such that the results speak for themselves. Participation in this programme should be voluntary but the Ministry of Education should conduct effective sensitization and give incentives to the participants (e.g. free books, field trips, etc.).

When MTE is fully implemented, indigenous languages should be taught up to tertiary and university level but this should free choice by the learners from secondary school upwards. Choosing a different language other than one's mother tongue could be encouraged at this level to dispel the fears that are usually raised by some people that promoting mother tongue will lead to ethnicity.

There should be deliberate effort to raise the status of indigenous languages. One approach would be to develop some languages for national use. The languages should count for employment in certain sectors like domestic tourism and manufacturing. They can also be used to document and patent indigenous knowledge e.g. on athletic champions, herbal medicine, traditional foods, etc.

We should explore ways of using IT solutions in MTE for example digitalized language apps that can be accessed from computers, android mobile phones. It is possible to record simple

interesting stories on these digital platforms. Experts could also translate and upload on such platforms standard materials such as the national anthem, the Lord's Prayer, etc. in all the local languages.

## Conclusion

The importance of MTE has been underscored and the efforts made by our educational institution to implement the mother tongue policy in our schools acknowledged. However, the realities explored in this paper indicate that a lot still needs to be done.. There is need to relook at our strategies, borrow where necessary some ideas from those who have succeeded and tread slowly but purposefully for successful MTE implementation. This article has suggested the above recommendations towards this end.

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## The Language of Environmental Conservation and Destruction: Examples from the Kisii and Tachoni

### Folklore

1Simiyu Kisurulia, 2Lena Nyandwaro  
University of Kabianga

### Abstract

Environmental degradation is a global problem. Countries and peoples across the world are grappling with how best they can contain the fast rate at which the environment is being degraded. The efforts to stem the problem are important since all living things depend on the environment for their survival. Human culture is a major contributing factor to either environmental conservation or degradation. This paper examines the contribution of the cultures of two communities in Western Kenya, that is Kisii and Tachoni (a subtribe of the Luhya community), to either environmental conservation or how the same cultures are a threat to the well-being of the environment that these two communities inhabit. The data is based on a survey of the languages of the two communities and their cultural practices. Traditional practices and aspects of oral literature that accompany the practices were analysed to see how they contribute to either promoting environmental conservation or environmental destruction. The culture of a people and their language shape their world-view and influence how they relate to the world. When a language has positive overtures concerning the environment, it will automatically make a people to have practices that are environment friendly and vice-versa. Purposive sampling was employed to select the communities as well as aspects of the culture to be surveyed. Content analysis was used to make sense out of the data that was collected. From the two communities surveyed, it was realised that indeed some cultures were a serious threat

to environmental preservation while others contribute positively to preservation of the environment.

**Keywords:** Environment, Language, Culture, Kisii, Tachoni

## **Introduction**

According to TUKI (2014) environment is a state or things surrounding a creature's habitat. It contains living things such as animals and plants and non-living things such as air and rivers. Because environment is critical to human life, people have tried to conserve it through different ways. One way through which conservation efforts are manifested is through the culture of a people. Language, through its various ways of usage, plays a significant role in modelling people's way of appreciating the environment. Oral literature is an art that uses spoken language to pass information from one generation to another. Every community in Africa has its own oral literature. For many African communities, their relationship with the environment is encapsulated in their oral literature. Native languages, according to Kandagor, Wendo and Sawe (2017), are languages spoken by different ethnic groups in Kenya. Makoloo (2005) avers that there are 52 native languages in Kenya.

Wallace (1996) argues that indigenous languages are very important because when used in media, writing and art, they are capable of bringing change among community members' lives. This article analyses the role that two indigenous languages, Ekegusii and Olutachoni play in shaping a people's world-view about the environment. Language, as expressed through oral literature and the mere spoken word, impacts on man's relationship with his environment. Specifically, rituals, totems, riddles and songs are analysed.

## **Literature Review**

According to Magachi (2015), the *Abagusii* community speak *Ekegusii* language and live in Nyamira and Kisii Counties of Kenya. Citing Guthrie (1997), he asserts that *Ekegusii* is included in the E42 category and has two main dialects namely northern (*Ekerogoro*) and southern (*Ekemaate*) dialects though the northern dialect is the one used by most speakers. Just like any other African community, the *Abagusii* had their culture which they passed along through different genres of oral literature. The raw materials for the different branches of oral literature of the *Abagusii* community came from their environment, a proof that they valued their environment, thus ensuring that it was protected.

The Abatachoni, on the other hand, are mainly found in Bungoma and Kakamega Counties. They form one of the many ethnic communities of the larger Luhya tribe (Osogo, 1965). Their language is called *Olutachoni*. They have a rich culture especially in the matter of initiation of young members of the community into adulthood (Lwangale, 2016 & Lihraw, 2010). Their oral literature and language at large make use of features of the environment quite frequently.

Language transmits the culture of a given community. Olusola (2007) argues that language and culture are inseparable. Ameh (2002) states that culture is a pattern of behaviour and things that are inherited and shared in the community from one generation to another. How a community relates to the environment is one of the aspects of behaviour that culture transmits. Osore (2018) argues that culture is what identifies a community and it differs from one community to another. The most important element in culture is the language which the community members use to communicate with one another and express their feelings. Osore's ideas resonate well with UNESCO (2003) which asserts that the value of language does not only

lie in enabling communication but also carrying cultural knowledge of different communities. From this, it is evident that culture is important to every community and that language is the vehicle for conveying this culture.

Slovic (1999) states that environmental literature is evidenced in branches of literature and shows the relationship between man and his environment. One of these branches of literature that has a lot to do with the environment is oral literature. Meng (2006) proposes that all literary branches should critique and analyse environmental issues because they are pertinent to man's existence. Adugna (2014) points out that through branches and genres of oral literature, ideas about human environment, community value, world-views, beliefs and their roles in environment are manifested. Oral literature in its entirety explains life and gives guidance on how community members are supposed to co-exist and relate with their environment. It is a repository of cultural knowledge which guides human nature concerning their environment and lessons about the living. It is clear then that we cannot avoid to talk about the environment when we talk about the culture of a people.

This is because human beings depend on the environment for their livelihood and there is no way they would have avoided to come up with a language that talks about their environment.

### **Environmental Criticism Theory**

According to the Environmental Criticism Theory, community members can critique and analyse oral literature knowledge so as to better their life and develop positive attitudes towards their cultures in order to advance environmental conservation. Grewe-volpp (2016) says that although environment cannot speak, man gives it voice through literature. Keitany (2019) asserts that the main objective of most ecological works is to inform that there is need to contribute to environmental care and conservation. Therefore, literary and cultural scholars concentrate on issues about values, meaning, culture, language and their contribution towards conserving the environment. This study was concerned with the culture manifested in specific genres of oral literature in the Abagusii and Abatachoni communities which contribute to environmental conservation or destruction.

### **Rituals and Environmental Conservation**

According to Matei (2011), a ritual is a traditional ceremony that is performed by a community during a specific period of the year. Rituals serve at least three purposes namely transiting a person from one age-group to the next, instructing the initiates on their new roles in the new age-group and passing on the community's norms and values including its history. Initiation and funerary rites were singled to find out how these two affected the environment.

Among the *Abatachoni* and *Abagusii*, male members of the society undergo circumcision. The normal practice is that young males are circumcised (the age ranging from 12 years and above). Earlier on in the history of the two communities, it was reported that female members of the community also underwent this rite of passage (clitoridectomy). However, it has completely died out among the *Abatachoni* (Nakitare, 1991) whereas among the *Abagusii* only pockets of it (done illegally) could be reported. It is expected that all male members are circumcised before they attain the age of marriage. It is considered an abomination for one to marry before undergoing circumcision meaning that one can be circumcised at any age. This rite of passage is closely associated with the environment as it is heavily dependent on what nature provides for it to be successful.

The important aspects of the environment for the success of this ritual are rivers (or any watershed for provision of water) and the vegetation (mainly to provide medicinal herbs for the initiates). Much of this information was gathered through interviews as well as observation of a few incidents of the ritual.

Among the Abatachoni, circumcision is done during the early hours of the day (roughly before 8.00am). To help lessen the pain of the cut, initiates are escorted to a watershed where they are dipped into it so that the cold water numbs their bodies. It is after this that they are brought back to the point where the actual minor operation is carried out. Arising from this need for watersheds, the two communities protected and continue to protect their watersheds. Among the Abagusii, circumcision was done under the *mosocho* tree (singular) or *emesocho* trees (plural). These trees were protected and taken care of to the extent that places were designated for planting these trees and these places came to be known by the names of these trees. For instance, there are places called Mosocho and Nyamesocho. According to Nyang'era (1999), a tree called *ribuko* was used by Abagusii to construct shelters and a resting place where the initiates stayed while healing. Consequently, this community designated and preserved places where these plants grew and such a place came to be known as *Amabuko*. During seclusion, the initiates were given grass called *suguta* (among the Abagusii) to take care of it. It was not to dry until one heals. This was symbolic as it was a way of inducting the initiate on how to take care of the environment and how to become a responsible adult.

After the actual 'cut', the initiates went into seclusion to heal. Among the Abagusii, the period of healing was accompanied with induction on the roles of men and what the community expected of them. These teachings were called *ekeigoroigoro* and they were creatively given through the use of soil and plants. Their handlers constructed miniature huts using soil from the river bank and the boys were taught the kind of plants that grew well in such soils. They used thorns and cotton-fruits to decorate these miniature huts that carried deeper meanings. The thorns symbolised the challenges the boys would face in the community and the cotton signified that despite the challenges, there was hope. Thorny plants and cotton were thus preserved so as to be used during the annual circumcision rituals.

On their part, the *Abatachoni* hold a second and final ritual before graduating the initiates. This ritual is called *okhulicha* (an equivalent of the Christian baptism). This ceremony is still practiced to-date. It involves taking the initiates (after they are completely healed) to an identified place along the river bank (called *esitabicha*). The identified place must have a vast flat rock, water, palm trees, a swamp and certain wild animals (Lwangale 2016, Kakai 1995 & Nakitare 1991). All these are used during this ceremony to finally 'baptise' the initiates before letting them join the adult members of the community. Because of the importance of the mentioned features in the environment, the *Abatachoni* have set out on a mission to preserve them within their localities so that they continue using them for their traditional initiation rituals. This was evident from the interviews and was corroborated with actual visits made at some sites by the researchers under the guidance of the study participants (interviewees).

Another ritual that the *Abatachoni* practice and which demands use of things in the environment is performance of traditional burial. This applies to elderly men who die and choose to be buried traditionally (Nakitare, 1991).

In such a case, the corpse is wrapped in a fresh skin from a slaughtered bull. The grave is prepared using freshly cut logs and fresh grass. Again we see in this case that this community has to preserve the stated features found in the environment so as to be used in burying elderly men who choose the traditional form of being laid to rest. This aspect of the *Abatachoni* culture is also still alive to-date. Information concerning this ritual was recounted by participants in the study.

### **Totems and Environmental Conservation**

A totem is a creature that a community, a clan or a tribe uses as an emblem and identifies with and it is taboo to kill them because the respective community believes that the creature protects them (as observed by the respondents) and in turn they protect the creature against any danger or harm.

Every *Abagusii* clan had an animal they identified with because they believed that the animal had some mystical power because it helped and protected them when they faced dangerous situations. They believed that killing that animal was equivalent to interfering with development or the next generation of the respective clan. As a result of this, they preserved the ecological niche of those animals and preserved the animals by not killing them. The *Abagusii* have five clans and each clan had their own totem. These animals were found within their environment and they saved them when the people realised that they were endangered such as when the community was conducting hunting, gathering of fruits and vegetables in the forests.

The *Bobasi* clan identified with the zebra. According to the clan's oral narratives, one time the founder of this clan went hunting in the forest and was surrounded by enemies during the hunting. Seeing this, the zebra attacked the enemies and thus the founder was saved. Thereafter the clan members identified with this animal and whoever killed a zebra or destroyed its habitat was severely punished as he was deemed an enemy who was hell-bent on endangering the *Bobasi* clan.

The second clan is the *Abasweta* clan and is made up of five sub-clans: *Abaguche*, *Abagetutu*, *Abamachoge*, *Abatondo* and *Abanyaribari*. They identified with the baboon because it is believed the animal was able to save them from disasters. For this reason, this clan protected the natural habitat of baboons.

*Bogirango* is the third clan which identified itself with the leopard as it is believed that this animal protected them against their enemies when they were hunting in forests. The fourth clan is the *Abanchari* and it identified with the hippopotamus. This clan inevitably valued and protected rivers which were the habitats of the hippos. The clan believed that this animal protected them against death when they were out hunting and fishing in their rivers. The last clan is *Bogisero* and it identified with the elephant.

From this discussion, it is evident that the *Abagusii* community preserved their environment which was the habitat of their totems because they believed that the death of the animals they identified with and prided in would affect the community negatively.

The *Abatachoni* also have totems that they commonly use. These totems are drawn from the environment showing this community's great affinity for the environment. The following totem from this community is awash with features of the environment.

<i>Wanekoye</i>	(men of papyrus reeds)
<i>Wanamnaba</i>	(those who make fishing baskets)
<i>Wamakwena</i>	(men who are friends of crocodiles)
<i>Wawelalo</i>	
<i>Wakhasolokho</i>	
<i>Wemaabo</i>	(the courageous ones)
<i>Wenachilinda</i>	(those who protect themselves against enemies)

In this totem, the community prides that it is made up of men who practice fishing and as such who can interact freely with crocodiles without this animal hurting them. This is not just a mere totem but members of this community go ahead and protect wetlands from where they practice fishing as a source of food. In this excerpt, the crocodile is the totem. It was thus forbidden to kill this animal as well as destroy wetlands, which are its habitat. The same wetlands with the papyrus reeds were protected so as to continue serving the community as a source of their food (fish).

Apart from this, *Abatachoni* fondly refer to themselves as *abana be likhanga*/children of the guinea fowl. As a result, they are not allowed to consume guinea fowl meat thereby preserving it.

### **Riddles and Environmental Conservation**

Mulokozi (2017) defines riddles as sayings with a puzzle; it is a question that is posed to the audience in order for the audience to provide a relevant response. The puzzle in the riddle is known to the community and more often contains important teachings and makes them think. It is an art that expects a person to identify, relate and compare different things found in the environment. The *Abagusii* have riddles whose puzzles are gotten from the environment with the aim of teaching the target audience who are mainly children about things, creatures, and plants found in their environment and the importance of preserving those things so as to benefit subsequent generations. There were riddles whose responses were animals, plants and the earth's appearance as follows:

### **Riddles with Animal Puzzles**

The following riddles were collected from the resource persons and are analysed together because they make recourse to animals. They are meant to transmit to young members of the community knowledge of various types of animals found in the environment. Note that every riddle uses an activity or behaviour in the human realm. In this case then the community's worldview is that activities and behaviour of animals are quite close to those of human beings. Such an association is meant to forge a positive relationship between human beings and animals in the environment. Once this positive relationship gets cemented on the human mind, efforts will be made to preserve the animals.

Riddle: *Abana bakoragera marara*/Children are eating while asleep.

Answer/*Ogotogora: Amage y'echinyoni*/Baby birds.

Riddle: *Asika esikati*/Asika in a skirt.

Answer *Ogotogora: Ribururu*/Grasshopper.

Riddle: *Chochi nyakemini ekare ekerubo*/The short-tailed Joji in the plains.

Answer/*Ogotogora: Egioto*/Frog.

Riddle: *Ebundi ekarara*/The artisan is asleep.

Answer/*Ogotogora: Oronyambobe*/Spider.

Riddle: *Etera abwo nainche ing'etere aa toboyie magokoro*/Go that way and me this way we cloth our grandmother.

Answer/*Ogotogora: Chindigi*/Cockroach.

Riddle: *Inkoagacha enyomba namenya inkong'anya natiga yasie*/I build a house, I stay inside and when I move I leave it open.

Answer/*Ogotogora: Eguto*/Mole.

Riddle: *Sinsi ndwani*/Sinsi likes wrestling.

Answer/*Ogotogora: Ensona*/Maggot.

Riddle: *Sindake ko imoyio ensagarara*/A needle that resembles a knife

Answer/*Ogotogora: Ensagara*/Lizard.

Riddle: *Niche 'nkona gokwania abageni*/I greet visitors/guests all the time.

Answer/*Ogotogora: Ingi*/A fly.

These riddles are used to educate the *Abagusii*, especially children, about different animals and insects found in their environment. During the riddle activities, they teach the benefits of those animals and the destruction of some animals and insects and how to protect themselves and their environment against those that are destructive. Apart from riddles that use animals and insects, there are also those that use plants.

### **Riddles with Plant Puzzles**

Riddles in this category were supplied by the research participants and related to edible plants. Once more they relate the characteristics of the edible plants to human behaviour. The purpose is to cultivate a close link between the two hence show how people are dependent on the environment and thus the need to preserve it.

Riddle: *Akagenda egasi getirianda oiranire nechianza*/He went to work naked, he returned dressed.

Answer: *Ogotogora: Ebando/Risiogore egosimeka yamera*/Germinating maize.

Riddle: *Ekeru inkoragera omwonwa nigo ogotoratora*/My mouth gets hurt every time I eat.

Answer: *Ogotogora: Eyarare*/Pepper.

Riddle: *Omomg'ina obwate ebiseero ebinge korende abana baye bakorara nse, risosa*/My mother has many hides/animal skins but her children sleep on bare floor.

Answer: *Ogotogora: Risosa* Answer/Pumpkin leaves.

Riddle: *Chierusa mosanonoku*/Sweet Jerusha.

Answer: *Ogotogora: Ritoke*/Ripe banana.

Riddle: *Tata ogure n'egoti*/My father dressed in a coat has fallen down.

Answer: *Ogotogora: Ritoke*/Banana.

Riddle: *Abana bakoiborwa nechianza*/Babies who are born with clothes.

Answer: *Ogotogora: Ebando*/Maize.

Through the plant riddle puzzles, the community learnt about different plants, the edible and non-edible ones, how to preserve the edible ones and conserve the environment where they grew or could be grown.

### **Riddles with Puzzles Situated within the Environment**

The following category of riddles is drawn from the wider environment. It means the *Abagusii* are firmly aware of the wider world that surrounds them and how this world affects them. The sheer knowledge of the environment and how it impacts on the people makes the community to learn how to interact with it so that it does not harm them. Instead members of the community should endeavour to benefit from it.

*Abana bane babere bakora emeremo buya ko tibanya goikana ang'e/My two children work together but they have never met and also chisani ibere chireng'aine* meaning two similar plates and the answers to these riddles are the earth and the sky. The answer in *Ekegusii* is *inse na igoro*.

Riddle: *Abusa risiko nyamagoro matambe ingochare/Sweep the yard because a long-legged visitor is coming.*

Answer: *Ogotogora: Embura/Rain.*

Riddle: *Abagaka baikaransete abamura bagotara/The elders are sitted whereas the youth are walking.*

Answer: *Ogotogora: Amagen aroche n'amache/unmoving boulders in the river and the flowing water.*

Riddle: *Ogokwa naende oboka omotienyi/He dies and ressurects.*

Answer: *Ogotogora: Omotienyi/the moon.*

These riddles educated the *Abagusii* community about the weather surrounding them and also the situations surrounding them and their significance.

### **Environmental Destruction Activities**

These two communities indeed show efforts meant to conserve the environment but they also had practices that led to environmental destruction which has been felt to date. One of the economic activities of the *Abagusii* was farming meaning land was very important. Omosa (?) explains that arable land among the *Abagusii* was divided into three: *Egeticha* where subsistence farming was done by a mother and her children, *emonga* where the father would cultivate crops to be used by the family and *enderemo* which was land that was used for cultivation after cutting and clearing bushes. *Enderemo* led to environmental degradation since clearing it involved cutting the bushes and through that animals, insects and plants would be destroyed. Through this practice most indigenous plants, grass and trees have been extinct.

Some of the songs collected had features of environmental destruction (Nyamwaka, 2000). The following song sung by the *Abagusii* during hunting obviously served to encourage environmental destruction.

Chorus

*Iya iyaa iyaaa*

*iya*

*Iya iyaa iyaaa*

*iyaa iyaa iya*

1. *Mosiori akanyebeta x2* Mosiori trapped an animal
2. *Onchong'a akayenonta x2* Onchong'a drew blood from an animal

3. *Mochache akayesora x2* Mochache prepared the drawn blood so that it could be eaten
4. *Nkominyonka nkoruria x2* We went running to go and hunt ( wild animals)
5. *Ing'o twarenge nere? X2* Whom were we with?
6. *Otwori na Kebari x2* We were with Otwori and Kebari

In this song, the participants in the hunting mission encourage one another as they hunt, trap an animal, talk of drawing fresh blood from a live animal and prepare it to be consumed as a meal. The song also calls for cooperation from other people so as to make the hunting successful. It is evidently clear from this song that some of the folklore encouraged environmental destruction.

In other cases, songs to accompany activities such as funeral rituals, circumcision rituals and others do not necessarily contain information on the environment directly but as they are performed, participants cause harm to the environment by breaking branches from nearby trees to be used while chanting the songs to lighten the mood of the ritual. This was evident from the actual performances that were observed in the research.

### Conclusion

It is evident from the foregone discussion that the Abagusii and Abatachoni communities of Kenya are acutely aware of their environment. This is captured in their traditional folklore. Through these cultural practices, they encouraged environmental protection practices with a view to continuing to reap benefits from the same. However, and somewhat paradoxically, they again encouraged environmental destruction through the same cultural practices. With the passage of time, the situation may not remain the same especially as a result of population pressure on the environment demanding that the communities exploit the environment fully for food and other material gain.

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## Vowel Harmony in English Borrowed Words in Ng'aturukana

1Tioko Celestine Nkieny, 2Henry Simiyu Nandelenga, 3Joshua Mulinge Itumo  
1Kenyatta University, 2Kibabii University, 3Kenyatta University

### Abstract

Language contact is one of the primary motivating factors contributing to the massive borrowing of words in many mother languages in Kenya. English is an official and the language of the classroom in Kenya. From these contexts, Ng'aturukana, a language spoken by the Turkana people of North Western Kenya, gets into contact with English culture through trade, education, health among other fields. Because Turkana culture has few native terminology for most modern objects encountered today, Ng'aturukana resorts to borrowing words from other languages among them English. As a consequence, the borrowed words have to be nativised into Ng'aturukana. The question raised is, how is vowel harmony, a process that is evident in Ng'aturukana words, manifested in the adapted words? Vowel Harmony (VH) is a special type of assimilation where vowels in the respective syllables or roots agree in terms of tongue root so that all belong to a harmonic set; Advanced Tongue Root [+ATR] or Retracted Tongue Root [-ATR]. Ng'aturukana is heavily characterised by ATR, English is not ATR specific. To answer the posited question, data was primarily drawn from native radio stations interviews broadcasting in Ng'aturukana. The researcher also being a native speaker elicited some words which were validated by another native speaker. Both singular and plural forms of the adapted words were used. To phonetically account for ATR, native speakers were asked to pronounce the borrowed words. All articulations were recorded, transcribed and glosses given. Optimality theory was used to analyse the data. From the analyses, this paper reports three outcomes of VH in the borrowed words; one, regressive sharing of ATR was observed in situations where the root or suffixes ATR was stronger than the preceding root vowels. Secondly, both progressive and regressive ATR sharing simultaneously occurs in situations where the root ATR was stronger than the preceding and following roots vowels. Lastly, some words manifested an opaque form of ATR where regressive ATR was blocked from spreading to the preceding vowels.

Language Contact, Ng'aturukana, Borrowing, Vowel Harmony, Alignment

### Introduction

This paper examined Vowel Harmony (VH) as an unmarked morphophonological process in English loanwords in Ng'aturukana. Borrowing of terminology is linguistically necessitated by a lack of adequate terminology for new objects in the borrowing language vocabulary, especially in a contact situation (Mwaniki, 2013). Due to this behavior, English has been identified as one of the leading contributors of vocabulary in Ng'aturukana language.

Borrowing of words is not a haphazard phenomenon because new words from a source language would partially or fully conform to the structure of the borrowing language. Conformity occurs in the form of adaptation processes, especially morphological and phonological. Furthermore, some processes tend to be both morphological and phonological hence morphophonological. Besides, some processes tend to be natural (unmarked) in one language and marked in another. Unmarked processes are prevalent and unavoidable in a language thus mostly realized in any language.



## Opaque Vowels

Opaque vowels are vowels that prevent or block ATR sharing in a word (Noske, 2000; Barasa, 2018). In Ng'aturukana, this phenomenon is often regressive. Opaque vowels resistance to ATR sharing was observed in two forms of interaction in the plural marking of the loanwords investigated: One, cases where [+high] vowels are followed by [mid-high, +ATR] vowels as in data set 1 (i)- (iii) below), and two, in cases where a [+low] vowel /a/, is followed or preceded by [+ATR] vowels as in (iv) and (v) in data 1 below. Traditionally, /a/ vowel is [-ATR] distinct in the Teso-Turkana group of languages. It lacks the [+ATR] counterpart (Dimmendaal, 1983; Noske, 2000; Barasa, 2017, 2018).

### Sample Data

1) BW. Sing	gloss	BW. Pl	gloss
i) {εtɔɔɔ}	'torch	{ηɪtɔɔɪ-o}	'torches'
ii) {a-bukɔ}	'book'	{ηa-bukɪ-o}	'books'
iii) {ε-bɔɔɔ}	'ball'	{ηɪ-bɔɔɪ-o}	'balls'
iv) {a-sɔla}	'solar'	{ηa-sɔla-i}	'solars'
v) {a-rula}	'ruler'	{ηa-rula-i}	'rulers'

Suffix {o}, for instance, in (i)- (iii) is morphophonologically a [+ATR] mid vowel suffix. For this reason, its [ATR] only affects the mid open vowels by raising them to mid high vowels but not the [+High] vowels deducible in the data above. Morphophonologically, [±ATR] mid suffixes do not affect the preceding [+high] vowels in Ng'aturukana. [+High] vowels occurring before a [+ATR] mid vowels are opaque to regressive assimilation of ATR features (Noske, 2000; Barasa, 2018). Suffix {o} is, therefore, affixed to the right of the ultimate roots above {-ɔɔ}, {-kɔ} and {-lɔ} respectively. The nuclei in the roots {-kɔ} and {-lɔ} first of all, change to {ɪ} before adding the suffix {o} according to Ng'aturukana specifications. Constructions such as {ɔ-o} and {ɔ-o} hardly occur morphophonologically in the noun group of Ng'aturukana. Voicing also changed when suffixation of {-o} took place in the above examples. Phonologically also, a devoiced vowel becomes voiced when another structure is added after it in Ng'aturukana because voicing is the unmarked state of vowels as sonorants.

The suffixation of all the examples above can be accounted for in OT.

Because [ATR] was paramount in the data, we propose *\*HI/RTR* that militates against the change of a [-ATR] high root vowel to [+ATR] when followed by a [+ATR] mid vowel suffix {-o} (Noske, 2000). To explain the alignments of suffixes affecting Ng'aturukana concrete nouns when inflected for number, ALIGN [AFFIX] R, PrWd, R constraint is proposed. The respective Grammatical Gender (GG) of the nouns is also catered through prefixation of the alternate plurative GG prefixes, {ηɪ}/ {ηa} respectively. In that case, the ALIGN [AFFIX] L, PrWd, L is proposed. These ALIGN constraints are, however, general in the sense that 'affixes' are varying in number in Ng'aturukana. This study replaced 'affixes' with actual morphemes that occupy certain positions for specific morphological functions; GG or number marking. In that respect, ALIGN [o] R is proposed for the suffix plural marker while ALIGN [ηɪ] L or ALIGN [ηa] L are used interchangeably when respective Masc. GG Pl or Fem.GG Pl prefixes are noted.

A morphophonological issue also occurring in the data set above was to do with the ATR values in the other vowels. IDENT<sub>ROOT</sub> [ATR] that blocks any ATR changes of the root vowels in the

outputs is proposed. In addition, IDENT<sub>[ATR]</sub> (Do not change the ATR feature) that accounts for the possible [ATR] is also invoked.

The proposed ranking of the above constraints is \*HI/RTR >> ALIGN [o] R, ALIGN [ŋɪ] >> IDENT<sub>ROOT [ATR]</sub> >> IDENT<sub>[ATR]</sub>. For example, a constraint interaction of the Input-Output (IO) mapping of entity (a) [ɛ-tɔci] - [ŋɪ-tɔci-o] 'torches' above is analysed as shown in the tableau below.

**Tableau 1: [ɛ-tɔci] + [o] —————> [ŋɪ-tɔci-o] 'torches'**

{ɛtɔci} + {o}	*HI/RTR	ALIGN [o], R	ALIGN [ŋɪ] L	IDENT <sub>ROOT[ATR]</sub>	IDENT <sub>[ATR]</sub>
a.{ɛtocio}	*!		*	**	***
b.☞{ŋɪtɔci-o}					
c.{ɛtɔci-o}			*!		
d.{ŋɪtocio}	*!			*	*

Candidate (b) is the optimal candidate. It satisfies the conditions set by the high ranked markedness phonological constraint; \*HI/RTR as well as the morphological GA, ALIGN [o] R, PrWd, R and ALIGN [ŋɪ] L, PrWd, L. It also satisfies the conditions of the IDENT<sub>ROOT [ATR]</sub> constraint. The candidate also obeys the requirements of IDENT-IO<sub>[ATR]</sub>. As such, the [-ATR] high vowel /ɪ/ is opaque to the leftward propagation of [+ATR] harmony from a [+ATR] mid vowel /o/. Besides, all the other vowels resist assimilation of the ATR features because it is blocked by the penultimate root vowel /ɪ/.

Candidate (a) is the most disharmonic in the tableau. This candidate did not only violate the prohibited \*HI/RTR constraint but also ALIGN [ŋɪ] L and IDENT<sub>ROOT [ATR]</sub>. These three constraints are the high ranked in Ng'aturukana, hence, all the violations incurred are fatal.

Candidate (c) is also declared suboptimal because it fails to align the required affix {ŋɪ} leftward of the prosodic word. Because the noun for the gloss 'torch' is a countable concrete noun in Ng'aturukana, the satisfaction of ALIGN [ŋɪ] L constraint is mandatory. Similarly, candidate (d) is disharmonic. It also violates the high ranked \*HI/RTR and IDENT<sub>ROOT [ATR]</sub> both of which are crucial constraints.

### Regressive ATR Sharing

Regressive ATR, the leftward sharing of ATR occurred in situations where the root or suffixes ATR are stronger than the preceding root vowels. Root [ATR] regressive sharing was specifically observed in GG prefixation of the loanwords while Regressive suffix ATR affected the preceding root' (s) vowels.

GG prefixation in particular reveals an agreement of ATR features between and among prefix vowels, medial syl/roots and the ultimate roots in all borrowed noun words in Ng'aturukana. GG marker vowel is aligned to the initial (left side) position of the input form in the output. Consequently, the

surface form of this morpheme must agree with the vowels occurring in the root in terms of the [ATR] feature specification. The following samples exemplify the above postulations. The output forms in these samples feature two forms, the UR & the SR. The data presented below traces the source of ATR harmony forms seen in the optimal output form.

**Table 2: Sample Data on VH**

Input (English)	Gloss	Output (Ng'aturukana)		Gloss
		UR- Input	SR- Output	
a) /vest/	'vest'	[epesɪt]	[ɛpɛsɪt]	'vest'
b) /redʒɪstə/	'register'	[arɛ̃ʝɛsɛ̃tə]	[arɛ̃ʝɛsɛ̃tə]	'register'
c) /glæs/	'glass'	[egɪlas]	[ɛgɪlas]	'glass'
d) /dɪɡri/	'degree'	[edɪɡɪri]	[ɛdɪɡɪri]	'degree'
e) /ləʊn/	'loan'	[e.lɔ.ɔ̃n]	[ɛ.lɔ.ɔ̃n]	'loan'

From the data set in table 2 above, the masculine gender marking prefix has two variants, /e/ and /ɛ/. While the feminine gender prefix is /a/. The feminine prefix, /a/ is deliberately ignored here because it is phonetically [-ATR] in Ng'aturukana. It lacks its counterpart for [+ATR] (Noske, 2000). The variations in the masculine prefix; /e/ and /ɛ/ are as a result of the following root's vowel ATR harmony; if the following root vowel is [+ATR], the preceding prefix form also becomes [+ATR] and vice versa.

Noske (2000) argues in favour of the above phenomena that the prefixes in the input forms are unspecified for [ATR] feature value. Phonologically, acquisition of [ATR] value occurs through vowel harmony from a following root or invariant suffix form. Barasa (2018) also argues that [ATR] sharing involving number and GG affixes can only be regressive and not progressive. This supports the view as to why the prefix vowels or the root vowels do not share the ATR features with the neighbouring syllable/root on the right. This view is, however, limited and untrue when a weak [ATR] suffix vowel or a mid-high [+ATR] high vowels appears after a [+ATR] strong roots or high vowels.

Using the example for 'loan' /e.lɔ.ɔ̃n/-[ɛ.lɔ.ɔ̃n] and 'degree' [edɪɡɪri]- [ɛdɪɡɪri] for instance, Ng'aturukana's output prefix forms differ in the UR & the SR respectively. Both ultimate roots {-ri-} and {-lɔ-} contain vowels /i/ and /ɔ/ that are [+ATR] and [-ATR]. If epenthetic GG vowels /e/ would be adapted without assimilation, for example, the outputs would be incorrect when borrowed. Other than the GG vowels, other vowels preceding the ultimate roots must likewise assimilate for the feature ATR.

Based on the data presented, it is notable that all the UR forms of the two outputs are erroneous because their [ATRs] are not completely shared. On the other hand, SR ones are correct because the ATR feature was shared regressively by the ultimate root. Because Walker (2011) and Kramer (2012) support the argument that VH systems demand a high ranking faithfulness constraint to be identified and marked to a prominent position, the faithfulness IDENT<sub>ROOT</sub>[ATR] is proposed. Although this is the case, the alignment constraint; ALIGN [+ATR] L ought to be proposed and must rank higher than the faithfulness constraint to account why unspecified prefixes agree with the following root in [ATR]. Additionally, IDENT-IO<sub>[ATR]</sub> which requires that ATR specifications of all the vowels are maintained is preferred to account for

ATR feature changes undergone by the different vowels. For example, the loanwords; 'loan' and 'degree' in table 1.0 above are favoured by the following constraint ranking hierarchy in Ng'aturukana;

[ε.ɓ.ɔ̃n] -ALIGN [-ATR] L >> IDENT<sub>ROOT</sub> [ATR] >> IDENT-IO<sub>[ATR]</sub>

[edigiri] - ALIGN [+ATR] L >> IDENT<sub>ROOT</sub> [ATR] >> IDENT-IO<sub>[ATR]</sub>

Their respective tableaux are drawn below;

**Tableau 3: [-ATR] Harmony; [e+ ɓɔ̃n] → [εɓɔ̃n] 'loan'**  
 [Unsp] [+ATR] [ATR identical]

[Unsp] [-ATR] /e/ + ɓɔ̃n	ALIGN[-ATR] L	IDENT ROOT [ATR]	IDENT- IO[ATR]
a. [e. loon]	*!	*	***
b. [ε.ɓ.ɔ̃n]			*
c. [ε.lo.on]	*!	*	**
d. [e.ɓ.on]	*!	*	*

**Tableau 4: [+ATR] Harmony [e- dɪgiri] → [edigiri] 'degree'**  
 [Unsp] [+ATR] [ATR identical]

[Unsp] [+ATR] /e/ dɪgiri]	ALIGN [+ATR] L	IDENT <sub>ROOT</sub> [ATR]	IDENT- IO[ATR]
a. [e-dɪ.giri]	*!*		
b. [e.di.gi.ri]			***
c. [ε.di.gi.ri]	*!		***
d. [ε.dɪ.giri]	*!	*	**

Comparatively, the optimal candidates in the tableau 3 and 4 above are candidates (b). These candidates, first of all, ALIGN [-ATR] L and ALIGN [+ATR] L constraints. As such, they are observed to apply regressive harmony to not only the GG vowels but also other vowels of the roots preceding the ultimate. These candidates, moreover, satisfy the high ranked IDENT<sub>ROOT</sub> [ATR] constraint that is [ATR] conditioning. To satisfy the high ranked constraints, the same optimal candidates (b) incur violations of the low ranked IDENT<sub>[ATR]</sub> faithfulness constraint.

On the other hand, candidates (a), (c) and (d) in each of the tableau (3 and 4) are ruled out, therefore, suboptimal. Candidate (a) of tableau 3 violates all the high ranked and low ranked constraints while candidate (a) of tableau 4 violates ALIGN [+ATR] L undominated constraint. [ε.lo.on] (c) of 3 similarly violates the two high ranked; ALIGN [-ATR] L and IDENT<sub>ROOT</sub> [ATR] constraints, and the low ranked constraints; IDENT<sub>[ATR]</sub>. It is thus suboptimal because it violates the high ranked constraints.

[e.di.gi.ri], (c) of tableau 4 is also suboptimal. This candidate violates the undominated, ALIGN [+ATR] L. Both candidates (d) of 3 and 4 fail to align ATR features regressively by violating

ALIGN [-ATR] L and ALIGN [+ATR] L constraints respectively. Furthermore, they violate the demands of IDENT<sub>ROOT</sub> [ATR], more so, IDENT [ATR] left. ATR is a crucial phenomenon in Ng'aturukana, both candidates (a) and (c) in both tableau are penalised. None of them keeps to the requirements of ATR.

### Regressive ATR sharing in suffixes

2)	Input	gloss	Output	gloss
i)	[arɛdɔ]	'radio'	[ɲa-redɔ-i]	'radios'
ii)	[ɛpɪɔ]	'pillow'	[ɲi-pilo-i]	'pillows'
iii)	[ɛ-ɣabeɟi]	'cabbage'	[ɲɪ-ɣabeɟ -o]	'cabbages'
iv)	[abasɪkelɪ]	'bicycle'	[ɲabasɪkelɪ-o]	'bicycles'
v)	[a-tarakɪta]	'tractor'	[ɲa-tarakɪta-i]	'tractors'
vi)	[ɛ-gɪɲa]	'gear'	[ɲɪ-gɪɲa-i]	'gears'

Contrary to the phenomenon in (a) above, the suffixes here are [+ATR], therefore, triggering the leftward sharing of [+ATR]. The preceding vowels; high or mid-high vowels followed by a [ATR] /i/ vowel suffix (i & ii) and [+mid] vowels followed by a {+mid-high} vowel suffix /o/ (iii-iv) except for cases where the [+ATR] opaque vowel /a/ occurs (v & vi), all surface as [+ATR] in the outputs.

Using example (ii) in the data set above, for instance, the correct plural form is constrained by the high ranked IDENT-IO SUFFIX [ATR] (IDENT<sub>SUFFIX</sub> [ATR]) constraint that penalises the change of ATR in the suffix (Noske, 2000). Noske postulates that some [+ATR] phonologically privileged suffixes resist the progressive [-ATR] sharing when they are [+ATR] specified. Instead, such vowels share their features regressively to the preceding [-ATR roots]. Ng'aturukana's suffix /i/ is characteristically a [+ATR] strong suffix.

In view of the above observation, suffix /i/ ATR features outdo the root vowels ATR features. By behaving so, suffix /i/ ATR features must, therefore, be shared leftward such that all the vowels of the preceding roots are [+ATR]. This harmony is achieved due to the presence of ALIGN [+ATR] L.

Note that the vowels of all the roots now exist as [+ATR] as opposed to the input's [-ATR] ones. We suppose that the same suffix /i/ is contextually (position) advantaged just like the other ordinarily high markedness ALIGN [+ATR] L constraints. The margins of the plural form {ɲi-pilo-i} 'pillows' indicated by the left and right hyphenated morphemes are realized through ALIGN constraints; ALIGN [ɲi] L and ALIGN [i]. These align constraints rank lower than the two established ATR constraints in Ng'aturukana. There is, therefore, no root privileged harmony in the form of positional faithfulness (Beckman, 2004, 2013; Nandelenga, 2013).

The violable and low ranked faithfulness constraint proposed is; IDENT<sub>ROOT</sub> [ATR]. This constraint naturally bars any ATR changes that affect the root.

The constraints so far mentioned are ranked in the order of: IDENT<sub>[SUFFIX] [ATR]</sub>, ALIGN [+ATR] L >> ALIGN [ɲi] L, ALIGN [i] R >> IDENT<sub>ROOT</sub> [ATR]. The tableau below shows how the optimal candidate was assessed.

**Tableau 4:** [ɛ-pɪɔ] 'pillow' + [i] —————> [ɲi-pilo-i] 'Pillows'

[-ATR] [+ATR] [ε-pɪɓ-i] + /i/	IDENT SUFFIX [ATR]	ALIGN [+ATR] L	ALIGN [i] R	ALIGN [ɲi] L	IDENT <sub>R</sub> OOT [ATR]
a). <sup>MF</sup> [ɲi-pɪɓ-i]					**
b. [ɲɪ-pɪɓ-i]	*!	**			
c. [ε-pɪɓ-i]		*!		*	
d. [ɲɪ-pɪɓ-i]		*!*			

Candidate (b) is the most disharmonic candidate from the 4. This candidate violates the two high ranked constraints: IDENT<sub>SUFFIX [ATR]</sub> and ALIGN [+ATR] L. As such, the candidate considers its penultimate root [-ATR] as ranking higher than the suffix /i/ [+ATR]. From its view, the [-ATR] feature is shared rightward instead of leftward (regressive). This, however, is an erroneous scenario as the suffix /i/ [+ATR] feature ranks higher than the roots' [-ATR]. The suffix [+ATR] should have been observed and more so, shared regressively. By violating the two constraints, the candidate is disqualified.

Candidate (c) is also suboptimal. This candidate portends a case whereby all vowels of the roots surface as [-ATR] while the suffix vowel is [+ATR]. What is occurring here, however, is untypical of Ng'aturukana vowels because there is no ATR harmony. The suffix /i/ which is [+ATR] does not trigger harmony. In addition, the candidate also fails to align the plural masc. GG prefix /ɲi/ to the base of this candidate. The candidate retains the singular Masc. GG prefix /ε/. The loanword for 'pillow' in Ng'aturukana specifications is countable hence requires /ɲi/ in plural. Because of these disharmonic traits, the candidate is declared suboptimal.

Candidate (d) is also disharmonic. It violates the constraint, ALIGN [+ATR] L that requires ATR features to be assimilated regressively by the preceding roots vowels. This candidate's penultimate root vowel behaves as if it is opaque but in actual sense, it is not. The only opaque vowels are; +low vowel /a/ and a high vowel preceding a [+ATR] mid high vowel (Noske, 2000). By resisting regressive assimilation then the candidate is eliminated.

The only remaining candidate so far is candidate (a). This candidate is granted the winning rights by the virtue of satisfying all the undominated constraints. Despite it violating the lowly ranked constraint, IDENT<sub>ROOT [ATR]</sub> it is optimal. The consequences of violating these two constraints are less serious and do not lead to the disqualification of any candidate. These violations are, however, necessary if any lexical item has to fully fit in the borrowing language morphophonology.

### Bidirectional [ATR] Sharing

Both progressive and regressive ATR sharing simultaneously (bidirectional) occur in situations where the root ATR was stronger than the preceding and following roots vowels in the loanwords collected. Consider the sample data set 3 below.

**3)    Input            Gloss                                    Output                    gloss**

- |      |                             |                            |
|------|-----------------------------|----------------------------|
| i)   | [ε-ni.pɔm] ‘uniform’ +/o/   | [ŋɪ-ni.pɔm.i-ɔ] ‘uniform’  |
| ii)  | [ε-la.m] ‘line’ + /o/       | [ŋɪ-la.i.ni-ɔ] ‘line’      |
| iii) | [a-sa.lɔn] ‘salon’ + /o/    | [ŋa-sa.lɔn.i-ɔ] ‘salon’    |
| iv)  | [a-ka.ntɪn] ‘canteen’ + /o/ | [ŋa-ka.ntɪn.i-ɔ] ‘canteen’ |

Data set 3 above indicates a simultaneous assimilation of ATR features from a central root to the neighbouring roots. As such, the root ATR feature is stronger than that of the suffix {-o} and the other preceding roots. Seemingly, the roots vowels align their [ATR] rightward and leftward at the same time; the ATR harmony is bidirectional. As a consequence of this assimilation, suffix {o} changes to {ɔ}. The former is [+ATR] while the latter is [-ATR]. Note that none of the above examples features {o} suffix but rather {ɔ}. The vowels of the other preceding roots must also resemble the penultimate root in ATR. Insertion of vowel /ɪ/ before the suffix is phonologically determined for [-ATR] harmony.

In OT, an English word like [laɪn] 'line' morphologically structures as [ε-la.m] 'line' and {ŋɪ-la.i.ni-ɔ} 'lines' in the singular and plural forms respectively in Ng'aturukana. We will consider the singular (Sg.) as our input here and the plural as the output. The plural loan form [ŋɪ-la.i.ni-ɔ] 'lines' surfaces because of the conditions set by the constraints; ALIGN [o] R, PrWd, R that introduces /o/ suffix and ALIGN [ŋɪ] L that aligns the Masc.pl GG. Premier to these constraints are the: ALIGN [-ATR] R that facilitates the phonemic change of vowel /o/ to /ɔ/, ALIGN [-ATR], L that structures all the preceding vowels as [-ATR], \*LO/ATR which blocks the [ATR] in [+low] vowels, and IDENT-IO<sub>ROOT</sub> [ATR] that prohibits the change of the ATR features in the penultimate root. The [ATR] of the root of the word in question is the one controlling the phonological adjustments of the ATR harmony observed in the optimal output. This is an instance of the root controlled ATR harmony in Ng'aturukana. IDENT<sub>[ATR]</sub> is violated to fix the vowel ATR harmony in the penultimate root and the aligned suffix.

The constraints explained above are ranked in the order of; ALIGN [-ATR] R, ALIGN [-ATR] R, \*LO/ATR >>ALIGN [o] R, ALIGN [ŋɪ] L>> IDENT<sub>ROOT</sub> [ATR] >>IDENT-IO<sub>[ATR]</sub>. The interaction of these constraints is shown in the tableau below.

**Tableau 4: [ε-la.m] 'line' + /o/ → [ŋɪ-la.i.ni-ɔ] 'lines'**

[ε-la.m] +{o}	ALIGN [-ATR] R,	ALIGN [-ATR] L	*LO/ATR	ALIGN [o] R,	ALIGN [ŋɪ] L,	IDENT <sub>ROOT</sub> [ATR]	IDENT-IO <sub>[ATR]</sub>
a). {ŋɪ-la.i.ni-ɔ}							*
b). {ŋɪ-la.i.ni-o}	*!	*					
c). {ŋɪ-la.i.n}		*!		*			
d). {ŋɪ-la.i.ni.o}	*!		*		*	***	****

The tableau above present candidate (d) as the most disharmonic. Of the six high ranked constraints, this candidate has only satisfied the requirement of two constraints but violates the rest. The other candidate eliminated is candidate (b). It violates the requirement of the high ranked, ALIGN [-ATR] R and ALIGN [-ATR] L. Just like (d), (b) violates the low ranked IDENT-

IO<sub>[ATR]</sub>. It is, however, punished based on the lack of fit with the high ranked constraints. Candidate (c) has an anomaly too. It is not featuring the proper marking of Ng'aturukana's concrete noun plural marking and proper [ATR] alignment. By not keeping to the demands of ALIGN suffix {o} right, it is misaligned and eliminated. Candidate (a) eventually remains as the only candidate that satisfies the demands of the high ranked constraints. On the other hand, this candidate violates the demands of the low ranked IDENT-IO<sub>[ATR]</sub>. However, these violations had to occur in order to modify the structure of the SL loanword so as to fit to be Ng'aturukana word. This candidate is selected on the principle of minimal violations.

## Conclusions

Loanwords in both singular and plural forms inherently observe [ATR] harmony when borrowed into Ng'aturukana. Similar to Ng'aturukana's native words vowel harmony modifications and marking, the data on the loanwords investigated in this study showed a tripartite form of vowel harmony. First, words which contained a [+low, back] vowel /a/ manifested an opaque form of [ATR] where regressive ATR was blocked from spreading to the preceding vowels. Second, regressive sharing of ATR was observed in situations where the root or suffixes ATR was stronger than the preceding root vowels. Third, both progressive and regressive ATR sharing simultaneously occur in situations where the root ATR was stronger than the preceding and following roots vowels.

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### Appendix

S/N o	Ng'aturukana Singular Loanword		Ng'aturukana Plural Loanword	Plural gloss
	Transcription	Gloss	Transcription	
1	[araba]	'rubber'	[ɲarabai]	'rubbers'
2	[arula]	'ruler'	[ɲarulai]	'rulers'
3	[ɛswɛta]	'sweater'	[ɲiswɛtai]	'sweaters'
4	[aburaci]	'brush'	[ɲaburacia]	'brushes'
5	[agiredi]	'grade'	[ɲagiredjo]	'grades'
6	[edigiri:]	'degree'	[ɲidigiriin]	'degrees'
7	[ayalenda]	'calendar'	[ɲakalendai]	'calendars'
8	[ɛjakɛtɔ]	'jacket'	[ɲɪjakɛtɔ]	'jackets'
9	[ecɔka]	'chalk'	[ɲicɔkia]	'chalks'
10	[ataam]	'term'	[ɲataamia]	'terms'
11	[esukulɔ]	'school'	[ɲisukulɔ]	'schools'
12	[ɛpɛɛ]	'page'	[ɲipɛɛɔ]	'pages'
13	[akit]	'week'	[ɲakitɔ]	'weeks'
14	[apisi]	'office'	[ɲapisjɔn]	'offices'
15	[ɲabɔti]	'boots'	[ɲabɔti]	'boots'
16	[ɛpɛɛn]	'pen'	[ɲipɛɛni]	'pens'
17	[ɛbɔɔ]	'ball'	[ɲibɔɔɔ]	'balls'
18	[arim]	'ream'	[ɲarimio]	'reams'
19	[abɔkisɪ]	'box'	[ɲabɔkisjɔ]	'boxes'
20	[abukɔ]	'book'	[ɲabukɔ]	'books'
21	[ɛniɔɔmɔ]	'uniform'	[ɲniɔɔmɔ]	'uniforms'
22	[ɛɔɔna]	'corner'	[ɲikɔɔnaɛ]	'corners'
23	[akalikuletai]	'calculator'	[ɲakalikuletai]	'calculators'
24	{ɛ-gɪja}	'gear'	[ɲi-gɪjai]	'gears'
25	[a-tarakita]	'tractor'	[ɲa-tarakita-i]	'tractors'
26	[ɛpenseli]	'pencil'	[ɲipenselio]	'pencils'
27	[asatipiket]	'certificate'	[ɲasatipiketɔ]	'certificates'
28	[ɛyoligetɔ]	'colgate'	[ɲikoligeta]	'colgates'
29	[apailɔ]	'file'	[ɲapaila]	'files'

30	[esɔpa]	'sofa'	[ɲisopai]	'sofas'
31	[arɛʃɛsɛta]	'register'	[ɲarɛʃɛsɛtai]	'registers'
32	[ɛgetɪ]	'gate'	[ɲɪgɛɛtɪɔ]	'gates'
33	[ɛgɪlas]	'glass'	[ɲɪgɪlasja]	'glasses'
34	[abaagɪ]	'bag'	[ɲabaagia]	'bags'
35	[ɛɣɔtɪ]	'coat'	[ɲɪkɔtɪɔ]	'coats'
36	[ɛ-ɣabeɟ]	'cabbage'	[ɲɪ-ɣabeɟ -o]	'cabbages'
37	[a-ka.ntɪn]	'canteen'	[ɲa-ka.ntɪn.ɪ-ɔ]	'canteens'
38	[abasɪkɛlɪ]	'bicycle'	[ɲabasɪkɛlɔ]	'bicycles'
39	[ɛpɪɔ]	'pillow'	[ɲɪ-pɪlɔ-i]	'pillows'
40	[a-sa.lɔn]	'salon'	[ɲa-sa.lɔn.ɪ-ɔ]	'salons'

#### Morpho-Phonemic Processes in Lukabaras Lexical Borrowing from Nandi: A Case of Chepsaita Scheme

<sup>1</sup>James Matseshe, <sup>2</sup> Reginald Atichi Alati  
Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology

#### Abstract

The contact between spoken Lukabaras and other languages like Nandi, Lutachooni, Luwanga, Lulogooli and Lubukusu spoken in Chepsaita Scheme has had several outcomes. Accordingly, Lukabaras speakers have apparently borrowed lexical items from the Nandi language. In this perspective, this research paper set out to analyse the morpho-phonemic processes involved in the lexical items borrowed in spoken Lukabaras from the Nandi in the home and business domains of interaction. The research for this paper adopted the descriptive design. Lexical items targeting nouns and verbs were obtained through audio recording, and analysed qualitatively through text and in-depth discussion of the linguistic processes that are evident from the empirical data. The findings from the study showed that the morpho-phonemic processes involved in the lexical items borrowed in spoken Lukabaras from the Nandi language in Chepsaita are largely prefixation and suffixation. The morphological processes involved in this borrowing are clearly phonologically conditioned in their concrete realization in Lukabaras.

**Keywords:** lexical item, Morpho-phonemic process, lukabaras

#### Introduction

Scholars such as Bender (2000) contend that the lexical items of all languages though stored in the lexicon of such languages, have rules which govern their formation and processes of use.

Bender (2000) further argues that the word content of all existing languages can neither be static nor exhaustive since the lexicon of a language expands in form and usage. As such every speaker of a language has the tacit knowledge to form an infinite number of words in their language. Additionally, different languages involve different word formation processes in the formation of their words and the prevalence of each process varies (Finch 2000).

According to Sankoff (2001), the borrowed items in the recipient language may be modified such that there are alterations and subsequent adjustments in the morphology of these words. Similarly, Siemund (2008) contends that the material transferred in a situation of language contact undergoes some sort of modification, such that once the lexical items have been adopted, they may undergo further processes internal to the recipient language.

Furthermore, Obuasi (2016) regards morphological processes as those mechanisms speakers of a language employ to change or modify the meaning of particular base-forms as well as form new words. These processes involve adding, deleting or modifying the base-forms of words in a language to suit its syntactic and communicational contexts.

## **2.0 Literature Review**

Winford (2003) asserts that borrowing is not just about direct importation of words, but it also involves the integration of such words in the borrowing language at various levels like phonology and morphology. On the same note, Kembo-Sure (1993), argues that the foreign or borrowed word is adapted and transformed to fit into the phonological and morphological structure of the recipient language. As a result, in the process of borrowing, the adapted word acquires the phonemic and morphemic shapes of the new system to enable it fit into the phonotactics of the recipient language (Kembo-Sure, 1993).

Akida (2000) studied Luwanga consonantal and vowel morpho-phonemics. The study adopted the Natural Generative Grammar theory as a tool of description to bring out phonological and morphological processes in Luwanga. Akida (2000) observes that using Morphophonemic Rules (MP - rules), the morphological changes on a whole word can be described in terms of the underlying phonological features. In view of the foregoing assertions, the present paper analysed the morpho-phonemic processes involved in the words borrowed in Lukabaras from the Nandi language in Chepsaita Scheme.

### **Morphophonemic Processes in Lukabaras Borrowed Nouns**

According to Mukulo (2016), all nouns in Lukabaras have nominal prefixes. In this perspective, the current study observed that borrowed noun forms derived from the nouns in the Nandi language also take prefixes in the formation of the new words in spoken Lukabaras. As such, the foreign nouns which are adopted into Lukabaras are first morphologically conditioned and nativised through nominal prefixation to take vocalics at word initial positions.

However, for the borrowed words to fit the phonotactics of spoken Lukabaras, they are further phonemically conditioned. This is attributed to the fact that Lukabaras phonotactics does not permit consonants at the word final position (Mukulo, 2016).

Accordingly, the present study observed that the morpho-phonemic processes involved in the borrowed lexical items in Lukabaras from Nandi entailed Lukabaras vowels. Therefore,

borrowed words from Nandi which have consonants at the word final position are phonologically conditioned to take a Lukabaras epenthic vowel [i] or [a] through suffixation. As argued in (Mukulo,2016),all Lukabaras vowels occur in all word positions, thus word initial, middle of a word and word final position. The present study observed that where such vowels occurred in borrowed lexical items in Lukabaras, they were phonologically conditioned through the process of vowel harmony.

Casali (2003) argues that vowel harmony ensures that vowels within a word or a morpheme belong to or have the same feature so that the vowels of a given language harmonize in terms of features such as backness, roundness, frontness and advanced tongue root. In the same vein, Boen (2014) points that a language which has a rounding harmony, for example rounded vowels such as [o] or [u], cannot co- occur with an unrounded vowel like [e] or [i] in the same word

In a given word, all the vowels must be ordinarily drawn from the same set, unless other phonological conditions prevail in the same environment. The present study thus identified five Lukabaras vowels and presented them orthographically as shown in the table below.

**Table 1. Lukabaras vowel orthography and phonetic symbols**

Phonetic symbol	Orthographic symbol	Lukabaras borrowed word	Gloss
[a]	a	<i>ateluti</i>	traditional tray
[e]	e	<i>ekoti</i>	House
[i]	i	<i>omureni</i>	Man
[o]	o	<i>omutoti</i>	Guest
[u]	u	<i>omuchorweti</i>	Friend

**(Source: Field study observation)**

#### 4.2.1 Prefixation

Prefixation as a morphological process entails the attachment of a bound morpheme to the front part of a root or stem (Fromkin, Rodman and Hyams, 2011). From the linguistic data obtained, this study observed that nominal lexical borrowing involved prefixation. It was further noted that Lukabaras pre-prefixation morpheme {e} was used in most non-human nouns such as *ekimieti*, *ekinuti*, *ekineti* and *erioti*. Other nouns that were an exception took the pre-prefixation morpheme {o} in words like *olubuchani*, *omutoti*, *omureni*, and *omukango*.

However, prefixation was only a surface realization through which the borrowed words were morphologically integrated into Lukabaras. Thus, for the words to fit into Lukabaras phonological structure, the study further described the phonological conditions underlying the environment of integrating the borrowed words. The structural form of the borrowed words was thus modified to adjust to the phonotactics of the recipient language (Lukabaras). The acceptability of the borrowed words as being similar to Lukabaras forms was due to the fact

that a Lukabaras speaker has the intuition to distinguish between well-formed and ill formed words in their language. The study hence regarded prefixation as a morpho-phonemic process. The table below presents the data of the borrowed forms in the target language (Lukabaras) as borrowed from the source language (Nandi).

**Table 2. Borrowed words with the prefixation morpheme {e-} and {o-}**

<b>Nandi word</b>	<b>Lukabaras borrowed form</b>	<b>Gloss</b>
<i>Kinut</i>	<i>e-kinut-i</i>	traditional mortar
<i>Kimiet</i>	<i>e-kimiet-i</i>	Ugali
<i>Riot</i>	<i>e-riot-i</i>	in-calf
<i>Karoon</i>	<i>e-karon-i</i>	Morning
<i>Kiinet</i>	<i>e-kinet-i</i>	Breast
<i>Mukangit</i>	<i>o-mukang-o</i>	cooking stick
<i>Lubchan</i>	<i>o-lub[u]chan-i</i>	Sweat
<i>Muren</i>	<i>o-muren-i</i>	Man
<i>Toot</i>	<i>o-mu-tot-i</i>	Guest
<i>Chorwet</i>	<i>o-mu-chorwet-i</i>	Friend

In the table above, it was observed that the Nandi base forms of the words *kinut*, *kimiet*, *riot*, *karoon*, *kiinet*, *mukangit*, *lubchan*, *muren*, *toot* and *chorwet* are free morphemes. The Lukabaras borrowed forms of these items involved the process of prefixation. The prefixes on these words were Lukabaras bound morphemes {e-} and {o-} which are prenominal affixes used to mark singularity in nouns. The study observed that the borrowed words were integrated into Lukabaras by first adding the Lukabaras nominal prefix {e-} or {o-} on the root of the donor language (Nandi).

Additionally, the root of the donor language was altered or modified by either deleting or inserting a vowel as seen in words like *toot* (*omutoti*) and *lubchan* (*olubuchani*). The study also observed that some borrowed forms take the Lukabaras prefixation morpheme {o-mu-} as seen in words such as *chorwet* (*omuchorweti*) and *toot* (*omutoti*). The following is an analysis of the prefixation process in the data obtained for the borrowed nouns in spoken Lukabaras.

#### **Prefixation for the Word *ekinuti***

The name *ekinuti* can be decomposed as:

{e-} (prefix) + {*kinut*} (noun) + {-i} > *ekinuti*

The root word in Nandi language from which this item comes is *kinut* (traditional mortar). In the process of nominalization, the borrowed form *ekinuti* is modified through a process that involves secondary articulation. The phonetic environment of the velar consonant [k] is influenced by the front high vowel [i]. As a result the [k] in the root of the Nandi word form is palatalised to become [j] in Lukabaras. The word *ekinuti* is thus nativized to *eshinuti* in spoken Lukabaras.

#### **Prefixation for the word *ekimieti***

This word was derived from the Nandi name for ugali; *kimiet*. The word is morphologically integrated into Lukabaras thus; {e-} (prefix) + {*kimiet*} (noun) + {-i} > *ekimieti*. However, the borrowed form of this word in Lukabaras is *echimieti*. As observed earlier, the palatal feature of the front high vowel [i] influences the preceding velar consonant [k] to become the palatal sound [tʃ]. The borrowed form of the word in Lukabaras is thus *echimieti* as illustrated; {e-} (prefix) + {*chimiet*} (noun) + {-i} > *echimieti*.

#### **Prefixation for the word *ekineti***

The word used for breast in Nandi is *kiinet*. Lukabaras speakers in Chepsaita adopt this word into their language, first, by adding the pronominal prefix {e-} and dropping one of the vowel [i] thus; {e-} (prefix) + {*kinet*} (noun) + {-i} > *ekineti*. This involves vowel deletion in which a segment is removed from a word that has a double vowel. It was observed that unlike the other items that palatalised the sound [k], there was no alteration on the word *ekineti*.

#### **Prefixation for the word *omukango***

*Omukango* is the derived word for cooking stick in Lukabaras spoken in Chepsaita. It is coined from the Nandi word *mukanget*. The study observed that the processes of nominalising this word in Lukabaras involved alteration on the root word by dropping the final word morpheme {-et}. This was replaced by the affix {-o} in Lukabaras thus; {o-} (prefix) + {*mukanget*} (noun) + {-o} > *omukango*. Although the borrowed word is morphologically sound, the study accounted for the replacement of the morpheme {-et} with {-o} through vowel harmony. Since Lukabaras does not end with consonant sounds, the <t> was first deleted. The phonetic feature of the velar sound [g] easily conditioned the insertion of the mid-back vowel sound [o].

#### **Prefixation for the word *omureni***

The word *omureni* (man) is morphologically integrated in spoken Lukabaras by adding the nominal prefix {o-} thus; {o-} (prefix) + {*muren*} (noun) + {-i} > *omureni*

#### **Prefixation for the word *ekaroni***

The root of this word in Nandi language is *karoon* (morning). However, the word is modified by dropping one of the vowels [o]. As earlier explained, this entailed a process in which a segment is omitted from a word to fit the pronunciation in the target language thus; {e-} (prefix) + {*karoon*} (noun) + {-i} > *ekaroni*

#### **Prefixation for the word *erioti***

*Erioti* is borrowed in spoken Lukabaras and means 'in-calf'. The nominal prefix {-o} is added to morphologically integrate the word into spoken Lukabaras. The word is decomposed as shown below:

{o-} (prefix) + {riot} (noun) + {-i} > *erioti*

#### **Prefixation for the word *omuchorweti***

Unlike other instances of the borrowed items in spoken Lukabaras in Chepsaita, the word *omuchorweti* created from the Nandi word *chorwet* (friend) had two Lukabaras nominal prefixes thus {o-} and {-mu-}. The word was derived by having the {o-} as a pre-prefix and {-mu-} as the second prefix as shown below.

{o-} (pre-prefix) + {-mu-} (prefix) + {*chorwet*} (noun) + {-i} > *omuchorweti*

### Prefixation for the word *omutoti*

The word *omutoti* was not only morphologically integrated into Lukabaras through pre-prefixation, but also by changing the form of the root of the donor word. As observed in other similar examples, this was through vowel deletion on the Nandi word *toot* (guest). Additionally, this word took two Lukabaras prefixes just like the word *omuchorweti* as illustrated below.

{o-} (preprefix)+ {-mu-} (prefix) +{ toot }(noun) + {-i} > *omutoti*

### Prefixation for the word *olubuchani*

The word *lubchan* in Nandi language which means ‘sweat’ was nominalised by adding the Lukabaras prefix {o-}. This was phonologically conditioned by the vowel harmony principle which requires vowels with related features to be in close proximity (Massamba, 1996). The vowel [o] was therefore influenced by the vowel [u] after the consonant sound [l]. Furthermore, to break the consonant cluster in -lubch- the epenthic vowel [u] was inserted after the bilabial consonant sound [b]. This could be explained from the fact that the articulation of both bilabial consonants and the back high vowel [u] involves the use of lips. Lukabaras native speakers therefore find it easy to co-articulate them (Mukulo, 2016). The word *olubuchani* was decomposed as;{o-} (prefix) + {lub[u]chan} (noun) + {-i} > *olubuchani*

### Suffixation in Nouns

From the data investigated, it was observed that the borrowed nominal lexicals in Lukabaras also involved suffixation. The final Lukabaras suffix {-i} was added to the final word position of every borrowed form of the nouns from Nandi language. According to Mukulo (2016), vowel insertion is introduced in order to break consonant clusters in languages that do not permit consonant clusters in a syllable or even in the word final position. Lukabaras being one such language, vowel insertion was introduced to prevent consonants at the end of the words in Nandi. Since the vowel {i} is phonologically conditioned to co-occur with certain consonants in specific environments, it was observed as shown in the table below that the consonants preceding the Lukabaras epenthic {i} at the word final position are alveolar sounds [t] and [n].

**Table 3. Borrowed nouns with the suffix [i]**

Nandi word	Lukabaras form	borrowed	Gloss
<i>Lubchan</i>	<i>olubuchan</i> + {-i}		Sweat
<i>Muren</i>	<i>omuren</i> + {-i}		Man
<i>Riot</i>	<i>eriot</i> + {-i}		in-calf
<i>Karoon</i>	<i>ekaron</i> + {-i}		Morning
<i>Kiinet</i>	<i>ekinet</i> + {-i}		Breast

From the table above, the present study established that most of the derived nominals had a common suffix ending [-i]. These findings were similar to those of Mukulo (2016), which observed that all Lukabaras vowels occur at all word positions; that is, word-initial, word-medial and word final. Although Lukabaras has two final epenthic vowels, [i] and [u], the present study observed that it is the word final suffix [i] that occurred on the borrowed nominals from the Nandi language.

### Suffixation in Verbs

The verbs borrowed in spoken Lukabaras also involved suffixation. The study observed that the derived verb took the suffix {-a} to a verb root of the Nandi language. According to Mutua (2013), epenthesis is a process that involves the insertion of one or more sounds in the middle or final position of a word. In the current study, vowel epenthesis on verb forms borrowed from the Nandi language had the vowel {-a} inserted at the word final position.

Akida (2000) observes that in most Luhya dialects the morpheme {-a} is a neutral vowel attached to all verbal radicals to show the indicative mood. The present study similarly established that the vowel {a} occurred at the end of the root word borrowed from the Nandi language and represented the infinitive form of the borrowed verb in Lukabaras. The table below shows the form of the verb in the source language and the borrowed form of the verb in Lukabaras.

**Table 4. Suffixation in borrowed verbs**

Nandi word	Lukabaras form	borrowed	Gloss
<i>Muut</i>	{mut} + {-a}		Hit
<i>Kwer</i>	{kwer}+ {-a}		Hit
<i>Ker</i>	{ker} + {-a}		Close
<i>Kas</i>	{kas} + {-a}		Hear
<i>Yaat</i>	{yat} + {-a}		Open
<i>Lipan</i>	{lipan} + {-a}		Pay
<i>Keus</i>	{keus} + {-a}		Harass
<i>Chor</i>	{chor} + {-a}		Steal
<i>Rut</i>	{rut} + {-a}		Pierce
<i>Keun</i>	{keun} + {-a}		Wash

This study established that the derived forms of the borrowed verbs from Nandi language in spoken Lukabaras in Chepsaita had the final word vowel {a}. Unlike the situation on borrowed nominals which took the suffix {i}, this study observed that Lukabaras speakers nativised the borrowed forms of Nandi verbs by adding the suffix {a}. It was further observed that most of the consonant sounds that preceded the epenthic vowel {-a} were alveolar sounds. The vowel [a] is a low mid vowel and shares the features of backness with the articulation of the alveolar consonants. This possibly explains the phonological environment that influences its occurrence in that position.

### Conclusions

From the findings of this paper, the main morphophonemic processes involved in the lexical items borrowed in spoken Lukabaras in Chepsaita Scheme were prefixation and suffixation. Accordingly, the study established that Lukabaras speakers nativised the borrowed forms of the nouns from Nandi language by adding the prefix {o-} or {e-} and the suffix {i}. The borrowed forms of the verbs from Nandi into Lukabaras took the suffix {-a}. The study thus revealed that in the process of integrating the borrowed forms in Lukabaras, the resultant

items were found to be foreign to native Lukabarar speakers. This creation of new lexical items constrained communicability in spoken Lukabarar in Chepsaita Scheme.

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Masimulizi Katika Mchakato wa Kufundisha Kipengele cha Wahusika Katika Riwaya za Kidagaa Kimemwozea

na ile ya Chozi la Heri

Stephen Muyundo Ndinyo  
Kibabii University

## Ikisiri

Mchakato wa ufundishaji wa kipengele cha wahusika katika riwaya hujengwa kwa kutumia masimulizi kama nguzo muhimu. Makala haya yalilenga kupambanua namna ambavyo masimulizi yalivyotumika katika mchakato wa kufundisha kwa kipengele cha wahusika katika riwaya za *Kidagaa Kimemwozea* na *Chozi la Heri*. Mkabala wa kithamano muundo wa kimfano ulitumika katika kutafiti. Mbinu za ukusanyaji data zilizotumiwa ni uchunzaji, usaili na majadiliano ya vikundi viini. Data iliyokusanywa iliwasilishwa kwa kuainishwa kwa kurejelea malengo ya utafiti kwa kutumia maelezo ya kifafanuzi na mijadala. Sampuli lengwa katika utafiti huu ilihusisha shule kumi (10) kati ya ishirini na saba (27), wasailiwa kumi na nane (18) kati ya hamsini na wane (54) katika kaunti hii ndogo ya Navakholo na riwaya za *Kidagaa Kimemwozea* na *Chozi la Heri*. Matokeo yalikuwa kwamba katika kufundisha kwa kipengele hiki cha wahusika, mbinu ya kidrama, mbinu ya kimaalezo, mbinu ya kilinganuzi na mbinu ya majazi zilitumika. Vile vile, kimya na toni zikitumiwa kama vipengele vya utendaji katika kufundisha kipengele hiki cha wahusika. Mapendekezo ya utafiti huu ni kuwa walimu watilie maanani matumizi ya mbinu tofauti mbali na zile zilizotafitiwa katika kufundisha kwa kipengele cha wahusika katika riwaya. Vile vile, vipengele vinginevyo vya utendaji katika ufundishaji wa kipengele cha wahusika mbali na toni na kimya pia vitaftiwe. Tafiti pia zifanywe kurejelea matumizi ya masimulizi katika ufundishaji wa kipengele cha wahusika katika tanzu nyingine kama vile hadithi fupi, ushairi, fasihi simulizi na tamthilia. Aidha, tafiti zilenge riwaya nyinginezo za Kiswahili.

**Maneno muhimu:** Masimulizi, toni, kimya, mbinu, wahusika na riwaya.

## Utangulizi

Fasihi katika jamii za Kiafrika ilifundishwa kabla ya kuanza kwa elimu ya kimagharibi. Hii ilikuwa kwa kurithishwa kwa vipera tofauti vya fasihi simulizi kutoka kwa kizazi kimoja hadi kizazi kingine. Baada ya wamishonari kuwasili mfumo rasmi wa ufundishaji ulianza na kuboreshwa zaidi baada ya mataifa mengi barani Afrika yaliyokuwa chini ya wakoloni kujikomboa kutoka kwa uongozi wa mkoloni. Fasihi ilianza kufunzwa katika miktadha rasmi kupitia kwa mitaala iliyoidhinishwa na nchi tofauti zilizopata uhuru barani Afrika.

Kwa mujibu wa KIE (2002) fasihi inafundishwa kama fasihi simulizi na fasihi andishi katika kiwango cha shule za upili. Fasihi andishi hugawika katika ushairi, tamthilia, hadithi fupi na riwaya. Kwa upande wa fasihi andishi, masimulizi yametafitiwa kama mbinu ya uandishi katika kazi hizi za fasihi. Masimulizi katika mchakato wa ufundishaji wa riwaya ya Kiswahili hayajarejelewa pakubwa. Mada hii ilichaguliwa kutokana na tafiti nyingi kurejelea masimulizi kama kipengele cha fani katika uandishi wa riwaya ya Kiswahili. Hivyo basi, utafiti huu ulinua kujaza pengo hili kwa kutafitiwa kutumiwa kwa masimulizi katika kufundisha riwaya ya Kiswahili katika shule za upili; mfano wa *Kidagaa Kimemwozea* na ile ya *Chozi la Heri*.

## Tafiti zilizofanywa juu ya Kipengele cha wahusika.

Sehemu hii ilihakiki tafiti ambazo zilifanywa kwa kurejelea kipengele cha wahusika kwa kurejelea riwaya ya *Kidagaa Kimemwozea*. Sehemu hii ilirejelea uhakiki wa wahusika kwa kurejelea riwaya tofauti. Tafiti hizi ni kama ifuatavyo:

Oyoyo (2013), alitafitia Uhakiki wa fani katika ngano tano za Kiswahili. Utafiti huu ulibainisha na kuchanganua vipengele mbalimbali vya fani vinavyoingiliana na kukamilishana katika ujenzi wa umbo la ngano, mchango wa vipengele vya fani katika kuwasilisha maana katika ngano zilizochaguliwa na kufana au kutofana kwa msanii katika muundo wa ngano teule za Kiswahili. Uhusiano kati ya tafiti hizi mbili ni kuwa, zote zimerejelea vipengele vya fani mahususi vya wahusika na msuko. Tafiti hizi zote pia zilirejelea kazi za fasihi ambazo ni ngano na riwaya. Hata hivyo, tofauti iliyopo kati ya kazi yake Oyoyo (k.h.j) na kazi yetu ni kuwa utafiti wake ulirejelea hususan uhakiki wa ngano tano zilizoteuliwa kutoka jamii ya Waswahili ilhali utafiti huu ukirejelea matumizi ya masimulizi katika kufundisha kwa kipengele cha wahusika katika riwaya hizi. Vile vile, utafiti wake Oyoyo (k.h.j) ulirejelea ngano tano zilizoteuliwa kutoka kwa jamii ya Waswahili ilhali utafiti huu ulihusisha riwaya za *Kidagaa Kimemwozea* na ile ya *Chozila Heri*. Oyoyo (k.h.j) alipata kuwa ploti ya ngano ni sahili huku ploti hizi zikitoririka kimfuatano isipokuwa katika mighani ya Fumo Liyongo. Sifa mbalimbali za wahusika na mbinu mbalimbali za usimulizi katika nafsi anuwai kama usimulizi nafsi ya kwanza, ya pili na nafsi ya tatu. Utafiti wake pia ulibaini kuwa tamathali za usemi zina umuhimu mkubwa kwa vile zimetumiwa kufafanua maana, kutoa mifano mwafaka, kuibua hisia, kuzua ucheshi mbalimbali na kuongeza ujumi wa kisanii.

Rono (2013) aliangazia Uhakiki wa kimaudhui na kifani wa *Kidagaa Kimemwozea*. Utafiti huo uliteua riwaya moja ya *Kidagaa Kimemwozea*. Rono (k.h.j) alionyesha mbinu zilizotumiwa katika kuwaumbua wahusika na alifafanua masuala anuwai yaliyoshughulikiwa katika riwaya hii. Tafiti hizi zote zilirejelea kipengele cha maudhui na wahusika, isitoshe tafiti hizi mbili pia zinarejelea riwaya ya *Kidagaa Kimemwozea*. Kinyume naye, utafiti huu uliangazia vitabu viwili : *Kidagaa Kimemwozea* na *Chozila Heri*. Utafiti huu pia uliangazia masimulizi yalivyotumiwa katika kufundisha kwa kipengele cha wahusika katika riwaya hizi. Matokeo ya utafiti wake Rono (2013) yalikuwa kwamba, wahusika waliumbwa kwa ukamilifu mzuri na walichangia katika kufanikisha kwa ujumbe wake mwandishi kwa njia iliyoeleweka na kuvutia. Pili, mwandishi alifanikiwa katika kushughulikia suala la ukombozi kwa vijana kushirikiana katika kuboresha maisha ya wenzao.

Haji (2018) alishughulikia Kutathmini mbinu za usawiri wa Wahusika katika riwaya za *Dunia Uwanja wa Fujo* na *Asali Chungu* : Utafiti linganishi. Utafiti huu ulilenga kuainisha mbinu za usawiri wa wahusika, kulinganisha na kulinganua mbinu za usawiri wa wahusika katika riwaya teule za *Dunia Uwanja wa Fujo* na *Asali Chungu*. Tafiti hizi zote zilirejelea wahusika kama mojawapo wa vipengele vya fani. Pia uhusiano wa pili kati ya tafiti hizi mbili ni kuwa, zote zilirejelea riwaya mbili kila moja. Tofauti zilizopo ni kuwa, Haji (k.h.j) alirejelea riwaya mbili za *Dunia Uwanja wa Fujo* na *Asali Chungu* huku utafiti huu ukirejelea *Kidagaa Kimemwozea* na *Chozila Heri*. Vile vile Haji (k.h.j) alitahmini mbinu za kusawiri wahusika katika riwaya za *Dunia Uwanja wa Fujo* na *Asali Chungu* : Utafiti linganishi huku utafiti huu ukirejelea Matumizi ya masimulizi katika kufundisha riwaya ya Kiswahili katika shule za upili kwa kurejelea *Kidagaa Kimemwozea* na *Chozila Heri*. Matokeo ya utafiti huu wake Haji (k.h.j) wahusika walisawiriwa kwa mbinu za mwingiliano matini, mbinu ya kimaelezo, mbinu ya taharuki mbinu za uzungumzi nafsi, mbinu za majigambo, mbinu za kidrama, mbinu za kuwatumia wahusika wengine, mbinu ya kitendi/kivisasili, mbinu ya motifu ya safari na mbinu ya mwingiliano matini. Riwaya hizi mbili za *Dunia Uwanja wa Fujo* na *Asali Chungu* zilikuwa na

mbinu sawa katika kuwasawiri wahusika lakini bado kuna baadhi ya mbinu chache zinazoonekana kulingana na kutofautiana.

Sehemu hii imehakiki tafiti kuhusu wahusika katika kazi za fasihi andishi. Sehemu hii imehakiki usawiri wa wahusika katika ngano. Vile vile, sehemu hii pia ilihakiki tafiti za jinsi wahusika walivyosawiriwa na mbinu za kuwasawiri wahusika katika riwaya.

### **Mbinu za Utafiti**

Utafiti huu ulitumia mkabala wa kithamano muundo wa kimfano. Kwa mujibu wa Punch (2005) muundo wa kimfano ni aina ya mkabala wa kithamnano ambao huchukua idadi ndogo ya sampuli kubwa na ikachunguzwa kwa kina ili kuelewa kundi ndogo la sampuli hiyo.

Sampuli lengwa katika utafiti huu ilihusisha riwaya mbili; riwaya ya *Kidagaa Kimemwozea* na ile ya *Chози la Heri*. Jumla ya shule zote mbili (2) za wavulana, shule moja (1) pekee ya wasichana na shule saba (7) kati ya ishirini na nne (24) za mseto zililengwa na utafiti huu. Utafiti huu ulilenga kuhusisha walimu kumi na nane (18) kati ya walimu hamsini na wanne (54) waliowakilisha asilimia thelathini na tatu (33%) ya walimu wa kaunti hii ndogo ya Navakholo.

Mbinu ya utabakishaji ilitumika kugawa shule katika daraja za shule ya wavulana, wasichana na mseto. Vitabu viwili (2) riwaya ya *Kidagaa Kimemwozea* na ile ya *Chози la Heri* vilichaguliwa kwa kurejelea kigezo cha riwaya hizi kutahiniwa katika kiwango cha shule za upili. Walimu kumi na nane (18) walichaguliwa kutumia mbinu ya usampulishaji wa kimakusudi.

Mbinu za ukusanyaji data zilizotumiwa ni uchunzaji, usaili na majadiliano ya vikundi lengwa. Vifaa vya ukusanyaji data vilikuwa usaili, mwongozo wa uchunzaji na mwongozo wa mjadala teule. Data iliwasilishwa kwa kuainishwa kwa kurejelea malengo ya utafiti kwa kutumia maelezo ya kifafanuzi na mijadala.

### **Masimulizi katika Mchakato wa Ufundishaji wa Kipengele cha Wahusika katika Riwaya za *Kidagaa Kimemwozea* na ile ya *Chози la Heri*.**

Makala haya yalishughulikia masimulizi katika mchakato wa ufundishaji wa kipengele cha wahusika katika riwaya za *Kidagaa Kimemwozea* na ile ya *Chози la Heri*. Kipengele hiki cha wahusika kilidhihirika katika mchakato wa kufundishwa kwa riwaya hizi za *Kidagaa Kimemwozea* na *Chози la Heri*. Kipengele hiki cha wahusika kilipofundishwa katika kiwango hiki cha shule za upili walimu walikifundisha kwa kurejelea sifa za wahusika na umuhimu wao katika riwaya hizi mbili.

Masimulizi yalitumika katika ufundishaji wa kipengele cha wahusika katika riwaya hizi za *Kidagaa Kimemwozea* na ile ya *Chози la Heri*. Kipengele hiki cha wahusika katika riwaya hizi kilijengwa kwa walimu na wanafunzi kusimulia kuhusu wahusika kwa kusawiriwa kutokana na mbinu nne za msingi. Kwa mujibu wa Wamitila (k.h.j) mbinu hizi nne zilikuwa za masimulizi zilizotumika katika ufundishaji wa wahusika na walimu ambazo ni mbinu ya majazi, mbinu ya kidrama, mbinu ya kimatelezo na mbinu ya ulinganuzi.

Riwaya hizi za *Kidagaa Kimemwozea* na ile ya *Chози la Heri* ilipofundishwa kipengele hiki cha wahusika, utendaji wa walimu na wanafunzi katika masimulizi ulikuwa nguzo ya kimsingi

katika kusawiri upekee wa mhusika akilinganishwa na wahusika wenzake. Hivyo basi, utendaji huu wa kipekee wa walimu na wanafunzi ulijitokeza kwa kurejelea mbinu tofauti ifuatavyo:

### **Mbinu ya Majazi**

Riwaya yoyote ile hujengwa na wahusika mbali mbali wanaosawiriwa kwa majina kwa kuhusishwa na maumbile yao au tabia zao na huwa jina la kupanga tu japokuwa linaweza likawa kama jina halisi. Mbinu ya majazi kwa kumrejelea Wamitila (k.h.j) ni mbinu iliyotumia majina ambayo yalifumbata tabia, sifa au matendo ya wahusika waliopatikana katika kazi za riwaya hizi. Haji (k.h.j) anasema kwamba, baadhi ya wahusika katika kazi ya fasihi hutumia majina yao kufumbata sifa na matendo yao kulingana na maudhui ya kazi husika, majina hayo wakati mwingine huwa ni ya kiishara au kitaswira kwa jamii.

Walimu na wanafunzi katika kufundisha na kujifunza kipengele hiki cha wahusika waliwasawiri wahusika mbali mbali kwa kutumia majina yaliyosawiri maumbile na tabia zao kwa kutumia majina ya muda na majina halisi. Hili lilidhihirika moja kwa moja katika kufundisha riwaya hii ya *Chози la Heri* kwa kurejelea kufundisha ifuatavyo:

Dondoo 5

Mwekevu ana sifa zifuatazo; kwanza kabisa, Mwekevu ni mzalendo kwa kurejelea historia yake ya kazi ilionyesha jinsi anavyofanyia wananchi kazi vyema. Pili ni mwenye maono kutokana na sera zake kupendwa na watu. Pia, Mwekevu amezinduka kwa kushindania wadhifa wa kisiasa na mwanamume licha ya yeye kuwa mwanamke. Isitoshe, yeye ni jasiri kwa vile haogopi kusema kwa watu kinyume na watu wengi wasioweza kusema mbele ya umati wa watu. (Rejelea kiambatisho X)

Chanzo : Masimulizi ya mwalimu.

Mbinu hii ya majazi ilitumika katika kusimulia mhusika Mwekevu katika riwaya hii ya *Chози la Heri*. Jina lake Mwekevu limetumika kimajazi kutokana na sifa zake katika riwaya hii ya *Chози la Heri*. Jina hili ni la kijazanda kwa vile linafumbata tabia, sifa au matendo yake katika jamii ya Wahifadhina. Sifa zake za kuwa mzalendo, mwenye maoni, jasiri na mzindushi zinaafiki jina lake kwa vile kutokana naye mwandishi anamtumia kupitisha au kuweka sifa zilizokubalika katika jamii yake katika riwaya hii.

Haji (k.h.j) katika utafiti wake alipata mbinu hii ya majazi katika riwaya ya *Asali Chungu* kwa kuwarejelea wahusika Dude na Baya. Haji (k.h.j) anaposema kuwa suala la majina katika jamii linapaswa kurejelewa kwa vile jina wakati mwingine huathiri tabia na mwenendo wa mhusika. Majina ya wahusika waliyopewa na msanii yanalandana na matendo yao kama vile Dude, Baya, na Semeni. Kwa kiasi kikubwa mbinu ya matumizi ya majina imejitokeza kwa baadhi ya wahusika katika riwaya ya *Asali Chungu* kuliko riwaya ya *Dunia Uwanja wa Fujo*.

Ali (2015) katika Kuchunguza dhana zilizobebwa na wahusika na zinavyolandana na majina yao: Uchunguzi katika riwaya ya *Kiu na Kiu ya Haki*, Ali (k.h.j) alionyesha kwamba, riwaya hizo mbili zimetumia mbinu changamano. Mbinu ya majazi ikiwa mojawapo wa mbinu zilizojitokeza katika utafiti huu. Ali (k.h.j) alipata kwamba riwaya hizi mbili zilipoandikwa mbinu hii ilitumika na waandishi hawa kukuza sifa tofauti za wahusika katika riwaya hizi.

Hivyo basi, tafiti hizi zote mbili za Haji (k.h.j) na Ali (k.h.j) zilibaini moja kwa moja kwamba mbinu hii ya majazi ilijitokeza katika uandishi wa riwaya hizo. Hali hii pia ilipatikana katika

utafiti huu kupitia kufundisha kwa kipengele hiki cha wahusika katika riwaya hizi za *Kidagaa Kimemwozea* na *Chози la Heri*.

Mbinu hii ya majazi ilitumiwa na walimu na wanafunzi katika kufundisha riwaya hizi za *Chози la Heri* na *Kidagaa Kimemwozea*. Mbinu hii ya majazi ilitumika katika kufundisha sifa za wahusika tofauti katika kufundisha riwaya hizi za *Chози la Heri* na *Kidagaa Kimemwozea*. Sehemu hii imeshughulikia mbinu ya majazi, sehemu ifuatayo itashughulikia mbinu ya kimaelezo.

### **Mbinu ya Kimaelezo**

Wamitila (k.h.j) anasema kuwa, katika mbinu hii mhusika husawiriwa kwa maelezo kwa kurejelea sifa zake, msukumo wa matendo yake, mazingira yake, tabia na amali zake zilizosimuliwa na msimulizi kwa lengo la wasikilizaji wauone mtazamo huo labda hata wakubaliane nao. Hii ni mbinu mojawapo iliyotumiwa sana na walimu pamoja na wanafunzi katika kufundisha riwaya *Kidagaa Kimemwozea* na *Chози la Heri*.

Mbinu hii ya kimaelezo ilitumika katika ufundishaji wa wahusika katika riwaya ya *Kidagaa Kimemwozea*. Mwalimu katika kufundisha kwa kipengele cha wahusika alifundisha kwa kusimulia sifa za mhusika Matuko Weye katika riwaya ya *Kidagaa Kimemwozea* kama ifuatavyo:

Dondoo 6

Matuko Weye ni mojawapo wa wapiganaji wa vita vya dunia kule Burma pamoja na wapiganaji wengine wa Kiafrika. Matuko Weye anaporejea baada ya vita anawehuka baada ya ahadi walizopewa na wakoloni kuvunjwa huku wenzao wazungu waliopigana nao vita sawa kama vile Noon alipadishwa cheo hadi cheo cha Major na anapewa pandikizi la shamba la ekari mia mbili sabini. Hali hii ilimfanya Matuko Weye kuwehuka. Matuko Weye licha ya kuwa mwehu anaupinga uongozi wake Mtemi Nasaba Bora kwa vile Nasaba Bora alikuwa kiongozi wa kiimla aliyewanyang'anya mashamba yao, fisadi na aliyewanyang'anya wanawake wao pia. Aidha, Matuko Weye anasalia katika hali hii ya uchochele kwa vile baada ya Waafrika kuchukua hatamu za uongozi hawakuwatuza na kuwadhamini wapiganaji wao wa uhuru kwa kuwatuza chohote. ( Rejelea kiambatisho VIII ).

Chanzo : Masimulizi ya mwalimu.

Maelezo haya ya mwalimu yalimrejelea Matuko Weye katika riwaya ya *Kidagaa Kimemwozea* katika kufundisha kwa kipengele hiki cha wahusika. Mwalimu alielezea kuhusu maisha yake Matuko Weye kuanzia alipojiunga na wapiganaji wa vita vya dunia hadi anapotoka vita vile na kuwehuka. Maelezo haya pia yalirejelea harakati zake za ukombozi na changamoto za wapiganaji Waafrika wa vita vya dunia.

Maelezo ya wanafunzi pia yalijitokeza kupitia kwa kufundishwa kwa kipengele hiki cha wahusika katika riwaya *Chози la Heri*. Maelezo haya yalijitokeza katika kufundisha kwa wahusika Tila, Lily, Umulkheri na Mwaliko katika riwaya ya *Chози la Heri* kama ilivyoelezwa na wanafunzi:

Dondoo 7

Tila ni msomi aliyesomea masuala ya sheria kwa kina huku Mwangemi naye amesoma na kuhitimu na shahada ya udaktari... Lily pia anasomea uanasheria na kupata shahada katika uanasheria... Umulkheri ni mwenye bidii kwa kusoma kwa makini hadi anapojiunga na chuo kikuu ng'ambo kwa shahada ya uhandisi katika masuala ya kilimo...Mwaliko vile vile ni mwenye bidii anaposoma shahada ya isimu na lugha hadi kiwango cha uzamili ( Rejelea kiambatisho IX)

Chanzo : Masimulizi ya wanafunzi.

Masimulizi haya yalitolewa na wanafunzi katika kufundisha kwa kipengele hiki cha wahusika katika riwaya hii ya *Choi la Heri* yametumia mbinu ya kimaelezo kwa kusawiri matendo haya tofauti ya wahusika. Wanafunzi hawa walisawiri wahusika Tila, Lilly, Umulkheri na Mwaliko kwa kurejelea matendo yao mbali mbali katika riwaya hii.

Mbinu hii ya kimaelezo ndiyo mbinu iliyotumika sana na walimu na wanafunzi katika kufundisha riwaya hizi mbili. Mbinu hii ilikuwa mwafaka katika kuchora taswira kamili ya wahusika mbali mbali katika riwaya hizi mbili. Mbinu hii ilipotumika na wanafunzi na walimu darasani iliwasaidia sana wanafunzi katika kufahamu vizuri sifa za wahusika hawa katika kufundisha riwaya hizi Hivyo basi, ni vyema iwapo mbinu hii ya kimasimulizi ingetumika pamoja na mbinu nyinginezo.

Haji (k.h.j) kwa kurejelea riwaya ya *Asali Chungu* ametumia mbinu hii ya kimaelezo katika kuwasawiri wahusika wake. Hii ilikuwa wazi kwa kusawiri wahusika kama vile Dude na Bi Amina na Mzee Shaabani Supu miongoni mwa wahusika wengine katika riwaya hiyo ya *Asali Chungu*. Hali hii pia ilidhirika pia katika riwaya ya *Dunia Uwanja wa Fujo* kwa mbinu hii ya kimaelezo kutumika katika kuwajenga na kuwasawiri wahusika wake. Mbinu hii ya kimaelezo ilijitokeza katika mwandishi kusawiri wahusika mbali mbali katika riwaya hii kama vile Makoroboi, Kasala, Dennis, Muyango, Balizunaki, Tumaini, Vera, Hadija, Mugere, Mugala, Kapinga, Mwanagwa, Bernadeta, Tembo, Mulele, Makaranga na wengineo. Wahusika wote hao walisawiriwa na mwandishi katika mbinu ya kimaelezo.

Ali (k.h.j) katika Kuchunguza dhana zilizobebwa na wahusika na zinavyolandana na majina yao: Uchunguzi katika riwaya za *Kiu* na *Kiu ya Haki*. Ali (k.h.j) aligundua kwamba riwaya hizo mbili zimetumia mbinu changamano. Mbinu ya kimaelezo ilikuwa mbinu mojawapo katika uandishi wa riwaya hizi mbili. Mbinu hii ya maelezo ilitumika katika kusawiri sifa tofauti za wahusika katika riwaya hizi mbili. Tafiti hizi mbili za Haji (k.h.j) na Ali (k.h.j) ilibainika kwamba waandishi walitumia mbinu hii ya kimaelezo katika uandishi wa riwaya hizi. Hili pia lilipatikana katika utafiti huu kwa mbinu ya kimaelezo kutumika katika kufundisha kwa kipengele hiki cha wahusika katika riwaya hizi za *Kidagaa Kimemwozea* na *Choi la Heri*.

Mbinu hii ya kimaelezo ndiyo mbinu iliyotumika sana na walimu na wanafunzi katika kufundisha riwaya hizi. Mbinu hii ilikuwa mwafaka katika kuchora taswira kamili ya wahusika mbali mbali katika kufundisha kipengele hiki cha wahusika. Walimu na wanafunzi walitoa maelezo ya kina kwa kurejelea sifa tofauti za wahusika katika riwaya hizi. Maelezo haya ya kina yalikuwa muhimu sana kwa vile wanafunzi walielewa wahusika vyema sana. Mbinu hii ilipotumika na wanafunzi na walimu darasani iliwasaidia sana wanafunzi katika kufahamu vizuri sifa za wahusika hawa katika kufundisha riwaya hizi za *Kidagaa Kimemwozea* na *Choi la Heri*. Hivyo basi, ni vyema iwapo mbinu hii ya kimasimulizi ingetumika pamoja na mbinu nyingine kama vile mbinu ya majazi, mbinu ya ulinganuzi na mbinu ya kidrama. Sehemu hii

imeshughulikia mbinu ya kimaelezo katika kufundisha kwa kipengele cha wahusika, sehemu inayofuata imeshughulikia mbinu ya kidrama.

### **Mbinu ya Kidrama**

Kwa kumrejelea Wamitila (k.h.j) mbinu ya kidrama iliwasawiri wahusika kwa kuwaonyesha wakitenda matendo na kuzungumuza na kuwaacha wasomaji wawaone na kuzichanganua tabia zao kutokana na matendo au mazungumzo yao. Mbinu hii ya kidrama ni muhimu kwa vile ilihusisha uigizaji wa wanafunzi au walimu darasani katika kusawiri wahusika katika kufundisha riwaya hizi za *Kidagaa Kimemwozea* na *Chози la Heri*.

Walimu katika kufundisha riwaya hizi za *Kidagaa Kimemwozea* na *Chози la Heri* walitumia maigizo ijapokuwa kwa nadra sana katika kufundisha kwa kipengele hiki cha wahusika. Hata hivyo, kwa wanafunzi kuigiza baadhi ya sifa za wahusika katika riwaya hizi darasani, maigizo hayo yalileta utendaji na uhai kwa kipindi. Vile vile, maigizo haya yalikumbukwa kwa haraka na wanafunzi na kuwashirikisha moja kwa moja katika kipindi hicho cha wahusika.

Mbinu hii ya kidrama ilijitokeza moja kwa moja katika kufundisha riwaya hii ya *Kidagaa Kimemwozea*. Mwanafunzi mmoja alijitokeza kwa kuigiza matendo ya mhusika Matuko Weye darasani. Hii ilikuwa kama ifuatavyo:

Dondoo 8

...(Huku akipiga kwata)"mark – time"... "about – turn," ... "left turn" ... "right turn"  
huku mwanafunzi akigeuka baada ya hatua kadhaa mbele ya darasa. ( Rejelea  
kiambatisho VIII )

Chanzo : Maigizo ya mwanafunzi.

Mwanafunzi mmoja aliigiza matendo ya Matuko Weye katika ufundishaji wa riwaya hii ya *Kidagaa Kimemwozea*. Mwanafunzi huyu anaigiza miondoko ya Matuko Weye akirejelea walivyokuwa kule Burma katika vita vya dunia ya pili. Matuko Weye baada ya vita na kuwehuka, mara kwa mara alipiga kwata kama walivyokuwa wakifanya vitani. Maigizo haya yalikuwa muhimu kwa kurejelea sifa zake Matuko Weye darasani. Mwalimu alipotumia mbinu hii ilikuwa mwafaka kwa vile iliwachangamsha wanafunzi katika kufundisha riwaya hizi mbili. Walimu na wanafunzi walipoigiza baadhi ya matendo ya wahusika wanafunzi waliweza kukumbuka sifa hizi haraka. Mbinu hii ya maigizo ilijitokeza katika kufundisha riwaya hii ya *Kidagaa Kimemwozea* katika kumrejelea mhusika Matuko Weye.

Mbinu hii haikutumiwa sana katika ufundishaji wa riwaya hizi mbili ikilinganishwa na mbinu ya kimaelezo. Walimu wengi hawakuipendelea kwa vile ilihitaji ufundi wa juu na muda mwingi katika kuitumia kikamilifu. Vile vile, wanafunzi wengi hawakuwa na ukakamavu wa kuigiza darasani. Hivyo basi, ipo haja ya mbinu hii ya maigizo kutumiwa zaidi pamoja na mbinu nyinginezo kama vile ulinganuzi, kimaelezo na kimajazi.

Haji (k.h.j) kwa kutafitia riwaya ya *Dunia Uwanja wa Fujo* alipata kuwa mbinu hii ya kidrama ilitumika katika uandishi wa riwaya hii. Mbinu hii ilirejelewa katika kusawiri kwa wahusika kama vile Tumaini katika mazungumzo yake na rafikiye, mahojiano ya Dennis na Mama Bahati, majadiliano ya Bwana Zuberi na mke wake Bi Amina miongoni mwa mifano mingine mingi.

Ali (2015) katika kuchunguza riwaya za *Kiu na Kiu ya Haki* aligundua kwamba riwaya hizo mbili zimetumia mbinu changamano. Mbinu hii ya kidrama ilijitokeza katika uandishi wa riwaya hizi mbili. Tafiti hizi zote mbili, utafiti wake Haji (k.h.j) na Ali (k.h.j) zilipata kwamba

mbinu hii ilitumika katika uandishi wa riwaya hizi. Mbinu hii ya maigizo pia ilijitokeza katika kufundisha riwaya hii ya *Kidagaa Kimemwozea* na *Chози la Heri*.

Mbinu hii ya maigizo ilipotumika katika kufundisha riwaya hizi mbili, wanafunzi katika kuigiza walishiriki moja kwa moja kwa kufundishwa kwa kipengele hiki cha wahusika. Wanafunzi na walimu walipoigiza sifa tofauti za wahusika katika riwaya hizi, sifa hizo zilijitokeza katika uhalisia wake. Maigizo ya wanafunzi na walimu pale darasani yalileta uhai katika kufundisha kwa sifa tofauti za wahusika wale.

Hata hivyo, mbinu hii ilihitaji muda mrefu kwa wanafunzi na walimu kujiandaa kabla ya kuwasilisha maigizo tofauti kwa kurejelea sifa tofauti za wahusika. Walimu na wanafunzi ni vyema waigize mara kwa mara ili kukuza ukakamavu wa kuigiza sifa tofauti za wahusika na hivyo kutoathiri kuigiza kwa sifa za wahusika tofauti. Vile vile, ipo haja ya mbinu hii kutumiwa kwa pamoja na mbinu nyingine kama vile mbinu ya kimaeelezi, mbinu ya kimajazi na mbinu ya ulinganuzi katika kufundisha kwa kipengele hiki cha wahusika katika riwaya hizi. Sehemu hii imeshughulikia mbuni ya kidrama katika kufundisha kwa kipengele hiki cha wahusika, sehemu inayofuata imeshughulikia mbinu ya ulinganuzi katika kufundisha kwa kipengele cha wahusika katika riwaya hizi.

### **Mbinu ya Ulinganuzi**

Wamitila (k.h.j) anasema, mbinu ya ulinganuzi na tajawuri ilitumiwa kuonyesha tofauti kati ya vitu viwili na kuviweka vitu hivyo katika muktadha sawa. Hatimaye, mbinu ya ulinganuzi au kinyume ilitumika kwa kazi nyingi zilizosimuliwa kwenye msingi wa kimaadili au zenye mwelekeo huo, hutegemea sana mbinu hii kuonyesha tofauti kati ya nguli na hasidi.

Haji (k.h.j) anasema, mbinu hii ilirejelea mhusika ambaye sifa zake ni kinyume cha mhusika wa pili. Kwa kumrejelea mhusika kwa makini tunahisi kuwa kuna kupingana kwa sifa na matendo fulani katika uhusika wake na mara nyingine msanii anaweza pia kuwaweka wahusika au kuwaonyesha kwa namna ambazo ni sambamba na kwa njia hii humfanya msomaji au mhakiki aziwazie tofauti au mfanano wa sifa zao. Kwa mujibu wa Rono (k.h.j) mbinu hii ilitumiwa kuonyesha tofauti iliyopo kati ya vitu viwili katika muktadha sawa ili tofauti kati ya vitu hivyo ibainike bayana.

Hili lilijitokeza popote pale walimu walilinganua tabia tofauti za wahusika katika kufundisha kwa kipengele cha wahusika katika riwaya hizi. Hii ni muhimu kwa vile iliwasaidia wanafunzi kuwaelewa vyema wahusika katika riwaya hizi kwa kuwalinganua kitabia. Kwa mfano kwa kurejelea kipindi cha wahusika kwa riwaya ya *Chози la Heri* mwalimu aliwasawiri wahusika kwa kuonyesha tofauti za sifa zao kama ifuatavyo:

Dondoo 9

Lunga anasawiriwa kama mvumilivu kwa tendo lake la kuvumilia hali ngumu licha ya kuwa alikuwa na kazi nzuri. Kitendo hiki ni tofauti na kile cha Naomi ambaye ni mwenye tamaa, kitendo hiki kunamfanya kuvunja ndoa yake kwa sababu ya mumewe kukosa pesa. Ridhaa ana bahati mbaya kwa kupoteza familia yake yote katika mkasa wa moto. Kaisari naye anabahatika kwa kusalia na familia yake licha ya wote wanawao kubakwa. Bwanake Selume ni mkabila kwa kumkataa mkewe Selume licha ya wao kujaliwa mtoto pamoja na kuoja mke wa

pili kutoka kwa kabila lao kama jamii yake ilivyotaka. Kwa upande wa pili mume wake Lucia anaoa nje ya kabila lake la Waombwe na anatetea ndoa yake licha ya uhasama wa makabila yao hapo awali. ( Rejelea kiambatisho XI).

Chanzo : Masimulizi ya mwalimu.

Masimulizi haya ya mwalimu yalirejelea wahusika tofauti katika riwaya hii ya *Chози la Heri*. Hii ni kwa kurejelea sifa tofauti za Lunga kwa kumlinganisha na Naomi, Ridhaa kwa kumlinganisha na Kaizari, mumewe Selume akilinganishwa na mumewe Lucia. Ilidhihirika wazi kuwa kila mmoja wao alilinganishwa na mwenzake na tofauti katika sifa zao ilikuwa ya dhahiri.

Hali hii pia ilikuwa wazi katika mchakato wa ufundishaji wa kipengele hiki cha wahusika katika riwaya ya *Kidagaa Kimemwozea*. Mwalimu katika kufundisha riwaya hii kama vile katika riwaya ya *Chози la Heri* aliwasawiri wahusika wake kwa njia tofauti. Hivyo basi, mwalimu alipofundisha riwaya hii darasani aliwatofautisha wahusika hawa kama ifuatavyo:

Dondoo 10

Mtemi Nasaba Bora na Mkewe Bi Zuhura wanatofautiana pakubwa kupitia kwa tabia zao. Mtemi Nasaba Bora alijihusisha kimapenzi na Lowela msichana mdogo aliyepaswa kuwa shuleni huku mkewe Bi Zuhura akiwa ni mwaminifu kwake. Hatimaye Mtemi Nasaba Bora anamtaliki mkewe kwa tetesi kuwa alijihusisha kimapenzi naye mchungaji wake Amani. Imani ni mwenye mapenzi kwa watoto mashata wake Mwalimu Majisifu na anawalea kwa mapenzi kama watoto wengine wowote wale. Vijakazi wengine hawakuwapenda na kuwathamini watoto hawa walemavu wa Mwalimu Majisifu na walishindwa kustahimili kufanya kazi pale kwa zaidi ya siku mbili. Mwalimu Majisifu aliwachukia wanawe kwa kuzaliwa wakiwa vilema na hata kutaka kuwatupa mtoni. Kwa upande wa pili mkewe Bi Zuhura aliwapenda na kuwathamini wanawe na anakataa mpango wa mumewe Mwalimu Majisifu kutaka kuwatupa mtoni. (Rejelea kiambatisho XII)

Chanzo : Masimulizi ya mwalimu.

Nukuu hii ilirejelea mwalimu kufundisha kipengele cha wahusika katika riwaya hii ya *Kidagaa Kimemwozea*. Mwalimu katika kufundisha kipengele hiki aliwasawiri wahusika hawa Mtemi Nasaba Bora na mkewe Zuhura, Imani na wafanyakazi wenzake na Mwalimu Majisifu na mkewe Dora wanalinganuliwa sifa zao katika kipindi hiki. Tofauti katika sifa zao inajitokeza kwa njia ya moja kwa moja kwa kurejelea masimulizi haya.

Haji (k.h.j) kwa kurejelea utafiti wake kuhusu riwaya ya *Dunia Uwanja wa Fujo* alibaini kwamba, mbinu ya ulinganuzi ilijitokeza kwa kurejelea wahusika mbali mbali kama vile Dennis anatofautiana kwa sifa na Mama Resi na wahusika Makoroboi na Hadija wahusika wanaotofautiana kwa sifa zao. Kwa upande mwingine Ali (k.h.j) katika kuchunguza dhana zilizobebwa na wahusika na zinavyolandana na majina yao: Uchunguzi katika riwaya za *Kiu na Kiu ya Haki*. Ali (k.h.j) aligundua kwamba riwaya hizo mbili zimetumia mbinu changamano. Mbinu mojawapo iliyojitokeza katika utafiti wake ilikuwa ni mbinu ya ulinganuzi. Ali (k.h.j) alipata kuwa mbinu hii ilitumika katika riwaya hizi mbili. Hivyo basi tafiti hizi zote zilitafitia mbinu hii ya ulinganuzi ilivyojitokeza katika uandishi wa riwaya hizi. Matokeo haya yalionyesha kwamba mbinu hii ya ulinganuzi ilikuwepo katika uandishi wa riwaya za Kiswahili. Hivyo basi, hili lilidhihirika pia katika ufundishaji wa riwaya hizi za *Kidagaa Kimemwozea* na *Chози la Heri* kwa mbinu hii ya ulinganuzi kujitokeza darasani katika kufundisha wahusika darasani.

Hivyo basi ilidhihirika wazi kwamba wahusika katika riwaya hizi mbili za *Kidagaa Kimemwozea* na ile ya *Chози la Heri* walisawiriwa kwa kurejelea mbinu tofauti. Kwa mujibu wa Wamitila (k.h.j) mbinu hizi ziliweza kuelezwa kama ifuatavyo: Kwanza, mbinu ya majazi iliyofumbata majina ambayo yalifumbata tabia, sifa au matendo ya wahusika waliopatikana katika kazi za riwaya hizi. Pili, mbinu ya kimaielezo kwa mhusika kusawiriwa kurejelea wasifu wake, msukumo wa matendo yake, mazingira yake, tabia na amali zake zilizosimuliwa na msimulizi kwa lengo la wasikilizaji wauone mtazamo huo labda hata wakubaliane nao. Tatu, mbinu ya kidrama iliyowasawiri wahusika kwa kusawiri sifa hizo moja kwa moja kwa hivyo kuleta uhalisia katika ufundishaji wa kipengele hiki cha wahusika kwa wanafunzi kutenda na kuzungumuza na kuwaacha wasomaji wawaone na kuzichanganua tabia zao kutokana na matendo au mazungumzo yao. Hatimaye, mbinu ya ulinganuzi ilitumiwa kuonyesha tofauti kati ya vitu viwili na kuviweka vitu hivyo katika muktadha sawa. Pia, mbinu ya ulinganuzi au kinyume ilitumika kwa kazi nyingi zilizosimuliwa kwenye msingi wa kimaadili au zenye mwelekeo huo, hutegemea sana mbinu hii kuonyesha tofauti kati ya nguli na hasidi. Hivyo basi ipo haja ya mbinu hizi kutumiwa kwa mseto katika kufundisha riwaya hizi mbili. Sehemu inayofuata imeshughulikia matumizi ya kimya katika kufundisha kwa kipengele cha wahusika.

### **Matumizi ya Kimya katika Kufundisha kwa Kipengele cha Wahusika**

Walimu katika kufundisha riwaya hizi za *Kidagaa Kimemwozea* na ile ya *Chози la Heri* walitumia kimya wakati wa ufundishaji wa kipengele hiki cha wahusika. Kimya kilitumika haswa walimu walipoeleza hoja moja kabla ya nyingine. Kimya hiki kilikuwa muhimu kwa vile kiliwawezesha wanafunzi wao kuelewa na kupata hoja za walimu wao bila ya kuharakishwa. Hii ilikuwa muhimu kwa wanafunzi kupokea na kuelewa hoja za wahusika katika ufundishaji wa riwaya hizi. Kimya pia kilitumika katika kusisitiza kauli fulani na kuifanya hadhira kuiwazia. Pia, kimya kilitumika kuchochea hisia za wanafunzi katika kufundisha sifa tofauti za wahusika. Mwalimu alitumia kimya katika kufundisha kwa wahusika katika riwaya ya *Chози la Heri* kwa kuwachochea wanafunzi kuwazia hali ya ugumu iliyopitiwa na Naomi, Ridhaa na Selume kama ifuatavyo:

Dondoo 9

Lunga anasawiriwa kama mvumilivu kwa tendo lake la kuvumilia hali ngumu licha ya kuwa alikuwa na kazi nzuri. Kitendo hiki ni tofauti na kile cha Naomi ambaye ni mwenye tamaa, kitendo hiki kunamfanya kuvunja ndoa yake kwa sababu ya mumewe kukosa pesa. Ridhaa ana bahati mbaya kwa kupoteza familia yake yote katika mkasa wa moto. Kaisari naye anabahatika kwa kusalia na familia yake licha ya wote wanawao kubakwa. Bwanake Selume ni mkabila kwa kumkataa mkewe Selume licha ya wao kujaliwa mtoto pamoja na kuoa mke wa pili kutoka kwa kabila lao kama jamii yake ilivyotaka. Kwa upande wa pili mume wake Lucia anaoa nje ya kabila lake la Waombwe na anatetea ndoa yake licha ya uhasama wa makabila yao hapo awali. ( Rejelea kiambatisho XI)

Chanzo : Masimulizi ya mwalimu.

Mwalimu alipofundisha sifa zao Naomi, Ridhaa na Selume kwa kutumia kimya alikuza hisia za huruma miongoni mwa wanafunzi. Hii ilitokana na ugumu uliopitiwa na wahusika hawa katika riwaya hii ya *Chози la Heri*.

Vile vile, walimu walimtumia kimya katika kusisitiza kauli fulani na kuifanya hadhira kuiwazia. Hili lilijitokeza katika kufundisha riwaya hii ya *Kidagaa Kimemwozea* kwa kurejelea sifa za Mtemi Nasaba Bora kama msherati na Mwalimu Majisifu kama mwenye chuki kwa wanawe vilema.

#### Dondoo 10

Mtemi Nasaba Bora na Mkewe Bi Zuhura wanatofautiana pakubwa kupitia kwa tabia zao. Mtemi Nasaba Bora alijihusisha kimapenzi na Lowela msichana mdogo aliyepaswa kuwa shuleni huku mkewe Bi Zuhura akiwa ni mwaminifu kwake. Hatimaye Mtemi Nasaba Bora anamtaliki mkewe kwa tetesi kuwa alijihusisha kimapenzi naye mchungaji wake Amani. Imani ni mwenye mapenzi kwa watoto mashata wake Mwalimu Majisifu na anawalea kwa mapenzi kama watoto wengine wowote wale. Vijakazi wengine hawakuwapenda na kuwathamini watoto hawa walemavu wa Mwalimu Majisifu na walishindwa kustahimili kufanya kazi pale kwa zaidi ya siku mbili. Mwalimu Majisifu aliwachukia wanawe kwa kuzaliwa wakiwa vilema na hata kutaka kuwatupa mtoni. Kwa upande wa pili mkewe Bi Zuhura aliwapenda na kuwathamini wanawe na anakataa mpango wa mumewe Mwalimu Majisifu kutaka kuwatupa mtoni. (Rejelea kiambatisho XII)

Chanzo : Masimulizi ya mwalimu.

Kimya kilitumika katika kusisitiza uzinifu wa Mtemi Nasaba Bora na Ukatili wa Mwalimu Majisifu kwa wanawe vilema. Wanafunzi walichochea kuwazia sifa za wahusika hawa katika riwaya hii ya *Kidagaa Kimemwozea*.

Walimu katika kufundisha riwaya hizi za *Kidagaa Kimemwozea* na ile ya *Chози la Heri* walitumia kimya wakati wa ufundishaji wa kipengele hiki cha wahusika. Walimu walitumia kimya kila mara katika ufundishaji wa riwaya hizi mbili. Walimu walipofundisha kumrejelea mhusika, kila mara baada ya hoja moja kabla ya hoja inayofuata, kimya kilitumika. Mwalimu katika kutumia kimya hiki wanafunzi walipokea hoja hizo na kuzielewa vyema katika ufundishaji wa riwaya hizi. Hali hii ilijitokeza katika kufundisha mhusika Matuko Weye katika riwaya ya *Kidagaa Kimemwozea*. Hii ilikuwa kama ifuatavyo:

#### Dondoo 6

Matuko Weye ni mojawapo wa wapiganaji wa vita vya dunia kule Burma pamoja na wapiganaji wengine wa Kiafrika. Matuko Weye anaporejea baada ya vita anawehuka baada ya ahadi walizopewa na wakoloni kuvunjwa huku wenzao wazungu waliopigana nao vita sawa kama vile Noon alipadishwa cheo hadi cheo cha Major na anapewa pandikizi la shamba la ekari mia mbili sabini. Hali hii ilimfanya Matuko Weye kuwehuka. Matuko Weye licha ya kuwa mwehu anaupinga uongozi wake Mtemi Nasaba Bora kwa vile Nasaba Bora alikuwa kiongozi wa kiimla aliyewanyang'anya mashamba yao, fisadi na aliyewanyang'anya wanawake wao pia. Aidha, Matuko Weye anasalia katika hali hii ya uchochele kwa vile baada ya Waafrika kuchukua hatamu za uongozi hawakuwatuza na kuwadhamini wapiganaji wao wa uhuru kwa kuwatuza chohote. ( Rejelea kiambatisho VIII )

Chanzo : Masimulizi ya mwalimu.

Mwalimu katika kufundisha mhusika huyu Matuko Weye alitumia kimya kati ya hoja moja na nyingine. Hii ilikuwa katika kurejelea sifa zake kama vile mwehu, mkombozi, maskini na mwenye hekima. Kimya kilipotumika kiliashiria kukamilika kwa hoja moja na mwanzo wa hoja

inayofuata katika masimulizi ya mwalimu. Hivyo basi walimu walitumia kimya kwa njia mbalimbali katika kufundisha kwa kipengele hiki cha wahusika katika riwaya hizi.

Kwa mujibu wa King'ora (k.h.j), kimya kimetumika katika tamthilia kuisisitiza ujumbe wa tamthilia. Kimya kinapotokea katika tamthilia kilitumiwa kutoa nafasi ya wasomaji kuuwazia ujumbe. Kimya pia kinatokea baada ya tambiko la kumtakasa Sudana. Hili ni tukio muhimu sana miongoni mwa Wazanji kwa sababu litawaepusha na maangamizi. Kimya kinatokea wakati wa mapigano ambapo Wamerope wanarudi kinyumenyume huku Wazanji wakiwasogelea. Hii ni ishara ya ushindi kwa Wazanji ambao silaha yao ni ari, ujasiri na ushirikiano. Kimya kinachotokea mwisho wa mchezo kabla ya taa kuzima kinaipa hadhira nafasi ya kuwaza.

Ukweli kwamba wakati uko upande wa Wazanji umedhihirika kama walivyohakikishiwa na Sudana katika utangulizi. Kipengele cha kimya kimetumiwa katika tamthilia kuisisitiza ujumbe maalum na kuuweka mbele ili uweze kuwaziwa kwa makini.

Kimya kilijitokeza katika kufundisha kwa kipengele cha wahusika katika riwaya hizi za *Kidagaa Kimemwozea* na *Chози la Heri*. Kimya katika matini ya kidrama hasa tamthilia huonyeshwa kwa njia tatu kuu: mazungumzo kusitishwa kwa alama za dukuduku, kupitia maelezo ya utendaji au maneno kama vile 'kimya' kutumiwa moja kwa moja. Kimya huchangia katika kubadili mkondo wa mazungumzo na hutokea aghalabu wakati jambo lisilotarajiwa linatokea kuashiria hofu, wasiwasi na vilevile taharuki. Wamitila (k.h.j) katika kushughulikia kimya anasema kuwa, uzito wa kisanaa hauwezi kutambulika pamoja na athari inayotolewa na matumizi ya kimya au mtuo bila kutumiwa kwake katika tamthilia. Mtuo unaweza kutumiwa kuisisitiza kauli fulani na kuifanya hadhira kuiwazia. Pia hutumiwa kuikuza hali ya hisia kwenye usimulizi na uigizaji. Kimya huweza kutumiwa kuisisitiza kiwango cha athari ya kisanaa na maneno fulani. Pia husisitiza na kuchimuza au kulifanya jambo maalumu litokeze mbele ya mengine na kuweza kuwazia kwa makini.

Munyioki (k.h.j) katika kutafitia riwaya ya *Haini*, matumizi ya kimya yamejitokeza katika uandishi wa riwaya hii. Kipengele hiki cha kimya kimetumika kama mojawapo ya vipengele vya utendaji kimetumika katika kubadili mkondo wa mazungumzo. Kimya katika riwaya hii kilitokea aghalabu wakati jambo lisilotarajiwa linatokea kuashiria hofu, wasiwasi na vilevile taharuki. Kimya pia kimetumika kama mbinu ya kuwatesa mateka wa kule kwa Ba Mkwe. Hivyo basi, Munyioki (k.h.j) amedhihirisha kuwa kimya kinajitokeza katika uandishi wa riwaya. Matumizi haya ya kimya pia yanatumika katika kufundisha riwaya hizi.

Walimu katika kufundisha riwaya hizi za *Kidagaa Kimemwozea* na ile ya *Chози la Heri* walitumia kimya wakati wa ufundishaji wa kipengele hiki cha wahusika. Walimu katika kufundisha kwa kipengele hiki cha wahusika walitumia kimya katikati ya hoja moja na nyingine. Kimya pia kilitumika katika kuisisitiza kauli za mwalimu katika kufundisha kwa wahusika katika riwaya hizi mbili. Vile vile, walimu walitumia kimya katika kuisisitiza kiwango cha athari ya sifa tofauti za wahusika katika riwaya hizi mbili. Hivyo basi, ilikuwa dhahiri kuwa matumizi ya kimya yalikuwa muhimu katika ufundishaji wa kipengele hiki cha wahusika katika riwaya hizi mbili. Sehemu inayofuata imerejelea matumizi ya toni katika kufundisha kwa kipengele cha wahusika.

## **Toni katika Kufundisha kwa Kipengele cha Wahusika**

Toni ni kipengele mojawapo cha utendaji katika kazi za fasihi. Kufundisha riwaya hizi za *Kidagaa Kimemwozea* na *Chози la Heri* toni ilijitokeza katika kufundisha riwaya hizi. Yip (2002) anasema kwamba, toni ni kipashio cha kiisimu ambacho hutumia kidatu katika kutofautisha maana za maneno katika lugha. Kwa mujibu wa Massamba (2004) Toni ni sifa inayowakilisha kiwango pambanuzi cha kidatu cha silabi katika neno au sentensi na ambayo huweza kubadilisha maana ya neno katika sentensi hiyi kisemantiki au kisarufi.

Kwa mujibu wa Massamba (k.h.j) anaainisha toni katika aina tatu za kimsingi ambazo ni toni ya juu, toni ya chini na toni ya kati. Kwa mujibu wa Massamba (k.h.j) toni ya juu ni toni ambayo hudhahirishwa na kidatu cha juu. Toni ya kati ni toni ambayo hudhahirishwa na kidatu cha kati. Toni ya chini ni toni ambayo hudhahirishwa na kidatu cha chini. Toni hizi zilijitokeza kama ifuatavyo katika kufundisha riwaya hizi za *Kidagaa Kimemwozea* na *Chози la Heri* kama ifuatavyo.

Walimu walitumia toni ya juu katika ufundishaji wa kipengele hiki cha maudhui katika riwaya hizi za *Kidagaa Kimemwozea* na *Chози la Heri*. Toni hii ilipotumika ilikuwa muhimu kurejelea hisia kama vile furaha katika kufundisha kwa kipengele hiki cha wahusika. Toni hii pia ilitumika kuvuta nathari ya wanafunzi katika vipindi vya kufundisha kwa kipengele hiki cha wahusika katika riwaya hizi mbili. Toni ya juu pia ilitumika katika kuonya au kukashifu katika kufundisha riwaya hizi mbili.

Walimu walitumia toni katika njia tofauti katika kufundisha kwa riwaya za *Kidagaa Kimemwozea* na *Chози la Heri*. Mwalimu alitumia toni ya juu katika kufundisha kwa kipengele hiki cha wahusika katika kufundisha riwaya ya *Kidagaa Kimemwozea*. Toni hii ilijitokeza kama ifuatavyo:

Dondoo 10

Mtemi Nasaba Bora na Mkewe Bi Zuhura wanatofautiana pakubwa kupitia kwa tabia zao. Mtemi Nasaba Bora alijihusisha kimapenzi na Lowela msichana mdogo aliyepaswa kuwa shuleni huku mkewe Bi Zuhura akiwa ni mwaminifu kwake. Hatimaye Mtemi Nasaba Bora anamtaliki mkewe kwa tetesi kuwa alijihusisha kimapenzi naye mchungaji wake Amani. Imani ni mwenye mapenzi kwa watoto mashata wake Mwalimu Majisifu na anawalea kwa mapenzi kama watoto wengine wowote wale. Vijakazi wengine hawakuwapenda na kuwathamini watoto hawa walemavu wa Mwalimu Majisifu na walishindwa kustahimili kufanya kazi pale kwa zaidi ya siku mbili. Mwalimu Majisifu aliwachukia wanawe kwa kuzaliwa wakiwa vilema na hata kutaka kuwatupa mtoni. Kwa upande wa pili mkewe Bi Zuhura aliwapenda na kuwathamini wanawe na anakataa mpango wa mumewe Mwalimu Majisifu kutaka kuwatupa mtoni. (Rejelea kiambatisho XII)

Chanzo : Masimulizi ya mwalimu.

Toni hii ilijitokeza katika kurejelea wahusika Mtemi Nasaba Bora, Bi Zuhura, Imani na Mwalimu Majisifu. Mwalimu alitumia toni hii ya juu hasa kukashifu vitendo vya Mwalimu Majisifu na Mtemi Nasaba Bora. Mwalimu Majisifu anawachukia watoto wake vilema huku Mtemi Nasaba Bora akijihusisha kwa mahusiano ya kimapenzi naye Lowela licha ya kuwa na mke.

Hata hivyo, toni hii ikitumika visivyo darasani na mwalimu wakati anapofundisha kipengele hiki cha wahusika, wanafunzi huweza kuathirika kwa kunyongonyeka haraka na masimulizi ya walimu katika kufundisha riwaya hizi mbili. Walimu wanapaswa waitumie itakikanavyo kwa kuibua hisia mwafaka katika kufundisha kipengele hiki cha wahusika. Vile vile, toni hii itumiwe pamoja na toni nyinginezo kama vile toni ya chini na toni ya kati pale zipaswapo kutumika wala si bila toni hizi nyingine.

Kwa mujibu wa Massamba (k.h.j) toni ya chini ni toni ambayo hudhihirishwa na kidatu cha chini. Toni ya chini katika kufundisha kwa kipengele hiki cha wahusika katika riwaya hizi pia ilitumika katika kufundisha riwaya za *Kidagaa Kimemwozea* na *Chози la Heri*. Toni hii ilitumiwa na walimu katika kufundisha riwaya hizi. Toni hii ya chini ilikuwa muhimu sana katika kuibua hisia kama vile huruma miongoni mwa wanafunzi katika kufundisha kwa kipengele hiki cha wahusika. Kwa kurejelea kufundisha kwa wahusika katika riwaya ya *Chози la Heri*. Toni hii ilijitokeza kama ifuatavyo:

Dondoo 9

Lunga anasawiriwa kama mvumilivu kwa tendo lake la kuvumilia hali ngumu licha ya kuwa alikuwa na kazi nzuri. Kitendo hiki ni tofauti na kile cha Naomi ambaye ni mwenye tamaa, kitendo hiki kunamfanya kuvunja ndoa yake kwa sababu ya mumewe kukosa pesa. Ridhaa ana bahati mbaya kwa kupoteza familia yake yote katika mkasa wa moto. Kaisari naye anabahatika kwa kusalia na familia yake licha ya wote wanawao kubakwa. Bwanake Selume ni mkabila kwa kumkataa mkewe Selume licha ya wao kujaliwa mtoto pamoja na kuoa mke wa pili kutoka kwa kabila lao kama jamii yake ilivyotaka. Kwa upande wa pili mume wake Lucia anaoa nje ya kabila lake la Waombwe na anatetea ndoa yake licha ya uhasama wa makabila yao hapo awali. ( Rejelea kiambatisho XI)

Chanzo : Masimulizi ya mwalimu.

Mwalimu alitumia toni ya chini katika kufundisha kipengele hiki cha wahusika kwa kurejelea wahusika Lunga, Naomi, Ridhaa na Kaisari. Hii ilikuwa kwa vile mwalimu alikuwa anarejelea ugumu ambao wahusika hawa walipitia kama vile Ridhaa kuchomewa familia yote huku Naomi naye ndoa yake ikivunjika. Toni hii inatumika kuathiri hisia za wanafunzi hawa kutokana na ugumu wanaokumbana nao Lunga, Naomi, Ridhaa na Kaisari miongoni mwa wahusika wengine.

Hivyo basi, ipo haja kwa mwalimu kutumia toni vyema hasa kurejelea sifa za wahusika mwafaka. Hii ni kwa sababu, toni hii inachangia moja kwa moja kwa kuibua hisia za chini huwafanya wanafunzi kunyongonyeka haraka na masimulizi ya walimu katika kufundisha riwaya hizi mbili. Toni ya chini haichangamkiwi na haikubaliwa na walimua wengi kwa vile haivutii makini ya wanafunzi katika ufundishaji wa kipengele hiki cha wahusika. Vile vile toni hii inapotumika wanafunzi huweza kupoteza makini kwa kile mwalimu anachofundisha. Hatimaye, wanafunzi wengine huenda wasimpate mwalimu vyema anapofundisha kipengele hiki cha wahusika kwa kutosukia maneno yake vyema.

Kwa mujibu wa Massamba (k.h.j) kuna toni kati ni toni ambayo hudhihirishwa na kidatu cha kati. Toni ya kati katika kufundisha kwa kipengele hiki cha wahusika katika riwaya hizi ilitumika na walimu wengi katika kufundisha riwaya za *Kidagaa Kimemwozea* na *Chози la Heri*. Toni hii ya kati ilikuwa muhimu sana kwa vile mwalimu katika kufundisha kwa kipengele hiki cha wahusika. Toni hii ilitumika katika kufundisha hali za kawaida. Kwa kurejelea kufundisha kwa wahusika katika kufundisha riwaya ya *Chози la Heri*. Toni hii ilijitokeza kama ifuatavyo:

Dondoo 5

Mwekevu ana sifa zifuatazo; kwanza kabisa, Mwekevu ni mzalendo kwa kurejelea historia yake ya kazi ilionyesha jinsi anavyofanyia wananchi kazi vyema. Pili ni mwenye maono kutokana na sera zake kupendwa na watu. Pia, Mwekevu amezinduka kwa kushindania wadhifa wa kisiasa na mwanamume licha ya yeye kuwa mwanamke. Isitoshe, yeye ni jasiri kwa vile haogopi kusema kwa watu kinyume na watu wengi wasioweza kusema mbele ya umati wa watu. (Rejelea kiambatisho X)

Chanzo : Masimulizi ya mwalimu.

Mwalimu alitumia toni ya kati katika kufundisha sifa za Mwekevu. Mwalimu alikuwa anarejelea Mwekevu kama mtendakazi, msomi na jasiri katika kufundisha wanafunzi kuhusu sifa zake. Toni hii ilipotumika kufundisha haikuwa na athari kubwa kwa hisia za wanafunzi japo wanafunzi hawa walimsikiza mwalimu katika kufundisha riwaya hizi mbili.

Hivyo basi, ipo haja kwa mwalimu kutumia toni ya kati vyema katika kufundisha kipengele hiki cha wahusika. Hii ni kwa sababu toni hii haikuwa na athari ya moja kwa moja katika kufundisha kwa kipengele hiki cha wahusika katika riwaya hizi. Licha ya toni hii ya kati kutumiwa na walimu wengi kwa vile walisikika vyema. Ilipaswa mwalimu atumie toni zote katika kufundisha kipengele hiki cha wahusika anapofundisha kwa riwaya hizi mbili kwa kurejelea maana na athari kusudiwa katika kuwarejelea wahusika.

Walimu katika kufundisha riwaya hizi za *Kidagaa Kimemwozea na Chози la Heri* walitumia toni kwa njia tofauti katika ufundishaji wa kipengele hiki cha wahusika. Kwanza, walimu walifundisha riwaya hizi kwa kurejelea toni tofauti kwa kufundisha kipengele hiki cha maudhui. Hii ilikuwa kwa kutumia toni ya juu, toni ya kati na toni ya chini kwa nyakati tofauti katika ufundishaji wa kipengele hiki cha wahusika. Hii ilitokana na maana na hisia tofauti zilizoibuliwa kutokana na sifa tofauti za wahusika katika riwaya hizi mbili. (Rejelea Kiambatisho II). Huu ulikuwa mwelekeo mwafaka kwa vile walimu walipofundisha walitoa toni hizi vyema katika kufundisha kwa kipengele hiki cha wahusika.

Vile vile, walimu wengine walitumia toni moja katika kufundisha kwa kipengele hiki cha wahusika bila ya kubadilika. Hii ilikuwa kwa kutumia toni ya chini katika kipindi chote, toni ya kati katika kipindi chote au toni ya juu katika kipindi chote katika kufundisha kwa kipengele hiki cha wahusika katika riwaya hizi. Mtindo huu wa kutumia toni moja pekee ulipoteza maana na athari ya hisia kwa wanafunzi katika kufundisha kwa kipengele hiki katika riwaya hizi. Hivyo basi, haja ipo kwa walimu kutumia toni tofauti katika kufundisha kwa kipengele hiki cha wahusika ili mwalimu aathiri hisia zifaazo za wanafunzi na maana kusudiwa kwa kurejelea sifa tofauti za wahusika.

Toni ni muhimu katika kufundisha kipengele hiki cha wahusika katika riwaya hizi za *Kidagaa Kimemwozea na Chози la Heri*. Walimu katika ufundishaji wa kipengele hiki walitumia toni ya chini, toni ya kati na toni ya juu. Toni ya Chini ilipotumika ilikuwa muhimu katika kuibua hisia za huruma na toni ya juu ikirejelea hisia za furaha na pia kukashifu mambo katika jamii. Walimu pia katika kufundisha kwa kipengele cha wahusika walitumia toni kwa njia tofauti. Walimu wachache walitumia toni moja kuanzia mwanzo hadi mwisho wa kipindi cha wahusika. Kwa upande mwingine, walimu wengi walitumia toni hizi tatu kwa njia mseto katika kufanikisha malengo yao ya ujifunzaji.

Lengo hili la pili katika kurejelea matumizi ya masimulizi katika ufundishaji wa kipengele cha wahusika. Masimulizi haya yalijitokeza kupitia kwa matumizi ya mbinu ya kimajazi, mbinu ya kimaeezo, mbinu ya kidrama na mbinu ya ulinganuzi. Vile vile, kimya na toni pia zilijitokeza katika matumizi ya mnasimulizi katika kufundisha kwa kipengele hiki cha wahusika. Sehemu inayofuata ilirejelea lengo la tatu la la utafiti. Lengo hili lilitathmini namna masimulizi yalivyotumiwa katika mchakato wa ufundishaji wa kipengele cha msuko katika riwaya za *Kidagaa Kimemwozea* na *Chozi la Heri*.

### **Hitimisho na Mapendekezo**

Makala haya yalibaini masimulizi yalivyotumika katika ufundishaji wa kipengele cha wahusika katika riwaya hizi za *Kidagaa Kimemwozea* na ile ya *Chozi la Heri*. Kipengele hiki cha wahusika katika riwaya hizi kilijengwa kwa walimu na wanafunzi kusimulia kuhusu wahusika kwa kusawiriwa kutokana na mbinu nne za msingi. Mbinu ya majazi ilitumiwa kwa kufundisha sifa za wahusika kwa vile majina yalirejelea sifa tofauti za wahusika. Mbinu ya kimaeezo ndiyo mbinu iliyotumika sana na walimu na wanafunzi katika kufundisha riwaya hizi mbili kwa walimu na wanafunzi kutoa maelezo tofauti ya wahusika katika riwaya hizi kufanikisha kufahamu vizuri sifa za wahusika. Mbinu ya maigizo pia ilijitokeza katika kufundisha riwaya hizi kupitia kwa walimu na wanafunzi kuigiza kwa sifa tofauti za wahusika.

Hatimaye mbinu ya ulinganuzi ilijitokeza katika kufundisha kipengele cha wahusika kurejelea wahusika tofauti huku tofauti zao zikisisitizwa. Hivyo basi, ipo haja ya mbinu hizi kutumiwa kwa mseto katika ufundishaji wa riwaya hizi za *Kidagaa Kimemwozea* na *Chozi la Heri*.

Walimu katika kufundisha riwaya hizi za *Kidagaa Kimemwozea* na ile ya *Chozi la Heri* walitumia kimya wakati wa ufundishaji wa kipengele hiki cha wahusika. Walimu katika kufundisha kipengele hiki cha wahusika walitumia kimya katikati ya hoja moja na nyingine. Kimya pia kilitumika katika kusisitiza kauli za mwalimu katika kufundisha wahusika katika riwaya hizi mbili. Vile vile, walimu walitumia kimya katika kusisitiza kiwango cha athari ya sifa tofauti za wahusika katika riwaya hizi mbili. Hivyo basi, ilikuwa dhahiri kuwa matumizi ya kimya yalikuwa muhimu katika ufundishaji wa kipengele hiki cha wahusika katika riwaya hizi mbili.

Toni ni muhimu katika kufundisha kipengele hiki cha wahusika katika riwaya hizi za *Kidagaa Kimemwozea* na *Chozi la Heri*. Walimu katika ufundishaji wa kipengele hiki walitumia toni ya chini, toni ya kati na toni ya juu. Toni ya Chini ilipotumika ilikuwa muhimu katika kuibua hisia za huruma na toni ya juu ikirejelea hisia za furaha na pia kukashifu mambo katika jamii. Vile vile, toni ya kati ilipojitokeza ilitumika katika kutoa maelezo ya moja kwa moja. Katika kufundisha kwa kipengele hiki, mitindo miwili ilijitokeza huku kikundi kimoja kikitumia toni moja kuanzia mwanzo hadi mwisho na cha pili kikitumia toni hizi kwa njia mseto katika kufanikisha malengo yao ya ujifunzaji.

Mapendekezo ya utafiti huu ni kuwa walimu watilie maanani matumizi ya mbinu tofauti mbali na zile zilizotafitiwa katika kufundisha kwa kipengele cha wahusika katika riwaya. Vile vile, vipengele vinginevyo vya utendaji katika ufundishaji wa kipengele cha wahusika mbali na toni na kimya pia vitafitiwe. Tafiti pia zifanywe kurejelea matumizi ya masimulizi katika ufundishaji

wa kipengele cha wahusika katika tanzu nyingine kama vile hadithi fupi, ushairi, fasihi simulizi na tamthilia. Aidha, tafiti zilenge riwaya nyinginezo za Kiswahili.

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## Social Media and Mother Tongue: An analysis of the use of Dholuo in Facebook

Kashara Juma Erick  
Moi University

### Abstract

Social media has become an important tool that makes it possible for people to communicate regardless of their geographical area and language. It has enabled people from the same ethnic community to stay in touch with their home country and maintaining their linguistic and cultural identity. Different forms of social media allow people to communicate in various ways such as; blogs, social networks (Facebook) microblogs (Twitter), wikis (Wikipedia), video podcasts, and photos sharing (Instagram and Snapchat). Facebook as one of these media, has been globally ranked as one of the most used social platforms with millions of users. It has come to yield unprecedented opportunities for the use of mother tongue as it offers the possibility of exchanging in limitless numbers of text messages, images and videos. Such options allow mother tongue users to write text and practice new vocabulary through interaction. Facebook groups and pages created by members who speak the same mother tongue allow them to share texts, images, graphics, and videos through their mother tongue. In Facebook, the Luo speaking community has created a group called *True Luo's* that allow them to interact and share in Dholuo. Therefore, this paper analyzes the use of the Dholuo on Facebook with a view to highlight and interrogate the manifestation of politics of language, ethnicity, and identity in the Facebook group known as *True Luos* as a way of reclaiming and reasserting ethnic identities in the context of overbearing ethno linguistic groups and identities which has been marginalized by the online mainstream digital media and social media. Content analysis was used to analyze posts in the *True Luo* Facebook group by the users, data was collected through content analysis and analyzed quantitatively. The paper demonstrates how Facebook has helped the growth of the Dholuo as most of the posts in the group were done in the Dholuo and some of the topics discussed were Luo cultural values, celebrity gossip, politics, and entertaining videos and photos. Therefore, the rise of social media has enabled the growth of mother tongue language.

**Keywords:** Mother tongue, Social media, Dholuo, Facebook.

### Introduction

Africa is one of the regions in the world with extensive linguistic diversity. It is estimated that the world has 6,000 plus languages but among them, it is approximated that Africa has more than 2,000 languages, which represent about a third of the world's languages (Ethnologue and SIL International, 2015). However, many scholars such as Djite (2008), Nettle and Romaine (2001) observe that not much empirical research has been done and this creates more gaps in asserting some needed facts about the linguistic situation in Africa. Kenya is among countries within Africa with multilingual and multiethnic with around 42 languages. The indigenous languages spoken in Kenya belong to the Nilotic, Bantu and Cushitic language families. According to Webb and Kembo-Sure (2000), there are 42 languages in Kenya. Ogechi (2003) states that there are 42 codes in Kenya while Obiero (2008) states that many sources indicate that Kenya has between 30 and 60 languages, while according to Ethnologue and SIL International (2015), there are 68 languages in Kenya which include: *Aweer, Borana, Burji, Chichonyi, Chidzihana-chikauma, Chidigo, Chiduruma, Daasanach, Dahalo, Dawida, Dholuo, Ekegusii, Gichuka, Gikuyu, Kamba, Keiyo, Kiambu, Kigiryama, Kimiiru, Kipfokomo, Kipsigis, Kiswahili, Kitharaka, Kiwiwana, Kuria, Lubukusu, Luidakho-luisukha-lutirich, Lukabaras, Lulogooli, Lutachoni, Maasai, Markweeta, Mwimbi-Muthambi, Nandi, Nyala, Okiek, Olukhayo, Olumarachi, Olumarama, Olunyole, Olusamia, Olushisa, Olutsotso, Oluwanga, Orma, Pokoot, Rendile, Sabaot, Sagalla, Samburu, Somali, Suba, Taveta, Terik, Teso, Torgen, Turkana, Waata and Yaaku*. Among the groups in Kenya, the Bantu group has the largest number of speakers. Among the Bantu languages, Kiswahili is the most widely used because it is used both as a first and second language.

According to the latest Kenyan Population Census (2019), the largest community natives speakers are Kikuyu 17%, Luhya 14%, Luo 11%, Kalenjin 13%, Kamba 10%, Kisii 6%, Meru 4% other African 13% and Non- African ( Asian European and Arabs) 1%. According to the Constitution of Kenya 2010, both Kiswahili and English are the official languages. This means that the two languages should perform equal roles in the whole country. However, in reality, English, presumably because of its long history as the de facto official language in Kenya, still performs more official roles than Kiswahili. Some conscious effort is needed to make Kiswahili perform the roles it is entitled to by the Constitution of Kenya 2010. The Constitution further states that it promote and protect the diversity of language of the people of Kenya and promotes the development and use of indigenous languages, Kenya Sign language, Braille and other communication formats and technologies accessible to persons with disabilities.

Mazrui and Mazrui (1998), states that the politics of language and belonging are contentious and delicate matters in most of the African countries, Kenya in particular. He argues that most of the national boundaries of most African countries are not underpinned by linguistic identities. Several ethnic groups speaking diverse languages dwell in the same country and compete for the same public spaces in a single nation-state. In Kenya, the battle for the same public spaces has been between major dominant tribes such as Kikuyu, Luos, and Kalenjins among others. According to Ndhlovu and Gatsheni (2009), contestations revolving around the supremacist positions of certain ethnic groups, their language and cultural identities, and marginalization and exclusion of other ethnolinguistic identities in public spaces, are commonplace in scholarly debates. The contestation is mostly motivated by politics of identity and belonging which include the condemnation of English Language hegemony in the public domain, which includes the media and education.

Even though Kenya is known as a multilingual nation, Kenya's two official languages, namely English and Kiswahili continue to dominate the media and the education sector. Although English is given preferential treatment and reinforcement in the mainstream media, it remains very difficult to ascertain the percentage of the people who speak, read and write it effectively in Kenya. Mazrui and Mazrui (1998) point out that English is yet to develop a large number of native speakers, writers, and readers in Kenya. In contrast, Kenya's local languages are marginalized and viewed as impediments to people's succession education by teachers who serve as government agents. These erroneous views by the school system lead to the stigmatization and devalorization of Kenya's local languages in favor of English, as is the case in many other African states (Bokamba 2008). However, these erroneous views are not cognizant of the roles indigenous languages play as the people's initial identity markers and as major tools for the politics of language. They also serve as an important role in religious and community development as it's the language that the ethnic group identifies and understand well. Unfortunately, these important roles associated with the indigenous languages are taken for granted and Kenya's local languages continue to be marginalized by the mainstream media in Kenya in online platforms and social media.

Media has a great influence on its citizens as an information disseminating tool. The government of Kenya controls the Kenya Broadcasting Corporation (KBC) which operates in Kiswahili and English but with most programs broadcasted in English. KBC broadcast in two levels that is television and radio. For the Television programs, it strictly broadcast in Kiswahili and English while it also has two radio station that broadcast in English and Kiswahili. The government has also established regional radio stations that are run in at least 17 major local languages. The languages include; *Kikuyu, Kikamba, Kimaasai, Kimeru, Kiembu, Dholuo, Kisii, Teso, Luhya, Kalenjin, Kuria, Teso, Boran, Rendile, Burji and Turkana* (Kiarie 2004). After multiparty in 1992, airwaves were liberalized and this led to the development of more private FM radio stations programming in local languages throughout the day. Some of these stations include; *Mulembe FM in Luyha, Musyi FM in Kamba, Ramogi FM in Dholuo and Kameme FM in Kikuyu* among others. In television, there has been also new stations that broadcast in local languages that include *Inooro TV in Kikuyu, Lolwe Tv in Dholuo and KassTV in Kalenjin* among others. Though in mainstream media that is leading national television stations still broadcast in English or Kiswahili. In print media, English publications dominate the market. All the leading newspapers in Kenya are all published in English except on privately local daily newspaper in Kiswahili called *Taifa Leo*. In digital media, all digital publications are done in either English or Kiswahili.

Even though mainstream media has tried to cater to the local African language, its presence has not been felt in the online media where the majority of Kenyans are present. The online communities feel that their language and cultural identities are being undermined in social media. Regrettably, online broadcast and print media in Kenya have not done any better in challenging ethnolinguistic hegemonies of whatever form or accommodating marginalized online virtualized community space to speak against their marginalization and exclusion. Instead, they participate in legitimizing discriminatory language choices and cultural representations, and in an extreme case, other minority linguistic and cultural identities are circuitously ridiculed (Mpofu and Mutasa, 2014).

The expansion of digital media technologies that support social media has seen the sprouting and consolidation of active sub-national ethnolinguistic communities in online space. These ethnolinguistic virtual communities are made up of individuals who are connected by them sharing the same language, ethnic identities, history and emotional state of suppressed cultural identities and aspirations. Against the argument that social media are liberating in the sense that they provide platforms and spaces for free participation of people (Chibuwe and Ureke, 2016). In Kenya, the proliferation of internet-enabled mobile devices has led to the rapid development of social networking sites, resulting in the continued reconfiguration of ways in which individuals or groups access social media platforms. Kenya leads the ranking of internet access among other African countries according to data that was released by the Communication Authority of Kenya (CAK) which indicated that the total subscribers by 2019 were 45.7 million (CAK 2019). The report further indicates that the majority access the internet via mobile phones. The report also ranked WhatsApp and Facebook as the most commonly used social media sites. Therefore, this paper considers the ethnolinguistic communities that exist in online space which are from time to time, formed and expanding on the leading social media platforms which include Facebook.

This paper discusses the existence of the Dholuo language among the Luo community on Facebook. The focus of the paper is on how a section of the Luo community uses a digital platform on Facebook known as *True Luos*. It highlights and interrogates the manifestation of politics of language, ethnicity, and identity in the Facebook group known as *True Luos* as a way of reclaiming and reasserting ethnic identities in the context of overbearing ethnolinguistic groups and identities which has been marginalized by the online mainstream digital media and social media.

The study focused on social media specifically Facebook known as *True Luos* used to interact among themselves. *True Luos* is a group on Facebook that is open to all luos. According to the group motto, it is an appreciation group for the luos community. Other than that, it aims at promoting unity and encouraging Luo culture, ethnicity, language and pride. The group had about 397,099 members at the time of the study was conducted. It was created on 20th January 2014 and it has remained active since its creation.

## **Methodology**

The paper is an outcome of an ethnographic study of indigenous African languages online communities that exist on social networking platforms. Online social networking sites such as Facebook allows members to create or join various Facebook groups and pages. In the groups and pages, the users have the option to participate in the groups and share ideas. According to Kozinets (2015), Netnography is the branch of ethnography that analyses the free behavior of individuals on the internet that uses online marketing research techniques to provide useful insight. Hine (2000), describe netnography as a virtual ethnography, a new approach of conducting thorough ethnographic research on online communication networks by combining archival work, participation, and observation. That is, it is a process of constructing and conducting an ethnographic study using the virtual (online) environment as the site of research.

I joined the group under study that is *True Luos* as one of the requirements of a netnographic study. I did this in 2018, one year before the study which I conducted in 2019. I participated and observed the posted matters in the group, as well as analyzing the subsequent comments and discussions on the *True Luo* group. Even though the netnography study depends more on computer-based methods of data collection, participant observation and content analysis remained a critical element in the ethnographic study (Miller and Slater, 2000). Apart from observation, the paper also obtained data using content analysis, according to Krippendorff (2004), which is a research technique for making replicable and valid inferences from texts (or other meaningful) matter to the contexts of their use. Content analysis was conducted on one of the selected Facebook groups for this study that is *True Luo* since it's among the groups that converse in the Dholuo language and has got more active members. The group was studied for a period of three months that is, from October 2019 to December 2019.

The study approach was quantitative and through thematic analysis, the study obtained data from *True Luos*. The paper focused on pinpointing, probing and highlighting patterns that are themes in the posts and discussions which are inclined to language, ethnic and identity politics. According to Kozinets (2015), netnography is immensely useful in revealing interaction styles and personal and group narratives in networked communities and is an archive of life and a window into hidden worlds. Therefore using this approach the paper explores the use of Dholuo language on socially networked societies on Facebook to understand their language politics, ethnicity, and identity narratives and the hidden conceptions of domination, marginalization, and exclusion.

### **Conceptual Framework**

With the emergence of social media, marginalized communities have found an opportunity where they can express themselves without discrimination. Therefore, this paper was grounded in the concepts of hegemony, alternative media, and computer-mediated communication. This concept was suitable for the study since the paper focused on the English language dominating other African languages in the online mainstream media that has led to most of the African languages felt left out in most of the debates. Since they felt left out by the dominant English, some of the speakers of the African languages have resorted to social media platforms such as Facebook to help them be active. Hegemony is a Gramscian concept which means domination through ideology or discourse (Lash, 2007). According to Wiley (2000), in particular, linguistic or cultural hegemony is realized when dominant groups create a consensus by convincing other linguistic groups to accept their language norms and used as standard.

According to Mhalanga (2013), speaking African language in the mainstream media deliberating of language politics and politics of belonging in African countries is volatile and considered tribalism, retrogressive and divisive to the nation especially in Kenya which has experienced post-election violence caused by ethnicity. Therefore, people belonging to ethnolinguistic communities whose languages and cultural identities are undermined in social media have resorted to what Fuchs (2010) calls alternative or critical media. According to Fuchs (2010), alternative media interrogates domination and articulates standpoints of the oppressed and dominated groups and people, in the process arguing for the existence of an

egalitarian society. While Pappacharissi (2002), explains that the emergence of new digital media technologies offers alternative communicative platforms that function as an online public sphere or virtual spheres. In this paper, the concept of hegemony emerges when English dominates other African languages in the social media, therefore, the Luo speaking group has come up with a group known as *True Luos* in Facebook to allow them to share their culture in Dholuo, identify themselves as Luos and discuss their politics in Dholuo.

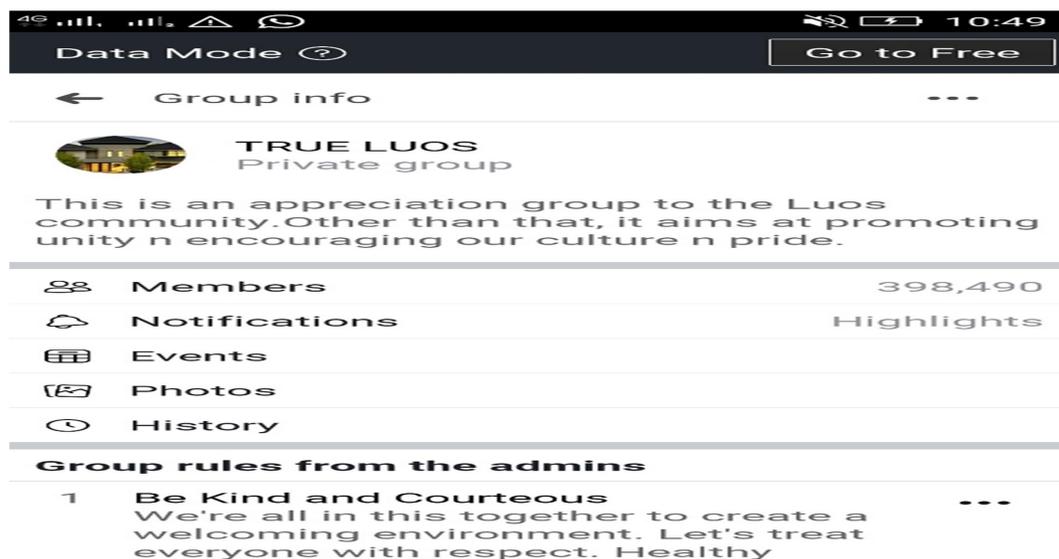
### Interrogating Counter-Discourse of Dholuo as a Minority Language on Facebook

During content analysis, 1026 posts were analyzed and some of the codes that emerged included; the language that was being used in the group, the type of discussion that was coded as political, social and economic. Under the codes, themes were developed from the social, political and social codes that emerged from the Facebook page.

#### The Number of People in the Groups

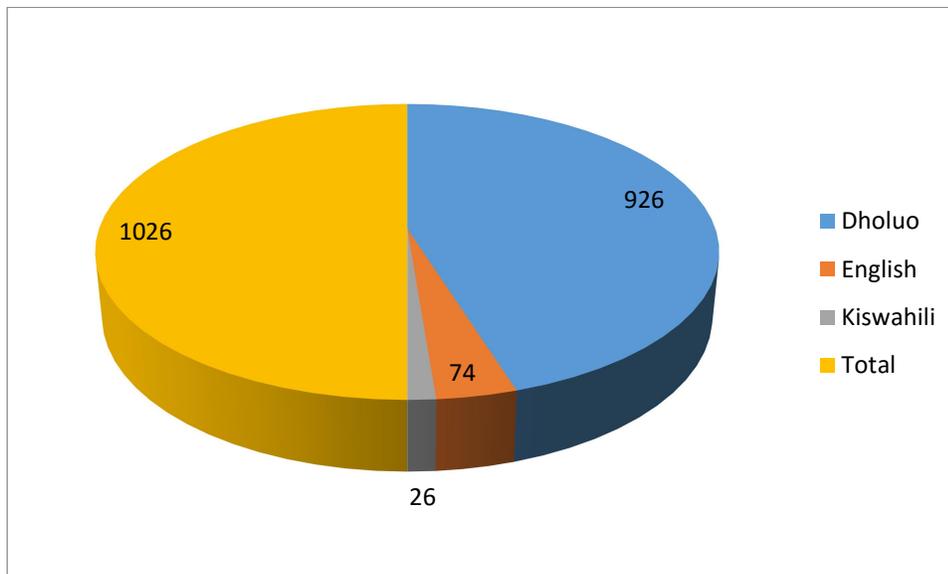
The study established that the group has 398,490 members during the time of the study. This is indicated by the screenshot of the group that was taken during the study. *True Luo* group members join the group either by request, approval or invitation by a friend. This process is normally managed by the administrators of the group. The problem associated with the online virtual communities is, they are typified by fragmentation, heterogeneity, and fluidity of association, arising primarily from the case of opting out (Lievrouw and Livingstone 2006). The online communities can also be misused since there are no restrictions, there are sexually abusive posts. The numbers shows that the group is active and that's why it's able to attract a large number of members. This is presented by figure 4.1 which is a screenshot from the group.

**Figure 4.1 Screenshot from *True Luos* Facebook group.**



#### 4.2 languages spoken in the group

The figure 4.2 shows analysis of the languages used by Facebook users in the group. It represents 1026 posts that were analyzed during the study.

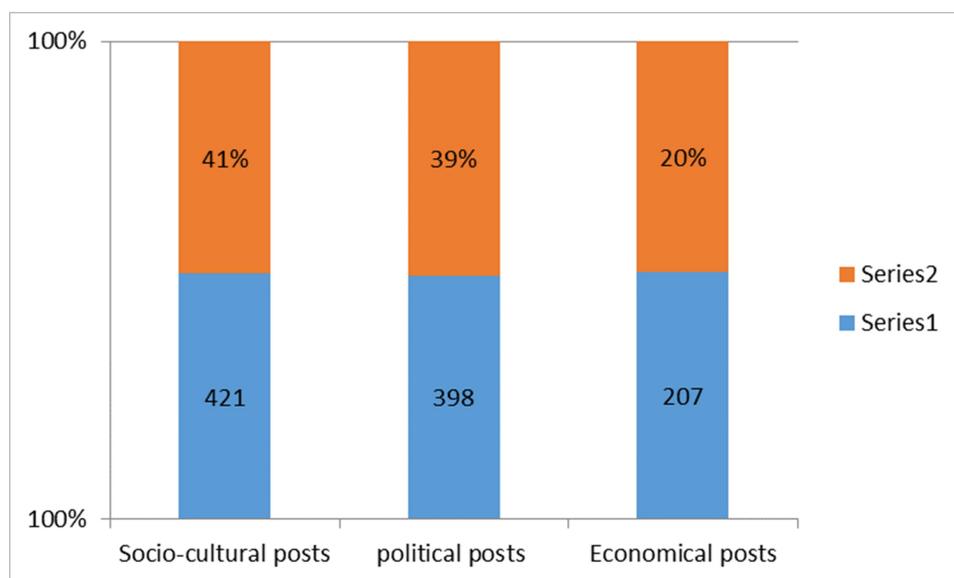


In the group, from the analyzed posts, it was found out that most of the respondents post in Dholuo as compared to English and Kiswahili. According to the number of posts that were analyzed during the period of study, it was established that out of the 1,026 posts that were analyzed in this study for three months, it was found out that 926 post that is 90% of the total posts was in Dholuo language, 74 posts that are 7% were in English while only 26 of the posts that are 3% were in Kiswahili language. From the study, it was established that *True Luos* that has been formed by the Dholuo speaking community have formed an online space for identification as Luos and also resist other languages dominance such as English among others. The study was in line with Safran and Luis's (2012) submission that speakers of minority languages often attach importance to their languages in the interest of identity maintenance, even if their use of major languages appears to be more practical. Members of the *True luos* community also insisted on the revival and legitimating of their Dholuo language and culture as a sign of Facebook being an alternative media to express themselves. While Macri (2011), in his study noted that the media have been recognized for having the power and ability to form, sustain, reflect and perform identities. In this study, it was also established that Facebook supported by digital media technologies has acted as alternative media for the minority groups in the online media such as the Luo community. This accounts for the dominance of Dholuo posts in the group.

### **Types of Posts in *True Luos***

The posts in the group that were analyzed were categorized into three namely; social, political and economic to determine which types of posts dominates the group. The results were presented in figure 4.3 below:

***Figure 4.3 types of posts posted***



The study found out that out of the 1026 posts that were analyzed during the study, 421 of the post (41%) were social-cultural posts, 398 posts ((39%) were political posts and 207 (20%) were economical posts . This shows how luos are deeply rooted in cultural aspects followed by politics which in the Kenya, they are key players in the political arena. As suggested by the name of the group *True Luos*, it suggests that the group only belongs to Luos especially those who regard themselves as true luos who understand the Luo culture, socio-economic and political life. The study found out that discourses in the posts and comments are done in the Dholuo language and this has helped to expand the political and socio-cultural freedom of Luos in the virtual media. This shows that there is a strong interest in asserting the perceived and aspired language identity of the group members. It's like the group members in True Luos demonstrating something that they miss in the offline communities in their social, economic and political everyday life.

According to Kietzmann et al (2011), social media are characterized by several mutually exclusive functional blocks that facilitate their functionality. The functional blocks include identity, conversation, sharing, presence, relationship, and groups. Through these functional blocks, *True luos* users, uses the group to share more socio-cultural post than other categories.

#### 4.3.1 Socio-Cultural Posts

**The table 4.1 social cultural posts in true luos**

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Men sending fare to ladies	173	41
Having houses in the village	53	13
Intermarriages	157	37
Others	38	09
Total	421	100

From table 4.1, it was established that 41% of the posts posted in the group were of men sending fare. On posts about men sending bus fares to a woman to visit them but the woman

fails to show up, members share their experience on this topic and providing the way forward by both men and women participating in the reason why this happens. 37% were about intermarriages. Intermarriage also dominated this discussion after one of the Luo celebrities posted condemning Luo women and suggesting women from other tribes were better in marriage compared to Luo women. This received a backlash from women and other women though some of the men agreed that women from other tribes make better wives. Dowry payment and other Luo cultures also dominated the discussion in the *True Luos*. 13% were discussions on having houses in the village. The study found out that some of the cultural topics that dominate are on some of the cultures that have faded and those that have led to the Luo community lag behind in terms of development. For example, during the festive seasons, pictures of those who have houses at home and some thatched grassed houses were circulating in the group with members asking where they are found and other discussions on social cultural forms 9%. This included how the married people are supposed to handle their phones while in the house, for example should you touch your husband's phone, how to make your marriage partner loves you more, wife inheritance, traditional culture like how one is supposed to pay dowry among others.





The above screenshots illustrate some of the social-cultural topics discussed in the group by members, the 1<sup>st</sup> screenshot above is a member asking if it's now safe to send bus fare to ladies or they will use the money and don't come to visit you. The second screenshot, the member is warning members not to touch their husband's phones. While the last one explains some of the things you can do as a woman if you want your husband to love you.

## Political Posts

Most of the political post in the group were either about those who supports Raila Amollo Odinga or those who were against him. Therefore political post were analyzed and presented in the table below.

**Table 4.2 political Posts**

Political posts	Frequency	Percentage
Supporting Raila	273	69
Against Raila	41	10
Other posts	84	21
<b>Total</b>	<b>398</b>	<b>100</b>

From the table 4.2, 69% of the political posts were about Raila, 10% were posts against Raila while 21% discusses other political aspects which included the county and international politics. According to the latest general election held in 2017 Luos had Raila Odinga as their kingpin according to results that were released by independent electoral and boundaries commission (IEBC) showed that President Uhuru Kenyatta got 54% while Odinga got 44% in

2017 elections in Kenya. Therefore the True Luo is dominated by politics praising Raila and his allies and contrary to that is not allowed, due to the handshake that occurs between President Uhuru Kenyatta and Raila Odinga, in the group, the members support the unity of two and this also dominates the discussion in the group.

Those who post against Raila Odinga receive harsh comments condemning them. Members follow stories concerning Raila including posting videos of his whereabouts. The page is also dominated by the discussions of how governors of Luo Nyanza work with ranking and discussing their development records. The study also found out that most of the people don't support deputy president William Ruto in the group as they see him as an enemy to Raila, therefore, most of the posts posted by members in the group always receive a backlash.



From the above screenshots, the first one is a member asking the group members who they will vote in the next election in 2022. In the comment section majority said they will vote for Raila. In the second screenshot is a member claiming there are those who have joined the group and now posting in Kiswahili supporting a politician who is their competing Raila Odinga. From the comments most of them suggested that the Deputy President supporters has joined the group and now posting in Kiswahili to campaign for Deputy President William Ruto. From this, it shows that the Luo community are using the group to discuss Luo politics.

## Economic Posts

### 4.3 Economic posts

Political posts	Frequency	Percentage
Comparison of Luo counties development	54	26
Job vacancies	21	10
Marketing products	37	18
entertainment	49	24
Other posts	46	22
<b>Total</b>	<b>207</b>	<b>100</b>

From table 4.3 above, 26% of the posts are post comparing development between the Luo community counties, 10% were posts of job vacancies, 18% were posts of marketing products, entertainment post were 24% and other economic posts were 22%. The group was dominated by post comparing the development in all the four counties that speak Dholuo that is Homabay, Migori, Kisumu and Siaya County. In the group they also share job vacancies in various fields, those who have specialized in various fields also market themselves and it also used to sell products by members. The dominating posts were constructors displaying some of the buildings they have constructed and asking members to contact them for such jobs, others were house jobs among others.

The group was also dominated by entertainment (24%) of the economic posts. The most dominant was topics discussing Gor Football club, this is a club own by Luo community therefore it dominated among the football topics. In music, Luo celebrities dominated, with most of the discussion on who is better than who and members allowed to vote to decide who is better than the other. For example in Luos have a type of music called Ohangla, members always asked which Ohangla artist is the king of Ohangla. The platform also helps the artist to launch and market their songs. It also promotes the comedians in the Luo Nyanza as the comedians share their jokes in the Dholuo language in the group.

12:48

Otieno's post

Otieno Jakobange ▶ TRUE LUOS  
27-Nov-2018

Nyaka sani e luo Nyanza,  
county ma dongruok nitie bar  
chakore migori, Homa Bay,  
kisumu kasto siaya.  
#teamtangatanga....

9

9 10

Ochieng Niuton  
**HIGH FIVE!**

Write a comment...

18:00

Emmy's post

Emmy Nyar Diblo ▶ TRUE LUOS  
9 hours ago

Amanyò tich wthn kisumu plz  
ngama nigì vacancy o txt a  
walo kando

35

35 50

Load previous comments...

Ken Jakoduol Snr  
Idwaro tich yes, isomo ango? Let's  
start from there

Write a comment...



From the above screenshots, the first one is asking which county is more developed. In the second post, a member is looking for a job vacancy. While the third and fourth is about entertainment. In the third photo, members are asked to vote on the best luo artist while on the last photo is one of the luo artist thanking fans for their support to him.

The posts and comments in True Luo demonstrate why there are reasons for the rise and growth of the use of Dholuo on Facebook. The paper reveals that the rise of this development of *True Luos* is to resist the use of the English language and other cultures in the online space. Since the language has been left out by the majority in the media and education, they use it to obtain and discuss their cultural, social, and political and content in a language that they identify with that is Dholuo.

### 5.0 Recommendations

1. During the content analysis, there were more posts that were not morale to the luo culture such as pornographic posts, to control this, the group administrators should approves the posts before they are posted in the group.

Even though the name of the group is True Luos, some of the posts were still posted in English and Kiswahili. Therefore for the identity and development of Dholuo, most of the members in the group should post Dholuo.

From the posts in the group, most of the people who posted could not write some words or express themselves in Dholuo as they grew up in town and were not taught the language by the

parents, therefore parents should teach their children mother tongue to help them in future to post fluently in Dholuo.

## Conclusion

Kenya is among countries within Africa with multilingual and multiethnic. The indigenous languages spoken in Kenya belong to the Nilotic, Bantu and Cushitic language families. There are 68 languages in Kenya. According to the Constitution of Kenya 2010, both Kiswahili and English are the official languages. This means that the two languages should perform equal roles in the whole country. However, in reality, English, presumably because of its long history as the de facto official language in Kenya, still performs more official roles than Kiswahili. However, it's a struggle to fit all the ethnolinguistic representation in the public spaces, including media and education. Kenyan digital media and the social media has not done much in challenging existing ethnolinguistic hegemonies of whatever form or in providing marginalized languages with the space to speak against their marginalization in the digital media. Instead, they participate in legitimizing those linguistic and cultural identities. Even though the academic platform provides free space for the deliberation of the volatile language and politics of belonging, the public space in Kenya is a restricted one. Therefore this paper has established that the development of digital media technologies and accessibility of mobile phones that can easily access the internet and support online social networking platforms has seen the propagation and consolidation of active indigenous languages on online groups. The groups are made up of individuals who are connected by sharing the same language, history and emotional state of suppressed languages, identities, and aspirations. The social media has enabled Luos in the *True Luos* to identify themselves as luos, discuss their culture and their politics without the restriction of time-space and restrictions. The paper is, therefore, contributes to the national identity among the ethnic languages, political identity and online media platforms in postcolonial Africa that promotes the indigenous mother tongue languages in Africa, and Kenya in particular. It provides a much-needed examination of the contestation between English language and indigenous African languages in Africa, on online social networking platforms, particularly Facebook.

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## Mother Language in the Early Years Education in Kenya: The Place and Role of Folklore

1Boswell Owuor, 2Carolyn Omulando  
Alupe University College

### Abstract

In 1953, UNESCO made a pronouncement that stressed the importance of educating children in their mother language. Language is the vehicle that carries the folklore of a group of people expressed in myriad form, basically embodying the culture, which is the way of life of its speakers. Actually, language reflects the culture – beliefs and worldview of the folk that speak it. Folklore includes the traditional elements of the way of life of a group of people and the creative expressions developing naturally as part of this life. Examples of folklore include: folk songs, dances, tales and the resultant activities from their beliefs. Folklore encompasses a child's heritage and all the groups associated with the child such as family, neighbourhood, school, church, race, tribe and nationality. The most significant folklore to a child is that to which the child has the closest ties and closely relates to their worldview. Folklore has also been seen as a generic term that designates customs, beliefs, traditions, tales, magical practices and proverbs; in short the accumulated knowledge of a homogeneous unsophisticated people passed on through the generations by word of mouth. An emerging conceptualization of folklore as expressed by some scholars incorporates riddles, chants, blessings, curses, oaths, insults, retorts, taunts, teases, toasts, greeting, leave taking formulas, drama (mime), folk medicine, names and nicknames among folklore. Language –especially one's mother language is the expression of both culture and the individuality of the speaker who perceives the world through language. Expert opinion, as expressed through literature on the significance of mother language notes that, it is the best and most natural means of self-expression. Therefore, this paper explores the opportunities available to teachers in early years' education (EYE) in Kenya as an avenue for establishing a strong education system that considers the wholesome education of a child by incorporating folklore personified in the mother language(s). This discourse is advanced from the backdrop of the benefits accruing as significant for both the personal development of the child and the larger society.

**Keywords:** mother language, folklore, culture, early years' education, child development

### Introduction

Why focus on folklore? Particularly in our contemporary and progressive society where the term conjures up thoughts of ignorant and backward people. This is the question that begs as we embark on our journey to explore folklore integration within EYE classrooms in Kenya today, with particular reference to the teaching of language and its use within the classroom setting. It is imperative at this point to mention that, communities in the present-day society are continuously grappling with elements of ethnic identity, seemingly striving to trace, understand and go back to their roots, more because they do not seem to have a concrete comprehension of who they are. Concepts like: self-cultural, self-ethnic and self-social awareness are represented by rather remote impressions when juxtaposed against existing

realities. In reality, many people live within indefinite boundaries of exactly who they really are, and are consequently compelled to rethink, redefine and unmask their identities as they relate to and within diverse social environments. Given this backdrop, a clear understanding of folklore is essential so that we provided a sound platform upon which carry on the conversation of the ideas in this paper.

The term "folk" insinuates people belonging to a group assigned certain shared features like religion, culture, traditions and language. However, whereas language is an element of folklore in its own right, it actually acts as the carrier and transmitter of the folklore from one generation to another. Essentially, folklore is typically contained and expressed in oral tradition – the spoken word or the oral language – which in reality is clothed in our mother languages. Barasa and Omulando (2019) conceptualize this form of oral linguistic representation as the “African idiom”, seen from a broad sense with different levels and forms of communication; with intertwined elements making up the whole: the tongue (the word) – which embodies creativity, artistry and symbolism – thus defining the communicative power of the African idiom. In addition, as expressed by Dundes, (1965) speech is a primary and productive skill of language as used by a specific community, and performs a very significant part in containing, carrying, transmitting and communicating the varied products of the experience and knowledge of the people and community. The spoken word not only encompasses the cognitive, cultural and social effects of the society/community, but also profiles the trends of that society/community. Thus, orality is the symbol of a people’s culture and identity. Borrowing from the thoughts of these authors, this all-encompassing sense of folklore, brings to light the fact that folklore is the key to the understanding of our cultural and identity realities. In essence, digging deeper into an understanding of folklore suggests an all-inclusive phenomenon that includes everything that is connected to human life and tells a story of a group of people and/or a community and their worldviews. In addition, it essentially represents all the categories of human culture including the spiritual and material components. It is the oral tradition often used as a tool of voicing our social realities, achievements and predicaments. This is because it constitutes the worldview of a particular language group of people or community expressed through their customs, beliefs, attitudes, life style, joys, sorrows, entertainments, events, states, habits, traditions and so forth. It is usually manifested in myths, legends, fairy tales, proverbs or sayings, idioms, riddles, tales, poetry, puns, anecdotes, jokes, dance, songs, epics and rituals along other forms of artistic expression like folk painting, artefacts like folk costumes and folk theatre. All these are preserved and passed down through their oral tradition.

Having socked our minds with an understanding of the concept of folklore, what it entails, how it was practiced and how it was and is maintained, now it is more visible that the richness within it can be harnessed for learning purposes within Kenyan schooling environments. It is important to critically think about these possibilities because in most African countries as noted by Barasa and Omulando (2019) and Wangia, Furaha, and Kikech, (2014), the colonial languages are mainly used for official purposes and as languages of education. This is a situation which according to Orwenjo, Njoroge, Ndung’u, and Phyllis, Mwangi, (2014) (2014) has been fuelled by the highly multilingual state in Africa. This multiplicity of languages has created a number of challenges, especially in education, as many African countries draft and

implement their language policies,” (p. 1). “... it is evident that many African countries still have to resolve many linguistic issues, (Wangia, Furaha, & Kikech, 2014, p. 11).

In our view, this would imply that mother languages, the carriers of folklore, have not been assigned defined roles within education circles, and if they have, their roles are being undermined, either deliberately or due to ignorance. Our support for integration of folklore in and for education is entrenched within the advocacy by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) which has encouraged mother tongue instruction in primary education since 1953 (UNESCO, 1953, 2003 & 2008). It further commits to multilanguage education, emphasising the central role of mother language(s) as an integral part of formal education in achieving Education for All (EFA), (UNESCO, 2003, 2008) and advocates protecting children’s indigenous languages for purposes of preserving the linguistic diversity, through bilingual education, (UNESCO, 2008).

The foregoing sentiments do not necessarily imply that, African countries have not made any efforts to bring on board African and mother languages in educational contexts. In very subtle ways, this has been done by highlighting their roles and value in the general society. Barasa and Omulando (2019) observe that, there is generally a great desire to uphold an African image by maintaining the sociocultural prestige that comes with the identification and use of indigenous African languages; the focus on indigenous languages basically, geared towards the development, promotion, and protection of the identity of various users. They further advance that, this is done with the aim of providing a platform upon which various indigenous language users can understand and appreciate their linguistic and cultural diversity and be able to promote homogeneity in the manner in which they relate. For example, narrowing down to the focus in this paper, in Kenya – it is noted in the Constitution of Kenya 2010, that the national language of the Republic is Kiswahili, while the official languages are Kiswahili and English. It is further noted that, “the State shall – promote and protect the diversity of language of the people of Kenya, and promote the development and use of indigenous languages (RoK, 2010, p. 14).

Drawn from this discussion, folklore is an embodiment of human culture, and human culture, clothed in language, thus the focus on mother languages. We ride on the certainty that culture is and can be communicated, strengthened and changed through language. Similarly, language can be used to as a tool to dominate, discriminate against, modify, and dislodge people’s culture. Given these capabilities of language, we build our argument on the premise that folklore not only provides identify, but “elements of folk culture can also be tools of change in society because they have always been a part of the socialization of living beings”, (Pandey, 2019, p. 85).

It is from this platform of reason that folklore in the context of this paper, is viewed as a possible agent of change, being considered as an integral part of the education system – especially at the formative stages of learning – in order to equip the young learners with desirable values, morals, attitudes and spoken skills, and also be used as a basis for general language development.

Folklore, which is carried in various forms/genres as already mentioned, is an efficient vehicle for language teaching because of its orality personality. Morgan-Fleming (1999, p. 274), observes that, “One body of literature that can be helpful in expanding our understanding of

orality in classrooms is that of performance-centred folklore.” They are suitable for the child audiences, especially so because the words and forms used are usually very expressive and embody life due to their performative and educative nature.

These in essence have the added advantage of introducing young children to literature in forms that would easily appeal to the levels of their cognitive facilities and conceptualization of the environments in which they live. Ideally, folklore is clothed in the language of a people and enacts their life activities. Furthermore, as expressed by Taylor (2000), oral forms appeal to child audiences because of their relatively simple forms of language and a storyline with proper beginning, middle and end in the case of folktales. Also, despite their outwardly simple appearance, folktales in particular address themes and issues that are profound for all humanity. These touch on psychologically significant themes of honesty, kindness, generosity, jealousy, arrogance, greed and so forth- such themes can be significant for all ages and all humanity, making them suitable for language learners of all ages. Other forms of folklore such as songs are appealing since the learners are actively involved; short forms like proverbs and wise sayings appeal to the learners’ intuition and this makes learning an enjoyable, joyful, simple and interactive process. Folklore have features of oral language which makes them suitable for oral face-to-face audiences as compared to other literary forms that may be in written texts such as novels or short stories which require more advanced language and cognitive skills.

### **Value of Mother Language in Society and Education**

The clear study and understanding of mother language, by extension folklore, has several benefits that range from personal to societal. However, most importantly, in understanding and appreciating the folklore of our lineages, we develop a grasp of their culture from whence we sprung. Consequently, providing sound basis for the origin of our identity, rich folklore and mystic tradition and culture from an ancestry perspective, as we interrelate it to the modern world cosmopolitan culture(s). Certainly, folklore has been used and continues to be used as an instrument to cement and rebuild ageless beliefs, customs and rituals. Putman (1964) identifies several values as follows: because of its artistic nature, folklore can stimulate understanding and appreciation of many types of artistic expression; they provide pleasure and stimulation for development of imagination; promote desirable values that may last a lifetime in the individual.

In school contexts, Lwin (2015) advances that, folklore should be considered and explored for use in formal schooling. Folklore reveals the traditions, customs and culture of a speech community and transmits them through speech in spontaneous and natural functioning; and according to Putman, (1964) it reflects human nature, and pupils become aware of the universalities of human thought and activity and in this manner promote cohesion.

In addition, he avers that the effectiveness of an instructional program can be enhanced through enlightened use of folklore, primarily through the intellectual, emotional, artistic and social benefits it offers to the pupils and teachers. Further, if the school fails to utilize its local folklore resources, a portion of significant local cultural heritage may be lost. Finally, if the school does make intelligent utilization of its folklore resources, the instructional program will be more effective; the children and youth of each community may be enabled to find greater

meaning and significance in their own lives: their creative and artistic talents will have additional opportunities for expression and development. Pupils will in effect be better equipped to understand and deal intelligently with those universal characteristics of human nature which affect the lives of people throughout the world. Generally:

Learners need to understand their origins and identity; linguistically and culturally through folklore. The characteristics of African folklore contribute towards learners' understanding of their culture and language. It can never be underestimated that the understanding of one's language is shaped by one's culture. Many folk texts are seen as a means of cultural expression from which valuable lessons about groups' differences and similarities may be learned, (Mzimela, 2016, p. 137).

Folktales provide meaningful, authentic comprehensible input in language learning situations, (Thi Hong Nhung, 2016). Since language is essential to understanding and can also be central to creating roles that different groups play in society, folklore can likewise be highly influential in initiating understanding relationships and encouraging an atmosphere of understanding, using classrooms as a platform of expression and delivery. In this regard, Lwin (2015) states that folklore, in its various forms, can be used in helping learners develop competencies in language; such forms can also be used as pedagogical resources in language classes. Such resources Putman, (1964) identifies as folk songs, dances and games which easily provide relief from formality and often produces improved attitudes toward school and school work – judicious use of folklore can help school work become more “alive” and more meaningful for the pupil. Based on these ideas, we posit that folklore has major benefits and can form a backbone for teaching English as a second language; this is especially so for the appreciation of literary texts such as novels, short stories and plays at later stages of learning. Generally, folklore content is a rich source of cultural history that provides a full range of colourful and interesting facts about peoples' culture, artefacts and places. We too can appreciate the study of folklore for its own sake, as Hymes, (1974) observes, that the study of folklore and its use may also provide a special opportunity for the development of folklore itself.

### **Folklore and Early Years' Education in Kenya**

We have endeavoured to conceptualize the term 'folklore' capturing the various components that render it dynamic as defined within the unique boundaries of community specific worldviews. We further have highlighted its value in human communities, at the individual, societal and educational levels. Ingrained within these understandings, we now shift focus into a deeper understanding and interrogation of how folklore feeds into educational contexts with a view of inculcating desired values and morals among the learners, as already pinpointed in the preceding sections of this paper.

We begin by noting that Kenya as a people, through the Ministry of Education, have a great desire of producing an all-rounded learner at the end of each level of learning and cumulatively, at the end of school. This is intended should be achieved, not only through focusing on academic excellence but also providing opportunities for development of social skills, abilities, competencies and knowledge among the learners through a value – based education. The first and sixth, among the eight national goals of education in Kenya mirror

these efforts. They state that education should be able to: first, foster nationalism, patriotism and promote national unity and second, promote respect for and development of Kenya's rich and varied cultures, (KIE, 2002). In this regard, Wamahiu (2017, p. 1) acknowledges that even though there is no subject called value--based education:

the teaching of values has been a critical part of the Kenyan school curricula since before independence in 1963. Rooted in various Kenyan ethnic cultures, value transmission was integral to indigenous education systems, inculcated throughout one's life and interwoven into the fabric of life and society.... formal education [has] reflected a concern for the teaching of values in Kenyan education curricula both during the colonial period, and after independence albeit reasons for their inclusion, the type of values prioritized and mode of delivery may have differed.

In order to put this into the perspective of this study, any educational context, the "... goals of education [should] seek to answer the question[s], "What purposes should the educational system seek to attain?" "What qualities of mind, what knowledge, skills, values, do we wish our learners to acquire?" The formulation of the goals of education is meant to specify more precisely, what qualities are thought most desirable to develop among the citizens of the country," (Mwaka, Kafwa, Musamas & Wambua, 2013, p. 151). This can only be attained through education enabling the learner to acquire a sense of nationhood and patriotism, promoting peace and mutual respect for harmonious co-existence.

Beside this, instilling in the learner appreciation of Kenya's rich and diverse cultural heritage, drawing them into valuing their own culture and being able to respect other people's cultures as well as embrace positive cultural practices in a dynamic society (KICD, 2017b). In the light of this, given the focus in this paper, our view is that, the national educational goals provide a perfect context within which to reflect upon the inherent linguistic and cultural benefits of consciously, intentionally, purposefully and functionally integrating folklore in EYE classrooms in Kenya. This thought is supported by Blyznyuk and Nafalska (2017, p. 156) who opine that, "Education through folk art has to attract students not only to their own folk culture but also other world cultures" ... "... because students get better acquainted with variety of customs, traditions and beliefs of the multicultural world through folk art," (p. 159). Besides, we focus the discussion in this paper on the EYE, as observed by Mzimela, (2016) because "it is at this stage where folklore as oral narratives and communication plays a pivotal role in developing learners' mother tongue ..." (p. 129), including "... the entire language development and also developing other basic literacy skills, (p. 136).

In Kenya EYE is a learning level that enrolls children of the ages between 4 – 8 years, and is covered at pre-primary for 2 years and lower-primary for 3 years, along the learning progression ladder, in the basic education framework, (KICD, 2017a).

At these levels of learning, two levels of integration of mother languages into the curriculum are highlighted as: medium of instruction and learning area referred to as, 'Indigenous Language Activities'. Specifically, it is stated that: mother language is a significant component in introducing children to formal education. In pre-primary education, "... the medium of instruction is the language of the catchment area," (p. 17), and in lower primary, 'Literacy' one of the learning areas "... shall be taught in the first language of the learner", (p. 22), and lastly, another learning area in lower primary the 'Indigenous language activities' will "... be carried

out in the language of the catchment area,” (p. 23), while in upper primary, ‘Indigenous Languages’ an optional learning areas will “... further develop the language skills acquired in lower primary ...” (p. 27). These references do not seem to directly highlight the actual place of Kiswahili, which is an African language, and equally carries the ‘lore’ – systems, beliefs and attitudes among others, of its speakers – Kenyans and Africans – it has also become an invaluable means of cultural orientation and transmission. We note, reference to the language of the catchment area, insinuates the use of Kiswahili as the medium of instruction, to be utilised in cosmopolitan classrooms where there is a varied range of ethnic and cultural representations. At lower primary school level Kiswahili is taught as one of the three languages learning area referred to as Kiswahili Activities.

Looking beyond the national educational goals, our thinking is further stirred by six among nine of the general learning outcomes for EYE in Kenya, (KICD, 2017b, 2017c, 2017d). Our analysis of these learning outcomes as presented in the pre-primary one (PP1), pre-primary two (PP2) and lower primary education curriculum designs reveals that they embody the values embedded within folklore. It is stated that, by the end of early years’ education, the learner should be able to: communicate appropriately using verbal and/or non-verbal modes in a variety of contexts; demonstrate appropriate etiquette in social relationships; apply creativity and critical thinking skills in problem solving, explore the immediate environment for learning and enjoyment; demonstrate the acquisition of emotional, physical, spiritual, aesthetic and moral development for balanced living; and lastly, demonstrate appreciation of the country’s rich and diverse cultural heritage for harmonious co-existence. Therefore, we are of the strong opinion that, if teachers who are the actual curriculum implementers, wholly and correctly conceptualize the functions of the mother languages in the EYE curriculum, and the inherent interlink between mother languages and folklore, they will be able to harness the benefits engrained within folklore, first to attain the national goals of education, and second, the objectives of teaching at EYE level that are inclined to the inculcation of cultural values and morals.

In addition, we also take cognisance of the fact that, the many general learning objectives of teaching languages at EYE level through the three language activities learning areas will also be attained. This is because, the teachers will be in a position to determine language structures and items that can be learnt through the selected genres and forms of folklore. In this connection, for example: it is stated in the curriculum designs for lower primary, that the aim of teaching literacy skills is to equip the learner with basic skills in reading and writing to aid in all other subjects. It will assist the learner to communicate with others as well as promote learning to learn. The set of skills acquired will be useful in giving learners a head start in essential skills that they will carry throughout their lives. The knowledge acquired includes the ability to understand, respond to and use forms of written language to communicate in varied contexts are important to facilitate learners’ understanding of English as a second language. At the PP1 and PP2 levels of learning, through learning of language activities, the objectives state that the learner should be able to: develop appropriate listening skills from varied experiences to enrich their ability to communicate; express own opinions, ideas and feelings creatively freely and confidently in varied situations as they appreciate others; participate in conversation using appropriate verbal and non-verbal language in their everyday experiences; articulate letter sounds correctly in preparation for reading; develop appropriate reading

readiness skills in varied learning experiences; and lastly, apply appropriate writing readiness skills in varied learning experiences.

At this point of the discussion, we should be able to appreciate that mother languages play a central role in the education setup in Kenya. As such, as noted in KICD, (2017a), mother tongue is a significant component of introducing children to formal education, all learning experiences of a learner being delivered in the mother language – the language of the catchment area. The use of mother language is a way of welcoming a learner to school at the pre-school level of learning.

Generally, mother language is praised for its ‘friendliness’ to such young learners since it takes advantage of their background experiences and culture to introduce them to formal learning and schooling. At this level also, there is emphasis on learning activities that sustain learners’ interest and augments well with the use of folklore since in order to sustain learners’ interest in the learning process and make learning successful, learning activities ought to be age appropriate (Gichuba, Opasta & Nguchu, 2009). Folklore, because it is carried in simple and child-friendly forms like songs, riddles, tales, among others, it therefore is an effective means of sustaining learners interest at such formative levels of learning and development. John Dewey (1859 – 1952), a re-known educationist argues for “participatory learning” and the use of folklore – songs, dance, riddling sessions, among others would enhance this aspect because the learners must be actively involved to make the use of folklore meaningful, foregrounding and taking advantage of the performative character of folklore.

The integration of folklore in the classroom is complimentary to the learning process because classrooms have been defined as oral in nature given the nature of interactions that take place during instruction. Morgan-Fleming (1999, p. 273) observes that “... teachers spend most of their workday talking...”, therefore in the context of this paper, they become the most appropriate channels through which oral traditions can be used for learning and also passed on to the young learners. Moreover, “... the students’ world also is oral. Children talk as they play with one another, ask questions of their teacher, take part in oral classroom performances such as the book report or show and tell, or in playground centred genre such as jump rope rhymes, taunting, joking, and confiding life’s truths learned so far.” (p. 273). The teachers in EYE level should be able to take advantage of the children’s oral personality to introduce and utilize different forms of folklore for learning purposes as defined by the national goals of education and learning outcomes at each level of learning at EYE.

### **Elements of Application of Folklore in Early Years’ Education in Kenya**

In this paper we maintain that mother language is the source of folklore.

Thus, our reference to elements highlighted in the competency based curriculum (CBC) basic education framework (KICD, 2017a) that we consider would be achieved through the integration of folklore in the CBC at EYE level of learning. These are:

- a) “... language development during early years involves engagement in social and environmental activities that promote the learner’s ability to understand words and communicate effectively both verbally and non-verbally,” (p. 17).

- b) “The essence of the language activity area is to develop oral, reading readiness and writing readiness competencies in order to lay the foundation for language acquisition,” (p. 17).
- c) “The aim of language activities at pre-primary school level is to enable learners to express themselves fluently. The purpose of teaching language at this level is also to assist learners to improve listening ability, concentration, understanding and memory,” (pp. 17 – 18).
- d) In lower primary a foundational level of learning, “... literacy aims at equipping the learner with basic skills in reading and writing to aid in all other learning areas. It will assist the learner to communicate with others as well as promote learning to learn,” (p. 22).
- e) Referring to learning of indigenous languages, it is noted that it, “... will enhance the acquisition of language and relevant vocabulary as well as the acquisition of foundational skills and knowledge in speaking, reading and writing in indigenous languages,” (p. 23).
- f) It is further noted that, “learning in a language the learners are familiar with will make it easier for them to construct their own understanding and look for meaning in their daily experiences, thus reinforcing their unique strengths,” (p. 23).
- g) In addition, “it is expected that learners will gradually acquire, construct, and use knowledge through the different learning levels. The skills and knowledge gained at this level will be a stepping stone to the next level of learning,” (p. 23).
- h) Building up from the knowledge gained at lower primary school learning, in upper primary through indigenous languages, learners will develop, “... positive attitudes and behaviours towards learning. ... and will provide a rich and supportive environment to enhance the development of their potential in indigenous language learning,” (p. 27).
- i) Furthermore, “... learning in a language they are already familiar with will give learners the required confidence to participate more actively in the learning process and think critically as well as imaginatively,” (p. 27).

More specifically, as highlighted in the curriculum designs for PP1 and PP2 levels of learning, (KICD, 2017c & 2017d), each of the five learning activity areas have been assigned clearly stipulated general and specific learning outcomes which we strongly believe, in the context of the ideas presented in this paper, can selectively be achieved by integrating folklore through mother languages. In the curriculum designs it is emphasized that during the curriculum delivery process, through all the learning experiences that the young learner will be exposed to, the teachers should endeavour to have the following achieved: first, acquisition of specific core competences: communication and collaboration, critical thinking and problem solving, imagination and creativity, citizenship, learning to learn and self-efficacy. Second, learning through integration of pertinent and contemporary issues into the curriculum design to prepare learners for the ever-changing society specifically in order to address the changing needs of the society and ensure the learner’s safety.

These include: life skills development through storytelling, living values, moral values and social responsibility. Third, holistic development of the learner which:

... can be achieved by embracing the thematic integrated learning approach which is ideal for teaching learners in their formative stage of development. The themes are derived from things and situations that learners are likely to

interact with in everyday life. Each theme is expected to cut across all the activity areas. Learning at the pre-primary level is expected to be flexible hence a theme may be interrupted to enable learners use an emerging situation as the learning theme for the period, (KICD, 2017c, p. x & KICD, 2017d, p. ix).

Specifically drawing from the concept of thematic integrated approach, teachers at EYE level should be in a position to appropriately select and apply the wide range of folklore to ensure that the desired skills, abilities and competencies are acquired and learnt by the young learners across all the activity learning areas. In this respect, Ashokan (2014, p. 51) acknowledges that “thematic units greatly enhance learning because they integrate different intelligences and topics into a single lesson which mirrors how young children actually learn.” In addition, delineating the values of the thematic approach in the instruction in early childhood education, he observes that the:

Thematic Approach is a way of teaching and learning, whereby many areas of the curriculum are connected together and integrated within a theme. It allows learning to be more natural and less fragmented than the way where a school day is time divided into different subject areas whereby children practice exercises frequently related to nothing other than what the teacher thinks up, as he or she writes them on the chalk board. It allows literacy to grow progressively, with vocabulary linked and with spelling and sentence writing being frequently, yet smoothly, reinforced, (p. 49).

### **Application of Folklore in Classroom Contexts**

There are several genres of folklore that are significant in the development of language skills and creativity of learners. The most basic language skills, listening and speaking can be enhanced by the use of oral forms, which is the basic form in which folklore is stored and carried. Besides, as already mentioned, children’s world is created and woven around orality, therefore they best learn through listening and speaking accompanied by doing, and all these are perfectly displayed and experienced through oral tradition forms. In this particular paper, we present only two genres of folklore from the Luo and Luhya communities, Nilotic and Bantu speaking groups respectively, that are found in the western parts of Kenya. In order to contextualize the classroom applications, we also provide definitions and explanations of the selected folklore forms.

### **Features of Folktales**

Thi Hong Nhung (2016, p. 23) defines a folktale as “a story, myth or legend forming part of an oral tradition, does not have a single, identifiable author or writer and is or was passed down from one generation to the next.” In addition, Lwin (2009, p. 69) provided a more elaborate description that, “folktales in general are part of folk literature, which is more widely referred to as folklore. They can be classified as one of the categories of folk storytelling.

Many folklorists have labelled myths, legends and folktales, as major narrative genres in folklore... Simply put, a folktale is a traditional story that has been passed on by word of mouth.” First, we notice that the folktale is communally owned and its content is derived from the tradition of that community. In addition, “The narrative structure of a tale can be regarded as the form, its social purpose the function, and its content the field,” (Lwin, 2009, p. 70).

However, despite these universal features, Lwin (2015) notes that studies of narrative and its structures have made a distinction between the narrative content (often referred to as the “what” or story elements) and the varying manner in which the story is told (often referred to as the “how” or discourse features – actual words and grammatical patterns). The “what” or story elements are said to have the possibility of “total transfer” from one medium to another and from one language to another, whereas the “how” or discourse features used in an actual presentation of the story will vary (Toolan, 2001). Basically, “a folktale can change over time, be reshaped by modifications and was often changed with each retelling. As a result, there can be various versions of the same folktale,” (Thi Hong Nhung, 2016, p. 23). If we take the well-known story of ‘Cinderella’ as an example, there exist the English, French, Native American and Japanese accounts. We also advance that Luo, Luhya and many other versions of the story are to be found in the Kenyan native languages – albeit with different setting(s), characters and discourse features, nonetheless, maintaining a similar story line and the underlying thematic concern(s). We have given the Luo version in this paper; its title is “In Search of Husbands.” According to Propp (1968), all these versions share more or less the same fundamental event sequence. Further, the reward/punishment storyline found in folktales from different cultures is a common phenomenon (Lwin, 2009). In this type of narrative, one of the two characters was good natured, performed the tasks or tests with humility, honesty or other moral qualities successfully, and was rewarded. The other character was bad tempered, failed in the similar tasks or tests, and was punished. Lwin (2009, 2015) summarizes the fundamental event sequence of narrative structure in such types of tales as follows:

Protagonist A: Task → Success → Reward

Protagonist B: Task → Failure → Punishment

Such a constructive narrative structure is to be found in Myanmar folktales, for example: ‘The Golden Crow’ (Maung, 1948, Lwin, 2010); Korean folktales, for example: ‘Hungbu and Noblu’ (Grayson, 2002); Medieval Arabic folktales, for example: ‘Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves’ (Drory, 1977); among others. Such a structure is to be found in many Luo tales including ‘In Search of Husbands’ (Onyango-Ogutu & Roscoe, 1974) and among the Luhya group of speakers, *Nashikufu* and many more. What these examples show is that different cultures may use different tasks or tests for the characters; nevertheless, the underlying message is of what are morally or ethically right, what is wrong and the consequences of actions, and the use of contrastive narrative structure to render such messages proves to be the same (Lwin, 2010). Besides, “folktales of a culture are usually preserved as part of a long folk tradition reflecting the humour, romance and wisdom of the people in the culture,” (Lwin, 2009, p. 69). This resonates well with the message that folklore/folktales are universal in their ideology and intentions; as such folklore should be encouraged not only for their educational and social value, but also for their aesthetics and entertain value.

### **Example of using a folktale in a classroom situation**

Below is an example of a folktale from the Luo community, a Nilotic speaking language group found in the western part of Kenya along the shores of Lake Victoria. The title of the folktale is – **In search of husbands** – translated from Dholuo spoken by the Luo community

Long ... long .... time ago ... a group of girls once set out to look for husbands. But there was one among them infinitely more lovely than her friends; and they all, in their hearts, knew it. As

they travelled along they met a party of their own people and asked them, "People of ours, do you think we are all beautiful?" Where- upon the reply came, "Ee, indeed you are, but there's one among you more beautiful than the rest."

These words fired the jealousy of the unfavoured girls, who discussed what they should do with their lovelier companion. They decided to change her into a smoking- pipe, and this they did at once. Further along the road they met more people who asked the girls where they were going. "We're looking for somewhere to cook," they replied. "Don't we strike you as beautiful?" "Ee, you do," the people replied, "but that smoking- pipe is lovelier than you all. If only it had been a girl...!" and saying this, they continued on their way.

With the fire of jealousy now raging in their hearts, and with yet another band of folk approaching, the girls changed their rival into a calabash, convinced that their beauty must surpass so square and ugly vessel. "Dear friends," they said, as the party approached, "how do we look? Aren't we all ravishing?" but the familiar reply came back. 'Ee,' they agreed, "you are lovely, but had that calabash been human it would have been more lovely than you all."

Still dissatisfied, they now turned the girl into a *mbiru*, the brown pot with the big mouth. Meeting more travellers, they asked yet again, "Aren't we all beautiful?" "Ee," came the reply, "indeed you are, but that pot has a special beauty. If it were human, it would be fairer than you all."

Their anger mounting, the jealous creatures now changed their victim into a dog- a wretched animal, thin and stingy, its eyes flowing with pus, like scum on a stagnant pool. There was never seen so mean and ugly a creature. Meeting yet another band of travellers, they asked their familiar question, "Good people, doesn't our beauty impress you?" But again the answer was disappointing. "It does indeed," they said "but if that dog was a girl her beauty would defy description."

At a loss for new ideas, the girls left their friend as a dog and continued on their way. Arriving among the clan where they hoped to find husbands, they found all the young men had left to go hunting. Not a single youth was in sight. Instead, they were welcomed by eager mothers, who broke up the party to secure a girl for their sons. Soon the square was deserted. Only the dog remained. No one wanted it. It stood there lonely, its tail between its legs.

Now it happened that Obong'o's mother was in her garden when the girls arrived, and heard the news later than her friends. She hurried to the square only to find the wretched weeping dog. "What shall I do?" she asked in her heart, "now all these beauties have been taken. Obong'o will kill himself when he finds out."

She stood for a while, deep in thought, before deciding- for no good reason at least to take the dog home. "It will keep the hens from the corn," she told herself, "and can watch the house when I'm away."

When Obong'o returned he asked to see the girl his mother had chosen. His face grew stormy as his mother told her story until finally his anger broke loose and he kicked out savagely at the dog, shouting hysterically and demanding, "Mama, why couldn't you bring me a girl like all the

other mothers did for their sons?" But she could only insist again that she had arrived too late and had found only the dog. She strove to console him saying, "Don't cry, my son, you'll find a lovely girl of perfect manners and behaviour. Of this I'm sure."

Next day, Obong'o went hunting again. His mother spread out some corn to dry, some millet for bread and some finger millet for porridge. Then she went off to work in her garden. As soon as she was gone, the dog discarded its skin and resumed the shape of a girl – a girl of dazzling beauty who gently took the millet and begun to grind it, singing:

Giloka kwesi giweya  
Giloka agwata giweya  
Giloka mbiru giweya  
Ndhi Ndhi pala.  
Dhako nokwanya  
Dhano kanobed jahawi  
Ndia Ndhia pala  
Dhako nokwanya  
Dhano kanoneye lenya.  
Giloka agwata giweya  
Giloka mbiru giweya  
Giloka kwesi giweya .....

(Among my age mates I am the loveliest, the one whose charm lights jealous fires. The victim, alas, of desperate rivals. The one they changed to a smoking-pipe, a calabash, a beer pot, and a dog. Good fortune will grace the woman who chooses me for her son's wife. She will rejoice in me, for her son's wife. She will rejoice in me, for I am the shining one with the smooth ochre skin, the girl who can work as well as love.)

With the millet ground, she took the flour into the house and resumed her dog skin, curling up on the floor by the millstone. On her return Obong'o's mother was astonished to find the corn ground and flour stored neatly in the granary. "What can this mean?" she asked. "Has the devil sent me a dog that can grind corn like this and carry the flour into the house? I'll cook my food and eat it. If I die, it must be the devil's work. If I survive, I'll know it's an earthly creature at work."

She waited for Obong'o to return and they ate together, with no effect appearing. At bedtime, Obong'o was told to take the dog to his hut to protect him against evil-doers; but he refused saying that his mother should keep the foolish beast near her; and so the dog curled up near the fireplace close to where Obong'o's mother slept.

Next morning mother and son went about their daily tasks, Obong'o going to hunt and his mother spreading out her grain to dry in the sun. The lovely maiden waited until the grain had dried and then, once more, ground it all, singing as she worked:

Giloka agwata giweya  
Giloka mbiru giweya  
Giloka kwesi giweya.....

Her task complete, she stored the flour, returned the millstone, and returned to her dog skin; but this time not before she had also split and stacked a good supply of firewood. The mother on her return was once more astonished. "What is this thing that grinds and stores all I have out to dry," she asked, "and even splits my firewood? I'll cook and eat. If there's evil here, I'll die. If it's good, I'll survive."

The mystery long remained unsolved. Obong'o's mother mentioned it to him, but he could offer no explanation, merely remarking that he always came back at sunset and saw nothing. Finally, his mother thought of a plan. "Tomorrow," she said, "neither of us will go out. Instead we'll watch the house." And so the next day, when Obong'o took his spear and club and his mother had spread out the grain, they pretended that a normal day was starting. Obong'o set off towards the forest and mother with her and pipe hobbled towards the garden. But soon they both turned in their tracks, crept back through the bush and concealed themselves near the house.

It was not long before the girl shed her skin, took the grain from the mats, and begun to grind it, singing sweetly to herself:

Giloka agwata giweya  
Giloka mbiru giweya  
Giloka kwesi giweya.....

Mother and son were amazed to find that their ugly dog was in truth a lovely maiden, and they dashed from their hiding place to seize her. She struggled hard, begging them to release her and return her skin. But Obong'o snatched this up in disgust and flung it away in the forest. Trying now to calm her, and speaking to her in gentle tones, the mother asked, "In truth, daughter of someone, you are a lovely girl, why do you make yourself repulsive like this?" The girl could only reply with hysterical sobbing. But at last they were able to quiet her. Sobbing over, and anger cooled, she was persuaded to remain with her hosts. It was indeed good fortune had graced the hearth of Obong'o and his mother with so lovely a girl.

Now interest in the husband-seekers still ran high. Young men argued hotly, each insisting he had secured the best girl himself. It was decided; therefore, that a competition be held to decide which girl cooked the best porridge.

On the appointed day, Obong'o's girl washed her brown pot and ground her finger millet fine. She cooked her porridge, poured it into her pot, and scoured so vigorously the calabashes from which it would be drunk that the vessels shone like the sun. It happened that her rivals took their porridge in ordinary pots; and the calabashes they brought were very dirty.

The youths refused to take what they served, telling them hotly to carry home all they had prepared for the competition. However, they gladly drank the porridge cooked by Obong'o's girl, finding the vessels clean and their contents delicious.

Returning home, the youths quarrelled with their mothers, each one demanding, "Mama, why didn't you bring me that dog of Obong'o's instead of this ugly dirty girl who can't even cook porridge or clean a calabash?" Obong'o of course went home rejoicing. He married his lovely girl and they lived happily ever after.

### *Tinda*

We suggest for a more logical lesson presentation, the teacher and learner activities derived from the oral narrative/folktale should be modelled on conventional reading or listening comprehension lesson presentations that are usually accomplished in three main stages: before, during and after reading/listening/narration activities. Before the narration the teacher could engage learners in prep-reading/listening activities that to prepare the learners for the listening/reading activity by helping them to set a context for the narrative, think about what they know about a topic of the text or narrative and predict what they will read or listen to, and arouse interest. The teacher could pre-teach new words to familiarize them with the unknown vocabulary, engage them in brainstorming, answering pre-prepared questions related to the topic of the narrative, identifying what they know in relation to the title and pictures of the narrative, guessing what the story is about from the title and pictures and presenting a video related to the story, among others.

In the course of narrating the folktale, pupils would be engaged in while-reading/listening activities, that form the main task the listening/reading session aimed at helping the learners to focus on specific elements of the text/story and to understand it better. The teacher should guide learners to put to use their memory, critical listening and critical thinking skills, since they are very helpful in the comprehension process. The teacher's aims should be to help the learners to deal with the challenges of certain linguistic elements of the mother language though keen listening/reading. Examples of activities that can be used to accomplish this include: identification of topic sentences or lead sentences in the story line, and the main idea of paragraphs or sections of the story; distinguishing between general and specific ideas or sections of the story; identification of parts of the story or words that provide the linkage in the plot events, these could be connectors and transition words or phrases; making predictions about next action in the story based on the flow of events experienced. The teacher could actively engage the learners through singing the song therein and responding to narration questions/cues. They also should be encouraged to non-verbally engage with the narrator to enhance interaction during the process, and for the teacher to ensure that each learner is on board. This could be done through, clapping hands at the right time, nodding the head in agreement or disagreement, and appropriately responding to the moods evoked by the narrative for example smiling and laughing, and frowning and so on.

After the during listening/reading session, the teacher should engage learners in activities for post-listening/reading. These are aimed at helping the learner to understand the narrative/text further through critical analysis of what they have heard/read or to provide personalization of the story/text.

The activities utilized should help the learner be able to integrate the narrative/text content into their real-life situations in order to keep the authentic elements of language use as expressed in the mother language(s). **Examples of activities for learners would include: short and creative discussions in small groups based on guides from the teacher;** asking learners to think and come up with the continuation of the story, they could consider changing some traits of the main characters, introducing a new character and provide an imaginative account of how the storyline would build up through specific events or episodes.; engaging the learners in enacting or reciting or role playing sections of the story that render themselves to performance, and lastly, the teacher asking **learners** to prepare some few questions about

what they read, then they can ask each other; asking learners to tell similar **stories to the one they listened to or read.**

The foregoing ideas provide theoretical and general guidance to the teacher, however, the points presented here below capture some real examples of how the teacher could engage with the narrative presentation:

- a) They could engage in retelling the narrative or parts of the story, for instance where the girls meet different groups who marvel at the beauty of the smoking pipe or calabash, describing certain episodes and answering other questions on plot, activities in the story, seasons in the story among others.
- b) They could also respond to comprehension tasks – the questions should be presented from simple ones that require recall to those that require inference depending on the cognitive level of the learners. Such could include what the girls were looking for; what people they came across, were doing; the probable age of the girls; why *Obong'o's* wife emerged the winner of the cooking competition, among others. Other questions that could be asked are: Why do you think 'millet' was featured in the tale? Why not maize or bread? Why do you think a smoking pipe and calabash were chosen? Why do you think a dog was used and not a cat? What economic activities do the people in the narrative engage in? What social activities do we find the people in the narrative engaged in?
- c) They could enact performable portions of the story, for instance where the girls come across people working and they tell that they are looking for a place to cook; or where the young men were quarrelling their mothers for not choosing on *Obon'go's* wife or the dialogue sections of the story – this could be done either during the presentation or after
- d) At varying levels of task difficulty determined by learner age and cognitive abilities, the narrative could be used for tasks on development of vocabulary, synonyms and grammar. These are given at the end of the narration. They could also be asked to rewrite the narrative as a news story.
- e) Learners could also be asked the moral lessons in the story. Such may include: avoidance of jealousy, commitment to work, love for animals, among others.
- f) They could also identify the cultural practices and social economic activities of the community in the story is told. Further to this, other tasks could involve learners comparing the cultural activities in the narrative with their own; discussion on socio-economic activities such as communal work, farming, marriage, among others.
- g) For advanced learners answer questions on character and characterization, and rewriting the story as a news story.
- h) Repeated or parallel sequences of events in folktales are useful for providing learners with opportunities to become familiar with syntactic structures which are used more than once to describe these repeated or parallel sequences of events in a tale. Some examples of parallel structures in the narrative include: the corn ground and flour stored; she cooked her porridge, poured it into her pot and scoured so vigorously the calabashes; begging them to release her and return her skin, etc.

With the teacher playing the role of facilitator, folklore in its various forms is also vital for speech skills development. This is especially so since the learners are actively involved in narration, singing and reciting. Challenging sounds – whether single consonants or consonant

clusters – are learnt easily in an informal, easy, relaxed and playful atmosphere. Desirable attitudes could as such be developed if the narratives are used appropriately in character and value development. For the older learners, after listening to a tale like *Man Must Dig* or *Hawk and Crow* (Onyango-Ogutu & Roscoe, 1974) or any other popular tale, can be asked to rewrite it as a news story – a news story typically has the most important event on the top with less important information in the background. Therefore, like other forms of literary texts, folktales can be used for demonstration to language learners, the importance of language forms and structures such as – vocabulary, syntactic structure and organization of texts – to create a particular effect in meaning to achieve a specific communicative purpose. More importantly, effective learning to be achieved, the learning tasks, activities and exercises must be pitched at the cognitive developmental level of the young learners.

### **Luhya Folklore – Short Forms**

In this section, we focus on analysis of folklore short forms drawn from the Luhya, a Bantu speaking language group found in the western part of Kenya. They comprise one of the largest language ethnic groups in Kenya.

### **Features of Folklore Short Forms**

Folklore short forms usually take different structural forms, however the main defining feature is that they are short in length and tend to use condensed words to pass across deep meanings. Sometimes, they are statements or questions that have indirect or under laying meaning, put forth as a puzzle to be solved, for example the riddles. They are concisely written or spoken linguistic expressions that are particularly memorable because of their meanings, and generally symbolic in nature. Thus their content is predominantly clothed in figurative, metaphorical or allegorical language. They derive their content from everyday happening, that expresses certain truths based on common sense or the practical experience of humanity. Their aim is always to expose certain evils, bad or good societal elements, but more importantly they focus on teaching of values and morals based on respective cultural foundations. Generally, these short forms of folklore act as tool of to initiate and enhance life-skills development, social control, explanation of certain societal phenomenon, entertainment, educate and language development. For instance, tongue twisters can be used for training in speech sounds where various consonants are emphasized. They can also be used to impart certain morals, values and cultural practices.

Just like the Luo, the Luhya also have various forms of folklore, however, for the lack of space we identify two forms of short form Luhya folklore – ‘proverbs’ and ‘sayings’ – which are among other short forms found in the community. Illustrations of these are demonstrated in the short forms below from the Luhya community language:

- a) *Oyoyo yayia meno*
- b) *Niwenya oteba etebo oteba otie?*
- c) *Otubeba tubiri tulia tuingire mutwina twabwe*
- d) *Amatsi kakhulukusia akalakhulukusirianga*
- e) *Okwe tsindaya okworera are*

Translated, the above mean the following- respectively:

- a) *Oyoyo* -a character- *burnt his teeth*  
For being greedy or hurrying with his food.
- b) *If you want to ask a question you ask how/how do you ask?*  
*How does one ask a question. Strong emphasis on the consonant sounds /t/and/b/*
- c) *Those two mice entered into their holes.*  
*Strong emphasis on the consonant /t/ and accompanying syllables /otu/;/tu/ and /tw/*
- d) *Water flows where it never flows*  
A flood will flow along a path it never follows.
- e) *That which produces sparks you warm yourself far from it.*  
It is used to caution against bad company.

Based on these short forms, the teacher and learner activities would include:

- a) The sounds in bold will be emphasized for development of speech are resultant speech organs.
- b) The learners would engage in recitation, accomplished in a continuous manner – usually in one breathe without a significant break in between the words. These are invaluable not only for language development but also for social training of values held in high esteem by the community to which they belong.
- c) Actually, in the presentation of such forms, learning is seen as part of play and this motivates learners to use their mother language. Because these forms are in the learners’ mother language, they are an efficient way of welcoming the learners to formal school since school is perceived as an extension of home learning.
- d) Further, they pass on the *lore*- the culture of the people.

Generally, in using folklore in its various forms whether short forms – such as riddles, proverbs, wise sayings or tongue twisters; or long forms such as narratives – fables, trickster stories, monster stories; poems, among others, it must be appreciated that in the foundational stages of education, play an important role in orientation of learners into formal schooling. Due to their orality character, they are also a means of ushering in written literary texts at advanced levels of learning since folklore helps in development of language skills, comprehension, problem solving and critical thinking skills. In addition, folklore is inherently performative and therefore features of an oral performance are vital in understanding their meaning and learners feeding into its entertainment quality. This implies that the teacher must always work from the knowledge that performance of any kind, determined by the folklore form being used in class, must be part of the instructional activities, for both the teacher and learners.

In addition, the teacher should pay attention to specific learner language needs in order to also draw on the full linguistic benefit from the narrative by including short speaking, reading and writing activities whenever possible during the listening sessions. The focus of the lesson is listening to the story or any other folklore form, but having diverse lesson activities enable learners to have a balanced learning of other language structures and skills as well as building their language rapporteur and confidence. The teacher should pay attention to go through word recognition by allowing learner opportunities to recognize written or spoken words; comprehension process by allowing the learners to read the folklore text, narrate the story, recite the oral poetry or other folklore short forms. through this activity, where the learner should be able to express fluency, that is, reading or orally producing the text accurately and

quickly. After that the teacher should give the learners time for processing the folklore text by providing interpretation and assigning it meaning.

### **Implications for Integrating Folklore in Early Years' Education**

The general presentation in this paper has revealed that the benefits of using folklore for and in learning cannot be underestimated. Further, we have highlight and underscored the fact that folklore is oral in nature, thus the reference to folklore as oral tradition of a people. Whereas, not all folklore is inherently oral, we take cognisance of the fact that, its transmission through generations is principally achieved orally. It has been argued that classroom activities are orally oriented. Both teachers and learners engage in a lot of oral interactions, and besides, the children's sphere of expression is wrapped around orality, thus our inclination that folklore should easily and perfectly fit into classroom discourse as an instructional tool. Although the teacher has the latitude to work within the boundaries of an already orally oriented classroom, Morgan-Fleming (1999, p. 273) notes that "one important function of schooling is the connection of the child's oral world to the literate world of past knowledge and narrative." [However in] making such a connection, thought and written text are certainly important, but a classroom in which print and thought existed without the mediation of the spoken word would appear strange to most educators." In this regard, upholding to the notion of integrating indigenous languages into the classroom, UNESCO (2008) highlights that the process needs serious efforts to make sure that learners can be educated in their mother tongue.

Whereas this may pose a challenge amid the possibilities and practicability of integrating folklore into classroom environments, "... lessons on folk tales, when properly organized might be the right place for not only effective language learning but also learning moral values," (Blyznyuk, & Nafalska, 2017, p. 160). It is for this reason that we emphasize that integration of folklore in the classroom must be implemented with a lot of cautiousness since a number factors could impede the teachers' efforts and desires of imparting certain skills, competencies, values and morals among the young learners. Given this background, the following provide a background on the implications of integration of folklore and would as well act as guiding points for the ministry of education and the teachers teaching at EYE level in Kenya:

- a) Based on the CBC basic education Framework (KICD, 2017a), integration of elements of folklore should principally be accomplished through the use of mother languages either as a medium of instruction or as a learning area.
- b) The objectives to be attained and intended learning outcomes as outlined (KICD, 2017b, 2017c & 2017d) should be the main guide to which genres of folklore can be utilized and how they should be manipulated for effectiveness. In actual classroom situations, it is imperative that the choice of folklore is made according to the lesson objectives of the particular lesson. It implies that the teacher should therefore be very objective and also selective as regards the type and complexity of the folklore form selected. The form selected ought to be according to the learners' mental development levels in order for them to comprehend and appreciate it. If the teacher fails to tailor his/her choice of folklore according to the teaching objectives, the use of folklore may not provide appropriate and desired learning experiences.
- c) Teachers at EYE level of learning should be creative and innovative enough to deliberately and consciously incorporate elements of folklore within their classrooms

and in other school activities in order to reap the myriad linguistic, social, psychological, cultural and entertainment benefits accrued with its integration into the written curriculum. Thi Hong Nhung, (2016, p. 24) notes that as a result of their exposure to folktales "... stories, legends and fairy tales have become an important part of children's intellectual life and for many provide an indispensable part in the process of growing up."

- d) Teachers should also be equipped with the relevant teacher pedagogical knowledge to be able to appropriately utilise the values based and thematic integration approaches to teaching for young learners as envisaged, at macro-level in the national goals of education, and at a micro-level, in the CBC basic education framework. It should be focused on the appropriate teaching methods and on the improvement of literacy practices in the classroom.
- e) There is a need to have authentic instructional materials for both the teacher and learners, one that embodies the diverse and expansive oral tradition repertoires of Kenyan cultural expressions in form of language use, and the folklore content.
- f) The teachers involved at EYE level of learning should make efforts to expose themselves to a range of oral tradition forms and culture in order to increase their orientation to the understanding and appreciation of, not only the beautiful, rich yet diverse Kenya cultures but also to the other world folklores.

Furthermore, it is imperative that teachers appreciate that apart from formal schooling where the use of folklore is significant, they should consciously and intentionally take advantage of integration of folklore as a learning tool through other educationally inclined spaces. Examples of such opportunities would include:

- a) Presentations of folklore inclined content over local radio and television stations programs, specifically tailored for children within the Kenya local context. Such programs have been designed with inclinations for friendly atmosphere with regard to their manner of presentation through singing, riddling, using tongue twisters that are aimed at enhancing certain sounds and speech skills, instilling certain values among others.
- b) Learners' participation in ministry of education music and drama festivals would provide rich sources of folklore. These co-curricular activities are rich in the nature of folklore displayed and experienced as aspects of formal education in form of poetry, folk and cultural songs and dances. This is made possible since, apart from entertainment, they convey the peoples' culture and in this way communicate the experiences, way of life and unique knowledge of the community.
- c) Field trips/visits to historical sites, museums, attending traditional/cultural ceremonies that embody folklore through singing and dancing like: burial, wedding, circumcision, and child naming ceremonies among others.
- d) Fieldtrips of visiting homes of the elderly who may engage in singing and dancing, or story-telling, talk about or demonstrate a skill or a cultural practice like playing of games, playing of musical instruments and making of handicrafts. They may also recollect history through narrations about the community regarding different activities and events like names of places and people and their meaning, planting and harvesting seasons, war and victory events, marriage ceremonies among others.

- e) Pupils can study their local history by engaging in a number of activities, these would include: singing and dancing, playing musical instruments, engage in storytelling, play games, do some weaving and make other handcraft work among others. They may also start a collection of people and place names, songs or folk sayings and language expressions peculiar to the community or locality within which the school is set. They can make a collection of their explanations, meanings and origin(s). In this way, pupils learn generalities that apply to all people; learn relationships between man and his environment.

Such activities and opportunities, offer learners cultural interactions that are significant in moral and value building, peacebuilding, reconciliation of our hopes, fears and aspirations, building of and appreciation of varied identities, and lastly, building of national cohesion and development. In addition, they are able to learn about the relationship between man and the environment – creating understandings and appreciations of why their forefathers lived as they did –not for lack of intelligence but adaptation. Lastly, they will grow into human beings and citizens who are more tolerant to other communities’ way of life, their own and those of their families. All these elements resonate very well with one of the goals of education in Kenya creating cultural awareness and promoting national unity.

We can sum the efforts and implication of integrating folklore in EYE in Kenya, through the words of Blyznyuk, and Nafalska, (2017, p. 160) who advance the idea that:

taking everything into account it has to be stated that incorporating folk art into primary English language lessons is a demanding but valuable undertaking. Clearly, careful choice and well-prepared tasks do play an important role in sustaining motivation for language learning and it leads to greater exposure to the target language and gives opportunity to learn about other cultures.

## **Conclusion**

The presentation of this paper has boldly drawn our attention to contexts in which the teaching of and use of mother language is advocated for and encouraged in the implementation of the CBC in Kenya. Besides this, it has also provided a background to broad and sound understanding of the nature of folklore and how it can be integrated into classroom situations not only for the benefits of language learning but learning across the curriculum. In that breath, we take cognisance of the orality nature of folklore as an immediate enabling factor in its integration into classroom environments. We recognise that, “realizing the centrality of orality to schooling can help bridge the gap between theory and practice as the day-to-day world of schools becomes more clearly defined and understood,” (Morgan-Fleming (1999, p. 288).

In light of this, whereas this presentation has highlighted the values of integrating folklore in and for education, much is demanded of the implementers in order for a breakthrough to be realized, and we begin reaping the benefits of mother language within our schooling system in Kenya as envisaged in the CBC. Consequently, embracing folklore in education – for learning, and for education – learning to learn, requires attention to be given to teachers’ empowerment and capacity building since they are at the core of curriculum implementation. The areas of focus should be: one, development of relevant teaching and learning materials, two, practical guidance for the teachers on the everyday implementation of mother use and teaching in EYE

level, three, teachers' move away from linguistic prejudices and identities that engender segregations resulting from boundaries created along various ethnic languages in Kenya. Barasa and Omulando, (2019) highlighting the elements in the beauty in the African Idiom argue that, despite the differences, through various ethnic languages expressed in the African idiom of expression, both cultural divergence and convergence should be harnessed for harmonious living. Taking advantage of cultural tolerance, the African community should operate within the knowledge that no culture is superior, wholly isolated, self-contained, and unique; each one has convergent features that allows it to operate as an African culture. Ultimately, the implementation process is crucial since "how [forms of folklore] are actually used in a particular ... class depends on a range of factors, for example, learners' profiles and proficiency levels, learning objectives, and teachers' knowledge as well as personal interests in folktales. Nevertheless, having a good understanding of the fundamental characteristics of folktales can be helpful for teachers to start exploring the possibilities of including them as pedagogical resources...", (Lwin, 2015, p. 81). Thus our thesis in this paper, that the place and role of folklore in and for education in the EYE in Kenya cannot be underrated, and this can only be wholly harnessed through the various rich and dynamic mother language in multilingual Kenya and employment of sound implementation processes.

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## Non-Equivalence and the Translatability of English Medical Discourse into Lukabarasi

Benard Mudogo

Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology

### Abstract

The concept of translatability is believed to be a central issue in translation although its relevance and applicability within the field of Translation and Interpretation theory have caused heated controversies. The paper tries to answer the question as to whether equivalence is a basic and necessary condition for translatability and if so, if we can translate in the absence of equivalence. This paper argues that if translatability is the essence of translation, then untranslatability constitutes an equally significant concept in the translation of English medical terms into Lukabarasi. The rationale for this position is that the specialized register of medicine in the English language is often characterized with semantic complexity and language specific items and therefore, presents evidence for the possibility of translating the untranslatable terms due to non-equivalence. Furthermore, these terms and expressions have to be skillfully translated and adapted to a level that the consumers from different linguistic backgrounds can relate them to their lexical knowledge and context. In this regard, the communication efficacies of the techniques used by Community Health workers in rendering English medical terminologies into Lukabarasi acceptable forms were evaluated. Data was collected using non-participant observation of community based health sensitization meetings. The Relevance Theory by Sperber and Wilson (1986) provided a framework for the discussion of the data. The findings indicated that naturalized borrowing techniques were used to render English items into Lukabarasi. Further, it was revealed that translating using equivalence is not necessarily the best strategy in the translation. The findings reveal that non-equivalence is more realistic and applicable than equivalence in rendering culture specific English terms into Lukabarasi in medical discourse.

**Keywords:** Non-Equivalence, Medical discourse, Naturalized borrowing, Translatability, Lukabarasi

### Introduction

Community Health workers are community-based semi-skilled personnel who link the rural communities with the health services by promoting health sensitization and outreach. The information they convey deals with specialized register of medicine which is inaccessible to non-expert and illiterate audiences from rural communities. In this regard, such information must be skillfully rendered to the consumers from different linguistic backgrounds to minimize the distortions in the source language (SL) messages. Furthermore, the specialized register of medicine in the English language is characterized with language specific items that do not have one to one equivalent expressions in Lukabarasi. In this regard, this paper sought to evaluate communication efficacies in rendering such items into Target Language (TL) acceptable forms. As observed by Vameer, (1996), the high pragmatic content of factual prose requires precision and unambiguous expression as far as form and content are concerned. In this regard, medical

terms should be skillfully rendered to avoid lexical gaps that may affect the communication efficacy in delivering community based health services. Medical discourse is an informative text type. Reiss (1989), argues that the translation of an informative text must guarantee direct and full access to the conceptual content of the Source Text (ST). Thus, an appropriate informative translation must be used skillfully in order to create texts that would communicate the intended information and produce a desired effect on the audience.

### **Translation and Translatability**

Theoretically, and in practice, the concepts of translatability and untranslatability have been central issues in translation although their definition, relevance, and applicability within the field of translation theory have caused heated controversies. As noted by Catford, (1965), translatability means the possibility to express the SL's text or language units with another language by translation between two different languages, aiming at letting the users of the two languages understand the same thing. He points out that translatability is a cline rather than a definite dichotomy. Thus, the SL texts are more or less translatable rather than absolutely translatable or absolutely untranslatable. Untranslatability on the other hand is the difficulty to accurately express the meaning of the SL text and language units in another language. Thus, the impossibility of achieving the purpose of enabling the users of two different languages to understand the same thing by means of translation (Catford 1965).

Translatability has also been considered as the essence of equivalence in the translation process. Nevertheless, in translation theory and practice, equivalence has been challenged by many translation scholars from different perspectives. Snell-Hornby (1988, p. 22) for instance, criticized equivalence as "imprecise, ill-defined, and as representing an illusion of symmetry between languages". Similarly, Nord, (1997, p. 44), criticizes the concept of equivalence as "lacking consistency, losing intrinsic interrelationship between situational and linguistic factors of communicative interaction and excluding target language texts which do not satisfy the criterion of equivalence". In this view, the nature of equivalence in translation theory and practice can only be established and analyzed according to its multifaceted dimensions: formal, dynamic, situational and contextual.

This paper argues that translating with nonequivalence constitutes an equally legitimate concept in interlingual translation, a concept that has been given a wide berth in translation studies.

The rationale for this position is that when translating language specialized register of medicine, some words or phrases denoting objects or facts can be so deeply rooted in their source language that they may lack a corresponding one-to-one equivalent in the target language. These words have often been referred to as untranslatable (Santoyo, 1987, García, 1982 and Yifeng, 2012). For this paper however, the argument is that the untranslatables can indeed be translated, a contention that negates the concept of untranslatability due to incompatibilities between languages. The question that guides the paper is; why do we have to chase the illusive concept of equivalence in translation knowing, as Newmark (1988) observes, that there is no exact equivalence between two languages in terms of lexical choices and concepts.

A successful translation according to Nida (1964), is that which caters for the response of the audience for which it is designed. For instance, the English medical terms, can be rendered into Lukabarasi equivalent forms using the strategies for translating the untranslatable terms proposed by Baker (1992) such as; using a cultural equivalent or using a general word. However, such rendering would lead into very lengthy constructions which may distort the flow of discourse and lead to meaning loss of the SL messages. Part of the reason for this “translatability” problem lies in the fact that this word carries meaning not only at the referential level but also at the pragmatic and intralingual level. Therefore, translating such terms solely depending on its TL referential equivalent may not capture its full range of meaning. In this respect, the deliberate shift in translating the same term using it in its SL form (borrowing and transcription) and ignoring its TL equivalents form can be done because the equivalents product, in this case, may fail to carry the full and complete nuances of meaning of the SL term. In translation practice, using TL equivalent forms as a sole base in translating texts produces TL products that are not equivalent to the SL forms. The proposition, which the researcher puts forth then, is that equivalence is not the only option in translating English-Lukabarasi medical discourse.

### **The Paradox of Translating using Non-Equivalence**

Studies on English-Luhya translations such as (Wangia 2003), have established constraints that translators face when translating culture specific English lexis into Luhya languages. What is revealed points to the fact that these two languages belong to two different cultures and hence, provide good evidence for the possibility of translating what is sometimes referred to as “untranslatable” due to non-equivalence. What motivates this investigation is the fact that, English medical discourse has language-specific terms and concepts that have no one to one equivalent version in Lukabarasi. For this reason, translatability is discussed and substantiated by evidence and examples in the process of translating from English into Lukabarasi, a point that need to adequately discussed in researches dealing with translation of medical discourse. Furthermore, the strategies for dealing with non-equivalence in translation suggested by various scholars such as Baker (1992) are not universal and may not be applicable to all text types. In this regard, the question arises as to whether translating using non-equivalence can produce functionally applicable TL forms. How these terms are translated into Lukabarasi to convey their conceptual and applicable meanings to the Lukabarasi speaking listeners is given prominence.

Furthermore, since English and Lukabarasi embody different language families, non-equivalence issues in translating lexical items and even phrases between these two languages figure out prominently.

Moreover, the fact that English medical terms and phrases are translated and recognized as acceptable functional Lukabarasi forms is the empirical evidence to the legitimacy of translating the untranslatable in the translation of English-Lukabarasi medical discourse, a claim made by this paper. In this regard, nonequivalence is the more logical and practical foundation for evaluating such translation and interpretation processes.

This paper underscores the fact that medical discourse – distinguished from other texts – is characterized by language specific lexis, which the essence is expected to be captured and maintained in of medical discourse. For example, unlike in standard language, specific register of medicine is either semantically complex or language specific and may lack a one to one

equivalent in the recipients' language. In addition, communication efficacies in community health sensitization meetings should be underscored. Based on the fact that most of the audiences are semi-literate and non-experts in the medical field, the techniques of rendering English medical terminologies into Lukabarasi acceptable forms were evaluated.

English being one of the main languages of medical prescription has greatly influenced discourse in the Kenyan native languages. Furthermore, as Bassnet (2002) observes, translation involves at least two languages and two cultures. In this connection, translators of English-Lukabarasi medical discourse may be faced with the problem of treating the language specific aspects implicit in the SL and finding the most appropriate technique for conveying these aspects in the TL in an appropriate way. Hatim and Munday (2004) consider translation as an act of communication which breaks cultural and linguistic boundaries, as an act of communication.

Jakobson, (1959: 238) observes that, "all cognitive experience and its classification is conveyable in any existing text language". He argues further that some concepts of one language may not exist in others but that alone cannot make them untranslatable, except when the form of the concepts/words contribute to the overall construction of the meaning/sense of the text. This may emerge in semantically complex terminologies such as those in medical discourse. In such cases, Hatim & Munday, (2004) content that the content can be translated while the form often cannot. However, as form contribute to the sense of the text, that's when the concept of untranslatability starts to emerge.

### **The Relevance Theory**

Relevance theory is a structure for the study of cognition which was proposed mainly for the sake of providing a psychologically realistic account of communication. It was originally proposed by Sperber and Wilson (1986). The main assumptions that relevance theory makes in relation to communication includes the claim that understanding an utterance is a matter of inferring what the speaker intended to convey from what (s)he utters. Another underlying assumption of relevance theory is that there are exactly two speaker's intentions that are central to communication, namely the informative intention and the communicative intention.

In translation theory and practice, the significance of relevance in translation is based on the communicative principle of relevance and the presumption of optimal relevance is the relevance-theoretic comprehension procedure, which as Sperber and Wilson (1986) notes, guides the search for the correct (i.e. intended) interpretation of utterances.

In the translation of English medical terms into Lukabarasi,, the deliberate application of non-equivalence may yield more relevant and applicable TL products rather than sticking on equivalent forms which may distort communication. Non-equivalence becomes more applicable than equivalence. Hence, it is quite legitimate to discuss non-equivalence and its applicability in translating language-specific terms, such as the register of medicine.

According to Sperber and Wilson (1986), the reason that the presumption of optimal relevance makes it reasonable for interpretation to follow a least effort path is that relevance varies inversely with effort, so an utterance whose intended interpretation is off the least effort path is less relevant than another utterance that the speaker could have managed to produce.

Therefore, the reason why the hearer can stop at the first optimally relevant interpretation is that an utterance that has two significantly different interpretations that both produce the expected degree of cognitive effects would fail to be optimally relevant, since the hearer would have to expend effort in choosing between them. Non-equivalence is a fact among languages. Although people constantly translating to and from English using certain words that we assume to be equivalent, they might be surprised to find that they are in fact using non-equivalents. In such cases, they manage to translate and not only to transfer as Catford (1965) suggested when he grouped such cases under the types of untranslatability.

## Methodology

Since this paper is concerned with the translatability of specific English register of medicine into Lukabarasi, sampled terms collected during non-participant observation of community based health sensitization meetings were selected and critically analyzed. The researcher attended four meetings in Malekha, Sundulo, Kalenda and Mavusi villages in Malava Sub County, Western Kenya. The number of items extracted from the meetings was 63. Subsequently, systematic random sampling was then used to reduce the number of sampled items to 21 items by picking every third on the list using a sampling interval of 3. This was 30 percent (30%) of the total. This was considered a representative sample threshold by Patton (2002) who suggests that a minimum sample representing 30 percent of the study population is considered sufficient to enhance generalizability to the rest of the population.

The collected data provided an empirical basis for discussion of the translatability of English medical terms into Lukabarasi. The relevance Theory by Wilson and Sperber (1986) was used in the process of analyzing the language specific English terms in their medical context and clarify the intended meaning in the SL. The respondents' participation in the discourse was evaluated to determine whether the translations reflected the applicable TL meaning.

## Results and Discussion

In this section, various examples of borrowing from the collected data are discussed and highlighted to demonstrate how they were applied in discourse. The samples are randomly drawn from the collected data. The paper begins with the analysis of selected texts to see the strategy in the representation and make deductions from the respondents in terms of communication efficacy of the target text and audience. Furthermore, in order to carry out the analysis as well as the discussion appropriately, a framework of analysis is provided. The framework features two categories generating translatability and these are: word categories and phrasal categories. The analysis of the collected data is done in comparison to the English Version of the SL messages.

**Table 1: Application of non-equivalence in the Translation of English Lukabarasi Medical Discourse**

Source Language	Target Language	Explanations
Anti-Retro Viral Drugs (ARVs)	<i>Amalesi</i>	The TL product is a general Lukabarasi word for medicine.
Bandaged	<i>Okhuvoya</i>	<i>Okhuvoya</i> literally, 'to

Nurse/Doctor	<i>Omuteresa/Omusisita/dakitari</i>	tie' in Lukabarasi There is discrepancy in the translation. A female nurse is <i>omuteresa/omusisita</i> while male nurse or doctor is <i>dakitari</i> .
HIV AIDS	<i>Ovulwale</i>	<i>Ovulwale</i> translates to disease in general without specifying the particular ailment
Injection	<i>okhupa esindani</i>	English back translation: to beat the needle
Get admitted	<i>okhukonamo</i>	The TL version <i>okhukonamo</i> literally translates as: to sleep in
Operation	<i>Okhwara</i>	The TL version implies to split into two
Miscarriage Prescription	<i>Omwana okhurula</i> <i>Okhwandichila</i>	The translated version implies' to write for'
In the hospital ward	<i>Mushiteli</i>	<i>Mushiteli</i> in Lukabarasi is: in the bed

From the few examples cited above, some insights the translation of English-Lukabarasi medical terms can be inferred and one can make some deductions and recommendations. First, English medical terms are language-specific. They represent a category of translating non-equivalence because they cannot be appropriately translated by providing their one to one into Lukabarasi equivalents. The Lukabarasi one to one equivalents of these terms may be considered within the framework of Nida's approximation in translation where equivalents are given only to approximate the meaning in general terms and not the details because the content of these terms is highly different from the content of their equivalents. Researchers such as Wangia (2003) attributed most cases of English-Luhya mistranslations to inaccuracies in finding the relevant words in the TL for the SL items. She notes that such mistranslations distorted the original messages leading to meaning loss in the TL forms. Furthermore, one of the major problems that hinders appropriate rendering of the English utterances into the Luhya language group is the word. For the present case, the words in Table 1 above are difficult to translate using the TL equivalence because they refer to specific register of medicine in the SL which does not have lexicalized Lukabarasi equivalent forms. It then follows that the TL equivalents applicable for these terms could be long explanations which would not only constrain the translator but also distort the TL messages

From the data, it can be revealed that the SL is translated not by providing its TL equivalents (Lukabarasi meanings) but by providing a strategy for dealing with non-equivalence. In this case, using nonequivalence was more applicable and acceptable in rendering the full meaning of these terms. For example, the word 'ARV' can be translated by using explanations or cultural

equivalent as many translators do in translating medical discourse to other languages. However, such equivalents would not give the acceptable and applicable meanings in Lukabarasi. ARV can be more adequately translated by using the general term *amalesi* (drugs), which is unambiguously understood by the audience to mean ARVs in this context.

Similarly, the word **'injection'** has literal equivalents in Lukabarasi as *"Okhutsoma"* and *"Okhuwunai"*. However, these equivalents do not convey the extra levels of socially acceptable meanings the medical term denotes. The words *"Okhutsoma"* and *"Okhuwuna"* in literal Lukabarasi refer to being pricked or pierced by something accidentally. Therefore, translating the SL items by giving their one to one equivalents is yet again not sufficient. Depending on the context where these words are used, it acceptable to translate them as using the non-equivalence, *'Okhupa esindani'* (to beat the needle), which in this context is unambiguously denoted to mean to receive an injection..

Medical terms are language-specific par excellence. This is because, they represent a category of translation non-equivalence because they cannot be appropriately translated by providing their one to one TL equivalents. The one to one equivalents given for these terms would either long explanation of the concepts or ambiguous terms which would result in communication breakdown. It is convenient to translate such words by using the socially contextual applicable terms to fill the lexical gaps absent in the TL and facilitate communication. Any idea of absolute translatability is dismissed because, "there can be no exactness in translation in any but rare and trivial cases" the notion of translatability therefore has to be considered in relation to each instance of translation as 'a concrete act of performance' and must be linked with the text type of ST, the purpose of translation and the translation principles being followed by the translator" (Shuttleworth and Cowie, 1999, p. 180).

It should be noted that these English terms can be translated into Lukabarasi by using what Ghazala (2004) calls explanatory equivalents. However, such long explanations may not give the full referential meaning of the SL terms and may sometimes lead to ambiguity in the TL forms. Based on the explanation above, it is to show that the form both words are equivalent, the words naturalized items are singular just like the SL items. Similarly the word category in the SL with reference to the TL is equivalent. For instance, the items in the SL are categorized as a noun and so are the ones in the TL as well.

For instance, the SL word **'operation'** in medical discourse is semantically complex. It refers to a medical procedure which has no equivalence in the Kabarasi culture, and therefore, can only be translated by using a more neutral and less expressive term, *'Okhwara'* (to split into two). Part of the difficulty in translating such terms lies in the fact that these words require an awareness of the English register of medicine, with specific attention to a complex surgical procedure. The Kabarasi equivalents available for such terms are either long explanation of the concepts or less expressive terms. It is applicable to translate these words by using unrelated words. For example, *"okhwara"* in Lukabarasi translates to "split into two", but the native Kabarasi speakers can easily relate the TL product to the surgical operation procedure.

Occupation titles present similar challenges to TL Equivalence. Of specific interest is the word nurse, a popular mention in medical discourse. This term can be translated by giving its

Kabarasi equivalent as “*omuntu wulindanga avalale*”. However, this will neither capture the local association of this term nor illustrate the Lukabarasi understanding of the SL terminology. Thus, the non-equivalent rendering of the SL term as *Omuteresa* or *Omsisita* are more acceptable when referring to a female nurse. A male nurse or doctor is simply called ‘*Dakitari*’. In the same light word ‘**bandaged**’ express a concept which is known in Lukabarasi but simply not lexicalized; that is not “allocated” Lukabarasi words to express it. This word is peculiar to the register of medicine and cannot be captured in one-to-one word rendering into the TL. It is therefore rendered as ‘*Okhuvoya*’ (to tie).

Some words difficult to translate because they refer to semantically complex concepts which are not found in Lukabarasi . For example, the word prescribe in English medical register refers to a process of giving instructions to patients on how to use drugs for specific ailments. This process represents a concept related to Kabarasi culture which of giving people medicine, the only difference being that in traditional medicine practice, there was no writing. . Similarly, the word admit in English medical register means. There are no English equivalents to capture the complex concepts associated with these English terms. The best strategy in translating these terms is to.

## Conclusion

It should be noted that the register of medicine is language specific and so looking for an equivalent expression in another language can distort the TL meaning and lead to communication breakdown. Non-equivalence in translation can be evidenced through numerous examples in the process of translating from English into Lukabarasi. Terms that lack equivalence due to markedly specific register in the English language can be translated to convey their conceptual and functional meanings to the Lukabarasi speaking audience by using naturalized borrowing strategy. This is because translating using equivalence in such cases may fail to produce a meaningful rendering of the source term into the target term. Rather, purposefully using non-equivalence results in a “better” translation. Non-equivalence becomes more relevant than equivalence.

In other words, “non-equivalence” becomes more equivalent than “equivalence.” Furthermore, translation scholars such as had to move to the looser concept of dynamic equivalence. Even the theorists who defend the concept of equivalence, such as Wilss (1982), based their argument on the merit of its applicability at the text level.

Nevertheless, this modified notion of text-level equivalence has had to come through non-equivalence at the word level. Non-equivalence, then, is a legitimate field of translation theory. These findings of this paper, it should be noted, do not mean that the resultant version can capture all the intended meaning in the SL. The investigation is only meant to provide a more practical way for handling language specific terms and expressions in specific translation.

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## Teaching Mother Tongues in Kenya: The Role of Teacher Training

1Jacktone O. Onyango, 2Ireri Mbaabu  
Kenyatta University

### Abstract

There are many challenges that face the teaching of mother tongues in Kenyan primary schools and one of them is that Teachers Training Colleges do not train mother tongue teachers. It is assumed that by virtue of being speakers of their language, teachers can teach their mother tongues. As Mbaabu (2000) argues, this is very inappropriate because some of these mother tongues have peculiar problems including inadequately standardized orthographies and complex tone patterns which have no parallels in either English or Kiswahili. Due to lack of training, teachers are not prepared to deliver high quality teaching of these languages. It is against this background that this paper aims at investigating the importance of training teachers for effective mother tongue teaching. The study seeks to achieve three main objectives, namely, to explain why mother tongue teachers should be trained, how they should be trained, and what strategies to be used in promoting mother tongues. This study is guided by the Instructional Design Theory as expounded by Perkins (1992). This theory explains the means to attain given goals for learning and offers guidelines on methods to use in different situations in curriculum implementation. The study adopts a descriptive research design and data was collected through a survey of available literature on the teaching of mother tongues and analyzed in accordance with the selected conceptual framework. It is envisaged that the findings and recommendations of this study will help curriculum developers and other education stakeholders in making informed decisions with regard to the teaching of mother tongues in primary education.

**Keywords:** Mother tongue, Training, Orthography.

### Introduction

The proposal to teach mother tongues in Kenya has been met with mixed reactions from various stakeholders. Those who support the proposal believe that this is one way of promoting and preserving the endangered mother languages. But those who oppose the proposal argue that it is practically impossible to teach all those mother tongues in Kenya because of the various challenges related to their teaching. It is in this context that this paper discusses the challenges facing the teaching of mother tongues in Kenya and suggests possible strategies that could be put in place in order to promote these languages. The discussion is guided by Instructional Design Theory (Perkins, 1992) that offers guidelines on methods to use in different situations in curriculum implementation. In this paper, the term 'mother tongue' refers to the vernacular language or first language spoken by a group of people who belong to a particular ethnic community that lives in a particular geographical region. For example, the Luyia language spoken by Abaluyia of western Kenya. The term 'training' refers to the process of giving people skills, knowledge and attitudes to enable them perform a particular exercise effectively. For example, training teachers to teach mother languages. The term 'orthography' is used to refer to the writing and spelling system of a particular language. Unlike Kiswahili, most mother languages in Kenya do not have a standard writing and spelling system because they

have not been standardized. This simply means that only a few mother languages that have been standardized already have orthographies.

### **Theoretical Framework**

This study is guided by insights from the Instructional Design Theory expounded by Perkins (1992) which explains the means to attain given goals for learning. It uses the concept of transfer of training in facilitating learning. Transfer of training is the continuous application of the knowledge, skills, and/or attitudes that were learned in a learning environment to the job environment. Teachers of mother languages need to be trained on how to teach these languages so that they can effectively transfer the same skills, knowledge and attitudes to the learners in the school environment and hence attain the goals for learning those languages. In order to know why the teachers of these languages should be trained, how they should be trained and what strategies to use for promoting these languages, it is important first to highlight the challenges that they are likely to encounter in their job environment.

### **Challenges of Teaching Mother Tongues**

One of the challenges of teaching mother tongues in Kenya is that they are very many (over forty) and most of them have dialects. As Mbaabu (1978: 15-16) notes, many mother tongues in Kenya are known by cover terms such as Luluhia and Kimeru yet these are groups of languages with varying degrees of intelligibility. For example, Onyango (1997:58) reports that Luyia dialects include Kinyala (Busia and Kakamega), Kisaamia, Kikhayo, Kimarachi, Kibukusu, Kiwanga, Kitsotso, Kitachoni, Kimarama, Kikisa, Kinyore, Kikabras, Kiisukha, Kilogooli, Kiidakho and Kitiriki. Which of these Luyia dialects is suitable for teaching and writing books? Similarly, Mbaabu (1996a:148) observes that what is referred to as Kimeru language is a group of closely related dialects individually known as Gichuka, Kimwimbi, Kiimenti, Gitigania (Tiania), Kiigembe and Kitharaka. These dialects differ in vocabulary, pronunciation, as well as the semantics of various lexical items. Moreover, speakers of these dialects consider themselves to be speakers of different languages.

This makes it more challenging when it comes to choosing which dialect should be used for teaching and writing instructional materials in a particular language without antagonizing the speakers of the remaining dialects (Onyango and Mbaabu, 2019:8). This also makes it very expensive to publish books and other required instructional materials in all mother tongues.

The second challenge is that most of these mother tongues have not been standardized hence they lack a standard orthography (Mbaabu, 2000:222). Ryanga reports that out of the nine Mijikenda group of languages at the Kenyan coast, it is only Kigiryama which was standardized and approved to be used as the language of the Mijikenda in primary standard three. However, other Mijikenda sub-tribes (Wadigo, Wakambe, Wajibana, Waduruma, Warabai, Waribe, Wakauma and Wachonyi) refused to use Kigiryama as their mother tongue and instead decided to use Kiswahili (Mbaabu, 1996a:148-149). The speakers of various dialects of each language sometimes have different speech sounds and different ways of spelling words in their respective dialects. This makes it difficult to teach and write materials in these languages.

Moreover, if all these (over forty) mother tongues are to be standardized by Kenya alone, it would take a very long time considering that it took over three decades for four countries (Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania and Zanzibar) to put their financial resources together in order to

standardize Kiswahili and produce books. This is well illustrated in the activities of the Inter-Territorial (Kiswahili) Language Committee (1930-1964) which standardized Kiswahili as documented in Mbaabu (1997). Kenya does not have such resources to accomplish that task. We are aware that Bible Translation and Literacy (BTL) organization has already developed orthographies for 20 mother languages. This has made it possible to publish TKK books for teaching **a few** mother tongues in lower primary (class 1 – 3). It is important to note that orthographies for most mother tongues have not yet been developed as of now, yet these unstandardized mother tongues are also expected to have written materials for teaching and learning. If all mother tongues (and their dialects inclusive) have to be taught, then all of them must be standardized and have standard orthographies first. Just having a few standardized mother tongues with a few written books is not enough to make mother tongue teaching successful at the national level. That is just the beginning.

Thirdly, some of these languages also have complex tone patterns which have no parallels in either English or Kiswahili. These tones are used to distinguish various lexical and grammatical meanings of words hence contributing to effective communication. A case in point is the Kimeru word *iria* which can convey the following four different meanings when pronounced differently in spite of having the same spelling in writing:

Iria  
milk

Iria  
take a bath

Iria  
lake/ocean

Iria  
weeds

Similar meaning differences triggered by tone may be observed in the following Kimeru sentences:

Juma ageta mantu jathuka  
When Juma goes there, things will get out of hand.

Juma ageta mantu jathuka  
Let Juma not go there (so that) things don't get out of hand.

Juma ageta mantu jathuka  
Juma will go there when things get out of hand

A teacher who is not conversant with such peculiar linguistic features may not be able to teach the tone language effectively (Onyango, 2006:143).

Fourthly, the mother tongues are not catered for in the syllabus used by Teachers Training Colleges hence the teachers graduating from those institutions are not well-trained to teach mother tongues.

Fifthly, there are very few qualified people who are capable of writing books in mother tongues since these languages are not even taught in upper primary, secondary, tertiary and university level. This means that we don't have many graduates who have been taught how to write books in **some Kenyan mother languages (if not all)**. The mere fact of being a native speaker of a particular mother tongue does not necessarily make one capable of writing books in that language or even teaching it. It should be noted that knowing how to speak a language does not necessarily mean knowing how to write it; one needs to be taught because speaking and writing skills are two different things in communication. We are aware of the fact that there are some linguists who have researched and written scholarly articles on mother language. For example, the American linguist Michael Marlo, has done studies on Luyia dialects including Lubukusu. This, however, does not mean that he can write learning materials for primary children in Lubukusu. One also needs to have training in linguistics and pedagogy in order to be a qualified teacher and writer.

It is in view of these challenges that some people argue that Kiswahili should be taught as the only mother language in schools because it has overcome those challenges mentioned above and it has great potential for promoting national unity as compared to all those mother tongues. As Mbaabu (1996b:20) observes, there is a general fear that to strengthen the teaching of mother tongues would encourage tribalism. The teaching of mother tongues appears to be strengthening the tribal bonds at the expense of national unity. If these mother tongues must be taught, then the teachers must be trained first in order to prepare them to effectively deal with those challenges in their job environment. The issue of training should be looked at in the context of what the training should be all about.

### **Need to Train Mother Tongue Teachers**

Training mother tongue teachers enables them to be well prepared to teach what they are expected to teach in order to attain desired goals. First, the teachers need to understand and appreciate the reasons for teaching these mother tongues in schools.

This will enable them to have a positive attitude towards mother tongue teaching and hence influence the learners' perception of the same. These reasons could include: The need to preserve endangered languages and our culture, the need to develop and promote these language as stated in the Constitution of Kenya (2010), the need to conduct research on various aspects of these languages and lastly, the need to document these languages.

Secondly, teaching is a profession and every subject (including language subject) has its teaching methods. Therefore, it is wrong to assume that the teaching methods used for teaching other subjects or other languages (like Kiswahili) will be appropriate for teaching specific mother tongues. Mbaabu (1996b:23) notes that there is a general impression that mother tongue teachers are supposed to use their knowledge and teaching skills of Kiswahili and English to teach the mother tongues. In some cases the transfer of those teaching methods from one subject to another will not yield positive results mainly because of the linguistic and cultural peculiarities of those mother tongues as highlighted in the challenges above. So teachers of each mother tongue will need to be trained on the unique aspects of each language.

Thirdly, the teachers who teach mother tongues could be the best writers of learning materials in those languages since they are in a position to understand the needs of the learners better than anybody else. But they cannot write good materials unless they are trained on what to write, for which target learners and how to write it. Not only teachers and writers need to be trained but also editors and translators of mother tongue materials in publishing houses. This is because they will encounter unique challenges that they have never encountered before and so they need to know how to deal with them. As Mbaabu (2000:222) observes, private publishers do not publish in many mother tongues because of lack of authors of good quality manuscripts and because such publications would not sell since the audience is limited.

Lastly, mother tongue teachers also need to be trained so that they can have the necessary linguistic and cultural background of the languages that they are expected to teach. A competent language teacher needs to understand and be able to analyze the linguistic structure of that language at the phonetic, phonological, morphological, syntactic and semantic level. They also need to know how the language is used in its cultural context. Such information can only be acquired through training.

It is also important to describe what a well-trained mother tongue teacher should know. Shulman (1987), Day and Conklin (1992), Commins (1995) and Mata (2014) have highlighted the following minimum competencies that should be included in the training of a mother language teacher:

- (a) Pedagogical competencies like learning theories, approaches, strategies and beliefs.
- (b) Knowledge of the target language and culture.
- (c) Personal characteristics: Having the right values and attitudes towards the mother tongue and learners; commitment to their own continuing professional and personal learning, belief in their students; team-working, collaboration and networking, inside and outside the immediate school context; importance of life-long learning.
- (d) Planning and managing the teaching and learning process.
- (e) Content knowledge of the subject matter as represented by courses in syntax, semantics, phonology, and pragmatics as well as literary and cultural aspects.
- (f) Monitoring and assessing student progress and learning outcomes.
- (g) Creating and maintaining a supportive classroom environment.
- (h) Creating and sustaining learner motivation, willingness to speak, and group motivation, while also taking into account individual learner differences and individual contexts.
- (i) Having support knowledge, referring to the knowledge of the various disciplines that inform our approach to the teaching and learning of mother-tongue language. These disciplines include psycholinguistics, linguistics, first language acquisition, sociolinguistics and research methods.
- (j) Pedagogic content knowledge. This is the specialized knowledge of how to represent content knowledge in diverse ways so that students may understand; knowledge of how students come to understand the subject matter, what difficulties they are likely to encounter when learning it, what misconceptions interfere with learning, and how to overcome these problems.

(k) Language pedagogy: current developments in language learning and teaching research.

From the foregoing discussion, it is evident that mother tongues cannot be taught effectively without training the teachers on various important aspects. This view is also supported by Africa Educational Trust (2020) which argues that it is very difficult to provide literacy and numeracy in mother tongues without training teachers and preparing teaching materials. However, effective training of the teachers requires good strategies to be put in place on how to train them and promote the development of mother tongues.

### **Strategies for Training Teachers and Promoting Mother Tongues**

Various strategies can be used in order to equip mother tongue teachers with relevant information. The first strategy is to do a survey of various Kenyan mother tongues, identify and describe the unique features of each language that need to be emphasized during the training of its teachers. In order to accomplish this, it is necessary for linguists to undertake first comparative linguistic and socio-cultural studies on these languages.

The second strategy will involve the use of information gathered from various comparative studies in order to prepare a syllabus that would be used to conduct the training of teachers in Teachers Training Colleges and Universities. Such syllabus will need to be reviewed after a certain period of time in order to update it with new information coming from research and make it relevant and responsive to the needs of the society.

The third strategy will be to prepare the resources for training the teachers and instructional materials for the learners. This will entail identifying qualified resource persons for facilitating the training of mother tongue teachers, organizing conferences, seminars and workshops, writing grammar books, basic and supplementary texts, story books, learners' workbooks, teachers' guidebooks, compiling dictionaries, preparing dialect maps and other relevant resources to facilitate teaching and learning.

The fourth strategy will be to establish a research fund that would facilitate research activities on various mother tongues and also enable the publication of research findings in form of books, theses, journal articles and other formats. The universities and other stakeholders will be expected to play a major role in undertaking research activities on these languages by offering scholarships to postgraduate students who research on various aspects of mother languages.

The fifth strategy will be to standardize the languages that would be selected for teaching and writing materials so that they have established writing systems. A competent panel of professionals will need to be put in place in order to establish the criteria for the selection of languages to be taught and to coordinate their standardization.

The sixth strategy will be to identify the traditional knowledge associated with each mother language and strive to utilize, promote and preserve such knowledge for future generations. Such knowledge include: diseases that can be cured, people who can cure them and herbs that can be used to cure, for example, among the Meru, a species of banana known as *muruaru* is known to cure several stomach ailments; fixing broken or dislocated bones, removing fish bones that are lodged in the throat, prediction of rain by looking at various signs in the

environment e.g onset of certain weather conditions or appearance of certain plants and flowers or when you hear during daytime croaking noise of certain frogs that stay far away from water, all these signs signal that the rainy season is about to begin; preservation of food using traditional techniques e.g. salting, drying or smoking fish, sprinkling ash on grains, preserving grains in granaries; conservation of traditional crops, fruit trees and vegetables, among other forms of traditional knowledge.

The seventh strategy is to preserve endangered languages by doing research on their linguistic structure, their oral literature and their culture. These include gathering information on the songs, praise poetry, riddles, proverbs and other aspects of literary genres and preserving them in hard copy and soft copy.

The last strategy is to ensure that all mother tongues are documented after a certain period of time. For example, certain types of songs should be documented by a certain time. This will prevent the loss of intangible cultural heritage associated with mother tongues.

In view of the foregoing, it is important for the government to come up with a policy that would favor the promotion of mother tongues in relation to the strategies suggested above. It is important first for the government to clearly state the goals of teaching mother tongues and even identify the number of mother tongues to be taught.

## **Conclusion**

This paper has discussed the role of teacher training in the teaching of mother tongues in Kenya and the strategies that may be put in place in order to teach and promote mother tongues. This can only be possible if the government and other stakeholders cooperate to develop a favorable language policy that will be fully implemented. It is important for the stakeholders to plan which research projects should be initiated in various mother tongues and come up with a timeframe for their implementation. Although we have not made much progress towards the teaching of mother tongues, it is true that we have managed to bring this debate in the public forum and we have also managed to create job opportunities for ourselves in terms of doing research and publishing books and articles on these languages.

Possibly, our determination to continue doing research on these languages may help to modernize them by being used in technology and translation of technical documents in other languages like French, Japanese, Chinese and Russian. Undoubtedly, this would be a major step towards the development and promotion of mother tongues. In order for the general public to benefit from these mother tongues, it is necessary to start projects like the ones suggested in this paper and ensure that strategies for their implementation are put in place.

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Challenges faced by Teachers of English while teaching oral skills in Public Primary Schools

Vivian Afandi  
Kenyatta University

**Abstract**

Effective curriculum implementation requires that learners be proficient in all language skills. Sadly, however, most primary schools put less emphasis on the learning of oral skills and more emphasis on reading and writing due to its importance in the examinations. In Kenya, the teaching of listening and speaking skills is either ignored or haphazardly taught. Consequently, English language is learnt for purposes of passing examinations and not necessarily for the advancement of the basic language skills. The objective of this study was to establish the difficulties faced by English language teachers while teaching oral skills. The paper was guided by Vygotsky's theory of Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). This theory asserts that a learner develops cognitively when exposed to problem solving activities shared with someone else older than him/her. At first, the older person interacting with the child assumes most of the responsibility as he/she guides the child through the problem solving. Later, the child is gradually left on his/her own to solve the problem. The variables under investigation were independent, intervening and dependent variables. The study used descriptive research design. The study employed stratified simple random sampling technique in selecting the sample size for the schools, classes and teachers of English giving final sample sizes of 10 schools, 100 teachers and 10 classes. Piloting study was done in two primary schools that were not used in the main study. Questionnaire, interview schedules, observation schedules were used to collect data. Both quantitative and qualitative data were collected and analyzed by Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The results were presented in form of tables for interpretations and discussions. Among the challenges facing the teaching of oral skills in English, the study revealed that the teaching and learning of oral skills in English was greatly hampered by mother tongue influence, lack of constant practice in the use of oral skills and inadequate teaching materials of oral skills in English. Based on these findings, the study recommends that teachers should design more interactive oral strategies that allow learners to participate in the learning process. Further, there is need for the government to procure and distribute enough teaching and learning materials that can facilitate the improvement of learning English oral skills. This study is useful to language educators and teachers of English language.

**Keywords:** Oral Skills, Mother tongue influence, English

## **Introduction**

The importance of English language for enhancing educational attainment through improved communication ability can never be over emphasized. Language is a tool of communication. Today, English language has rapidly become one of the main medium of communication at home, in school and in communal domain both locally and globally. Therefore, there is need for English users to accurately and fluently communicate in English all over the world. It is therefore important that the teaching and learning of English language is taken seriously especially for communication purposes of pacing up with worldwide demands for English language skills (Morris & Leavey, 2006). The importance of oral proficiency in any language cannot be overemphasized. Palmér (2010) notes that spoken language is the pupils' primary way of communicating and forms a crucial part in their language learning process. To communicate is to send and receive comprehensible information, process the information and evaluate their knowledge. It is through communication skills that they are able to beef up and develop more advanced language skills. Listening and speaking are prerequisite skills to reading and writing. A learner has to develop his/her oral skills first before he/she is able to

read and write. Once a learner can listen to a language and speak it, then he/she can progressively learn how to read and write effectively (Resnick & Snow 2009).

In most classrooms, the major focus is on the reading and writing skills rather than the other two skills. Both the teacher and student give less importance to the listening and speaking skills. Teaching the students who have a limited exposure and understanding of the English language can be a tedious job. English for a majority of learners is a second language, as learners of English communicate in their first language at homes, markets and other places; most of them face crucial problems in writing and speaking because these are productive skills. Listening and speaking skills forms the basis to start learning more languages. These skills are paramount as they are afterwards used as a means through which one is able to sustain the life- long learning process. If there is poor listening input from caregivers to a child, there are high chances that an individual will fail to accomplish long-term goals. We perceive the world through listening (Linebarger, 2001). Improvement in listening skill has a profound effect on other basic language skills. Morris and Leavey (2006) found out that listening skills enhance learners' phonological development. The teaching of listening skills also improves the learners' comprehension during reading. Listening and reading stories simultaneously improves the learners' performance in reading comprehension (Badian, 1999; Bergman, 1999).

The teaching and learning of English language involves the four basic skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing. Even though each skill carries equal importance in English language learning, these skills do not develop at the same rate among the pupils. Many pupils found to understand English language unfortunately fail to express themselves effectively in public. This is because most pupils still find speaking in the second languages the most difficult skill to acquire. The need for fluency, accuracy and effectiveness in the use of English language all over the continent as a result of the function it plays as the continent's international means of communication has given priority to establishing more effective ways to instruct English language. Teaching listening and speaking skills is thus crucial in English language instruction. The great number of erroneous utterances that learners of English produce in oral performance and their recourse to communication strategies, as shown in Rababah's study (2001), is an indication of how serious the problem is. Being able to successfully communicate ideas orally is a fundamental skill in language learning and represents a huge challenge for beginners. Especially at the primary school level, learners usually struggle with expressing themselves and would usually avoid active participation in communicative activities, which can hinder their language learning process and can affect their attitudes towards the language. Foley (2002) and Jordaan (2011) claim that English is on the whole being used badly by most educators. According to Rees (2000) many learners do not hear adequate and authentic English from first language speakers of the language in a register appropriate for their age or scholastic level. Janks (2014) confirmed this, arguing that many African teachers teach using English language. This works negatively for the learners as they often copy their teachers' incompetence in the English language. Balfour (1999) and Fakeye (2014) argue that in instances where English language is instructed incompetently it hinders and impairs the learning process. A study done by Neeta and Klu (2013) revealed that difficulties in English are a serious problem in the education system in South Africa and the low levels of English competence among learners is a fact. De Wet (2002) and Janks (2014) claim that most teachers

are not well equipped with the required knowledge, skills and attitudes for effective teaching and learning of English language.

The importance of incorporating English language in Kenya's education system is enclosed in the National Educational Objectives, as postulated in the National Language Policy which states that in a monolingual settings, mother tongue be used as the language of instruction in lower primary except in teaching of English language (Muthwii, 2004; Nabea, 2009). This implies that language usage is a consequence of the multiplicity of language types that surround the Kenyan society, and which require a regulatory mechanism to determine the language in which to transact both in school and other social places (Gathumbi, 2008). From upper primary school (from class 4), English is taught as a subject and also used as a medium of instruction for all the other subjects except Kiswahili. Symwene (2013) asserts that the teaching of English as a subject and using the language as a medium of instruction in the Kenyan curriculum is important as English plays a vital role for the rest of a learners academic life and beyond. It is the medium of instruction and most academic materials are availed and printed in English language thus the academic success of a learner entirely lies on his/her competence in English language. Oral skills therefore entirely establish the foundation to the instruction and learning of the English language.

In line with the recent curriculum reforms witnessed in Kenya, Competency-Based Education (CBE) focuses on the outcomes or outputs of learning. More specifically, Competency-Based Language Teaching (CBLT) focuses on what "learners are expected to do with the language" (Richards & Rodgers, 2001:141). The major basis of CBLT is the "functional and interactional perspective on the nature of language (Richards & Rodgers, 2001, p. 143) which means that language learning always needs to be connected to the social context it is used in. Therefore, language is seen as "a medium of interaction and communication between people" who want to achieve "specific goals and purposes" (Richards & Rodgers, 2001:143). This especially applies to situations in which the learner has to fulfil a particular role with language skills which can be predicted or determined for the relevant context (Richards & Rodgers, 2001, p.143). In CBLT, the use of language and the meaning of language interactions depend on the context and purpose of communications as well as the roles and relationships among the participants. For teachers, full linguistic competence requires the ability to make appropriate use of a variety of language forms (ranging from formal to informal) across the four language modalities: reading, writing, speaking, and listening. The role of the learner in a competency-based framework is to decide whether the competencies are useful and relevant for him/her (Richards & Rodgers, 2001, p.146). This shows that the learner has an active role in the classroom which is underlined by the fact that the students are expected to perform the skills learned (Richards & Rodgers, 2001, p.146). The competencies the students will learn are clearly defined and present in the public so that "the learner knows exactly what needs to be learned" and for which purpose he/she has to use the competencies (Richards & Rodgers, 2001, p.147). In this regard, it is vital that every competency is mastered one at a time because this makes sure that the learners know what they have already learned and what the next steps will look like (Richards & Rodgers, 2001, p.147).

The current English curriculum implemented in primary schools in Kenya is labelled as competency-based curriculum. It seeks to enhance communicative competence in spoken and

written English comprising speaking, listening, writing and reading, and raising awareness of the nature and significance of English as a chief means of learning. Despite the goals oriented to the mastery of English competence and the implementation of the communicative approach in the classroom, competence in English among primary school pupils is generally low.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Language plays an important role in the teaching and learning process in that all aspects of the curriculum depend on the learners' proficiency in all the language skills. Sadly though, studies in second language learning (L2) (Alam and Uddin, 2013; Symwene 2013; Coleman, 2014) shows that in most public primary schools, less emphasis is placed on the learning of oral skills and more emphasis is placed on reading and writing due to its importance in the examinations. Wafula (2009) also notes that in Kenya, the teaching of reading and oral literature is either ignored or haphazardly taught. Consequently, English language is learnt for purposes of passing examinations and not necessarily for the advancement of the basic language skills. In the Kenyan curriculum, oral skills are not tested in the examinations, which is the reason for the less emphasis by teachers and learners especially the system being examination oriented. Therefore, listening and speaking skill is often neglected and pupils are found to be silent, shy or have a profound fear of being wrong. This leads to stagnation in the acquisition of oral skills (Keraro, Okere & Mondoh, 2002). Competency in oral language skills form the foundation for acquisition of reading and writing as well as better performance in other activity areas. Consequently, it is necessary to ensure that teachers use appropriate strategies for oral language teaching. The Tusome External Evaluation Midline Report on early grade reading intervention in Kenya (GoK, 2017) notes that it is imperative that students learn to read in the early grades, yet many fail to do so. The report notes that only 18% of pupils in lower primary are fluent readers in English. Hence there was need to establish the difficulties faced by English language teachers while teaching oral skills in public primary schools in Kakamega East Sub-County.

### **Literature Review**

It is more challenging to learn a second language (L2) in a multilingual setting than in a monolingual setting. In a multilingual environment, the second language is seen as an intruder as there is already an existing interaction system more so among children. Trying to learn another language may sound complicated due to the differences in the different language structures that exist in a multilingual setting (Asfaha & Kroon, 2011).

The compromise in standard language use contextually (Pitt, 2005) which leads to learners adapting and mixing of the languages creating confusion among the languages could be another challenge. Clegg and Afitska (2011) note that to facilitate communication between teachers and learners, there emerges creative bilingual practices due to a lack of fluency in a common language especially in African classrooms which are dominantly multilingual. This ultimately affects effective teaching of oral skills in English language.

Zhang (2009) insists that, speaking as a productive skill is persistently becoming the hardest skill to acquire for most speakers of English language. According to Ur (1996), so many factors contribute to difficulty in acquisition of speaking skills, some which include inhibition, low or uneven participation by learners, mother tongue use among learners and learners who have no

motive to express themselves. In addition, Rababa'h (2005) supports Ur and says that many other factors cause difficulties in speaking English among learners in a multilingual setting. The learners themselves, teaching strategies employed in the curriculum and the environment. Learners lack the necessary vocabulary to sustain a conversation. This could be a result of poor communication competence and inadequate strategic competence. Lack of motivation to speak the language also largely contributes to learners not being able to sustain conversations for long in the target languages. Motivation whether intrinsic or extrinsic is a determiner to whether a learner engages in an activity or not, the extent to which he or she engages himself or herself and for how long he or she can take it (Littlewood, 1984). This therefore implies that in order for learners to effectively perform the skill learned, the language teachers who are the primary agents of socialization in school must expose learners to adequate oral skills.

The emphasis of competency-based curriculum is the application of skills and knowledge to real life situations. Moshá (2012) notes that a competency-based curriculum is one that has specific outcomes statements that outline the competences to be developed or attained. Competency is defined as proven ability to apply skills, knowledge and personal abilities in different learning situations (Nikolov, Sholkova&Kovatcheva, 2014).

Generally, competency based approach is aimed at developing language performances which are useful in the real world either for daily use or work settings. This approach does not specify any learning theory to attain the competency. It views language as a life skill. Competency in oral language skills form the foundation for acquisition of reading and writing as well as better performance in other activity areas. Pupils may be resistant to this approach in the beginning, especially if they do not see any real need for learning the language. Successful classroom interaction depends on student participation. Students need to find ways to motivate themselves and find ways to apply information to their own lives and to integrate it into the classroom. Students must be willing to challenge, to question, and to initiate in the Competency Based Language Teaching classroom (Marcellino, 2005).

Communicative competence achievement is successful only if the learners are motivated, have the chance to express themselves and interact with people around them (Littlewood, 1981). The types of teaching strategies used by teachers are also an impediment to communicative competence. In most cases they are inadequate and rarely do they emphasize on oral skills. In service teacher trainings, seminars and workshops were found not beneficial in positively influencing teachers' ways of teaching (Rababa'ah, 2005).

Another problematic area experienced by learners is the pronunciation of English words. This may be, primarily, because of the variations in the sound systems between the English language and the native language. Some pronunciation difficulties are due to varied pronunciations by teachers. These differences also contribute in learning erroneous pronunciation. In Kenyan primary schools, there is significant underperformance in English language as researched by (Sure &Ogechi, 2009; Kioko&Muthwii, 2001). This could be attributed to the multilingual nature of Kenya and other possible day-to-day communicative alternatives without forgetting the challenges posed by the linguistic environment (Hurley, 2003).

In Kenya, by the time a child joins school, he or she has acquired at least two languages mostly mother tongue and Kiswahili. With this, they find introduction of a third language (English) challenging and they consider it as an intruder to an already existing system of communication (Sure & Ogechi, 2009). This poses English literacy a challenge to learners immediately they start schooling according to Quality Education for Social Transformation (QUEST, 2007) and Muthwii (2004). The language of the catchment area is used to induct them to both receptive and productive skills in English. Learners are required to stick to the national language policy in 'timetable-full' schedules of learning. This comes along with language confusion resulting from traumatic changeovers during instructional sessions thus learners are frequently caught in the centre of this mix-up (QUEST, 2007; Muthwii, 2004). To this end, this study attempts to unearth the challenges faced by teachers of English while teaching oral skills in public primary schools given that the language of the catchment area varies significantly from one region to another.

In Kenya, a study by Oseno, Barasa and Omulando (2014) noted that mother tongue interference was a challenge by teachers when teaching oral communicative skills. Most pupils have mother tongue dominance in pronunciation of the words and various sounds of the English language. This is as a result of the difference in the sound system of English verses that of the African Languages.

A study by Dil, (2009) investigated Turkish English as foreign language communication hindrance in English language classrooms. He says that EFL learners are anxious and unwilling to participate during English lessons; this is brought about by fear of being negatively evaluated by their peers or teachers when making mistakes, especially in the presence of their friends. This is worse by pupils who think of themselves as poor in the language. They get extremely anxious and more unwilling to converse in English as compared to those who perceive themselves as excellent, good or fair in the language.

Al-Lawati (1995) studied the challenges faced by learners in omani in their oral work in English language. He discovered that vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, and discourse compose the most difficult area as according to teachers; the learners have not yet acquired sufficient level in the basics of the language. This was attributed to the fact that the curriculum did not provide adequate opportunity for exposing the learners to the learning items and activities. AmbuandSaidi, (1997) studied a number of issues in instructing English speaking in a foreign language classroom. One of the challenges was the big number of pupils in the classroom, limited time allocated to the teaching of English language and the inadequacy of the syllabus to satisfy the needs of the communicative demands for the learners. Failure to test oral skills in examinations makes teachers and learners put less emphasis on learning oral skills.

Al-Lawati's (2002) in his findings, pupils were found to give more attention to writing and reading, which are similar to exam items. The teachers and pupils admitted that they gave least attention to speaking tasks in the textbooks because speaking is completely excluded from exams. Al-Abri (2008) blames the absence of listening and speaking skills activities in course books as a strong reason for learners' challenges in oral work thus he recommended that oral work activities in the form of dialogues, songs, rhymes, drama, poems and simple stories be incorporated to enable learners to have more fun and enjoy learning to improve their speaking

skill. Bwire (2007) adds to it and states that oral skills is not as emphasized as reading and writing in public primary schools in Kenya.

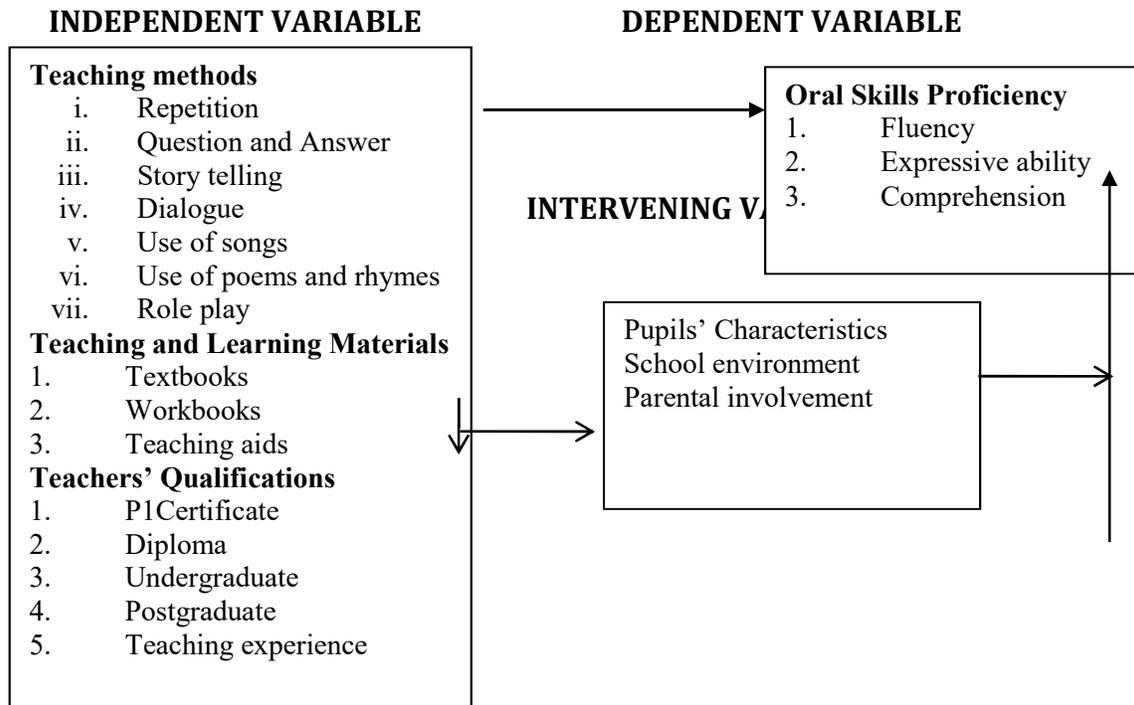
It is evident from this review that majority of these studies were done in the developed countries of Europe and the United states of America. Generalization of findings of such research in a third world country like Kenya may lead to erroneous conclusions due to diverse multilingual setting. Studies from Kenya such as Bwire (2007) focused more on learner competencies and proficiency in English listening and comprehension. This paper focused on oral skills proficiency in primary schools in Kenya. The study will therefore serve as a springboard for future researchers to investigate and widen their scope on teaching techniques that promotes the development of oral proficiency of learners.

### **Theoretical Framework**

Vygotsky's theory of Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) provided the theoretical framework for this study. Vygotsky's social development model as cited by Symwene(2013) asserts that interactions with the immediate environment and socializing agents such as caregivers, teachers and friends contribute most importantly to a learners mental growth. A learner's quality of interaction results to his/her level of cognitive development. A learner develops cognitively when exposed to problem solving activities shared with someone else older than him/her. At first, the older person interacting with the child assumes most of the responsibility as he/she guides the child through the problem solving. Later, the child is gradually left on his/her own to solve the problem. In his theory, Vygotsky advanced the concept of Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). He compares the ability of a child to solve a problem individually and his ability to solve a problem with assistance. According him, the actual developmental level is making the difference between the ability of an individual to solve a problem individually and the level of potential development determined by the ability of an individual to solve a problem with help from an older person.

When a child fully socializes and interacts with the environment then there is maximum development of zone of proximal development. This theory is relevant for this study since it captures the variables of appropriate teaching strategies for developing oral language skills. According to Vygotsky, for the curriculum to be developmentally appropriate, the teacher must plan activities that encompass not only what children are capable of doing on their own but what they can learn with the help of teachers. Through the study of these theoretical understandings, teaching approaches can be enhanced to meet the needs of second-language learners as they acquire oral language skills. From the above theory, it is evident that appropriate teaching strategies for developing oral language skills in English are affected by a plethora of factors which are social and environmental. In order for teachers to teach oral skills successfully, it is imperative that they locate each learner's zone of proximal development. Hence the objective of this paper is to establish the difficulties faced by English language teachers while teaching oral skills.

## Conceptual Framework



**Figure 1: Conceptual Framework**

The independent variable of this study was teaching methods used in teaching oral skills in English such as repetition, question and answer, storytelling, songs, role-play, teaching and learning materials and teachers' academic qualifications. This has an influence on oral skills proficiency (dependent variables). The indicators of oral skills proficiency include fluency in the use of English language, expressive ability and learners understanding or comprehension. The independent variable and the dependent variables were investigated to shed light on the influence of strategies used in teaching oral skills in the English language on pupils' oral skills performance in lower primary schools in Kakamega County, Kenya. The intervening variables (parental involvement, students' own characteristics and implementation of the language policy in primary schools) may influence pupils' oral proficiency in English. The independent variable was anticipated to have an effect on the dependent variables.

## Methodology

The descriptive survey design was used in this study. This study design was chosen because one is able to collect quantitative data which is later analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics (Saunders *et al*, 2007). According to Chandran (2004), descriptive study describes the prevailing status by observation and interpretation techniques. In addition, the study incorporated both qualitative and quantitative research. This study was carried out in Kakamega East Sub County. Kakamega County was purposefully sampled out of the other 47 Counties due to diverse nature of primary school activities, poor performance in English language at the national examination (KNEC, 2016) and its cosmopolitan population.

Kakamega East Sub County was similarly purposively sampled since most of the teachers used few instructional strategies. Based on KNEC 2016 report, Kakamega is among other counties whose performance in KCPE had been on decline in the previous two years. In particular, Kakamega East Sub-county had the highest decline compared to other sub-counties in the county as shown in table I:

**Table I:** *KCPE Performance for Kakamega County for the past two years*

<b>Sub-County</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>
Mumias West	285.59	281.34
Kakamega South	272.44	271.49
Kakamega Central	270.99	267.56
<b>Kakamega East</b>	<b>269.08</b>	<b>260.80</b>
Kakamega North	251.59	254.61

Source: Kakamega County Director of Education–(Examination Department)-2016

The study targeted all the 36 public primary schools in the Kakamega East Sub-County spread across the six zones namely: Ileho, Shinyalu Central, Shinyalu North, Shinyalu South, Shinyalu West and Khwisero East. The accessible population comprised of 335 English language teachers and 4500 grade three pupils. Stratified sampling, purposive sampling and simple random sampling procedures were used to sample out the required schools, learners and English language teachers from the study area. In simple random sampling, each participant in the study has an equal chance of being selected. The study used stratified random sampling to select 30% of the schools which participated in the study based on the six educational zones within the sub county to make a total of 11 schools as shown in table 3.3. In purposive sampling, researchers select sampling units subjectively in an attempt to obtain a sample that appears to be representative of the population. In this particular investigation, the English language teachers were selected on the basis that they teach English. This number was chosen on the basis that, this was a case study, thus an intensive investigation was carried out. A total of 11 English language lessons were observed from the sampled schools. The observations were done in order to establish if teachers use strategies in teaching oral skills in the English language.

**Table 2: Sampling frame**

<b>Educational Zones</b>	<b>Number of Schools (N)</b>	<b>Sampled Schools (n=30%)</b>	<b>Teachers (N)</b>	<b>Sampled Teachers (n=30%)</b>	<b>Std English Lessons (N)</b>	<b>3 Sampled English Lessons (n=30%)</b>
Ileho	11	3	100	33	11	3
Shinyalu Central	5	3	70	22	9	3
Shinyalu North	4	1	40	12	4	1
Shinyalu South	8	2	59	19	8	2
Shinyalu West	4	1	45	14	4	1
Khwisero East	4	1	21	6	4	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>335</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>11</b>

Three instruments were used to collect data for this study namely a questionnaire, an interview schedule and an observation schedule. The study yielded both qualitative and quantitative data. Qualitative and quantitative data was collected, organized and cleaned of any errors that could have occurred during data collection. They were then coded and keyed into SPSS version 21.0 computer software database. The questionnaires were checked for omissions and irrelevancies in answers provided. After which they were numbered and entered sequentially into the SPSS database. The data collected for all the objectives were then analyzed using frequencies, percentages, standard deviations and mean) and correlation statistics. Qualitative data from the interview schedule was analyzed and coded thematically into a codebook for analysis. The results were then presented in tables for easier interpretation. Quantitative data was analyzed by SPSS software while qualitative data was analyzed by content analysis to identify emerging themes leading to certain conclusions.

### **Demographic Data of Respondents**

The teachers' questionnaire consisted of questions which provided bio-data about the teachers' gender, age, educational qualifications and teaching experience. This information was used to determine how these factors influenced the strategies used in teaching oral skills in the English language. The demographic information of the respondents (teachers) was important to the researcher because it was important to understand the nature of the respondents who were taking part in the research study. The study sought demographic data of the respondents including gender, age, level of education, and years of teaching experience. The researcher was keen to know the views of both genders on the influence of teaching strategies in teaching oral skills in English language among grade three primary school learners. The age of teachers was important for the research study because the researcher wanted to be sure of the kind of teachers who were involved in teaching English. This was so because teaching age is an important indicator of experience and probably has a bearing on performance. The researcher was also interested to know the educational qualification of teachers. This was important to the researcher because professional training directly influences the choice of teaching activities and effectiveness in content delivery. The number of years of teaching experience was

important for the research study. This was so because the ability to understand the issues under the research study was dependent on actual field exposure on the teaching and learning environment. The data is subsequently summarized in Table 3 below:

**Table 3: Demographic data of respondents**

<b>GENDER</b>	<b>Frequenc y</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Valid Percentag e</b>	<b>Cumulativ e Percent</b>
Male	28	43.1	43.1	43.1
Female	37	56.9	56.9	100
<b>AGE</b>				
Below 25 Years	12	18.5	18.5	18.5
26-35 Years	29	44.6	44.6	63.1
36-45 Years	10	15.4	15.4	78.5
46-55 Years	10	15.4	15.4	93.8
Above 55 Years	4	6.2	6.2	100
<b>LEVEL OF EDUCATION</b>				
P1 Teacher	37	56.9	56.9	56.9
Diploma in Education	12	18.5	18.5	75.4
Bachelor of Education	13	20	20	95.4
Master of Education	3	4.6	4.6	100
<b>TEACHING EXPERIENCE</b>				
Less than 5 Years	22	33.8	33.8	33.8
5-9 Years	17	26.2	26.2	60
10-14 Years	11	16.9	16.9	76.9
15-20 Years	10	15.4	15.4	92.3
21 Years and above	5	7.7	7.7	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	

Results in table 3 reveal that the majority of the respondents to the study were female-37, representing 56.9% while 28 representing 43.1% were male. These findings were related to the observations made in the sampled schools where majority of the teachers were female. This depicts the presence of gender disparity in favor of female with regard to the teachers who teach English in the study locale. Further, the findings reveal that majority of the respondents 46.6% were between the age brackets of 26-35 years. This indicates that majority of the respondents were youthful teachers. Only 6.2% of the respondents were above the age of 55 years.

In relation to the level of education of the respondents, 37 respondents representing 56.9% had P1 qualification, 13 respondents representing 20% had Bachelor of Education qualification. Further, 18.5% had diploma qualification. Only 4.6% of the respondents had

Master of Education qualification. The researcher was therefore satisfied that the teachers were well trained in the teaching of English language hence better results were expected, especially in teaching oral skills. Their responses were taken to be credible and reliable. The findings further revealed that majority of the respondents had less than 5 years of teaching experience.

Nonetheless, this period was long enough to enable them gain the necessary exposure and become knowledgeable enough to provide credible real life experience on issues facing the teaching of oral communication skills in English.

### **Challenges Faced by Teachers of English while Teaching Oral Skills**

This study sought to find out the challenges faced by teachers of English while teaching oral skills in public primary schools. Zhang (2009) argued that speaking remains the most difficult skill to master for the majority of English learners, and they are still incompetent in communicating orally in English. Table 4.6 shows the enumerated challenges faced by English teacher while teaching oral skills.

**Table 4.6:** *Challenges faced by teachers while teaching oral skills*

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Interference of mother tongue	65	4.25	.848
Ineffective methods used in teaching oral skills	65	2.18	4.085
Shortage of relevant textbooks	65	4.03	1.145
Lack of constant practice in the use of oral skills	65	4.14	1.074
Valid N (listwise)	65		

On the interference of mother tongue on the teaching of Oral English, the results from the analysis reveal that the majority of the respondents were of the opinion that the teaching and learning of oral skills in English was greatly hampered by mother tongue influence. These findings are consistent with those of Muriungi and Mbuyi (2013) whose study established that students' acquisition of English language skills is greatly hampered by poor foundations right from primary school where much of the instruction is given in vernacular. Mother tongue influence and poor foundation were given as another source of slow acquisition of English language skills by students. Most second language learners subconsciously transfer language rules of L-1 to L-2, sound system or word order. Thus, heavy mother tongue influence happens because your native language sounds have not yet been replaced with the second language sounds. The importance of pronunciation in communication cannot be denied. In fact, it is as important as grammar and vocabulary. Yet, the evidence of mother tongue influence on English is very obvious. This manifests in the form of incorrect pronunciation. Pronunciation error may be due to many issues. Guesswork or vagueness of the correct form of a word or sentence, or a general ineptness of the language could be the reason of mispronunciation. The most common reason is transfer or interference from the mother tongue. Generally, errors made in pronunciation are due to difference in the sound system and spelling symbols between the mother tongue and English.

Results obtained through observation showed that learners struggled to find the appropriate vocabulary item when trying to speak in English, which reflects their insufficient vocabulary

repertoire. It was also noted during the class observations that pupils' participation was very low. This is because of the fear of making mistakes in front of their classmates. As the old adage goes "practice makes perfect", lack of constant practice in the use of oral skills emerged as a major challenge in the development of oral skills in English among learners in primary schools.

This finding echoes that of Kaniu (2003) whose study indicated that if the students used mother tongue in most of their interaction activities, then their opportunities to practice the use of English is limited. This idea seems to suggest that students' acquisition of English language skills to some extent can be thwarted by the rampant use of vernacular in most of their interaction activities in schools. Practice is a physical activity. It also requires a confirmation on its relevance to effective teaching of this component of English Language. Pupils need to be exposed more to learning activities that provide opportunities for language practice. Oral skills in English are an aspect of language that is concerned with our ability to speak good English. Regular usage of standard pronunciation can lead to perfection. This is not the case with many pupils as they revert to the mother tongue, Kiswahili or sheng immediately after the normal lesson or class hours.

The study also revealed that lack of adequate textbooks hindered the development of oral skills in English as revealed by the high means and standard deviations ( $M=4.03$   $SD=1.145$ ) respectively. Textbooks are very necessary in the teaching and learning process. They enhance the learners' understanding of what has been taught. The libraries in most public schools are not fully equipped to meet the needs of the learners. This also affects their proficiency especially in spoken English. Textbooks reading are considered to be among the best practices that can enhance basic oral communication skills. Reading English literature, newspapers, magazines, novels improves vocabulary skills. According to (Rodríguez, 2014), communicative texts are educational materials for language learning that focus on the genuine use of a language for communicative purposes in a variety of meaningful contexts. Above and beyond the mere study of linguistic forms, these texts offer opportunities to communicate, interact and negotiate meaning.

Many scholars indicate that textbooks seem to be the main teaching resources in EFL classrooms. Byrd (2001) claims that most teachers depend on textbooks - often as a required tool because they provide content and activities that shape what happens in the classroom. González (2006) says textbooks became an alternative for three main reasons: they are apparently eclectic alternatives to save time and money, they include pictures and graphic materials that may be more efficient than the teacher's descriptions, and they contain all kinds of objects that may be difficult to bring into the classroom. From some teachers interviewed, they state to have lacked support from both the school and parents. In schools, they claim that some teachers failed to implement the language policy set while some parents encouraged their children to speak in mother tongue.

The findings of this study contribute to the extant literature on oral skills development. Based on Vygotsky's theory of Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), the implementation of competency-based curriculum requires the ability to make appropriate use of a variety of language forms (ranging from formal to informal) across the four language modalities: reading, writing, speaking, and listening. Thus, English language teachers therefore need to create a

friendly atmosphere in the classroom which promotes the use of oral skills. For English lesson to be fully interactive, teachers should provide opportunities for learners to use oral skills. Of importance as well is the need for teachers to sensitize pupils to always communicate in English.

## **Conclusion**

The overall aim of this research was to investigate challenges faced by teachers of English while teaching oral skills in public primary schools class three pupils among lower primary school learners in Kakamega East Sub-County. Arising from this study findings, the following conclusions are drawn.

Whereas oral skills are taught in schools, teachers do not use a variety of instructional strategies that play a major role in achieving communication competence. Most schools lacked a variety of other teaching and learning materials and resources to enable teachers effectively teach oral skills. Teachers used course textbooks, and the chalkboard as the main teaching and learning resources. Therefore, there is need to diversify teaching and learning materials that can bring about effective teaching and learning of oral skills in English. Teaching and learning of oral skills in English was greatly hampered by mother tongue influence and lack of constant practice in the use of oral skills as well as that lack of adequate textbooks. Vygotsky's theory of Social Development and interaction asserts that full development of zone of proximal development (ZPD) depends upon full social interaction. Meaningful human learning takes place in interactive social setting. Hence, it is recommended that the implementation of the competency-based curriculum should be organized in such a way that it permits the use of purposeful interaction and the use of knowledge in real life situation.

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Towards Afrocentricism in Africa: Is Afro – Language an Antidote to Africans' Double - Consciousness?

Jeremiah Mutuku Muneeni  
Kenyatta University

#### **Abstract**

Commonwealth countries were forced to adopt English as language to use in most if not all government engagements with its citizen. This has, together with economic status of its native speakers, propelled it to the status of a global language. The problem of African estrangement dates back to 1884 when Africa was sub-divided into small units by the European capitalists.

The units would later become African countries which were colonized by the imperialists to whom they were allocated during the scramble and partition of Africa. The colonisers came in with all their structures including, religion, education, language, and politics and imposed them on Africans. By the time the Europeans were bequeathing the flag independence to their colonies, their culture had been implanted into the minds and souls of the colonized hence making everything European to be accepted with little, if any, contest. Through scholars, Nationalists, and Pan-Africanists such as Franz Fanon, Sedor Senghor, Edward Said among others, Africans later on became conscious of the European cultural burden which they had readily accepted. They have forever found themselves at crossroad, wondering whether they should revert to their Afrocentric values or continue upholding Eurocentricism. Consequently, Africans have forever found themselves in “double-consciousness,” a state that makes them to struggle with two identities. This paper identifies language as a unit of culture and it aims at contributing to the on-going debate with regards to the language that Africans should adopt for their interactions that exonerates them from “othering” their own culture. The unit of analysis cuts across several examples drawn from both creative works and researches. The paper interrogated the texts and arguments within postcolonial framework. Specifically, I aim at enriching the debate on whether using European languages, with specific bias on English for interaction among Africans amounts to promoting Eurocentricism. By so doing, I explore the merits and demerits of using African languages, including Swahili, in an attempt to promote Afrocentricism. I conclude the paper by pointing out at the possibility of strengthening the linguistic middle ground approach so as to benefit from both sides of the divide.

**Keywords:** Eurocentrism, Afrocentricism, Double Consciousness, Euro – American Language

## Introduction

My dear  
I have been thinking  
That we should name the baby -  
Like it used to be in our grandpa’s time –  
After somebody in our ethnic line, you know,  
Because the child must have some identity  
And not just Patrick Johnson,  
David Stewberry, Peter Maclizzard, Charles Shoemaker,  
Kim Peking, Kennedy Dickson...<sup>11</sup>

Africa is characterized by double-consciousness resulting from the cross breed of a culture that its citizens were exposed to after the arrival of foreigners, more so the Europeans who painted their own culture as superior to that of Africans hence (mis)leading them to have reservations with theirs, and in some instances abandon it completely. This cultural conflict is reflected in many spheres of life including but not limited to religion, language, politics, and education. These facets of culture have made Africans to become children of two worlds: trying to practice their own culture while at the same time subconsciously adopting the, arguably, superior culture of the white people.

One of the elements of culture that has put Africans in a major dilemma is language.

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<sup>11</sup> “Conversation on African Names” Everett Standa (An Anthology of East African Poetry) p. 72

Language is a major unifying factor from the smallest to the largest administrative units. Again, African states have established collaborations at regional, continental and global levels hence necessitating a language that would help them communicate with each other. Owing to economic power that European countries exercise over and above African countries, there are rare instances, if any, where European countries have adopted African languages as their major communication tool. Perhaps the exception is missionaries who learnt/learn the indigenous language of the target group with the sole aim of boosting their evangelism. The moment the objective is achieved, they go back to the comfort of their mother language. This skewing of the scale towards European products is what has been christened Eurocentrism.

Africans have become conscious of the need to adopt Afrocentricism (the opposite of Eurocentrism) as a way of demonstrating their self – worth, decolonizing their entire self including language. Consequently, there has been a spirited effort to grow and develop indigenous languages as a means to communicate not only in Africa but also across the globe. Indeed there are institutions of higher learning in Europe that offer, for instance, Kiswahili language as part of their programmes. The question that begs to be answered is: with the Eurocentrism being the norm, how effective can African indigenous languages be in reaching out to the world? Is it possible that an African language with wider usage across the globe will at some point in time manage to challenge the global position that English holds?

This paper first explores the way English was introduced and cemented into the hearts of the African via Eurocentrism, the change of attitude of latter day Africans towards Afrocentric consciousness and finally the standpoint of English as a global language.

### **Historiography of the Paradigm Shift from Afrocentricism to Eurocentricism**

Afrocentricism was encapsulated in oral conversations of Africans and celebrated by all before the coming of the Whiteman. The orate communities that existed in Africa communicated via the various indigenous languages to pass culture and all its facets from one generation to another. As such the pre-literate community was a closed one owing to little interactions with the outside world. Therefore, the formal education was encapsulated in what can be termed as oral literature defined by Nandwa and Bukenya (1983) as:

Those utterances whether spoken, recited or sung, whose composition and performance exhibit to an appreciable degree the artistic characteristics of accurate observation, vivid imagination and ingenious expression (p. 9).

Thus orate community was overly oral but their spoken word was not devoid of creativity as captured by the above definition on the part of “artistic nature.” Oral communication can be viewed as the storehouse of African history and culture.

African religious, philosophical, legal and political precepts were, and to a greater extent, are expressed in oral form. It is this kind of a community, a lover of its culture in which language is part, that the Whiteman encountered when they made sojourn to Africa.

The only way the colonisers could make the culture – loving Africans to abandon their culture was to present a narrative that showed the African culture as barbaric, backwards, uncouth and uncivilized. From the beginning they had a (mis)conception that the African was incapable of abstract thinking and that his/her mind was closer to that of an animal than to normal human being. To augment their notion, the white people used evolutionary thinking advanced

by Charles Darwin. Evolutionism centres around Darwin's ideas about the origin and survival of biological species. Folklorists who were influenced by these ideas saw in traditional tales remnants of an earlier worldview or a set of ideas about man and his environment. The major viewpoint taken by this theory is that: society's progress develops similar traits even if they are geographically different and that all societies progress from primitivism towards a European like civilization. European scholars such as David Hume, Wilhelm Grimm, Max Muller and James Frazer have used and advanced this viewpoint.

To prove to Africans that they and their culture was lower in the civilization ranking, the Europeans borrowed heavily from the central tenet of Evolutionism that operates around the concept of unilinear and parallel stages of social and cultural evolution through which all societies must pass, concentration on the origins of any institution as being of the first importance; and finally the implicit and evaluative assumption that the direction of evolution was upwards – a progress from the crude communal stage of primitive life towards the civilized and differentiated culture of contemporary Europe.

The evolutionists' interpretation of "primitive" was conceived to mean both early in history and low and undeveloped in the scale of evolution. Viewed this way, they were able to twist the meaning to favour their need: that the stage of development attained by non-literate people could thus be equated and evaluated as the same traversed by the pre-historic ancestors of European nations. Thus Europe was seen as the most developed and civilized region within the scale of evolution with African societies still evolving. In view of this notion, African culture, to which language is part, and which only existed in oral form; was seen as belonging to earlier stage of evolution as compared to the advanced written language of Europe.

It is against this backdrop that Europeans arriving in Africa brought in a prejudiced worldview of "primitive" Africans. H.M Stanley's book – *My Dark Companions and their Strange Tales* (1859) aptly captures the European prejudice towards African culture, specifically about Southern Lesotho:

During the early part of our sojourn among them we often heard them recite, with very dramatic gestures, certain pieces that were not easy of comprehension, and which appeared to be distinguished from the ordinary discourse by the elevation of the sentiment, powerful ellipses; daring metaphors and very accentuated rhythm. The natives called these recitations praises. We soon discovered that they were real poetical effusions (p. 71).

Other books that emerged out of the European prejudiced worldview against Africa include: John Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* (1902) Karen Blixen's *Out of Africa* (1937) and Elspeth Huxley's *The Flame Trees of Thika* (1959). Though set in different parts of Africa, they all underscore nuances of prejudiced undertones. Their focus on the backwardness of a primitive African in dire need of European brother to save him from the murky waters of primitivity formed the basis for the European brothers to troop into Africa with the aim of Evangelising to its citizenry to save it from idol worship at the one hand and settle and exploit her raw materials on the other hand. The other core aim was to "civilize" Africa. Later in this paper, I will point out how the so called civilization faired on Africans' own culture, language included.

Bukenya and Nandwa outlines the strategy employed by the Europeans to achieve the objective of making Africans hate their language. Firstly, the Europeans colonized the minds of the Africans in a systematic way. Firstly, they established their system of instructions hence changing the educational, economic and political structure in Africa leading to social disruption. The replacement of African formal education meant schools were run by teachers who were ignorant of the children's background. As such, it became easy for their teachers to inculcate the European system that they were familiar with into the minds of the young children.

Secondly, there was the emphasis on linguistic alienation with the Europeans imposing their language into the minds of Africans systematically suppressing African languages. This resulted into an educated lot that did not have confidence in its indigenous language. To crown it all, the European educators carried out an elaborate campaign aimed at brainwashing the Africans with the aim of changing the mind of the native. This they did by intimating to the Africans that there is something wrong with their language, their way of life and even his very person. The African was made to constantly believe that everything about him was savage, uncivilized, primitive, pagan and heathen. The psychological pressure employed here made the African to be ashamed of himself and even the colour of his skin as well as his culture. He thus desperately started trying to embrace and adopt the culture and values of the foreign colonizer.

I have used this approach of historizing the origin of the linguistic confusion inherent in Africans in order to point out the confused position that the Africans found themselves with regards to linguistic independence (or lack of it).

### **Postcolonial Reaction to Euro - American Languages**

Post-colonial critics focus mainly on the 'cultural colonization' that took place when the imperial culture invaded local cultures. There was a kind of imposition of culture of the West into the native cultures such that, post-colonial cultures include a merger of and antagonism between the culture of the colonizer and that of the colonized. British intrusion into the cultures of her colonies was so intense that it intruded into government, education, cultural values as well as the daily lives of her colonial subjects. That is to say that although the colonizers left their colonies, there has been a serious precipitate of cultural colonization, an inculcation of education system from the West, culture and values that degrade the culture, morals and education systems of formerly colonized peoples.

The natives were left with a 'psychological inheritance' of a negative self -image and hatred of their own cultures.

This has in turn led to loss of a substantial material of their original, pre-colonial culture. Therefore, a good deal of post-colonial criticism addresses the problem of cultural identity as represented in post-colonial literature. There are many Africans coming from different disciplines who have demonstrated consciousness of the fact that self -hatred imposed on the African can be re-imagined and re-constructed. Let me invoke a few examples to demonstrate.

Ngugi wa Thiong'o, a world renown creative writer and a literary critic has come out to challenge the notion advanced by the imperialists. Narrowing down to language, wa Thiong'o, in his collection of essay in a book *Decolonizing the Mind (1986)*, he calls upon the Africans

whose language component was inevitably consciously or unconsciously colonized by the Whites using the methods already discussed to arise and correct the misdemeanour done by the colonizers. He talks of the:

[...] ceaseless struggles of the African people to liberate their economy, politics and cultures from Euro –American – based stranglehold to usher a new era of true communal self- regulation and self - determination. It is an ever continuing struggle to seize back their creative initiative in history through a real control of all the means of communal self-determination in time and space. The choice of language and the use to which language is put is central to people's definition of themselves in relation to the entire universe (p. 4).

Wa Thiong'o's concern regarding the importance of language and self - determination is augmented by Franz Fanon's viewpoint contained in his seminal book *The Wretched of the Earth* (1963). Fanon satirizes the fascination with the Whiteman's fashion of civilization in a bid to call upon Africans to re-discover their roots. The narrative goes:

The gaze that the colonized subject casts at the colonist's sector is a look of lust, a look of envy. Dreams of possession. Every type of possession: of sitting at the colonist's table and sleeping in his bed, preferably with his wife. The colonized man is an envious man. The colonist is aware of this as he catches the furtive glance, and constantly on his guard, realizes bitterly that: "They want to take our place." And it's true there is not one colonized subject who at least once a day does not dream of taking the place of the colonist. (p. 5)

This is a satirized reflection of what goes on in the minds of Africans for which he calls for mentality change in order to rectify the brainwashing done on the blacks. Sardar in the foreword of another book by Fanon - *Black Skins, White Masks* (1967) – captures the same sentiments in trying to summarize Fanon's conceptualization of the alienated African. Sardar avers:

When the black man comes into contact with the white world he goes through an experience of sensitization. His ego collapses. His self-esteem evaporates. He ceases to be a self-motivated person. The entire purpose of his behaviour is to emulate the white man, to become like him, and thus hope to be accepted as a man. It is the dynamic of inferiority that concerns Fanon: and which ultimately he seeks to eliminate (Xiii).

Language forms the major mimicking of the Whiteman that concerns Fanon here. Language is carrier of our identity thus to lose it is tantamount to losing our identity as Africans.

In the realm of creative writing, Okot P'Bitek in his epoch-making Anthology of *Poetry; Song of Lawino* points out the degradation that Africans have undergone in accepting to be alienated. Through Lawino the persona, a seemingly illiterate but a genius in matters indigene, P'Bitek manages to castigate Africans for abandoning their culture in favour of a foreign one that does not cohere with the teachings and guidelines of their ancestors. In all the thirteen poems (songs) Lawino brings to the fore the failure associated with people abandoning their culture to adopt another one that they don't understand. A brief look at a specific poem entitled "My husband's tongue is Bitter", Lawino decries the attitude that her husband, Ocol has taken towards her just because she cannot use English:

My husband abuses me together with my parents;  
He says terrible things about my mother  
And I am so ashamed!

He abuses me in English  
And he is so ignorant

He says I am primitive  
Because I cannot play the guitar,  
He says my eyes are dead  
And I cannot read,  
He says my ears are blocked  
And cannot hear a single foreign word (pp. 37 -38).

By using the phrase “he says...”, Lawino distances herself together with other Africans from the blatant alienation adopted by the educated elite who shamefacedly start the ignoble practice of looking down upon their language. The sentimentalities presented by the three scholars above show that there has been a kind of a renaissance from the side of Africans after realizing that what was taught to them regarding their culture and language was not the reality. It was just but a strategy used by the Europeans to conquer not only their land but also their minds in order to exploit the Africans’ potential holistically.

### **The Future Space of Euro – American Languages in Africa**

The confusion caused by infiltration of Euro – American languages brought in as a package of Western culture has been a major concern for the formerly colonized nations. Governments have come up with policies that recognize the historical fact that the formerly colonized nations will never shake off the fact that there was cultural interference that resulted into incorporation of Euro – American languages into their lives. However, in an attempt to prevent total alienation, most African countries have given prominence to other indigenous languages to work hand in hand with Euro – American languages. For instance, Kenya in the new constitution promulgated in 2010 promoted Kiswahili, an indigenous language, from being a national language to an official language hence giving it the same status as English.

South Africa has eleven official languages, namely; Southern Sotho, Tsonga, Africaans, Tswana, Swati, Zulu, Venda, Ndebele, Xhosa, Northern Sotho and English. In Tanzania, English is basically used as a language of instruction while allowing Kiswahili to enjoy the status of a national language.

Outside Africa, English remains an important language with almost hundred percent use in USA, UK, West Indies, Australia, Canada, and New Zealand. These countries hold economic power hence the likelihood to continue imposing their influence on the countries with lesser economic capability. To be able to interact with the economic powerhouses, the lesser endowed countries, in spite of the guilt that goes with

betraying one's culture for another person's, will have no otherwise other than continue revering and upholding Euro - American languages.

Achebe, a leading light in African literary arena, admits it is not good for an individual to abandon their own culture for that of other people while at the same time admitting he has no other option other than using the language of the imperialists. This is a testimony to the ambivalence that characterizes Africans as they debate on which language to adopt as their own. Achebe avers:

Is it right that someone should abandon his mother tongue for someone else's? It looks like a dreadful betrayal and produces a guilty feeling. But for me there is no other choice. I have been given the language and I intent to use it (p. 23)

Thus the adoption of Euro - American languages in place of the indigenous ones does not come naturally. It leaves the individuals with double consciousness as they try to struggle with the possibility of belonging to the two worlds.

Pushed by the double consciousness feeling, Achebe tried to revise his standpoint with regards to use of Euro - American languages (specifically English in his case) in his conversations/writings. He wrote:

I feel that the English language will be able to carry the weight of my African experience. But it will have to be a new English, still in full communication with its ancestral home but altered to suit new African surroundings (p. 37)

Doesn't taking a language that is not your own and altering it to suit your own needs amount to the proverbial bird, referred to by Achebe in his novel *Arrow of God* (1964, p.231), that hops from the ground and lands on an anthill then considers itself not to be on the ground? Whether this is true or not, it is the situation that Africans have found themselves in as they struggle to unshackle themselves from the effects of language colonization. Achebe is supported by Okara (with a slightly different viewpoint):

Some may regard this way of viewing English as a way of desecrating the language. This is of course not true. Living languages grow like living things, and English is far from a dead language. There are American, West Indian, Australian, Canadian, and New Zealand versions of English. All of them add life and vigour to the cultures while reflecting their own respective cultures. Why shouldn't there be a Nigerian or a West African English which we can use to express our own ideas, thinking and philosophy in our own way? (p. 6)

The two are creative writers and the prospect of a wider audience has pushed them into trying to have an alternative way of approaching the language dilemma imposed on them by the colonizers.

Their idea of modification of a language to suit the philosophies and sensitivities of certain individuals and or region(s) attests to the fact that in as far as Euro - American languages are bound to remain global languages; it is not going to be the original Standard ones bequeathed to Africans by the colonizers, at least the ones used in Africa.

Already the West Indies and the Caribbean have *creolized* part of them while Nigerians have *pidgnized* theirs. Kenyans have the unofficial *sheng* language/slang which

combines English with other indigenous languages. The same is popular with the youths who prefer it over the Standard English as learned from the classroom.

Nevertheless, despite all these attempts on the language, Euro – American languages remain to be languages to reckon with globally as they hold a covetable position in ensuring effective inter and intra communication between countries that use them as their native language and their former colonies on whom the language was imposed.

### **Conclusion**

I would wish to conclude this paper by pointing out that indeed Afrocentricism is a concern for elite Africans who feel guilty for having abandoned their culture to adopt that of the foreigners. Nevertheless, there are some of their brothers who swallowed the bait of Eurocentricism daggled to them by the colonizers. The antagonism between these two groups made it difficult for those leaning towards Afrocentricism to wield power over and above their Eurocentric counterparts. The result has been double consciousness for the former Afrocentric individuals with language ambivalence reigning supreme. Introduction and maintenance of indigenous languages meant to counter English influence in former colonies of Britain have not attained much since their education system was infiltrated by use of Euro – American languages. This infiltration, coupled with the economic power that the original Euro – American speaking nations hold, has made the foreign languages to cement themselves as global languages. The versions of a variety of these languages fused with indigenous language(s) such as creole, pidgin and sheng have not managed to offer a significant challenge to the position of Euro – American languages since they are used informally. However, Kiswahili has managed to infiltrate the formerly rigid position held by these foreign languages with its rapid spreading across the globe holding the hope for paradigm shift from the shackles of Eurocentricism, at least on the part of language.

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Linguistic Landscape in a Multilingual Context: A Case of Kenyan Universities

1Stella Wangari Muriungi, 2Benard Angatia Mudogo  
Mount Kenya University<sup>1</sup>, Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology<sup>2</sup>

### **Abstract**

The linguistic landscape of a place constitutes a clear representation of its language ideology, culture, users' identity and language practice. These are depicted in verbal language used in public signs including business names, street signs, advertisements and graffiti. The aim of this paper is to examine the language distribution, purpose and authorship of public signage in the multilingual context in Kenyan universities. The paper also examines the students' attitudes towards the public signs in the sampled institutions. The paper utilized both quantitative and qualitative approaches. A sample of 185 photos taken from notices, advertisements, building names and posters are analyzed. The analysis reveals that English is the most dominant language used in Universities for both top-down and bottom-up signs, with 77% prevalence. This is attributed to the acceptance of English as a global language and presence of international students and lecturers. A high incidence of informative signs is also noted at 42% of all signage linked with the academic nature of the paper context. The questionnaires revealed that local students value bilingualism where English is used for academic activities while Kiswahili is for non-academic undertakings. The international students also appreciate the use of English but express preference for the inclusion of Kiswahili and French in wider communication to ease navigation within the institutions. The findings also reveal that Kiswahili as an African language with Bantu and Arabic roots is barely utilized in public signs despite its official status. This has implications on language policy and its implementation as it indicates a mismatch between policy and practice.

**Keywords:** Linguistic Landscape, Multilingualism, Language Policy, Public Signs, Kiswahili.

## **Introduction**

Multilingualism is a common phenomenon, which can be manifested in the diverse use of languages in different sociolinguistic context. The paper analyzes languages in context by focusing on the written information that is available on language signs in Kenyan Universities. As observed by Landry & Bourhis, (1997: 25), 'linguistic landscape of a territory can serve two basic functions: an informational function and a symbolic function'. This implies that, the linguistic landscape can reflect the relative power and status of the different languages in a specific sociolinguistic context. In this sense it is the product of a specific situation and it can be considered as an additional source of information about the sociolinguistic context along with censuses, surveys or interviews. In this respect, the study of the linguistic landscape in a multilingual setting is necessary because it can provide information on the implications of language policy and practices that can be reflected in top down signs such as street names or names of official buildings and the impact of that policy on individuals as reflected in bottom-up signs such as shop names or street posters.

This paper focuses on a comparison of the use of different languages in the linguistic landscape of Kenyan Universities. This is because, from the perspective of language contact and use as well as attitude, these institutions accommodate people with dynamic ethnolinguistic backgrounds. In addition, the presence of international students in the Universities further enriches the institutions as a source of sociolinguistic information. As observed by Gorter (2013), descriptive approach to Linguistic Landscape (LL) provides insights to language diversity in a specific region or territory as it provides information about users' perception about language (s). Yavari (2012) also noted that the linguistic landscape of a university is fundamental to society in addition to determining employability.

Therefore, LL adds onto sociolinguistics as it reveals more information on society's perception about language and impacts on linguistic behavior. This is in addition to being instrumental in language instruction and raising awareness on social issues. In the same light, Blommaert (2013) emphasized that a sign is not only a linguistic item but also a representation of the social, political and cultural contexts of its origin.

It is our contention that the study of these linguistic elements, in a given social context presents a field that may justify a systematic study as it may constitute an empirical way of uncovering social realities. In this era of modernity, globalization and multiculturalism (Ben-Rafael, 1996), new institutions, branches of commercial activity, professional identities and demographic developments are legion. They can transform the character, composition and status of quarters, while relations between groups as well as between the institutions and the individuals receive new dimensions. It is against this complex background that our paper wants to read, in the multilingual context of Kenyan, the drives and forces that stand behind the (re)shaping of their LL.

## **The Notion of Linguistic Landscape**

This paper presents an empirical study of the LL of Kenyan Universities. By this notion we refer to linguistic objects that mark the public space and it is studied here in a variety of

heterogeneous Universities. The groups involved are University students from different Linguistic backgrounds. The study focuses on the degree of visibility on private and public signs of different languages. This LL study draws its conceptual framework from a few works about LL that preceded it, and its research questions from sociological theory.

LL has been described by Cenoz & Gorter, (2006) as language items that can be seen in particular public spaces. This refers to signs on billboards, public road signs, place and street names, commercial signs and government building signage. According to Landry & Bourhis (1997), LL encompasses the language of place and street names, advertising billboards, shop signs and public signs on public roads and buildings. The nature of LL has been used as a basis for analysis of social structures and perspectives where important agendas are established, negotiated and endorsed. Studies have categorized linguistic landscapes into two; Top-down and Bottom-up landscapes.

The top-down approach focuses on language elements propagated by the national government and public institutions, signage on public sites, names of streets and public announcements. On the other hand, the bottom-up linguistic landscape refers to signs produced by individuals such as shop owners and company or shop names as well as personal announcements as stated by Ben-Rafael, Shohamy, Amara & Trumper-Hecht, (2006). This means that top-down signs are related by governments or other official institutions whereas bottom-up signs are established by private entities such as individual business peoples, companies and private organizations. This categorization was also done by Backhaus 2006 who identified them as official and non-official signs. Official signs constitute signage associated with government and its agencies besides public transport facilities. Apart from the two groups, all other signs are classified as non-official such as business names, private billboards and private enterprises signs.

LL as an approach was first utilized to examine the bilingual situation in Canada where it laid out the ethnolinguistic vitality in the country. The educational context in a multilingual situation has been regarded as a rich resource for sociolinguistics and applied linguistics. School signage reveals more information about the identities, ideologies and language instruction. Waksman & Shohamy, (2008) observe that linguistic landscape in educational contexts provide a platform for further research into language learning and activism. The aim of this paper is to examine the dominant language (s) in the public signage and identify the authorship of the signs in terms of top-down or bottom-up signs. This paper also seeks to bring out the views of the students in regard to the languages used in the campus environment. LL study is significant as it expands the scope of analysis by allowing for the examination of all categories of signs (Gorter, Marten, & Mensel, 2012). A study of LL is also crucial as it encompasses the authors, creators, places and audiences of the signs to give a better picture of the linguistic situation. This is in addition to its ability to provide more information on the demographics, uses and policies affecting language.

Local studies related to LL have focused on onomastics in terms of place names (Kibet, 2017), political party names (Malande, 2018), Personal names (Malande 2011), (Miruka, 2018) and (Onchoke, 2018). Other Studies that have contributed to further understanding of local linguistic landscapes include an examination of business names (Atieno & Kinegeni, 2019) and churches (Njoki, 2013). The concentration of these studies has been on Business names and

place names with less focus on educational environments; especially tertiary education settings.

Muaka (2018) examined the linguistic landscape of Kenya and Tanzania from a youth language perspective. The study sampled city signage and established that it was a reflection of the prevailing youth language which informed economy as well as policy.

The focus on linguistic landscape has been intensified by the fact that signs are intentional aspects of society. The signs are put forth by various actors with diverse social and political or cultural motivations or objectives. The linguistic landscape in learning institutions has been examined under theme of schoolscape in previous studies. A comparative study by Wang, (2015) featuring two universities in two different states came up with phenomenal conclusions and implications for language policy. The national languages were the most dominant in signs where language policy was reflected in top-down signs as opposed to bottom-up signage. Chimirala, (2018) noted that schoolsapes are an indication of ideologies and language policy. He posited that sociolinguistic examination of schoolsapes may be limited by its inability to exhaustively reveal the underlying multilingualism in such contexts.

In the educational contexts the linguistic landscape as it provides insights into language awareness, public participation and intercultural competence. (Mahemuti, 2018 ) established that international students on campus realized the need and impact for the multilingual linguistic landscape in terms of enhanced language awareness, interaction and identity construction.

### **Language Situation in Kenyan Universities**

According to Njoroge, (2018), the average Kenyan student is proficient in a minimum of three languages: Kiswahili, English and one local language. In 1964, the Ominde commission recommended for the use of English as a medium of instruction in upper classes. The commission stated that indigenous languages were ill adapted to cater to the teaching needs in the learning environment. This was however revised by subsequent commissions such as the Gacathi (1976), Mackay (1981) and Koech (1999) in (Njoroge & Gathigia, 2017) which established the use of indigenous languages during the initial three years of learning. Mother tongue is therefore preferred language of teaching for pupils in lower primary as noted by (Oduor, 2010). Njoroge, (2018) explains that the government clearly spells out its intention to promote linguistic diversity in the Kenyan constitution. This includes indigenous and Kenyan sign language besides other communication systems for people with disabilities. The Elevation of the English language is at the expense of majority of Kenyans seeing that a mere 9 percent of the 33 million are proficient in English. While Kiswahili is the unifying language intended to enhance patriotism and solidarity, English acts as a link to the global economy for Kenya. The current constitution CAP 7 on Languages recognizes Kiswahili as an official language (Kenya Law Reform Commission, 2019).

According to Machuki, (2018) to the Kenyan language policy on Kiswahili has been inconsistent. This is a factor that has further enhanced the negative attitude towards the teaching and learning of Kiswahili language. The language policy stipulates that Kiswahili and English are official languages for use in various contexts including the school. However, the

school situation is different due to the differences in geographical locations which change the languages of the catchment areas.

In their investigation, Mwangi & Michira (2014) predicted that the establishment of Kiswahili as an official language would likely face a number of challenges including its lack of visibility and use in educational contexts. For instance, Ghai, (2017) noted that the constitution does not emphasize the need for legislation to be in both English and Kiswahili. Some universities have also reinstated Kiswahili departments where they had been dissolved as in University of Nairobi (2013) and Maseno University (2004).

The admission criterion at university level has also accepted the substitution of English with Kiswahili in the cluster subject combination. These gains are however curtailed by the absence of Kiswahili Linguistics for language students who are forced to undertake the subject with another subject such as religious studies or history. The students of English however have the advantages of pursuing English at the linguistic and literature levels as a combination readily accepted by the largest employer for education students- the Teachers' Service Commission (TSC). However, the universities need to embrace Kiswahili in their documentation that includes mission statements and core values to efficiently promote Kiswahili as an official language.

Generally, English is the dominant language of use in the schoolscape with indigenous languages coming third in the ranking after Kiswahili. Universities in Kenya are expected to adhere to the language policy which sets English and Kiswahili as official languages with English being the medium of instruction in school. The Bantu-based Kiswahili acts as a lingua franca for transactional purposes for speakers using any of the 68 other languages spoken in Kenya. Kiswahili is also preferred due to its African roots that bear no colonial sentiments. This is in addition to its structural relation to other Kenyan Bantu languages despite borrowing heavily from Arabic.

### **Theoretical Framework**

The present investigation was based on the Trump-Hecht (2010) analysis of the symbolic and informative functions of LL. Trump-Hecht (2010) pointed out three facets of space as a concept. These were explained as spatial practice, conceived space and lived space. The spatial practice refers to the physical aspect that indicates language distribution based on the physical signs. The conceived space on the other hand, brings out the political aspects of language as it represents the ideological perspectives and opinions backed by policy makers as well as the impact of policy on linguistic landscape. The third dimension under this view is the lived space which focuses on the experiential perspective by examining the attitudes of language users or inhabitants. The theory will help in the analysis of how social groups cope with the game of symbols within a multilingual setting.

### **Methodology**

Based on the Trump-Hecht (2010) definition, the present paper takes a three pronged descriptive analysis of the landscape under investigation. The LL approach is best suited for the paper as it takes into account all categories of signs in the area of study in addition to examining details of authors and target readers. LL used photography to capture the signs and gather data on the spatial practice or physical element of the campus. The photographing

exercise focused on road signs, street names within the institution, business names around the campus and signboards designating different sections. The exercise aims at capturing one sign per photograph.

The signage data was categorized in terms of its functions as guided by Spolsky and Cooper (1991) who identified different sign types. The eight categories were applied as follows: building names, warning signs, informative signs, graffiti, objects, street signs and plaques. The sign categories were adjusted to fit into the educational context. These were therefore renamed and condensed into warning signs, advertisements, building/place names, informative signs, plaques and graffiti. The signs were then grouped along the lines of bottom-up or top-down.

The second dimension of political or conceived space was understood through the regulatory frameworks put in place by the institution with regard to language use. The relevant departments were visited to shed light on the communication policies and any other rules governing the placement of signs in the campus. On the third dimension of the lived space, the paper applied questionnaires and interviews to establish the attitudes of students towards the languages used in the institution. The two instruments were structured in order to capture perceptions of users as well as their assessment of the importance and rank of languages used. The paper applied convenience and purposeful sampling to form a sample of international students.

### **Political Space**

This space is also referred to as the conceived space as it consists of policies and regulations. These are clearly stipulated by government agencies in collaboration with politicians, technocrats and policy makers. Shohamy (2006) explains that language policy is apparent in languages applied in public signs, government business and the medium of instruction in schools, (Spolsky & Shohamy, 2000) state that language policy is an effort by someone with or claiming authority to changes the language practice of someone else". In this context, the university's language policies were also evident in their admission requirements for local and foreign students. University B provided for applicants to indicate their level of proficiency in the English language which is the language of instruction. These were not clear in universities' A and C requirements. For the various Undergraduate programmes, English was the major requirement especially in health science-related and engineering courses. However, Social Sciences, Arts, Hospitality, Engineering and Tourism were found to be flexible as they provided for either official language as a qualification.

The institutions also offer Kiswahili at Undergraduate and Graduate levels. All three had running Master's programmes in Kiswahili while Universities C and B additionally offered them as Bachelor of Arts degrees. The medical programmes in the three universities also recognized the role of Kiswahili. University expected applicants to have good command of the two languages to peruse Veterinary medicine. University B and A maintained that either Kiswahili or English was required to enroll for Bachelor of Medicine and surgery. A look into Legal programmes in the institutions under study revealed that universities stipulated that English language was a mandatory requirement in universities A and B for admission in the Bachelors of Laws programme. University C on the other hand stated on their website that applicants needed to have a good grade in either English or Kiswahili language.

## Physical Space

The physical space forms the basis for data collection in LL through photography. The analysis of signs, posters and other documents in the three campuses indicated that a greater percentage were monolingual. Moreover, the paper found majority of the signs to have been authored by the institution's management, so that the top-down signs were a majority. The high incidence of monolingual top—down signs is attributed to the university's authority over operations at the campuses. Bottom-up signs, on the other hand, included those which were issued by individual social actors such as signs on businesses and personal announcements. The signs were considered in their entirety as some photographs contained more than one signboard. The results are shown on Figures 1, 2 and 3 as shown below;

Figure 1: Top-down signs all Monolingual (English)



Figure 2: Bottom-Up Sign



Figure 3: Bottom-Up Sign-Multilingual Graffiti



### Analysis of Physical Signage

The first concern about languages displayed concerns the number of languages used in each unit of analysis (sign). Table 1 gives the results.

**Table 1: Analysis of physical signage**

Groups	Authorship	Language Preference	Number	Percentage
Unilingual	Top-Down	English	98	53 %
		Kiswahili	6	3 %
Bilingual		French and English	2	1 %
Monolingual	Bottom-Up	English Only	45	24 %
		Kiswahili Only	10	6 %
		Sheng Only	4	2 %
Bilingual		English and Kiswahili	16	9 %
Multilingual		English, Kiswahili and Local languages	4	2%
Total			185	100

There is the predominant use of English in top-down communication. The figures also show that bottom-up signs utilize Kiswahili and local languages. The use of English is linked to its status as an official language as well as an international lingua franca. The table also points out the low incidence of Kiswahili in public signage. This is despite its recent elevation to official language status in Kenya.

**Table 2 Communicative functions of Sampled Signs**

Category	Number	Percentage %
Building Names	35	19
Warning Signs	13	7
Informative Signs	78	42
Graffiti	3	2

Advertising Signs	<b>43</b>	<b>23</b>
Street Signs	<b>9</b>	<b>5</b>
Plaques	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b><u>185</u></b>	<b><u>100</u></b>

The communicative functions of the signs based on the Spolsky and Cooper (1991) classification, identified informative signs as the most predominant purpose of signage in the landscapes. From table 2 above, informative signs accounted for 42% of the signage followed by advertising at 23.2% and labelling in form of building names at 18.9%. Cautionary signage was also identified at 7.02% while graffiti, street signs and plaques had a less than 5% prevalence. This indicates that the landscape under investigation focuses on passing information, communication of products and services and labelling. This is attributable to the academic nature of the university context.

### **Lived Space**

The lived space is the third dimension in the Lefebvre (1991) concept of the inhabitants' space. This dimension examines the user's interpretations and perceptions towards their linguistic landscape. The interviews sought to examine participants' attitudes towards signs in the campus. From the sample, interviewees appreciated the linguistic landscape of the campus but were aware of the need for inclusivity and cultural sensitivity. The interviewees emphasized on the need for acceptance and empathy towards one another in a multilingual context of the University. Students from previously francophone countries expressed the need to include French in signage. They additionally cited frustrations with Kiswahili for both academic and interactional purposes. However, students from Somalia and Somaliland emphasized the importance of basic English training as content in class is delivered through the language.

### **Conclusion**

When we try to summarize the order of dominance of the three languages, we see that English is by far the most prominent language in the linguistic landscape in all the three Universities followed by Kiswahili as the second language and in the third place comes Sheng with a marginal presence. The local languages were the least utilized. In all the Universities the majority language (English) is also more prominent in the signs regarding the size of the fonts, the position of the text as compared to other languages and the information given in the text. This study shows that the linguistic landscape has both informative and symbolic functions (Landry & Bourhis, 1997). The informative function shown in the signs in the different languages indicates the language to be used in communication at shops and other businesses and also reflects the relative power of the different languages. The use of the different languages in the linguistic landscape also has a symbolic function mainly when language is a salient dimension of a linguistic group. According to (Landry & Bourhis, 1997) the use of a specific language can 'contribute most directly to the positive social identity of ethnolinguistic groups. For example, the use of Kiswahili in bilingual signs in the Universities is not only informative, because not everybody can get the information in Kiswahili, but it has an important symbolic function which is related to affective factors and the feeling that Kiswahili is a symbol of national identity.

On the other hand, the use of English in commercial signs could be interpreted as informational mainly for international students but it is obvious that its increasing presence has a strong symbolic function for the local students as well in all the three Universities. Using English can be perceived as more prestigious and modern than using the local languages (Piller, 2003) but it can have important consequences for the future of the other languages present (Phillipson, 2003).

This investigation is limited to the analysis of linguistic signs in only three Universities but shows the important role of the linguistic landscape and its relationship to linguistic policy in multilingual contexts. It also emerges that linguistic landscape does not necessarily reflect the use of the languages in oral communication but it also provides information about written communication between language users.

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Henry Simiyu Nandelenga  
Kibabii University

### **Abstract**

The supremacy of a country's Constitution is an acknowledged universal truth whose legality or validity is not subject to challenge by any court or state organ. Indeed, Chapter One of The Constitution of Kenya, 2010, Article 2(1), is unequivocal that "this Constitution is the supreme law of the Republic and binds all persons and all state organs..." In essence, any law or act of omission or commission that is inconsistent with its provision is void to the extent of the inconsistency. Similarly, in the defence of the Constitution, Article 3 (1) of the same Chapter reiterates that "...every person has an obligation to respect, uphold and defend this constitution". However, in practice, provisions pertaining to mother tongue rights have been liberally and consistently violated contrary to what is contemplated by the Constitution. There are glaring contradictions in the justice system right from legislation to the administration and enforcement of the law on mother language usage in the public space. The purpose of this paper is to examine the contradictions inherent in the legal process in respect to people's inalienable right to mother tongue in the justice system. The data was sourced from surveys, observations and written records of the justice system. Couched within the Forensic Linguistics perspective, it is argued that mother language must be at the center of the administration of justice as envisaged in the Constitution. The privileged status enjoyed by English in our justice system is a travesty of language rights that is in contravention of Article 27 (4) of the Bill of Rights on equality and freedom against discrimination. The right to the use of one's mother language in the legal process is a fundamental pillar of equality and freedom against discrimination. It ensures that all Kenyans are equal before the law and have the right to equal protection and benefit of the law. Therefore, individual persons, state players and organs, have an obligation to uphold and defend mother tongue in the spirit of the Constitution. It is proposed that the contradictions in the current Constitution must be re-examined in the context of legal language reform to put mother tongue in its rightful position in the administration of justice and legal practice in the country.

**Keywords:** Constitution, justice, legal, forensic linguistics

### **Introduction**

In the words of Gibbons (2005:1), "The law is an overwhelmingly linguistic institution. Laws are coded in language and concepts that are used to construct the law are accessible only through language". Indeed legal processes that includes court proceedings, police investigations or enforcement and prison administration/management, take place mainly through language. In the same vein, contracts, that typically regulate our relationship with other people, are essentially language documents. In essence, legal documents are basically language documents. Mattila (2006: 6) points out that "Law is necessarily bound to language (notably in matters of legal interpretation), and in that sense legal language has existed as long as the law". On the other hand, Olsson (2016) asserts that, it is rare that a crime is committed without some language evidence, and, Shuy (2005) is of the opinion that crime is often created

by language. Gibbons (2005:2) sums up the pervasive nature of language and its problematic legalese in the justice system thus “It is, therefore, not only the law that permeates our lives, but the language of the law, and it does so in ways that are not always problem free”

In a nutshell, language pervades all spheres of our lives similar to the laws they encode hence our mother tongue is central in legal administration. It follows then that language is a very central and critical factor in the legal system yet one of its key characteristic is its opacity and incomprehensiveness. It is, therefore, important that those who seek justice have access to the language of their choice due to the pertinent role played by language in the judicial and legal processes. It is instructive to note that in the world over, cases are won and lost purely on the basis of language, specifically, legal language mastery and not necessarily on the basis of any substantive evidence in the courtroom. It is apparent that innocent litigants have been condemned to jail terms and sometimes to death while hardcore criminals are set free largely on linguistic evidence. The language of the justice system can both empower and disadvantage justice seekers depending on their linguistic prowess, in particular, their proficiency in the legal language. In the Kenyan justice system, use of mother tongue is not guaranteed, therefore, inflicting undue injustice to Kenyans who lack mastery of the Common Law Legal English. This calls for redress at all levels of justice administration and legal practice in Kenya in an effort to protect the lay justice seekers who lack any formal training in legal English and mastery of the same.

Among the basic human rights acknowledged universally is the right to express oneself in one’s mother tongue; a core principle in the legal systems across the world. Similarly, the right to the usage of one’s mother language is a constitutional provision that is inalienable neither by state nor state agencies and organs. On this basis, it is assumed that language rights and fundamental freedoms enjoyed by citizens are not granted by state but are part of the inalienable human rights whose observance is meant to preserve human dignity and promote social justice. Among the rights and fundamental freedoms envisaged in the Bill of Rights (BR) is the right to the use of our mother tongue in all spheres of life including in the legal process. The right to the use of mother tongue has for a long time been recognized as fundamental pillar in the protection of civil and personal rights by the United Nations’ general assembly. This was espoused in the ‘Universal Declaration of Human Rights’ of 1948. Similarly, marginalized and minority groups have had their mother language rights violated by state organs with impunity through forced linguistic assimilation. It is in the light of this that the UN General Assembly adopted the ‘Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People’ in 2006 to address this injustice.

However, mother language has often been relegated to the periphery in official discourse within the legal practice in many countries in spite of this Declaration. Resistance to language rights for indigenous people in former colonial countries still persists. In these countries, various excuses have been used to sabotage any effort meant to put mother language at the center of social interaction in the public and private domains.

In Kenya, for example, lack of funds to support interpreters in the justice system for the different mother languages has been the excuse. Equally, there are clear inconsistencies in UN’s own policy on mother tongue and the people’s right to use and promote their mother language. This is apparent in the refusal by the General Assembly to officially adopt the Universal Declaration of Linguistic Rights (The Barcelona Declaration) of 1996 whose central objective

was to ensure protection of linguistic rights of all people especially the minority and marginalized communities.

Countries that are signatories to UN Conventions and Declarations pertaining to language rights have constitutional provisions protecting mother language and attendant laws that actualize these provisions. The Constitution of Kenya 2010 (hereafter, CoK, National Council for Law Reporting, 2013; hereafter, NCLR) provides for the protection and promotion of local languages and diversity of culture for which language is a key component. It states that the state, among other things, shall endeavour to promote and protect the diversity of the languages of the people of Kenya and also, promote the development and use of indigenous languages. However, in actual implementation of the constitutional provisions, there are glaring contradictions. State organs and persons charged with actualization of these provisions into law (Parliament and the Attorney General), interpretation (the Judiciary) and enforcement of the same (Police and Prisons Services), have been a major obstacle. No tangible laws have been enacted to guarantee the rights of Kenyans to the use of their mother language since the promulgation of the Constitution in 2010. Specifically, the justice system has no safeguards that guarantees the right to the use of mother languages in legal and judicial matters.

The justice system has totally failed to live up to the spirit of the constitution as regards people's rights to their mother language in the justice system and the entire legal process. Mother tongue remains subordinate to the dominant English language that enjoys the enviable status of 'a de facto language of the justice system' in the country. It is noteworthy that the Constitution of Kenya 2010 has not been translated into a single indigenous language, not to mention Kiswahili, which is a mother tongue of many Kenyans. The subordinate role played by the mother tongues in Kenyan justice system is one of the many unwelcome constitutional contradictions in the justice system. The justice system has in effect abdicated its role, inadvertently subverting justice as purveyors of language injustice. While there might be alternatives to mother tongue through translation or use of the national language (Kiswahili), these are ad hoc measures that do not guarantee justice to mother tongue users. Legal terminology are often system specific and, therefore, any form of interpretation or translation of mother tongue into the courtroom legal language, may perpetuate injustice to users of mother tongue (De Groot & van Laer, 2006:65).

In view of the foregoing observations, it is imperative that the contradictions inherent in the law on language and in the justice system in particular, are addressed. The constitutional provisions are supreme and no law or statute that stands in contradiction is valid. The CoK unequivocally reiterates in Chapter One, Article 2(1) that "this Constitution is the supreme law of the Republic and binds all persons and all state organs..." In essence, any law or act of omission or commission that is inconsistent with it is void to the extent of the inconsistency. Similarly, in the defence of the Constitution, Article 3 (1) of the same Chapter reiterates that "...every person has an obligation to respect, uphold and defend this constitution."

However, in practice, it is apparent that provisions pertaining to mother tongue rights have been liberally violated with impunity contrary to what is contemplated by the Constitution. Equally, some constitutional provisions are inherently contradictory and have been used by the justice system to subvert Kenyans' right to the use of their mother language as a fundamental human right.

In this paper, we adopt the broader concept of justice system that encompasses the office of the Attorney General, the Legislature, the Judiciary, the Police and the Prisons services. These institutions are directly involved in matters language right from drafting the bills through to the interpretation and enforcement of the law. This is in contrast to the narrow concept of the legal system that is limited to four major elements; the code of laws, the court system, the police and the prison services.

### **Legal Language and Justice**

Legal language is the language of the law and its relation to law and the legal process at large. Legal language unlike ordinary language operates as a functional variant of natural languages having its own domain of use and specific linguistic norms at the level of phraseology, vocabulary, hierarchy of terms and semantics (Mattila, 2006). It possesses specific linguistic features at the morphosyntactic, semantic and pragmatic levels as used in particular judicial roles for example, in pleading, claiming, among others. Legal language can be divided into subgenres according to the subgroups of the legal fraternity. Mattila (2006:4) identifies the following subgroupings; legal authors, judges, legislators, administrators and advocates all of whom display some unique linguistic characteristics of vocabulary and style. Typically, the legal author language is less constrained, more liberal with scholarly vocabulary especially of Latin origin. By contrast, the language of judges (courts) is formal, archaic, categorical (judges typically make unreserved declarations and peremptory orders) and at times, very laconic. Legal counsels on the other hand use language that is full of detailed argumentations and rhetorics with lengthy quotations of statutes and precedents. Across these subgenres, there is profuse use of legal terms with legal jargons forming a continuum from the solemn to the more laid back language.

The language of the law may also be divided into two; the codified written language of legislation and other documents that are largely monologic and the spoken interactive dynamic language of the legal process (courtroom language). As a language for specific purpose, the meanings of legal language may vary from one branch of law to another, country to country and even period of usage, all showing distinct characteristics from ordinary language. This often leads to incomprehension on the part of the ordinary public. In spite of this, legal language is a tool for communication beyond the internal legal fraternity, for example, law demands compliance from all the citizens. Unfortunately, legal language has often been described as incomprehensible and overly technical (full of legalese), unintelligible to ordinary readers and barely intelligible to lawyers. This is summed up by the American lawyer and father of modern Forensic Linguistics who puts it candidly 'Legal English is wordy, unclear, pompous and dull' (Mellinkoff, 1963:24). On legal documents, Stygall, (2010:64) concludes "We live in a world of complex documents that are difficult for almost all readers to understand".

Legal language, as a language for special purposes, is characterized as a technical language or 'technolect' (Mattila, 2006:3). Contrary to the ordinary language, a chief characteristic of the legal language is its opaqueness and aloofness (de-contextualized) to the extent that only the initiated legal fraternity may understand it. Typical syntactic features that characterize the legal genre includes; the binomial expressions, complex prepositions and long, complex, multi-

clause sentences with syntactic matching in the subordinate clauses (Coulthard & Johnson, 2007:39). Indeed, Coulthard and Johnson (2010:35-36) point out that the term legal languages has become synonymous with a language that is full of grammatical complexity, sparsely punctuated, over-lexicalized and opaque written texts. They further observe that “legal language has a reputation for archaisms and convoluted syntax... it is simply [*sic*] impenetrable”.

Bhatia (1993: 101) on the same obfuscation puts it that legal written English “... has acquired a certain degree of notoriety rarely equalled by any other variety of English. It has long been criticized for its obscure expressions and circumlocutions, long-winded involved constructions and tortuous syntax, apparently meaningless repetitions and archaisms”. The legal language is thus portrayed as a frightening phenomenon imposed on a society. Coulthard and Johnson (2010:1) concede thus “...we know that the legal world is context-rich. It is peopled by a hierarchical mini-nation of judges, lawyers, police and law-enforcement officers and then the common man and woman, who walk, like Adam and Eve, unknowing, through this strange world”. The above quotation aptly sums up the agony of lay litigants in an alien justice system in which power asymmetry based on some opaque legal language, inhibits their quest for justice.

However, why should this be the case when legal language is meant for communicating issues that are pertinent in securing and promoting justice? For drafters of legal documents, according to Bhatia (1993:102), their justification is based on the view that their profession demands that they “convert legal intentions into unambiguous prose, constructions whose main purpose is to bring precision, clarity, unambiguity and all-inclusiveness”. Similarly, the author is of the view that “the legal drafter is in an unenviable position, striving to use language to do justice to the intent of Parliament and, at the same time, to facilitate comprehension of the unfolding text for ordinary readership”. The author stresses the fact that the drafter must also “...protect the intended interpretation against uncooperative readings by skillful lawyers” (Bhatia 1993: 103). But the author contrasts the foregoing by asserting that “...it may be a ploy to promote solidarity between members of the specialist community and to keep non-specialists at a respectable distance”. Furthermore, observers have argued aptly that such language use in the legal fraternity is meant to preserve professional monopoly and so control legal proceedings to the advantage of the counsels/advocates (the bar) and the judges/magistrates (the bench) (Maley, 1994:12).

Bhatia (2010) further argues that specification in legislative writing is a key requirement to ensure invariable and consistent interpretation and this is corroborated by Seidman et al; (2001:293) who assert that the objective is “... ensuring that courts construe statutes to carry out the legislative purpose”. Bhatia further contends that for negotiation of justice, it is important that precedents and legislative statements are clearly, precisely, unambiguously and adequately specified. According to Halliday (1985) though, the legal language is largely the way it is based on the functions it is meant to do.

For example, in legal settings such as ritual openings of court proceedings, the police caution (the Miranda warnings), beginnings of an interview or the reading of the indictments, use formulaic expressions signaling the start of a formal legal process, among others, are the norm.

However, it is apparent that such language is incomprehensible and may distance and disadvantage the lay participants.

Pursuant to the foregoing, it appears that legal language functions play a role in its complexity and incomprehensibility. Based on the theory of communication, Mattila (2006:31) identifies a number of functions of legal language that may be responsible for its key characteristics that makes it so inaccessible to lay litigants and ordinary readers. Among these are: achieving justice, transmission of legal message, strengthening of the authority of the law, strengthening of the team spirit (solidarity) of the lawyers and preservation of the linguistic cultural heritage of a country. These five functions among those mentioned are more relevant and are discussed below showing why legal language is the way it is (inaccessible, opaque, archaic, convoluted, complex, etcetera) because of each of these functions expected of it.

Achieving justice by the use of legal language is a key function in the sense of producing legal effects by speech acts. Language is used to transmit messages and influence behavior but importantly, acts are realized through it according to the Speech Act Theory (Searle, 1980). Speech acts are important in legal order because law is a metaphysical phenomenon only alive in language when language is used to change legal relationship and thus functioning as an instrument of speech acts with performative role (Mattila, 2006). Theoretically, legal order gives the meaning of a speech act to words expressed orally or to some signed document. Therefore, a judge can make a judicial decision by a speech act and similarly, a valid judgement such as declaring 'this court sentences you to life imprisonment' for instance, has the force of an action. In this case, legal documents (forms) as affirmation of speech acts, are achieved through language either in written form or signature (of parties to a contract, notary or authorities).

Legal transmission of messages is done via language for messages relating to law and matters of legal significance. Through legal language, we are enlightened on the contents of the law, judgements, regulations, administrative decisions, pleadings and indictments, among others. Legal communication, like any human communication, confronts myriad interferences in the form of obstacles, loss, distortions and noise. Obstacles may include mistaken address, disappearance or delay of message and incompetence of receiver. Information loss may include its diminution or impairment or negative attitude of receiver. As for distortion, this may be due to misunderstanding or misinterpretation of information due to ambiguity. Finally, noise in communication is due to impeding elements mixed up with the message. In the context of legal communication, interference involves incomplete, unintelligible (hermetic or closed) and equivocal nature of the message, mutation of information in transmission, impediments of the message by the signals and negative attitude by the recipient.

Strengthening the authority of the law via language is a central feature in legal practice. It is imperative that a law is respected by all citizens and legal language is thus used as an instrument of social management and control. There is need to understand and memorize legal rules and this is achieved through mnemonics: concrete description of specific cases in colourful details and use of a concise and rhythmic legal language that may also be very poetic especially for legal maxims. Our contemporary legislation, due to the complex nature of the modern world, demands rules that are not just precise but complex in details. In fiscal and

social matters, it is common for articles of law to express some mathematical formulas in highly complex language form. Such regulations are totally incomprehensible to the general citizenry. Legal language as the language of power, must be categorical; it conveys the authority of the law and the fear of sanctions.

The fourth function of legal language is the strengthening of lawyers' team spirit and professional solidarity. Legal language strengthens group cohesion, consolidates professional identity and their commitment to values and traditions of their profession. The classical legal language of Latin and legal jargons are very characteristic of the legal fraternity. Latin had been the language of law from medieval times and its prestige has remained; it was associated with the 'educated' and 'learned'. Latin maxims are still used in many legal documents long after the emergency of other legal languages besides legal authors who cultivate Latin in their publications. Legal jargon is the norm as an esoteric language that strengthens their professional affinity. Typically, it is characterized by subjectivity, fantasy and comedy apart from showing 'legal' emotions. Legal language with Latinate terms is thus meant to monopolize information by a special group whose use is basically a distancing strategy. Most of the legal jargons are so hermetic that only few specially initiated within the profession may understand them.

Finally, legal language has an important role to play in linguistic cultural heritage of a country because justice forms part of human culture and consequently, the language of the law forms part of the linguistic culture. It is through legal language that we are able to preserve our linguistic heritage. Language, like any institution ossify (Mattila, 2006:58) and for security, legal language has to hold to its tradition; legislations have to be stable because laws can be in force for generations. This implies that the terms of such laws remain in use in spite of being archaic. This is evident in the archaic character of legal English. This is part of the preservation of the linguistic cultural heritage via the conservative nature of legal language. Part of the linguistic heritage shows the influence of foreign languages (as is the case with legal English). Furthermore, the archaism of legal language has a symbolic value; symbolizes cultural continuity linking the past and present thereby solidifying national feeling of solidarity and identity. These, and the foregoing functions may explain why legal English is often unintelligible to many.

Bhatia, (2010) argues that legal requirements of drafting of law may be responsible for the overly aloof and incomprehension of legal language. He asserts that legislative writing requires specificity for purposes of accessibility, transparency, power and control. All legislative rules are required to have clarity, precision, unambiguity and inclusiveness. Specifically, legislative rules should have clarity of expression so that the legislative intentions are clearly contextualized to avoid any vagueness. Clarity is achieved via use of terminological expressions and complex prepositional phrases instead of simple prepositions. Precision requires the use few words as much as possible achieved through the use of nominalized expressions. The requirement of unambiguity demands, certainty of interpretation and application. This is achieved via insertion of relevant qualification at specific syntactic positions in the sentence. Finally, the author identifies inclusiveness as the final requirement. This demands that legislative language adequately specifies the legal scope of the law.

This requirement directly concerns accessibility of legal language (how comprehensible and interpretable) because a lot of qualifications are required to define the scope of application. The scope of application must be clearly specified so that interpretation is unambiguous.

Due to the mentioned functions (Mattila, 2006:31) and requirements of legal drafting (Bhatia, 2010), legal language has developed legal features that makes it overly incomprehensible. Stygall (2002) argues that with lack of domain knowledge of specialized terms and limitations on working memory, comprehension difficulties arise. This is due to sentence length, retrieval interferences, multiple embeddings and negations, passivization, syntactic or scope ambiguity, and the absence of relative pronouns marking clauses. Similarly, lengthy sentences presented in a bulleted list of no-parallel items, inconsistency in punctuation, largely “impede communication” According to Tiersma (1999: 203), other sources of incomprehension includes technical vocabulary; archaic, formal and unusual words; impersonal constructions; overuse of nominalizations and passives; modal verbs; multiple negation; long and complex sentences; and poor organization (pp. 203–10). Some or all of these may be typical of legal documents detracting comprehension. Stygall (2010) adds that references to inaccessible texts; critical background texts unavailable to lay readers, repetitive use of formal legal names of entities and common words used with a specialized legal meaning add to the opaqueness of legal language.

The reality, however, is that in the justice system, especially in the courtroom discourse, language users construct a social and physical world that is pragmatically related to the social-cultural and physical contexts they inhabit (Gibbons, 2005). The world view of participants is based on some shared knowledge and different perspectives of their social and material world. If indeed we view our world through our language, then this knowledge consists of our communicative ability; the communicative competence. As argued by majority linguists, native speaker competence is all that is required in adequate language use. Legal documents or process coined in a language other than mother language inevitably lacks this knowledge. This is the injustice that those seeking justice suffer when they cannot construct their world view of the material events that are the subject of court proceedings or trial. They can only defend or prosecute their case fairly in their mother tongue which is not available to them.

While the wording of legislation must have a single clear meaning as basis for interpretation and imposition of the law; the ‘plain meaning rule’, in linguistics however, language is not a simple unambiguous means of communication. It is not just about the legal ‘jargon’ per se but the legal view of the social and physical world whose ‘legal’ meaning is at variance with everyday usage. While technical terms are considered ‘shorthand’ in making language efficient and compact, it often leads to lack of clarity. Often, it may portray a different sociocultural view that is different in intent (Gibbons, 2005:14). There is knowledge gap between lawyers and non-lawyers; legal jargon, referring to legal concepts, require technical language because it is not part of everyday knowledge, yet majority of Kenyans lack this knowledge.

As pointed out earlier, a characteristic of legal English language is the use archaic deictics which lawyers prefer for clearer and less ambiguous reference. Yet these only serve to enhance interpersonal power and legal conservatism. Such in-group language is both inclusive and exclusive.

In the legal system, there is the 'two audience dilemma' arising from the legal language in the justice system, that is; language appropriate to the lay witness audience on one hand and to the specialist legal audience, on the other. Specialist English terms such as committal, enforcement, felon, plaintiff, homicide and assault have quite different legal sense from everyday usage, i.e. the latter two may not involve physical contact in the legal semantics.

The pursuit of precision is driven by the desire for legal documents to define and control human behaviour in unambiguous manner' (Gibbons, 2005). However, it is noteworthy that the pursuit of precision when combined with extreme conservatism and archaism, leads to language that is arcane and unintelligible to non-lawyers, producing what observers call 'obfuscation' and Melinkoff (1963) calls it 'pompous'. Difficulties encountered in justice system may, therefore, emanate from two sources; non-lawyers not understanding the legal language and the lawyers not understanding the people who lack mastery of the legal language. It is generally agreed that although the English Law is communicated largely in English, most speakers of the English language are excluded from semiotic group of the law, (Jackson, 1990: 87). This is mainly because they cannot grasp the register of the language in which the law is coded.

One of the glaring contradiction resulting from the unintelligible legal language is the fact that the Common Law (the form adopted in Kenya) presumes that 'ignorance of the law is no defence'. It is difficult for the accused to challenge what he or she does not understand in a courtroom. Similarly, the common citizenry can only observe and respect the law that they understand. In essence, legal language must be intelligible to the people affected by it so that they can understand and protect their own legal and contract rights not to mention their meaningful participation in legal processes in the justice system. As pointed out by (Gibbons, 2005:199) 'without public understanding of the law, it becomes an avenue for oppression rather than order, for injustice rather than justice'. This is the case in Kenya's justice system in which those who do not understand the legal English are denied their right to mother language that could safeguard their constitutionally specified language rights, an avenue of injustice indeed.

## **Methods and Data**

This study is based on a survey and observation of courts, police stations and prison offices focusing on the status and role of mother tongue in those institutions. Specifically, the survey covered three courts in Kitale, Nakuru and Nairobi (Makadara), two police stations in Kitale and Nakuru and two prisons offices in Kitale and Nakuru. Similarly, a review of the Hansard records of parliament formed part of the source of data. In the survey, a magistrate, a judge, a prosecutor, two police officers, two prisons officers, two prisoners, two lawyers and four litigants were interviewed to elicit data for this paper. Finally, a review of The Constitution of Kenya, 2010 provided data on language rights and related Articles that pertains to mother tongue usage.

## **Findings and Discussion**

From the review of CoK, the Hansard, the observations and interviews, relevant findings related to the study are discussed below. The focus is on CoK provisions that touch on language rights and the contradictions identified in the actual implementation of the Constitutional provisions.

### **The Constitution and Language Rights**

The Constitution of Kenya, 2010 is clear on the role of mother language and other indigenous languages in the country; they are the pillar for the linguistic diversity of the nation. Pursuant to this, the state is under obligation to protect and promote the said diversity while developing and promoting its usage as set out in Article 7 (3) of the Constitution of Kenya, 2010 (NCLR, 2013). Similarly, Kiswahili, an indigenous and mother language of the coastal Kenyan communities, is recognized as both the National Language and Official Language of the Republic of Kenya under Article 7 (2) of CoK. This, in effect, gives due recognition to a local language the status it deserves. On the other hand, Article 10 (2b) on national values and principles of governance makes it explicit that human dignity, equity, social justice, inclusiveness, equality, human rights, non-discrimination and protection of the marginalized shall be honoured in which mother tongue is arguably a key component in terms of linguistic human rights and diversity of the country.

Chapter Four of CoK focuses on The Bill of Rights (hereafter, BR) in which Article 19 (2) asserts that the purpose in the recognition and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms is to preserve the dignity of individuals and communities and to promote social justice, among others. In the application of the BR, Article 20 (1&2) states that these rights applies to all law and binds all state organs and persons, and that every person shall enjoy the rights and fundamental freedoms to the greatest extent consistent with the nature of the right or fundamental freedom. Similarly, clause 5b of the same Article provides that 'the state is obliged to allocate resources giving priority to the widest possible enjoyment of the right or fundamental freedom having regard to prevailing circumstances, including the vulnerability of particular groups or individuals'. Mother tongue is not just part of the human rights and fundamental freedoms guaranteed by the BR, it symbolizes our humanity and its usage, a manifestation and an assertion of communal dignity.

In the implementation of the BR, Article 21 provides that it is a fundamental duty of the state and every state organ to observe, respect, protect, promote and fulfill the rights and fundamental freedoms in the BR. This entails taking legislative, policy and other measures, including the setting of standards, to achieve the progressive realization of these rights. Furthermore, all state organs and public officers have the duty to address the needs of vulnerable groups within society, including but not limited to members of minority or marginalized communities, and members of particular ethnic, religious or cultural communities. In addition, the State shall enact and implement legislation to fulfill its international obligations in respect of human rights and fundamental freedoms. On the enforcement of the BR in Article 22, the Constitution guarantees Kenyans the right to institute court proceedings whenever a right or fundamental freedom in the BR has been denied, violated, infringed or is threatened. The Constitution also gives authority to the courts to interpret, uphold and enforce the BR including those relating to language rights.

In this regard, the High Court has jurisdiction, in accordance with Article 165, to hear and determine applications for redress of a denial, violation or infringement of, or threat to a language right or fundamental freedom in the BR. Parliament is expected to enact legislation to give original jurisdiction in appropriate cases to subordinate courts to hear and determine applications for redress of any violation of these fundamental freedoms in the BR. In addition, in any proceedings brought under Article 22, a court may grant appropriate relief, including a declaration of rights, an injunction, a conservatory order, a declaration of invalidity of any law that denies, violates, infringes, or threatens a right or fundamental freedom in the BR and is not justified under Article 24 (that provides for reasonable limitation), an order for compensation and judicial review. The Attorney General, parliament, judiciary, police and prison services are expected to give force to these provisions by enacting laws on mother language, interpreting and enforcing the same as a way of upholding the constitution.

Equality and freedom from discrimination is central in the BR as per Article 27. Specifically, clause 1 and 2 asserts that every person is equal before the law and has the right to equal protection and equal benefit of the law. Such equality includes the full and equal enjoyment of all rights and fundamental freedoms. The article requires that the state shall not discriminate directly or indirectly against any person on any ground, among others; race, ethnic or social origin, culture and language. To ensure compliance to this provision, clause 6 and 7 of the same Article provides that the state shall take legislative and other measures, including affirmative action programmes and policies designed to redress any disadvantage suffered by individuals or groups because of past discrimination and such measure shall adequately provide for any benefits to be on the basis of genuine need. Article 28 on human dignity states that every person has inherent dignity and the right to have that dignity respected and protected.

Language and culture are often intertwined and Article 44 (1&2) states that every person has the right to use the language and to participate in the cultural life of his/her choice. A person belonging to a cultural or linguistic community has the right, with other members of that community, to enjoy his/her culture and use his/her language or to form, join and maintain cultural and linguistic associations and other organs of civil society. Clause 2a of this Article is very specific on a person's right to use his/her language. Article 48 on access to justice, provides that the state shall ensure access to justice for all persons and language is an important avenue for this access to justice. The rights of arrested persons are protected by Article 49 of the Constitution. Clause 1 states that Kenyans have a right to be informed promptly, in a language that the person understands, the reason for the arrest, the right to remain silent and the consequences of not remaining silent, among other information.

On fair hearing, Article 50 provides that every accused person has the right to a fair trial, which include the right to be informed of the charge in a language they understand. In addition, the person has the right to choose to remain silent, and not to testify during the proceedings, to have the assistance of an interpreter without payment if the accused person cannot understand the language at the trial. Clause 3 and 4 of the same Article provides that if this Article (50) requires information to be given to a person, the information shall be given in a language that the person understands and evidence obtained in a manner that violates any right or

fundamental freedom in the Bill of Rights shall be excluded if the admission of that evidence would render the trial unfair, or would be detrimental to the administration of justice.

Article 54 (1a&d) on disabilities states that, among other provisions, a person with any disability is entitled to be treated with dignity and respect and to be addressed and referred to in a manner that is not demeaning and to use sign language, Braille or other appropriate means of communication. Article 56 (d) on minorities and marginalized groups, the Constitution states that the State shall put in place affirmative action programmes designed to ensure that minorities and marginalized groups develop their cultural values, languages and practices. Article 120 provides for the official languages of Parliament. It states that the official languages of Parliament shall be Kiswahili, English and Kenyan Sign Language (KSL). The business of Parliament may be conducted in English, Kiswahili and Kenyan Sign Language. Yet Article 259 (2) on construing of the Constitution asserts that if there is a conflict between different language versions of this Constitution, the English language version prevails. This is a clear contradiction in negating mother tongue usage by elevating English to the status of a 'constitutional' language!

### **Constitutional and Legal Contradictions in the Justice System**

There are glaring contradictions and inconsistencies in the Constitution itself and the justice system meant to uphold and promote mother language rights. In terms of the Constitution, there are contradictions inherent in it and discrepancies between the Constitution and what is practiced in the justice system. In regard to the constitution, in spite of its acclaimed supremacy as per Article 2 and 3 of Chapter One of CoK, the BR relevant to language rights have not been implemented. Specifically, Article 2(1) which specifies that "this Constitution is the supreme law of the Republic and binds all persons and all state organs..." is yet to be observed in contravention of the provision by an act of omission. This is contrary to the force of the above Article that is explicit in declaring that there can be no law that negates the spirit of the constitution nor any act of omission or commission that is inconsistent with its provisions. The Article binds all persons (the Attorney General) state organs (the legislature, judiciary, police and prisons services). These bodies have not implemented the provisions of the Article in drafting laws to protect mother tongue (the AG and Legislature), interpret the same (the Judiciary) and its enforcement (the Police and Prisons).

Article 7 (2) asserts that the official languages of the Republic are Kiswahili and English while 7(3) provides for the promotion of the linguistic diversity of the country. Clause 2 and 3 three of this Article contradict each other in the sense that mother languages are not given formal legal status as a form of promoting the said diversity. Article 10 (2b) on national values and principles of governance makes it explicit that human dignity, equity, social justice, inclusiveness, equality, human rights, non-discrimination and protection of the marginalized shall be honoured in which mother tongue is arguably a key component. Mother tongue usage is part of our human dignity, equality and equity before the law and a manifestation of social justice and denial of the same is a violation of this dignity, equality and inevitably, social injustice. Denial of mother tongue usage in official circles is a violation of language rights and

social justice for majority Kenyans who have no access to legal English whose elevation to status of legal language negates the spirit of non-discrimination and equality.

While Article 19 (2) makes it clear that that the purpose of recognizing and protecting human rights and fundamental freedoms is to preserve the dignity of individuals and communities and promote social justice, mother tongue, a fundamental right, is not guaranteed in the justice system; an affront to individual and communal language rights. State organs in the justice system have routinely violated provisions in Article 20 (1&2) that stipulates BR application by not ensuring individuals are free to use their mother tongue in the justice system. Similarly, the national government has routinely failed to allocate resources for full implementation of these provisions from the time the Constitution was promulgated.

To date (2020), mother tongue use is not guaranteed in the entire justice system. While the fundamental duty of the state and state organs is the implementation of rights and fundamental freedoms by observing, respecting, protecting, promoting and fulfilling BR, this is not the case in the justice system contrary to Article 20 (1). Failure by the state to take legislative, policy and other measures to achieve progressive realisation of the guaranteed rights contradicts Article 20 (2).

Article 24 of the BR identifies the rights and fundamental freedoms that may be legally limited for public good, yet Article 25 does not include language rights or mother tongue among those protected from the said limitations. Furthermore, the grounds for limitations are not specified in clear and unambiguous terms. For example, what is meant by "... the limitation is reasonable and justifiable in an open and democratic society..." (A24 (1)). The concepts of 'reasonable, justifiable and democratic' are amenable to multiple and varied interpretations. More so, this limitation is actually in contradiction to the provisions in Article 44 below. Similarly, the CoK provides that the State shall enact and implement legislation to fulfill its international obligations in respect of human rights and fundamental freedoms. In this regard, parliament has failed to enact water tight laws that guarantee the observance of linguistic rights across the board. Specifically, in our justice system, mother tongue has no visible role and its use is frowned upon by those who wield linguistic power. When mother language is not used in the legal process, it is a violation of fundamental freedoms; a form of discrimination contrary to Articles 27 and 28.

Language is part of our culture, it manifests our ethnicity and race, hence subordination of mother tongue is more than mere discrimination on the basis of language. It is a discrimination of our culture and ethnicity. Note that Article 28 espouses on the sanctity of human dignity stating that every person has inherent dignity and the right to have that dignity respected and protected. This is what is missing in the justice system; recognition of mother language as a person's inherent dignity that demands respect. It is imperative to note that Article 44 (1&2) are unequivocal on a person's right to a language of his/her choice in their cultural life. However, this is at variance with what is practiced in the legal process. Furthermore, Clause 1 of Article 49 of BR states that Kenyans have a right to be informed promptly, in a language that they understand, of the reason for the arrest, the right to remain silent and the consequences of not remaining silent, among other information. However, when the police arrest Kenyans, they typically do not inform them of the reasons and if they do so, they use Kiswahili and courts read charges couched in legal English that is not comprehensible at all. In a nutshell, the right

to use mother tongue is routinely violated in the justice system compromising access to justice due to language barrier for lay persons seeking justice. People's linguistic rights are curtailed when English is the *de facto* language of the courts and the entire justice system.

Article (50) of BR requires that if information is to be given to an accused person, the information shall be given in a language that the person understands. Similarly, evidence obtained in a manner that violates any right or fundamental freedom in the BR shall be excluded. That is, if the admission of that evidence would render the trial unfair, or would be detrimental to the administration of justice. To this end, there can never be a fair trial if the charge sheet is read in legal English and the accused is not allowed to use the language he/she understands, nor access to an advocate who understands their mother language when they are not competent in legal English. Besides, evidence given in a language other than the mother language of the accused is a travesty of justice when its interpretation is at variance with that of mother tongue.

Further contradictions are observed with regard to the disabled community in Kenya especially those whose mother tongue is Kenyan Sign Language. Although Article 54 (1a&d) asserts that individuals with disabilities must be provided with appropriate means of communication besides the use of sign language and braille, institutions within the justice system do not guarantee these services to the disabled communities. Legal documents are not available in Braille and the Kenyan Sign Language is only available in a few courts and totally lacking in the Police and Prisons services country-wide. Often, a judge makes a ruling on a case without hearing the individual defence from a person with visual or hearing impairment: a true miscarriage of justice.

It is such a constitutional auto-contradiction when Articles 7(2) and 120 identifies English, and Kiswahili as the official languages of the republic of Kenya, and these two plus Kenyan Sign Language as the official languages of Parliament, respectively.

These Articles are in contradiction with Article 44 (1&2). In fact Article 44(1) states clearly that "Every person has the right to use the language ...of the person's choice". In this scenario, Kenyans have no right to use their mother tongue in the entire justice system in spite of the provisions of the foregoing Article. These are the gaps in the Constitution that have been exploited by those in the justice system to deny Kenyans their right to mother tongue usage. Similar discrepancy in Article 259 of the Constitution has been used to relegate mother languages to the periphery in the justice system by providing a legal 'justification' for the denial of mother tongue in the justice system. Article 259 (2) focuses on the interpretation and construing of the Constitution. It stipulates that if there is a conflict between different language versions of this Constitution, the English language version prevails. This is a clear contradiction in negating mother tongue usage by elevating English to the status of a 'constitutional language!' Mother tongue is thereby legally and constitutionally consigned to the backseat in both the official discourse and specifically in the justice system.

There are worrisome injustices pertaining to Articles 7, 54, 56 and 120. There are contradictions inherent in the Constitution that have given state organs, and in particular, the justice system the licence to subordinate mother languages in the administration of justice. The

deaf who need sign language do not have such services while minorities who often have little education in English, the language of the courts, have no redress and there is no affirmative action in the justice system to remedy this injustice. When mother languages of the country are not recognized constitutionally for use in parliament, it is evident that they cannot be accorded any role outside parliament, for instance, the courts. If English must prevail in case of any conflict in the interpretation of the Constitution, this gives credence to the marginalization of mother languages, an injustice that pervades our justice system because they virtually have no legal backing.

In the Kenyan justice system, poor communication largely arises because of the use of legal language involving the police who are hardly conversant with the legal genre.

The risk is that in the Common Law tradition of the Kenyan courts, much of the power to prosecute is vested in the police officer in most local Magistrate and District courts. In cases involving minor offences, the police present evidence that a suspect is guilty which is accepted without further investigation or argument. In essence, the main concern in such courts is sentencing rather than decisions about guilt or innocence. In Kenya, like other Common Law countries, the police interviews or interrogations contain some 'scripted' cautions informing interviewees of their legal rights and obligations during the interviews or interrogations. Nowhere is there mention of their right to be informed of the charge or to be interviewed in their mother language.

Such scripted cautions may include the fact that a person may have the right to silence, legal representation, to be informed of the purpose of interrogation or arrest, among others. Generally, there is no mention of the right to use one's mother tongue and to decline responding to questions not framed in one's mother tongue or the right to an interpreter. It is at this point that injustice takes root in the entire legal process with no recourse to an alternative avenue in which mother language may be used by the accused. In a typical Kenyan court, the judge or magistrate simply asks the litigants if they understand English or not. In a few cases, they may ask if the litigants understand English or Kiswahili with no provision for mother languages spoken across Kenya. It is, therefore, imperative that these contradictions and discrepancies are addressed to ensure language rights of Kenyans are respected and upheld.

### **Addressing the Contradictions**

The contradictions identified are basically constitutional and legal in nature. This implies that any effort to address these contradictions must be constitutionally and legally driven. Specifically, these contradictions require constitutional amendments, legal language reform, professionalizing legal translation and interpretation, recognition of Forensic Linguists as expert witnesses and Indigenous Disputes Resolution in the justice system. These measures should have as its core objective, putting mother language and language rights of Kenyans at the centre of legal practice and legal administration in Kenya's justice system. Considering the critical role played by language in the entire justice system, it is imperative that the language used within this sphere is accessible to all for fairness and to guarantee justice for those seeking the same.

Constitutional amendments should target those areas that negate the spirit of the Constitution on language rights as a fundamental human right. Article 7 and 120 should be amended to

include some mother languages as official languages of the Republic and as languages of parliamentary business. This will in effect promote linguistic diversity as anticipated by Article 7(3). Such amendments will remove the contradictions observed with respect to Article 44. Similarly, Article 25 that specifies fundamental freedoms and rights that may not be limited, should be amended too so that enjoyment of linguistic rights is included in the list of such protected rights. Finally, Article 259 (2) should equally be amended to give Kiswahili, a language understood by majority of Kenyans, equal status in the interpretation and construing of the Constitution. The Constitution should make it mandatory for Kenyans to choose the language of interaction in the entire justice system especially during the court proceedings.

Law reform council in Kenya should include Legal Language Reform having a singular objective; making language comprehensible to ordinary Kenyans without compromising clarity and unambiguous interpretation of legal statutes. Legal language reform should borrow from the Plain Language Movement that originated from England in the form of 'Plain English Campaign' (that spread to USA and Australia), whose sole aim was for a plain English law. This is in recognition of the centrality of language in the legal process having shown that law is basically a language entity. Replacing archaic and Latinate/Greek terms should be key in the reform process to the extent that ordinary English users can understand legal statutes. Legal language reform should also include recognition of mother languages and sign language in the justice system and provision of free legal interpretation services.

There is the need to professionalize legal interpretation and translation. According to Article 49 (a) and 50 (2m & 3), Kenyans have a right to be informed in a language that they understand in their interaction with the government officers within the justice system. Considering the level of illiteracy and the incomprehension of legal English, it is important that the accused, for instance, have access to legal translators as part of their right to fair trial and non-discrimination on the basis of language. Currently, the courts use non-professional translators and interpreters which exposes litigants to a mistrial and possible contestation of court ruling. Professionalization may require targeted training and certification/registration of those who are qualified to offer such services professionally in accord with clear ethical standards. Inclusion of linguists; experts in interpretation and translation practice, should be part of the process.

Kenya, in tandem with other countries, should recognize Forensic Linguists as expert witness in the courts. While legal drafting has often been considered a preserve of the legal fraternity, it makes sense to include linguists in this processes. It has been demonstrated that no crime is committed without there being some language evidence (Gibbons, 2005) and that legal documents are essentially language documents (Olson, 2016). This implies that linguists who are language experts are an important resource for the justice system not only in ensuring veracity of legal evidence, but in the entire legal process. This is evident considering the centrality of language in drafting, interpreting and final enforcement of the law. Specifically, there are many crimes that are reducible to mere language crimes, these requires the input of linguists. In the context of mother tongue rights and usage, linguists understand better the peculiarity of these languages' semantics in upholding human dignity as espoused in the BR. Judiciary Training Institute should include Forensic Linguistics in its syllabus for Continuing

Judicial Education (CJE) for judges and magistrates to enhance their linguistic interpretation of the law

Recognition of alternative disputes resolution that provides for mother tongue use is a desirable approach in ameliorating the observed contradictions in the justice system. Indeed, traditional Indigenous Disputes Resolution (IDR) mechanisms puts mother tongue at the core of the administration of justice in the spirit of Article 49 of the Bill of Rights. Fortunately, this option is provided for in the Kenyan judiciary under Alternative Justice Systems. On this basis, adopting IDR in the justice system would provide an avenue for linguistic rights of lay litigants to be observed and promoted as stipulated by specific and relevant Articles in the BR. Lay litigants are familiar with the language use in such traditional legal frameworks. The different mother languages of the country will have a legal space in the justice system that has for a long time been seen as an alien tool of oppression for Kenyans who do not have the basic or rudimentary knowledge of legal English. Similarly, use of IDR brings with it the indigenous legal knowledge that is lacking in the legal English whose legal semiotics remains foreign at best.

## **Conclusion**

It is apparent that there is a discrepancy between constitutional provisions of CoK on linguistic rights and what is practiced in the justice system in Kenya. All Kenyans seeking any form of service or justice in the justice system have had their rights infringed upon and there is need to seek redress. The Constitution is supreme and binds all persons to adhere and implement its provisions. Acts of omission and commission perpetrated by state organs and agencies are an insult and affront to the CoK. There is need for all state organs mandated to actualize the provisions of the Constitution on mother tongue to fully implement these provisions. The right to mother tongue is a universal and fundamental human right that must be unreservedly anchored in the Constitution. Parliament and the Attorney General should address the contradictions identified in the CoK's BR on linguistic rights to ensure unambiguous implementation of mother tongue rights. Legal language reform in the justice system is a must to place mother language at the center of legal practice in the country as a basic constitutional and legal right for all Kenyans. Language is central in the legal process and it follows that legal documents and statutes are coded in a language that can be understood by all. Law is meant for all, therefore, the language in which it is conveyed must be accessible to all.

Yet there are outstanding issues in the way of mitigating the contradictions in the justice system and the quest for language rights of ordinary Kenyans. There are major obstacles, foremost of these is the political will to address the contradictions in the CoK's BR. Unless the political class is committed to human rights, it becomes a daunting task to initiate such amendments. The prestigious status enjoyed by English in the country is major challenge in assigning mother tongue the status of languages of the justice system. Similarly, the linguistic power asymmetry enjoyed by the legal fraternity makes any legal language reform a formidable task. Those who wield the linguistic power and privilege are unlikely to cede such a privilege easily. Although plain language campaigns begun way back in 1940s (Gowers, 1948), more than half a century ago, it has never gained traction due to the influence of those who hold sway over legal language authority. The demands of legal drafting is likely to favour the often maligned legalese English over plain English. On the same note, legal language

requirement in terms of legal concepts and terminology to be expressed demands simultaneous developments in mother tongue, an option not available in Kenya currently. The numerous mother tongues in the country adds to the practical challenges of admissibility of these languages as judicial or official languages of the justice system not to mention the attendant challenges in translation. However, the position of this paper is that mother tongue usage in the justice system is not only possible, it is attainable.

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Niche Markets for the Mother Language Enterprise: An Insight to the Production and Distribution of

Linguistic Resources in Kenya

Jayne Mutiga  
University of Nairobi

**Introduction**

Current research shows that there is an increase in the interest on the subject of the commodification of language and the general area of creative economies. There are strong arguments that language could be analysed economically in many ways as a marketable commodity and that it can be produced and distributed much in the same way as any of the other marketable commodities.

There are many ways in which language forms a part of the symbolic capital that can be mobilized in markets as interchangeable with forms of material capital. Moreover, the recent interest in language as commodity points us to specific and emergent forms of this exchange value. This status-quo leads to a concern that there is competition over who defines what counts as legitimate and commodifiable language and who controls the production and distribution of this linguistic resources.

This article seeks to discuss language markets, focusing specifically on niche markets, where the mother language as a resource and commodity finds value, to be sold and bought. It highlights the growing demand for the production and distribution of this commodity to specific domains and the developing and enhancing of these emerging markets to cater for the growing need of the commodity language and what avenues of production and distribution are

attendant. It also highlights the economic and socio-economic gains with a particular interest in the economic rewards a mother language brings when harnessed and strategically placed in the context of niche markets.

The world of today is driven by market ethics in which people's choices are guided by the persistent quest for what to sell in the market of opportunities, both in the social and material domains of life.

Our young people must be shown how speaking a mother language opens up opportunities for self-advancement in their struggles to make life meaningful. This general argument is hinged on literature from both linguistic and non-linguistic scholarship, and illustrated with Kenya's sociolinguistic realities and the corresponding constitutional and policy provision

It points to the need for a market orientation in the advocacy for mother language, as well as in the research that seeks to establish the value of mother language competence.

Research has established the benefits of mother language education but other gains that accrue from its development and creative usage of the are not well researched and documented for the speakers of different mother languages, especially in countries that are forced by historical circumstances to use languages other than their indigenous mother languages and to assign important functions to these non-indigenous languages.

It is a well-established fact that human language is the most important tool of communication in any linguistic setting, however, it is rare that language is thought of as a valuable commodity (Erreygers and Jacob, 2005). In order to think of language as a commodity we must first view it as something that we can trade in; something we can sell and buy in a market; something we can commodify.

When language is used in a multilingual and multicultural context, and especially in relation to globalization and in trade and integration, it reveals that our mother languages are an essential commodity that another person would be interested in acquiring even at a price, it also shows that these languages are rich in ideas and serve clear and important functions, and so are usable in diverse situations.

This richness can be given currency and quantified socio-economically and in monetary value. Language therefore can, and does contribute significantly to a people's ability to harness economic resources through effective information and the knowledge management systems in their mother tongue. For one, language does harness economic resources needed for accelerated socioeconomic development when it is the commodity that is on sale. So, we can argue that there is a close relationship between language and economic development, especially in mass participation and local initiatives that are essentially based on, for example, the exploitation of cultural information, knowledge and delivery. This commodity can be packaged and sold in niche markets of modern economies.

### **Emerging Domains**

The term Commoditization or commodification describes a concept that has come to be used alongside the term niche markets. Commoditization is the act of turning something into or treating it as a commodity; it is the making commercial of a goods by the substantial and

tangible or abstract. Commoditization of language therefore, means being able to use language in such a way that it accrues symbolic, social and economic capital (Cameron, 2005).

When we think of language as a commodity, we must think of the existence of a market or a set of markets, locally and globally, in which language, like other tradable commodities, has an economic exchange value. The concept of a linguistic market is not a new idea, linguists can trace it to the work of Pierre Bourdieu (1977). In his work, Bourdieu (ibid) illustrate this concept by using the example of English language. He muses that, if one thinks of English, for example, as a mother tongue in certain contexts, one will realize that English is highly valued as a commodity as well in those context where it is domicile as a native or near native language and it holds both cultural and economic value in that context. One example of a domain where English has long been treated as a commercial commodity is in foreign language instruction where it has been commodified by the modern English Language Teaching industry to the extent that for one to be able to fluently speak the language, that capacity accrues a symbolic capital as well as assumed economic and social mobility.

However, this is only one of the possible forms of language commodification. Some other forms which are associated with recent processes of economic globalization, and how an analysis of such may contribute to rethinking the symbolic capital of language do exist in English and in other languages as well although English has historically played, and is expected to continue to play, a significant role in the new forms of capitalism which have emerged in the global era, simply due to its status in the Anglophone world.

### **Production Lines**

Thinking of language as a commodity, and as a resource with exchange value, has gained currency with the growing importance of language in the globalized new economy and the global village orientation. In this context, the peoples of the world have increased interaction in time and space though holding different ideologies and practices. Some of these interactions are operations in such key sites as: tourism, marketing and advertising, language teaching, translation and interpreting, communications, the off- shore communication industry, and the entertainment and creative arts industry.

Bourdieu (ibid) in his quest on language and the modern economy points to the many ways in which language forms part of the symbolic capital that can be mobilized in markets as exchangeable with forms of material capital. Language accrues social identity and attracts economic capital due to the value we place on it and the different ways in which we creatively use it, this goes to explain why some languages are more desired and sought after than others. Further, it explains why certain linguistic forms and practices play the role they do in the production and reproduction of the social order. We therefore construct the value attached to these languages and their linguistic forms and practices, and carve out niche markets for them and not for others, yet all languages have the potential compete in the market. That is how we are able to inculcate value and produce a marketable product in one language and neglect to do so in another.

In the production of value in the languages that we use as our mother languages, three key issues emerge from the creative sectors and the modern economy: One is that these are goods

that have potential for job and wealth creation. Secondly linguistic niche markets are based on the knowledge and use of the mother language in a multilingual and multicultural setting and that is why they should not be hindered by restrictive language policies since they occur in contexts that will not thrive if they are under such controls. Thirdly, these three issues create a very conducive environment for the development and value addition of the mother languages for economic development.

### **Niche Markets**

By definition, a niche market is a segment of a larger market, that can be defined by its own unique needs, preferences, or identity that makes it different from the market at large. For example, within the market for selling general goods are many different segments or niches that are specialized for specific needs. Nearly every market can be further refined, or divided, by the particular needs and preferences of its constituents. Some of the most common ways to define a niche are based on the price of the commodity on sale, the demographic composition of the potential buyers, the level of the quality of goods on sale, values, interests and attitudes of potential buyers and graphics in terms of the of the would-be clientele be it neighborhood, local or foreign clientele. Identifying a niche market and focusing to produce commodity for it is a strategic modern economic decision. This is what language as goods has found in the recent years in the modern economy of the world and in the Kenyan economy as well.

Recent interest in language as commodity points to an emergent form of this exchange value on two levels. On one level is the extent to which forms of exchange for example use of proficiency in the standardized language for access to jobs and upward mobility, where these used to be appreciated but treated only as matters of higher social class, good breeding, taste, intellectual competence, good schooling, or rational thought are now treated as directly exchangeable for material goods, and economic capital.

The second level concerns the extent to which the circulation of goods that used to depend on the possession of other kinds of resources now depends on the possession of linguistic resources, for example, in cases where getting certain jobs used to depend on physical strength, height or the breadth of ones shoulders but now many jobs require communicative skills instead

At this level, there has been an expansion of markets and their progressive saturation, resulting in an increased importance for managing the flow of resources over extended spatial relations and compressed space and time relations, providing symbolic added value to industrially produced resources, as well as facilitating the construction of and access to niche markets and, developing linguistically mediated knowledge and service industries. To get to this level, society needs to answer the question of who defines the value of their linguistic commodities or, more broadly, who regulates the market. Also, if one need to speak the standard language can, he can sell in the market and whether, dialects and other language varieties have symbolic capital or if code switching and code mixing has any economic value.

Available literature certainly provides evidence of new ways of producing symbolic capital from language. This has born much fruit especially when it has been focused on performance, and as communication skills that are marketable commodities, rather than as expressions of true

selves or of poor accomplishments of socially located personae. This can be viewed within broad categories such as gender, class, or race, also within kinship, institutional, political, and religious structures. All these would not change the value of the symbolic capital if the product is well situated within a specified niche market Bonvillain (2003).

For example, the value assigned to native speaker competence as the standard in the development of niche markets servicing the officialdom for instance in conference interpreting or public speaking or even in the role of an acclaimed emcee in a high level diplomatic function can, in the right context, be equated to the colloquial and the in-between; the hybridity, multiplicity, complexity, polynomial, metrolingualism, or transnationalism and the compartmentalization. This is the irony of distancing stance mechanisms as seen, for example, in the local Kenyan comedy programmes such as *Churchill*, a programme where actors majorly use Sheng, code-switching and code-mixing to deliver their message. Another local example would be Teacher *Wanjiku* whose main focus is on mother tongue influenced English and Kiswahili usage. Avoiding the use of standard language of English or Kiswahili, actors in these two programmes have opted to be creatively engaging by using the in-between and the non-formal varieties. They excel in their trade by wittingly and creatively using Sheng as well as by and code switching and code mixing between English, Kiswahili and several mother tongues. This goes to show that all these variations have a place in the language economy and operate in their different niche markets. They play out in key roles in the language-centered economic spaces

These key economic spaces have their interrelated functions which include the economic capital accrued through globalization and global reach-out in the management of communication, where the main players are first and foremost the producers, the consumers, and the national, international or supranational regulating bodies across linguistic boundaries and among speakers of different languages. Secondly, the computerization of the work process, requiring new kinds of language and literacy skills among workers and thirdly, the growth of the service sector and the use of symbolic value added language products.

Today's language economy is increasingly involved in the symbolic dimensions of value addition to its commodities and notably in this category of value added commodities are tourism and marketing, key players in the distribution of commoditized linguistic resources, as well as language teaching and translation and interpreting. On the other hand, there has been an increase in the opening up of new spaces of creativity other than the traditional ones named above.

To further illustrate other ways in which the commodification of language is tied to late capitalism and modern economy, we will focus on three key areas that have proved to be niche markets in Kenya. These are: Performing Arts, Call Centers and the Broadcasting Industry.

### **Performing Arts**

In recent year, due to improved Information and Communication Technology coverage, Kenya has experienced an upsurge of *Performing Arts* groups especially those specializing in *Standup Comedy, Drama and, Music*. In this domain, there has been a mushrooming of local musicians who specialize in the performance of song and dance. Older names such the late Joseph

Kamaru, Nameless, and Emmy Kosgei being challenged by newer ones in the likes of Sauti Sol, and Nyashinski. Many of these musicians sing songs ranging from cultural to modern and religious songs with some writing their own music and others re-working or translating classics.

Performers in this industry entertain guests during weddings, fund raisings and all sorts of other ceremonies. These groups have made themselves versatile as they are able to perform in different languages and can thus fit into different settings. The performers have originality, technical and professional skills in the productions and are able to meet client demands. This creates a ready market for the performances, making the sector lucrative and self-sustaining. Due to their skills and expertise, the performers have perfected their art and this is the niche that has made Performing Arts groups make economic gains since they have perfected the art and they sell it for good value. The niche market they have created for themselves in the Kenyan economy has been insatiable. New Artists continue to enter the market as older ones are re-engineering themselves.

On local television scene, we have drama programmes such as *Mother-in-Law*, *Baba Shirandula*, *Inspekta Mwala* among others. In the *Stand-up Comedy*, as discussed earlier in this section, programmes such as *Churchill*, where actors majorly use Sheng, code-switching and code-mixing to deliver their message or *Teacher Wanjiku* whose main focus is on mother tongue influenced English and Kiswahili usage.

The creators of these dramas have used language especially, code switching and code mixing, mimicking of mother-tongue influenced Kenyan speakers and humour to attract viewers and so media houses air these programmes at certain prime seasons and time to attract viewership. The artists who create these programmes make their money out of selling them to eager media houses who air them or repackage them on applications such as *Viusasa*, an online application owned by Citizen TV, a local media house, for sell to subscribers. Another sector in this domain which has seen great growth in response to the Government policy of increasing local content in our Television viewership is the flourishing local movie production both in the local mother languages and the two national languages, English and Kiswahili. These movies are produced in a cross section of the Kenyan local languages with varying viewership. These movies are of two types: short-duration movies and series-based movies. This sector whose production is primarily done under the banner of Riverwood mimicking Hollywood gainfully engages a cross-section of Kenyans. Some of their productions are readily available and sold in DVD formats. This is one of the major initiatives that has made many to appreciate the importance of mother tongue and the niche market it provides them. Together with the above the media houses have specialized in buying movies produced outside Kenya and then translating them with excellent dubbing and lip-synching. Examples of such include Mexican, Indian, Chinese and Nigerian movies. This is yet another growing sector that employs people with local languages and enhances their translation skills.

In concurrence with Bishop et al, (2005), we argue that *Performing Arts, Movies and Drama* serve the role of directly or indirectly expressing human tensions, commodifying language and at the same time critiquing the alienation that it produces, claiming the local and the authentic on a global market for the entertainment industry, including music, and theatre, as they

manipulate language to create linguistic forms beyond recognition within a globally recognized performance genre. That way they gain currency from the use of the local mother languages.

### **Call Centres**

The Call Centre industry majorly based on the off-shore market is one of the newer domains in Kenya where language has become a valuable commodity in a niche market created through Information, Communication and Technology and powered by the presence of multilingualism good communication skills, proficiency in a relevant language and perhaps skills in translation and interpretation as needed. Off-shoring has opened up work spaces globally aimed not just at managing the globalized production and circulation of industrialized goods, but also at producing resources and adding value to goods and services, Urciuoli (2008).

This has refreshed marketing, especially the online market space and has created a niche even in already saturated global markets. The added value can be symbolic as in language graphics or advertisement as well as in material. In Kenya, for example, a hand-made embroidery made in Kisumu City, a soapstone curving made in Kisii, or a *kiondo* (traditional woven basket) made in Kitui County, may be worth more than a factory manufactured lace when marketed off-shore because of its novelty and packaging. This is due to the symbolic capital embodied in the former and the experience it gives to the purchaser or consumer. This is what has come to be known in *Business Science* as intensification. Language as used in the Off-shore Market has created business intensification by expressing itself in labelling, indexing, branding and engraving.

These give voice to an otherwise ordinary merchandize, and that is what happens in the Off-shore market where these function are undertaken by native speakers to reach the market wherever it be found. Language commodification therefore, challenges the notion and the practice of monolingualism by presenting and marketing multilingualism, confronting standardization with variability, and prestige with the case of authenticity in a market where linguistic resources have gained respect and value in much the same sense as any goods or services would.

In Kenya today the call centre work has powered tourism and the telephony industries, two of the fastest-growing industries. Goods and services are outsourced from afar off and marketed locally through the telephony industry where sales compete well with the traditional shop visit. Two major call center operators in the country are *Jumia*, an online marketing company and *Safaricom*, the most profitable telephony company in the country. These two outfits employ a big number of young people to manage sales and advertisements online. With a good command of English and an added advantage of a foreign language many people have been absorbed in this new niche market. As Lerner (2002) states, Call Centres have become of symbolic importance because they creates a shift from industrial, white, masculine, working-class first-world culture to a non-gendered Off-shore production and distribution of resources locally and internationally. It creates an important identity as legitimate labour site for the niche market for language, and other skills.

### **Broadcasting**

The broadcasting industry in Kenya has opened up employment opportunities in different areas especially after local media houses started using local mother languages to broadcast

news and advertisements, in the late 1990s. The opening up of media of communication centres that source, produce and transmit news, advertisements and local entertainment in the different local mother tongues, therefore created an emerging media market with benefits in career development and gainful employment in the emerging ethnic language media industry of community radios and FM radio and TV stations. Among the prolific employment sites are the stations owned by the Royal Media Services, these include: the Kikuyu radio and TV broadcasting stations such as Kameme FM, Njota FM, Inooro FM . Cooro FM Gukena FM, Inooro TV station, those broadcasting in the various Luhya dialects being MulembeFM, SulweFM. The Kikamba broadcasting station are Athiani FM . Mbaitu and Musyi FM. Others mother language stations are Radio Ramogi and Lake Victoria FM which broadcast in Dholuo, Kass FM, Changei and Rehema FM stations broadcasting in Kalenjin, Metro East FM in Hindi and Star FM in Somali.

According to an Ipsos-Synovate 2011 study, local language radio audiences spend at least three hours per day listening to the broadcasts. These stations have gained popularity because people believe that community media directly address the concerns of the audiences. The table below captures the major percentages of national listenership by language Okoth, (2015: 4).

***Top radio broadcasting languages by time spent listening, Ipsos-Synovate 2011***

<b>Language</b>	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>Main reach</b>
Luo	28 %	Regional, National and Diaspora
Kiswahili	26%	Regional, National and Diaspora
Kikuyu	25%	Regional, National and Diaspora
Kalenjin	24.8%	Regional, National and Diaspora
KiKamba	22%	Regional, National and Diaspora

Source: Okoth (2016)

These Radio stations have a wide reach and are received live in most parts of the country, region and the Diaspora and also on different online platforms, courtesy of ICT. Due to their online reach, we can argue that they have a global audience with the speakers of the relevant languages in the diaspora being reached by programmes in their mother tongue.

Why would a person spent so much time listening to a mother language broadcast? The answer lies in the argument that language has a connotative function. The conative function of language is the one that gives its users power to influence their world, specifically to their advantage. The greatest advantage and attraction to mother language is its use as a tool to shape the happenings in our spheres of influence thus enabling one to get what they want ... Okombo (2016:7). Politicians have been known to use this power to influence speakers of their mother tongues and to convince the as voters for example, to get into political power. Mother tongues therefore provide power and influence in the niche market of politics.

Listening to one's mother language has capacity to enhance one's communication skills in that language, a position that may be deemed as a tool for negotiation where negotiation skills places one at an advantage in the what Okombo (2016:7), calls the human relationship market, "...it is all about what one can do with the learnt language in order to achieve one's goals in life, including opportunities in education, job placement, business activities, relationships and other aspects of personal endeavour within one's community and beyond". Okombo (2016: 8)

Listeners also do actual buying and selling on these stations, for example, a musician may sell his music CD and another listener may subscribe to a product through radio advertising.

Other economic benefits to individuals skilled in their mother language include advertising opportunities in vernacular radio and TV programmes and investment in vernacular technologies.

In our investigation, we concur with Okoth (2015: 2) when he says,

...vernacular media has thus employed many journalists who broadcast in the different vernacular languages as well as those who work in other production or technical related areas. In addition, musicians who have previously been receiving limited air play from the mainstream media and suffering low popularity and low income have also received a major boost to their business. Having a channel that plays their music over and over again has both provided greater popularity for them and an economic bonus from concerts and sales of albums. 3 The research also examines how more vernacular radio stations can be used to champion socioeconomic and cultural transformation as well as promote peaceful co-existence in the ethnically diverse Kenya.

## **Conclusion**

This article has pointed out the niche markets that have been filled by the creative economies that are based on the knowledge and use of mother languages in Kenya. It has highlighted some three niche markets where language has been gainfully exploited to feed the growing modern economy in Kenya.

Of significance is that the three sectors discussed in this article reveal an area that has not been given the attention that it deserves yet it presents untapped economic development opportunities. There is need to channel resources of time and money into the creative language economies to make them even more productive.

According to the findings the knowledge and use of the mother language should be re-evaluated and there is need to think of them as a commodity that can be sold. Mother languages are the ones that generate the ideas and information that is used in the language creative economies, as every language has people who speak it as their mother language. There is also a need to ensure that they are well developed so that those who use them in creative economies have the requisite expertise.

A multilingual setting presents numerous opportunities for those who want to exploit knowledge and use of mother tongues for monetary value. Cultures are rich with ideas and those ideas can only be exploited fully when one knows the relevant language. In addition, niche markets in our context here refers not to the common application of commerce and industry that motivates the flow of goods and services, but rather to a variety of situations a

speaker or a group of speakers of a mother language may market themselves to potential clientele using marketing techniques acquired strategically for the specific market. It the use of a language and in particular context to leverage on a situation best suited for a specific value because it is packaged in a language or with skills that are needed by that market.

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The Relationship between English Word Stress Perception and Production among Lwidakho speaking Form  
Three Secondary School Students.

1Achesa Rodgers, 2Lucy Mandillah, 3David Barasa  
Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology

**Abstract**

English word stress can either involve the perception or production of a word. In word stress production, stressed syllables are pronounced longer, louder and with a higher pitch unlike other syllables within the same word. Word stress perception on the other hand, involves the realization of the stressed syllable in a word when pronounced. This paper examines the relationship between English word stress perception and production among Lwidakho speaking form three students in secondary schools in Ikolomani sub-county, Kenya. It is expected that an individual with good perception skills in word stress should also produce word stress correctly. This is because the two concepts ought to be acquired innately. A deviation from this, could mean other factors contribute to the differences. The consultants selected for the study through random sampling were form three secondary school Lwidakho speaking students in Ikolomani sub-county secondary schools. The findings show that English word stress perception is independent from English word stress production among Lwidakho speaking form three secondary school students.

**Key words:** English, Lwidakho, word stress, production, perception

**Introduction**

The English subject at secondary level is examined in three papers at the Kenya national examination. The first paper offers the learners with three questions. The third question, which also contributes to the highest marks in the whole paper tests on oral skills. In fact, oral skills accounts for the half of the total marks examined in the paper, with the remaining sections of the paper testing on functional writing and cloze test. Therefore, other than the questions set on stress in oral skills section, the candidate has to use pronunciation skills to respond to the remaining questions in the same section of the examination paper.

Based on the above assertions, any student who fails to score all the marks in the oral skills section risks scoring less than grade A in English as a subject. This is because the maximum (s) he can score will be 85% on condition that (s)he scores all the other questions correct in the first paper and also in the two other English papers. This becomes unrealistic and unattainable hence making it difficult for the affected candidate(s) to attain the minimum requirements in pursuing certain courses at the universities and tertiary levels.

Word stress according to the Kenya secondary school syllabus is introduced at form two and later expounded on at form three. It is important for the form three student to master word stress in preparation for the national examination in form four. At no other level within the secondary school curriculum will the same concept be retaught, hence the need to have a better understanding of the same at form three in preparation for the final national examination.

Basing on KNEC, 2017 report on English subject performance, specifically paper one, an average mean score of 29.02 was attained in 2014, 29.37 in 2015, 29.15 in 2016 and 25.89 was attained in the year 2017. The report indicated a drop in the performance of oral skills section. In addition, students' excellence in English subject is partly attributed to their ability to perceive and produce English words correctly.

While examining the pedagogical challenges in teaching and learning of oral skills in English in secondary schools in Kenya, Abiero, (2019) found out that the learners in secondary schools performed dismally in oral skills. This occurred especially in word and sentence stress as most of the respondents (teachers and learners) lacked an understanding of the concept of stress. In the study, 75.3% of the respondents (learners) had difficulties with stress placement in words to give different meanings. Further, 88.6% of teachers interviewed agreed that the students had difficulty with stress placement in words to give different meaning.

Further, arguments concerning the inclusion of explicit teaching of pronunciation skills in the education curriculum have featured in most second language learning discourses. Specifically, pronunciation skill is neglected in second language contexts (Achesa, Mandillah & Barasa 2019). This has been attributed to reasons such as the almost impossibility of speaking in the native accent and minimal opportunities of interaction with native speakers of English by the second language learners (Fraser, 2000). Failure to pronounce words correctly hamper communication by the second language learners, form three Lwidakho speaking students are not an exception. It is against this background that this paper intended to examine whether knowledge of word stress perception implied one can also produce stress in words in English.

### **English word Stress**

Many scholars offer a definition of word stress as "the emphasis put on a specific syllable within a word" for instance, (Underhill, 1994). Further, to identify stress in a word, vowel duration, loudness during pronunciation, and pitch length are considered (Ladefoged, 2005). Word stress is important because the English first language speakers rely on it to identify English words in spoken discourses (Field, 2004). English second language learners have a responsibility of mastering, understanding and grasping English word stress rules so as to

effectively communicate in English. Stress can be placed on the ultimate syllable, penultimate syllable and also on the ante-penultimate syllable basing on the word class. A stress marker (ˈ) is used to indicate the stressed syllable in an English word.

### **Stress perception and Stress Production**

English word stress can either involve the perception or production of a word (Roach, 1992). In word stress production, syllables with stress are pronounced longer, louder and with a higher pitch unlike other syllables within the same words. Word stress perception on the other hand, involves the realization of stressed syllables in words when pronounced (Roach, 1992). From the two concepts (perception and production), it is obviously expected that an individual who is able to perceive stress in a word should be able to produce it effectively in the same words. This is because they are innately acquired and mastered.

In Lwidakho, stress is less essential as opposed to English language. Lwidakho being a tonal language, its tonal aspect corresponds to stress in English words (Shidiavai, 2015). Further, Shidiavai (2015) asserts that whereas stress in English has features including pitch and great intensity and length, its main function is to differentiate the meaning of words while in Lwidakho tone variations lead to meanings of words being realized. To be precise, Lwidakho speakers place emphasis on some syllables in words and the emphasis is only realized during pronunciations.

### **Methodology and Findings**

In the present paper, descriptive research design was used, this design was used to get the exact pronunciations of the respondents of the study. Generally, this design offers a description of data as it exists in the field, and therefore more reliable when collecting data on pronunciation.

The study was conducted in Kakamega South sub-county in Kakamega county Kenya. One hundred and forty four form three students were randomly sampled across the sub-county in selected secondary schools for the study. Two word lists were developed for the perception and production tests, respectively. The word lists comprised of English content words purposively sampled from the learners' secondary school English course books.

On the perception test, the respondents were given a word list and each of the respondent was asked to identify the stressed syllable in the list of fifteen English content words pronounced and projected to them through a laptop speaker. The pronunciation was done twice consecutively with a break of about ten seconds in between. The respondents were to mark the stressed syllable after the second pronunciation.

The respondents marked what they perceived to be the stressed syllable on the perception word list given to them at the beginning of the test. Each of the student's response was determined to be correct if (s) he placed the stress marker on the correct syllable of the word as indicated in Received Pronunciation's transcription provided on the researcher's sheet. Some respondents placed the stress marker either on the wrong syllable or did not indicate any stress marker on any of the syllables present in the word. Table 1 below presents sample of the findings on English word stress perception.

**Table 1: Word Stress Perception Field Data**

<b>Word</b>	<b>Category</b>	<b>English transcription showing stressed Syllables</b>	<b>Respondents correct scores (%)</b>
Form	Noun	/ˈfɔ:m/	9
Little	Adjective	/ˈlɪtl /	4
Novel	Noun	/ˈnɒvl/	6
Person	Noun	/ˈpɜ:sn/	7
Play	Verb	/ˈpleɪ/	3
Total respondents correct scores			29

From the table above, only 29% of the respondents perceived stress in the selected English content words correctly. On the production test, a list of fifteen English content words was written on a chalkboard, with every word having in brackets the part of speech it belonged to. Each participant was to read the words one at a time, and the readings were recorded using a digital audio-recorder. In the meantime, the researcher made notes that he later used to compare with the recordings for analysis. For purposes of recognition of individual syllables more easily, each word was broken into syllables horizontally. Table 2 below is a presentation of English word stress production field data.

**Table 2: English Word Stress Production Field Data**

<b>Word</b>	<b>Category</b>	<b>English transcription showing stressed Syllables</b>	<b>Respondents' Correct Pronunciation scores (%)</b>
Poem	Noun	/ˈpəʊɪm/	3
Pulley	Noun	/ˈpʊli/	4
Time	Adjective	/taɪm/	2
Word	Noun	/wɜ:d/	4
World	Noun	/wɜ:ld/	1
Total respondents correct scores			14

Based on the field results above, only 14% of the respondents produced English stress in the sampled words correctly.

### **Conclusion**

The findings show that seventy one (71) percent of the respondents on the perception test failed to identify the stressed syllable in the given list of English content words. They either placed the stressed syllable on a whole word or the wrong syllable. This meant that they were unable to perceive English word stress in the words. On the other hand, in the production test, eighty-six (86) percent of the respondents read the words placing stress either on the wrong syllable or stressed the whole word, meaning that a great number of them lacked knowledge on English word stress production.

The finding of this paper is an indication that English word stress perception is independent from English word stress production due to varied performance in the two tests administered to the respondents. The study also indicates that some students with good English word stress perception ability had equally good skills in English word stress production. Also, based on the dismal performance in the production test, teachers of the learners are most likely to have challenges on word stress, hence could have trickled down the same to the learners.

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## A Discourse Construction of Gender in Selected Lubukusu Initiation Songs

*1Pamellah N. Wanjala, 2Reginald Atichi Alati*

<sup>1</sup>Shamberere Technical Institute, <sup>2</sup>Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology

### **Abstract**

Gender inequality is a global issue, with efforts to realise equality being hindered by sociocultural factors in different societies. Despite efforts that have been made to address gender equality in the society, gender bias continues to persist in both public and private spheres especially the economic, political and social aspects of life. The purpose of the paper is to investigate stereotypical constructions of gender in Lubukusu initiation songs and how social actors are represented. The songs were collected during the 2018 initiation ceremonies in Bungoma South Sub-County, Kenya. Content analysis was used to analyse data. The research was guided by Critical Discourse Analysis theory. Initial findings reveal that male dominance and female subordination is the norm; the linguistic choices made disseminate stereotypical gender ideologies while maintaining the status quo. The women's role in Lubukusu initiation songs is seen as subordinate to men. Gender inequality can be identified as a risk and a limiting factor for both men and women. The goal of this paper is to raise awareness of how gender asymmetries and power relations are perpetuated through discourse; the findings may be used in practical applications to combat all forms of social discrimination through language.

**Keywords:** Discourse, Gender inequality, Initiation Songs, Mother language

### **Introduction**

Gender inequality is a global issue affecting women and girls in different parts of the world; efforts to realise equality between men and women are being hindered by sociocultural factors and traditional beliefs about gender roles and behavioural expectations in different societies. In this paper, linguistic manifestations in Lubukusu initiation songs are analysed to investigate how they articulate particular gender discourses and whether the linguistic forms sustain or challenge Bukusu beliefs on gender relations, roles and expectations. Critical discourse analysis theory (Sunderland, 2004; Lazar 2005; Fairclough, 2015) is used to analyse the songs as cultural and linguistic practices, focusing particularly on how social actors are represented.

The paper identifies traditional gendered discourses in the songs and examines how Bukusu men and women are constructed as well as how their representation perpetuates gender imbalances and asymmetrical power relations. In this case, gendered discourses are conceptualised as 'discourses that say something about women and men, girls and boys, and about their – in certain ways gendered – actions, behaviours, positions, choices, relations and identities' (Litosseliti, 2006:58). More specifically, gendered discourses are discourses that

represent women and men acting (being expected to) in certain ways because they are women/men or girls/boys. In most instances these representations reconstitute and maintain (or challenge) gender inequalities.

Gender and language studies have been of interest in linguistic research with scholars focusing on inequality, power, ideology, discrimination and subordination in different contexts (Majstorovic et al., 2011; Atanga et al., 2012). Most of these studies have focused on Western societies and cultures, particularly Europe and America. The African context is still being explored; there are even fewer studies in Kenya. This paper will therefore constitute an addition to the existing literature in gender and language scholarship while suggesting alternative ways of achieving gender equality.

The main objective is to analyse linguistic forms, as manifested in Lubukusu initiation songs, and explore the interrelationship between discourse, gender and sociocultural practices. Earlier language and gender researchers (first and second wave feminists) were associated with gender differences, political resistance against sex discrimination, promotion of gender equality and emancipation of women (see Lakoff, 1975; Tannen, 1990; Litosseliti, 2006). Current researchers (third wave feminists) have adopted more critical, constructivist and poststructuralist theoretical perspectives while focusing on diversity, performativity and co-construction of gender identities and inequalities (and ways of changing these) in the society (Litosseliti, 2006). Talbot (2010) states that gender and language research is now predominantly interested in identifying, demystifying and resisting the ways language is used to reflect, create and sustain gender inequalities in specific contexts. This paper is embedded in the current trends in gender and language research whose focus has shifted from identifying differences in language use between men and women to examining how language use constructs, represents and produces gender identities and relations, and how gender relates to other social aspects such as ethnicity, age, class, race and status. It claims that language shapes and is shaped by social structures; language therefore contributes to reproducing and/or changing these structures.

Language and culture are intertwined. Linguistic practices are social practices, while social practices are partly linguistic (Fairclough, 2015). Studies in language and gender have demonstrated that language is a critical vehicle in issues of gender and in power struggles (Baxter, 2003; Sunderland, 2004; Cameron, 2005). Gender roles, behaviours and expectations are expressed through linguistic sites such as proverbs, idioms, and songs. These act as sites where the relationship between language, gender and culture can be explored and sociocultural roles and gender expectations be understood. In Bukusu, men (of all ages) are perceived to be authority figures that hold power and control. This is a common feature in most patriarchal societies (Connell, 1995; Diabah et al., 2015) and it is in most cases seen as legitimate and largely inherent; it is common sense and part of life (of the Bukusu for instance).

Deeply entrenched in patriarchal societies is hegemonic masculinity and femininity. Connell (1995) defines hegemonic masculinity as the configuration of gender practice which embodies legitimacy of the dominant position of men and the subordination of women. Schippers (2007) states that hegemonic masculinity entails 'the qualities defined as manly that establish and legitimate a hierarchical and complementary relationship to femininity and that by doing so guarantee the dominant position of men and subordination of women'. Hegemonic femininity

on the other hand entails 'characteristics defined as womanly which establish and legitimate a hierarchical and complementary relationship to hegemonic masculinity and that by doing so guarantee the dominant position of men and subordination of women' (Schipper, 2007). In patriarchal societies, the culturally idealized form of femininity, emphasized femininity is produced in relation to male dominance. Emphasized femininity works in such a way that it allows compliance, subordination, nurturance, and empathy as ideals of womanhood to which all women should subscribe (Connell, 1987) through accommodating the interests and desires of men.

Bukusu is a dialect of the Luyia Language. It is spoken in Western province and Rift Valley Province, specifically in Bungoma District (Western Province) and Trans-Nzoia district (Rift Valley Province), (Angogo, 1983). The Bukusu or babukusu are one of the seventeen sub-tribes that comprise the Luyia cluster of interlacustrine Bantu tribes of Eastern Africa (Wanyama, 2006). Other sub tribes are Batiriki, Barakoli, Banyole, Bakhayo, Bamaraki, Banyala, Basamia, Babesukha, Babetakho, Bakisa, Bachoch, Bakabresi, Batachoni, Bawanga, Bamarama, and Barechea.

Although many Bukusu people have embraced western faiths such as Islam, Christianity and so on, there are many adherents to traditional religious beliefs (Were, 2010). These traditional beliefs, practices and norms pervade the initiation rites and normally come to the fore during the initiation season. *Imbalu*, Bukusu initiation rite, is believed to be a traditional practice which the young Bukusu men must undergo before taking up the roles of adult members in the society. According to Were (2010), this practice prepares the youth for eventual life in the community and orientates them to practice the norms and values of the society

## **Literature Review**

Whereas there are substantial amounts of work on African sociolinguistics, Atanga, et al., (2012) observe that there is less African sociolinguistic work in relation to gender. Some of the gender and language researchers in the African continent have focused on proverbs (Hussein 2005; Muwati et al., 2011; Anderson, 2012) arguing that this is the main medium for the expression of gendered norms and practices. Findings from their research show that African proverbs are more positive when referring to men while women are represented negatively or in subordinate positions (see also Wambura, 2012). Other examples of research that has focused on gender and discourse in the African context include Atanga (2012), on gendered discourses in Cameroon parliament and Ellece (2011) on gendered marriage practices in Botswana. Both Atanga and Ellece found that men and women were constructed in binary and unequal ways; men were positioned as public and active while women were represented as domestic, only being active within a restricted home environment.

Every period in life is determined by music of its time, almost like an imprint that reflects cultural reality always striving for aesthetics (Izushima et al., 2010). Music is truly a narrator of what human beings have gone through and still evolving to become. Therefore, without music, the life span will be shortened because our ability to bring out our emotions will be limited and that would be directly linked to our mental and physical health. Akombo et al (2010) observes

that singing and dancing are an integral part of African culture. Most songs have deep expressions and employ figurative language.

Vikiru et al., (2014) states that songs serve the function of teaching, mourning, entertaining, criticizing, soothing, consoling, thanking, expressing love and inspiring people in a particular community. Circumcision songs among the Bukusu people have perhaps been studied in different fields. Wanyama (2006) investigated the form, content and performance of Bukusu circumcision music, which gave it cultural meaning and social relevance. Unlike Wanyama, Were (2014) looks at how *Imbalu* (Bukusu initiation rite) can be considered as both drama and education. His study looks at the rite of passage as a process of transition. Simiyu (2011), on the other hand, examined the socio-cultural significance of *Chinyimbo chie sikhebo* (circumcision songs) among the Babukusu focusing on contemporary issues surrounding them but relevant to the Babukusu culture.

It is important to note that these works by Were, Wanyama and Simiyu are not exclusively linguistic. A study of songs from other communities like Kalenjin, Dholuo and Kipsigis have been sporadically discussed by Koech (2013), Omollo (2014) and Keter (2013) using a lexical pragmatic approach, but to date no systematic study of this approach has been made on Bukusu initiation songs.

### **Critical Discourse Analysis**

This paper uses Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) as its theoretical and methodological framework. It also makes use of Sunderland's (2004) work on gendered discourses and views representation of men, women in Lubukusu male circumcision songs as inherently gendered. Van Dijk (2001) defines CDA as a 'discourse analytical perspective that primarily studies the way social power abuse, dominance and inequality are enacted, reproduced and resisted by text and talk in the social and political context.' CDA has an explicit interest in making transparent the hidden agenda of discourse which is responsible for creating and sustaining gender inequalities. Wodak (2002:11) argues that CDA does not only focus on analysing opaque relationships 'but also transparent structural relationships of dominance, discrimination, power and control as manifested in language'. It is therefore the most appropriate research tool to critique social inequalities as reflected in language. The starting point of CDA is social problems (Fairclough, 2001) such as gender inequalities with the ultimate goal being emancipation and social change (Lazar, 2005). Society is submerged in many social problems including dominance and abuse. These are enacted and reproduced in discourse in ways that are not always obvious (Fairclough, 1992; Van Dijk, 2001). Lazar (2007) argues that issues of gender, power, and ideology have become increasingly more complex and subtle in present times; hence calling for an analytical approach that is both descriptive and critical. CDA is such an approach. CDA has been used to study gender issues (see for instance Lazar, 2000; Sunderland, 2000, 2006; Kosetzi, 2008; Atanga, 2012; Ellece, 2012) and has been described as an incisive tool for the study of gender. The study particularly makes use of Fairclough's (1992, 2015) framework of analysis as it is concerned with textual analysis, including vocabulary and metaphor analysis. Songs are analysed as texts whose intense and concise nature hides some of the intended meanings, thus making ideological underpinnings more subtle and pervasive. The linguistic forms in the songs also serve to sustain hierarchical gendered social arrangements in which women are disadvantaged and men exalted.

## **Methodology**

The data for this paper constitutes songs which were collected during Bukusu male circumcision ceremonies in western Kenya during the month of August 2018. I participated in the ceremonies as an insider and an observer where I audio-recorded the circumcision songs, conducted interviews and kept observation notes. Thirty songs were recorded as they were being performed during the ceremonies and 20 interviews with 16 men and 4 women conducted; observation notes detailed linguistic aspects which were relevant to the study. Data was transcribed and translated from Lubukusu language to English, then analysed and interpreted. Translations were verified by two other Lubukusu speakers who are also proficient speakers of English. For this paper only eighteen songs, were purposefully selected to address the questions, were analysed. Analysis involved identifying lexical items and gendered discourses in the musical texts. The linguistic patterns were then categorised into two groups; those that referred to men, and those for women. Following Sunderland's (2004) approach, gendered discourses were identified, named, described and interpreted as they emerged in the songs, while drawing meanings from the context where the songs are produced and consumed. The next section is a summary of the linguistic features that acted as evidence of gendered discourses in the data.

## **Traces of Gendered Discourses in the Songs**

Sunderland (2004) states that the process of discourse identification is always interpretive, because there are no finite sets of discourses. She adds that discourses are not always there to be recognised easily; they 'are not simply out there waiting to be spotted' but are 'in flux' (see also Litosseliti, 2006). There is, therefore, no discourse that self-evidences itself as a discrete chunk of a given text in its entirety, 'what is there are linguistic features: 'marks on the page', words spoken or even people's memories of previous conversations which - if sufficient and coherent may suggest that they are 'traces' of a particular discourse' (Baker, 2008). For this paper, the lexical items, metaphors and other linguistic forms identified in the data are the linguistic cues/traces of gendered discourses in the songs and some of the ways in which men and women are constructed. Thus, the portrayal of men and women in selected Lubukusu initiation songs is analysed. The section explores the different attributes given to men and women which are drawn from the different levels of human and natural experiences. This included portrayal of men and women as animals, objects, immoral beings, children, promiscuous and so on. Each of this was used depending on the intention of the singers and the context in which the songs were sung.

## **Men and Women as Animals**

Lubukusu initiation songs construct the two genders using animal attributes. The discourses used are derived from the cultural background of the community. In these songs, different animals are used to portray different qualities. Particular animals are used to describe men and women. The animals used to describe men are associated with power, purity and aggressiveness while those used to describe women are associated with smallness, weakness, ugliness, untrustworthy, and loose creatures.

The use of animals to describe men and women reveals the attitude of the singers (community) towards the two genders where men are compared to animals that are respected and valued while women are compared to animals that are not liked. This is evident in certain songs. For example:

Extract 1. Song 5, extract 1

**Soloist**

Ooh mother of the child  
on a wild cat

**Response**

Ooh! Ooh! come and see sonko

Song 5 is sung to call on relatives of a certain boy (sonko) to come and witness their boy dating a girl (Nanjusi). The term Nanjusi (wild cat) is metaphor assumed to refer to a girl who has characteristics of a wild cat. This lexical item of female animosity features portrays women as “wild cat” who should be kept away from human beings-men. Consider another example in song below:

Extract 2 Song13

**Soloist**

Ho – ho  
man one on termites

**Response**

Hoo – ho – ho an unmarried

In the song above, people are surprised of how an able, energetic man goes for weak girls. In this song, another metaphor *kamabuli* (termites) characterizes women while the word Sumba (an able and energetic man) refers to men. *Kamabuli* are small termites that appear only during evening hours and are normally eaten by all kinds of animals including birds. The construction of women as *kamabuli* shows that women come out to be eaten or used in the evening by everything.

In the same songs 5 and 13 men are constructed as “sonko” and “sumba” respectively. Sonko is a borrowed word from sheng that stands for well to do people in the society, while “sumba” is a Bukusu name that refers to young unmarried energetic men in the society. The two images symbolise able and strong people. The word *sumba* was also originally coined from the Kiswahili word “simba” which means a lion.

From the two songs, the lexical words and the message used in the songs uplifts the position and identity of men as they trivialize the position of women. Just the way lions hunt down animals for food; men should hunt down women for sex as they are many like termites.

### **Male and Female Body Parts Using Animals**

The bias is reflected in the lexical words used to construct men’s and women’s sexual organs as illustrated earlier in example (Song4) where men’s sexual organs are referred to using a metaphor *Okupata*.“ Lipata (a duck) is a domestic bird that provide proteins to human beings when eaten. The eggs produced by these birds are also considered sweet and nutritious to human beings. Underlying this reference is the presumption that men’s sexual organs are sweet to whoever consumes them. In the song, the augmentative affix morpheme (-ku-) on the word is also used to describe the size of men’s organs– they are big in stature. The manner in which a man’s sexual organ is constructed, creates a picture of something that is special and valued in the society. A clear comparison between the two gender’s sexual organs is brought out in song 15 “Tinaini” (Jackal) as shown below:

Extract 3 Song 15

**Solo**

Eeh jackal

**Response**

A big black thing  
It has grown hair Eeh jackal

A big black thing                      Eeh jackal      It's full of milk                      Eeh jackal  
The girls of these days                      Eeh jackal      How do they look like                      Eeh jackal  
you look at their thighs                      Eeh jackal      It's full of urine                      Eeh jackal

The song describes both male's and female's organs indirectly. First the men's sexual organs are exalted by comparing their organs to a jackal and then to milk. "Tinaini" is a wild animal among the Babukusu that resembles a dog but is feared by most animals including dogs themselves. This is an animal that is feared, and the mention of the word *Tinaini* even at night makes people scared. The association of the word *Tinaini* to man's sexual organs accords the men special descriptive terminology as it calls on people to fear and respect their organs. Further into the song, the squalid physical conditions that generally characterize women body parts are described in detail. For instance, women's thighs are pejoratively described as ugly and filled with urine.

This evaluation implies that the song exalts whatever that is found on men and downgrades what is found on women. At the end of these demeaning words, for instance in song 1, 2 and 3, the utterances used presuppose that men are at liberty of sexually exploiting women because all women need is to please men. This is attributable to the fact that a woman is seen as a property or an object to be used by men.

In this paper, we found out that some Lubukusu initiation songs address women by their sexual body parts. This was evident in song 19 where a mother in law was abused using the lexical word *kumunie* "vagina". A mother in-law is someone who is respected among the Bukusu community. The use of sexual body parts to construct her shows lack of respect. The woman loses her identity as a mother as she is recognized solely by the physical characteristic of her body.

**Men and women as promiscuous**

Taboos are used to enforce moral rules. Though this is expected on both genders, most of them limit the rights of women and enforce patriarchal dominance. On extra marital sexual affairs, Bukusu initiation songs depicts that a woman is supposed to be submissive and faithful to her husband while the rule is loose regarding the man. Sharp - edged descriptions of the unseemly qualities that manifest the fatalistic attitude towards women are seen and contrasted to the favourable situations deliberately created for men. Song 4 has a good example of this. In the song, a woman (Zainabu) who is considered promiscuous is condemned through a song.

Extract 4 song 4

**Soloist**

Zainabu  
penis and move  
A girl Jigger  
cannot see Wanyonyi  
A girl a termite  
cannot see Wafula

Hoo-ho Zainabu

**Response**

cannot see a  
Hoo-ho Zainabu  
and move  
Hoo-ho Zainabu  
and move

Sing of Zainabu  
cannot see Wekesa  
A girl who tightens  
cannot see Wabwile

Hoo-ho Zainabu  
and move  
Hoo-ho Zainabu  
and move

The discourse used to condemn Sainabu's behaviour directly attack her. For instance, instead of using discourse that conceal the sexual organ, the song uses such words, "she cannot see a penis and move" to expose the behaviour of the woman. Demeaning symbolic words like *Sichinji* a jigger; symbolises an insect that is troublesome once in someone's body. Other images used for comparison of Sainabu are the metaphors *iswa* (ant), *Sichwisi* (something that tightens)..... are used to construct the woman, Sainabu. The reference of the woman Sainabu to the images drawn from animals and objects is clearly offensive. A cynical attitude towards her is enhanced in many instances in the song by the sheer number of times the word "penis" and the names of different men that are mentioned.

It is worth noting that whereas the Bukusu circumcision songs construct women seen as promiscuous using degrading words, on the contrary, men who are seen as promiscuous are constructed using euphemistic words. This is evident in some songs. For example;

Extract 5 song 7

**Soloist**

Chemiatu separates children  
The grand child to Nafula separates children  
children

**Response**

Separates children  
Separates

In song, Chemiatu is a married man who is promiscuous. The song is sung in praise of his character. Although such a character should be condemned, at the level of word choice the song is deliberate and therefore not sufficiently suited to the subject matter. This is exemplified in the discourse accorded to Chemiatu. First, the song uses the word *umbula* (separating but in a good way). Contrary to the words used to directly attack Sainabu in song 2; the word *umbula* conceals Chemiatu's behavior. Further in to the song Chemiatu is referred to as *omwichukhulu* (grandchild). This is a soft and appealing name used by old people when addressing young ones not necessarily biological off springs. Again in the song, Chemiatu is being encouraged to engage more in extra marital relationships-Chemiatu *umbula* (*umbula* is in present tense). Though we expect his behavior to be condemned openly through the song, his sexual acts are constructed by discourses that are used figuratively in euphemistic way to conceal the intended meaning. To illustrate this point further let's consider another song.

Extract 6 Song 17

**Soloist**

Mose Mose  
Moses- eeh eeh- Mose  
Sweet talk madam x2 Hold, hold

**Response**

Moses x2 Moses knows how to seduce  
Moses Sweet talk, sweet talk  
Hold madam

In the above texts, a man called Moses is being praised of his promiscuous behaviour. First that Moses knows how to seduce, that he seduced a madam, he caressed a madam and so on. Therefore, men are exalted and constructed as strong when found to have taken part in extra marital sexual affairs. In the songs, adultery is construed as proving the value or worthiness of men. The utterances used in the song privately hail men's behaviour. Ironically, such acts by women are condemned ruthlessly and at the same time women who are found guilty are severely punished.

## Men and women as immoral

According to the oxford advanced learner's dictionary (New 8th Edition), immorality is a noun that means not being in accord with standards of right or good conduct. Immorality is evil, sinful, promiscuity, impurity, corruption, murder or otherwise any other unacceptable behaviour.

Any kind of immorality is not accepted among the Babukusu where immoral people are treated with ostracism. Given this rules, people try to abide to the norms and rules of the society. However, this does not imply that moral rules are not broken. Immoral behaviour in every community should not be gender based; both men and women could be guilty of unethical conduct (Familusi, 2012). Looking at the discourses used in selected Lubukusu initiation songs to show the status of men and women in traditional Bukusu society, men are exalted of any immoral ineptitude while women are condemned. This is evident in some songs. For example:

Extract 7 Song 9

### Soloist

Jane  
She threw  
Sorrow

### Response

Jane who lives at the market is barren ×2  
she threw a child in the toilet ×2  
sorrow affects those who gave birth ×2

Song 9 is sung of a barren woman called Jane who worked as a prostitute and stayed at the market place. Her neighbour's child ate her meat that had been brought by one of her lovers. The only form of punishment she could mend for the child was to throw the child in the toilet. At the depths of societal norms, this is an animalistic behaviour. Jane is condemned of this behaviour and the community assumes that maybe, she did this because she has never experienced the pain of giving birth. In this song the words *omukumba* (barren) directly points out the status of Jane. The word *khusukuna* (to throw) also points out the exact activity done by Jane. The song generates a lot of scathing criticism and hatred for Jane. Again the words *woluswa* "of incest" used in song 14 directly address what Naity did. The criticism expressed towards on women is harsh and full of hatred. On the other hand, the criticism extended to the men is friendly. That is, it conceals the exact thing done by men by using polite words. Let us consider the illustration below;

Extract8 song 6

### Soloist

Talk of Emanje in this  
home talk of Emanje  
ndoya  
Emanje

### Response

Emanje Ee ee who belongs to our father  
Emanje Who takes care of people outside

Looking at the above song at first glance, one would imagine that the song is in praise of a man called Emanje. This is because the discourses used exalt his character that is "of our father Ndoya, one who takes care of people" and so on. In real sense the song questions the behaviour of a man called Emanje who is a night runner. Night running is a vice that is condemned in many societies and many communities including the Bukusu go to an extent of excommunicating those involved. Therefore, instead of the song exposing Emanje's behaviour just like song 9 exposed Jane's character, it uses a euphemistic word *khutomola* to conceal the character of night running. Below is another example that exalts vices in men.

Extract 9 Song 8

**Soloist**

*Khwenya khumanya nanu owachanja likhese*

Translation

Soloist

We want to know who vaccinated a sheep

**Response**

Patrick

Response

Patrick

This song provokes bestiality though indirectly. Bestiality is a vice that is highly condemned by the Bukusu community. Patrick was a herd's boy who lacked the seductive language to convince girls in the village. At the age of 32 years he had failed to marry and as a man he had feelings for women. Lacking a woman to satisfy his desires, he went for a sheep. He was found by his employer, sacked and later condemned through an initiation song. It could have been apt for the song to directly address what Patrick did instead of hiding.

In the songs above, discourses involving women are brought out clearly and condemned while those referring to men are addressed indirectly and sometimes replaced with lexical items or sentences that conceal their behaviour. For instance, instead of saying who raped the sheep, the lexical word "rape" is replaced by "vaccinated". Again instead of saying, "Emanje is a night runner," the expressions "one who takes care," "of our father," and "grandchild" are used.

**Portrayal of men and women using names**

The bias is also reflected in the lexical words used for naming, where the most demeaning words are assigned to the female members of the society as compared to men. Consider examples below:

Extract 10 song 3

**Soloist**

Atoti my heart has thought

**Response**

give me the woman (*omukhasi*)

In song 3 a woman is referred to as *omukhasi*. *Omukhasi* is a derogatory term that comes with negative connotations to show disrespect to a woman sometimes. In the Bukusu community there is a difference between "omukhasi" and "omukhaye." The two terms can be used to refer to married women but the former has a negative connotation while the later has positive connotation. For instance, *Omukhaye* means one who works hard and hence is respected. While *omukhasi* is used when referring to a woman whose job is to give birth. Therefore, the lexical word *omukhasi* in the above song belittles the position of women in the society. This construction reaffirms the 'woman as domestic' and 'woman as private' discourses (see Atanga, 2007) which legitimate and naturalise the status quo. Diapah et al., (2015) state that one of the marks of a good mother is her ability to provide for the nutritional needs of her family. This functionalization is a form of subservience and subordination of women and is perpetuated through Lubukusu initiation songs. Contrary to the demeaning lexical items used to refer to women as in 33 above, the lexical items used to refer to men come with positive connotations. This can be illustrated in song 34 below;

Extract 11 Song 11

**Soloist**

This madiapa

Madiapa somebody

excellent

This Kibulei

**Response**

Ahee This madiaba

Madiapa system

ahee

This Kibulei system Wekesa excellent	Kibulei somebody boy somebody	excellent This Wekesa	Kibulei ahee This boy system
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*Matiapa* in song 17 refers to a man. “*Matiapa*” is a big soda that is valued in the Bukusu community. The association of men to *Matiapa* accords them a special position. In the same song, names of people like Kibulei and Wekesa are mentioned and likened to human beings “omundu” and an animal Kipoko (Hippopotamus). The reference of men to powerful animals and items and that of women to weak animals and items is asymmetric. This asymmetric language use for men and women reflect a serious gender relation among the two communities.

A part from using names, most Lubukusu initiation songs use possessive adjectives in describing men while descriptive, interrogative and quantity adjectives in describing women. Interrogative adjectives are used to question the behaviour of women, at the same time, the possessive adjectives are used to show the possessive nature of men, that is, who owns and not owned. This is a common feature in selected Bukusu initiation songs as shown in the example below:

Extract 12 Song 1

<b>Soloist</b>	<b>Response</b>
Fl-o-ora	surely Flora give me some things ×2
You yourself promised that on your way to the market I meet you things	You give me some things
You yourself promised that on your way to the posho mill I meet you	You give me some things.

In the song, the interrogative adjective *wamwene* ‘you yourself’ and *seumba* “you give me” are directed to women. In song 3, *mbe omukhasi wanje* (give me my woman), the pronoun “wanje” (my) refers to men. Possessive adjectives in the songs are used to show a form of ownership. How men are at liberty of possessing women while the interrogative pronouns are used to question why women are not fulfilling men’s demands.

### Women as children

Women are also depicted as children in the same songs. This is evident in song 17 as shown below:

Extract 13, Song 17

<b>Soloist</b>	<b>Response</b>
Hold on the centre post baby girl, Mulongo	Get hold of a Mulongo

The lexical word “omwana” (child) though used with some level of affection has a myriad of negative connotations. It implies that a woman is senseless, defenceless, timid and dependent like a baby. Throughout the song, there is no other interpretation to show that women are special like babies or ladies (as used in modern romance world). Contrary to this song, is song 13 “*Sumba khumabuli*” (a man on termites). The lexical word “*sumba*” an energetic man, positions men in opposition to women. Men are constructed as tough, strong and independent

hence special masculine ideals. Therefore, the song Mulongo patronizes women by using the term “*omwana*”.

### Women as objects

The reference of women and their sexual organs in selected Lubukusu initiation songs to objects is clearly offensive. Objectification means treating a human being as a product or as a thing, with no regard to their individuality or self-respect. Objectification is frequently examined at a level of a society, however can also refer to the behaviour of individuals

In song 14, women are treated as if they are not human beings. Women are advised on self-hate, to look at their own bodies and personalities with shame, discomfort and disgust. The songs carefully and selectively engage images from many fields of natural life and human activity to describe women; scraps, bats, things and the like. Consider the data below:

Extract 14 Song 10

#### Soloist

#### Response

Scrap dem come here

ooh! scrap dem come here

Energetic men have arrived

ooh! Energetic men have arrived

People of glucose have arrived

ooh! Men of glucose have arrived

In the song, the metaphor “*Sikirepu*” (scrap) refers to a woman. Scrap refers to materials or objects that are no longer used for the purpose they were made for, but can be used again in another way. Underlying the reference of women to “scrap” is the presupposition that women should be exploited by men, and once they have been used, they should be replaced.

Again it is worth noting from the song that whereas the Bukusu initiation songs refer to women using non-human attributes, men are referred to as “*sumba*” (energetic people) and “*bandu*” (people). This shows that men possess both unique human traits and traits essential to human nature.

### Conclusion

From the analysis presented, the main observation is that gender is constructed in a binary and contrastive way. Women are constructed as givers of life, mothers, carers, nurturers and servers. On one hand, the qualities of men were compared to things that are powerful, aggressive and pure, whereas the qualities of women were compared to the behaviours of the things that are ugly, small, helpless and untrustworthy. The intention of the discourses in the songs was also addressed. For instance, the discourses accorded to men are used to conceal their behaviours while those accorded women are used to ridicule or pour scorn on women.

In conclusion, therefore, the analysis reveals that Lubukusu initiation songs reflect traditional conservative ideals. They reinforce traditional gender roles, asymmetrical power positions and restate expected behaviours that both men and women should abide by without violating them. Even with the current change in trends on women’s roles and gender positions in modern Kenya and the rest of the world, change in Bukusu society is being hindered by the continued use of, and repetition of, the Lubukusu initiation songs from one season to another. These leads to a continued naturalisation of asymmetrical relations and presentation of imbalances as normal, expectable and acceptable, even good.

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### **Abstract**

The thesis of this paper is the place of Kiswahili as a mother language in Kenya. It argues that there is an evolving socio-cultural matrix unique to Kenya with regard to Kiswahili. As much as ethnic groups continue to use their indigenous languages for their daily communication, Kiswahili is increasingly gaining momentum in usage both as national and also second mother tongue to many upcoming generations and ethnic groups in Kenya. This generation is seeking a common language of interaction and socialization besides the use of their indigenous languages. Thus the end result is an adaptation of Kiswahili as a language of communication, a scenario that results in a generation that adapts Kiswahili as their first and so mother language. Based on the linguistic functional approach theory, this paper highlights the role of Kiswahili in education, social interaction and political dimensions as a mother language which hence cannot be undermined.

**Keywords:** Kiswahili, Mother language, First language, Functionalism

### **Introduction**

Mother language is a concept that draws mixed views from scholars. While some consider it as the language a child starts learning after birth and thus speaks it first, others see it as the language of one's community affiliation (Cummins, 2007). Bloomfield (1933) as cited in Nordquist (2019) says that a mother language also referred to as 'father' or 'parent' language, 'first' or 'native' language is a language that a person has been exposed to from birth or within the critical period. According to Yule (1996), critical period generally ranges from the years the child's brain has fully developed to accommodate language processes up to adolescence. On the other hand, Allan (1991) maintains that mother tongue is the language of one's ethnic group rather than one's first language. However, this paper adopts Bloomfield's definition of mother tongues as a language which one is exposed to from birth. This will be considered in this paper but with reference to Kiswahili.

### **The Functionalist Theory**

Functionalism, an approach associated with the Prague school of linguistics has been prominent since the 1930s. Based on the work of Michael Halliday, the theory holds that language is a matter of learning the kinds of meanings that can be shared in particular situations. According to Emmet et al (2015), the approach focuses on the relationship between language, form and social meaning. Concerned with the functions performed by a language, the approach centres on how elements in various languages accomplish their functions (Encyclopaedia, 1998). Language is thus not so much a system of rules as posed by Chomsky but a means of performing particular social functions. Halliday outlines seven functions of language which were designed to reflect the various conversational interactions. These are the instrumental function, regulatory, interactional, personal, heuristic, imaginative and representational. According to Halliday, when children realize the potential that these functions serve, they become more skillful in using them. Hatfield (2011), states that the functional model applies when language is used for meaningful purposes and to carry out

authentic functions. The model hence focuses on the functional processes rather than mastery of language forms.

### **Kiswahili as Mother Language**

Having originated from the East African Coast as a trade language used by both Arabs and Coastal tribes, Kiswahili has significantly grown within and outside Kenya, East Africa and the continent. It has been conferred with an official or national language status (Republic of Kenya, 2010). It is also spoken, taught and studied in many universities in Africa and also in other continents outside Africa like the School of Oriental and African Studies-SOAS in London and the Universities of Ohio and Yale (Matundura, 2012). The World Bank (2005) report estimates show that the population of native speakers of Kiswahili has increasingly grown from 2 million in 2003 to 150 million in 2012. This is probably more now as many speakers continue to embrace it.

Among the roles of Kiswahili are a national language in the DRC, Kenya and Tanzania. It is also a working language of the African Union and a Lingua Franca of the East African Community a move that has seen its introduction in the school syllabi of all the East African community member states. Although it is a national and an official language in Kenya (Republic of Kenya, 2010), Kiswahili is used both as a first language and as mother tongue in Kenya. This is so in various communities that always interact in social, political, educational and religious forums and therefore seek to have a common language of interaction. In such circumstances, therefore Kiswahili becomes a language of communication that links the people. The use of Kiswahili as mother tongue is manifested in various scenarios some of which are the Kenyan cities, border communities, and also in the education sector.

### **Kiswahili as mother tongue in Kenyan cities**

Manifestation of Kiswahili as a first or mother language in Kenya is evident in its use in urban areas. Most Kenyan towns and cities because of being cosmopolitan witness the use of Kiswahili more often. In town centres, market places and residential estates, people tend to use Kiswahili especially when the language of the second speaker is unknown to them. Parents are hence forced to teach their children Kiswahili as their first language or sometimes these children acquire this language through the interaction with others in the same environment. Therefore these children end up adopting the use of Kiswahili both at home and at school. This kind of upbringing has seen most children grow up with Kiswahili as their first or mother language and only get to learn their mother tongues as grownups. Others also end up with Kiswahili as their mother tongue.

For example, Nairobi that is the capital city of Kenya leads with a large population that often uses Kiswahili. Although its most pure use remains at the Coast, the language gets sophisticated as you move in (KTB, 2014). Nairobi is now the home of Sheng. In Nakuru, Kiswahili as well as English are the most commonly spoken languages. Being the 4<sup>th</sup> largest city in Kenya after Nairobi, Mombasa and Kisumu, Nakuru employs the use of Kiswahili especially in the tourism industry around Lake Nakuru, in business centres and in residential estates. As a language of tourism, it is more beneficial to local tourists who prefer using Kiswahili. The same scenario is evident in Kisumu city where residents are forced to use Kiswahili for interaction. Quite a number of children hence grow up as bilingual mother tongue speakers. Thus they adopt the

ethnic group language and also Kiswahili concurrently and use them alternately in their daily conversations as mother tongues. As this occurs, the aspect of bilingualism therefore manifests itself whereby one speaks more than one language with native-like proficiency (Lyons, 1981). Another prominent characteristic of Kiswahili language in Kenyan cities is the emergence of the Sheng variety. Mazrui (1995) defines Sheng as an acronym for Swahili English Slang which emerged in the 1960s in the multicultural environment of Nairobi. Besides English and Kiswahili, the language also combines other Kenyan languages like Kikuyu, Luhya, Dholuo and Kikamba among others. Although it does not have an official role, sheng is becoming a vernacular language. This means that Kiswahili language takes a form that enables the performance a given function. In linguistic functionalism, forms of a natural language are created, governed, constrained, acquired and used in the service of communicative functions (Bates & MacWhinney, 1982; MacWhinney, Bates & Kliegl, 1984) Ferrari (2014) asserts that people born in the 1980s or later have Sheng as their first language and hence their mother language. This situation is evident in most Kenyan cities where Sheng has evolved as a combination of English, Kiswahili and the dominant local Language or languages respectively. Nairobi the capital city of Kenya leads with the richest variety due to its complex cosmopolitan nature. Other cities and towns have varieties with more of the local language mix. When it is spoken, Sheng is considered as a dialect of the Kiswahili language.

### **Kiswahili as Mother tongue in Border communities**

Kiswahili manifests itself as a first or mother language in communities in various border communities in Kenya. Due to their interaction and frequent association, people who live at the border areas seek to have a common language of communication. Since Kiswahili is a national language that is widely spoken, it is therefore commonly used at the border among bordering communities. The end result of this is a generation that adopts Kiswahili as their first language and thus becomes a mother language. For instance, the cross border trade that exists between Kenya and Uganda tends to employ the use of Kiswahili. This as a result has grown a community of Kiswahili speakers along the border despite the fact that they are from different ethnic groups. A similar situation is manifested at the Malaba border. Despite being a town in Teso, it forms the international border from Malaba to Uganda (KIG, 2016). As such, it employs the use of Kiswahili and hence promotes its use as a first language. It therefore follows that Teso and Samia languages are not as popular as Kiswahili in this border town thus influencing children to speak it as their language of communication. In addition, the children who are born in this environment find their parents using Kiswahili and so adopt it as their mother tongue. In addition, most communities who live at the Kenya–Tanzania especially Namanga and Sirare borders tend to communicate in Kiswahili for inter-community communication. A similar state of adoption hence follows.

Apart from the cross country borders, Kiswahili has also been adopted as mother tongue in community or regional borders in Kenya. Western and Nyanza regions depict several cases. For example, among the Luo and Luhya (specifically Banyore) of Maseno town, children have tended to adopt the use of Kiswahili and abandoned their mother languages of Luo and Luhya (the Banyore). Very few make an attempt to learn their local languages. In general, various communities in Kenya border each other therefore the tendency of speaking a common language like Kiswahili is always witnessed.

### **Kiswahili as Mother tongue in Education**

Mother tongue in education refers to a situation when a school or educational institution integrates the language a child is most familiar with into the classroom along with the schools lesson (Thurmin, 2015). The use of mother tongue in Kenyan schools can be traced back to the colonial times. Although there were no firm language policies in Kenya at that time, the missionaries and the colonial administration advocated for the use of mother tongue to help them spread Christianity and to secure cheap labour respectively. Following the recommendations of the Ominde commission in 1965, English has been used as the main medium of instruction and examination in Kenya. The educational language policy in Kenya states that learning in the first three years of primary school should be in the mother tongue of the child. The chapter also states that research has shown that children learn more effectively when concepts are introduced to them in a language they already understand (Ominde, 1964; Njeru, 2016). The mother tongue policy applies to all schools except those in urban centres in which Kiswahili should be the medium of instruction. Apart from its use in urban schools, Kiswahili takes the place of mother tongue in education in cosmopolitan communities and border communities. Children in these communities have been raised using Kiswahili and by the time they get to school, this is the language they are familiar with and understand best. It hence becomes their mother tongue in education. Most primary teacher training institutions also advocate for the teaching of Kiswahili as a first language rather than the language of the catchment area. This follows the fact that most teacher trainees are from diverse Kenyan backgrounds and mostly are not familiar with the languages of the schools where they practice. Kiswahili is hence taught as mother tongue in this respect.

### **Kiswahili as a Second Mother tongue**

Kiswahili is perfectly used as a second mother tongue as witnessed even among the Bantu speaking ethnic groups along the coastal enclave. For instance, the coastal inhabitants have always tended to use Kiswahili as a second mother tongue besides the first indigenous languages spoken in the area (Nurse & Spear, 1985). Therefore the Bantus who are Kiswahili speakers and who tend to use Kiswahili as second mother tongue are those who are generally referred to as the Sabaki Bantus who also speak various indigenous languages like Elwana, Comoro, Pokomo and Mijikenda (Nurse & Spear, 1985).

In addition, certain communities happen to have two mother tongue languages in equal measure whereby mother tongue in this respect is the language most spoken at home (Thurmin, 2015; Cummins, 2001). This normally happens in cases of intermarriage between the mother and the father who are from different language speaking communities. Kiswahili is also regarded as a second mother tongue to many Kenyans. Most Kenyan children learn Kiswahili concurrently with their community mother tongues. Numerous benefits are associated with learning or acquiring many languages. According to Cummins (2001), children therefore tend to have a better understanding of how to use different languages effectively when they develop their skills in more than one language. This is a scenario witnessed in homes, communities and schools.

In many Kenyan homes, parents have a tendency of using their local languages and Kiswahili concurrently. This leads to a state of bilingual mother tongue. Cummins encourages this situation by outlining the various benefits that go along with it.

It gives children a deeper understanding of the language and makes its use a lot easier. The children are able to use language in a wider depth, they have more advanced critical thinking skills and are able to develop their literacy skills. As a second mother language, Kiswahili plays multiple roles. It has a double role in education where it is used as a medium of instruction or as a language used to elaborate concepts that pupils do not understand in the language of instruction. Besides, it contributes to the development of bilingualism both at home and at school. The use of Kiswahili as a second mother tongue should hence be encouraged to develop proper use of language and expression.

### **Kiswahili among the Top Mother Languages of the World**

The role of Kiswahili as a first or second mother language therefore leaves us with a clear question of determining her place in relation to the top mother languages of the world. Thurmin (2015) indicates that many languages are shrinking in usage as people begin to adopt more widely spoken languages around their regions. This is the case of Kiswahili in Africa, East Africa and Kenya in particular. Swahili serves as a national language of the DRC, Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda. It is one of the working languages of the African Union and officially recognized as a lingua franca of the East African Community. According to Racoma (2013), Kiswahili was by then a mother tongue to over five million people. There is no doubt that this number has hitherto increased to more than double. This expanded use puts Kiswahili in the map of the top mother languages of the world. Among them are Spanish, English, Hindi, Arabic, Portuguese, Bengali, Russian, Japanese, Javanese, German, Wu Chinese, Korean, French, Telugu, Marathi, Turkish, and Urdu. With the number of native speakers of Kiswahili on the rise, this paper recommends that Kiswahili be added on the list of the top mother tongues of the world languages.

### **Conclusion**

This paper gives a highlight of the role of Kiswahili as a mother language. It hence gives a general overview of the role played by Kiswahili as a mother language in education, social interaction, and sometimes as a second mother tongue learnt alongside the native language as a bilingual mother tongue a situation that has proved to be beneficial to its users. In this respect. This paper affirms the role of Kiswahili as a mother language in Kenya and recommends its inclusion among the top mother languages of the world.

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Solomon Onchoke Aunga  
Kaimosi Friends University College

### **Abstract**

In Kenya, ethnicity is at the center of politics often leading to ethnic- related conflicts during elections. As such, many studies have been conducted about the Kenyan politics normally competed along ethnic divisions leading to violence but not much literature is available on the metaphorical and metonymical language used by different tribes to refer to each other. Consequently, this study was set to identify metaphorical and metonymical terms relating to tribes and ethnicity, and analyze the cognitive processes involved in their mapping and interpretation. The data collected from 32 different ethnic groups were analyzed using the Cognitive Metaphor Theory of Lakoff and Johnson (1980), and two models anchored underneath; the social cultural and the Great Chain of Being Metaphor. A qualitative research design was used to plan, build the content and form of this study. The results suggest that interpretations and usage of metaphors and metonymies of ethnicity pervade the lexicon of ethnicity in Kenya and form networks by which different ethnicities conceptualize each other as animals, thus the conceptual metaphor, A HUMAN BEING IS AN ANIMAL. Also, it is evident that metaphors and metonymies create mental images, reflect the cultures of the different ethnicities in Kenya, create avenues for derogatory communication references and their interpretations rely on the context. This study exposes the importance and subtle nature of the mother languages not only in Kenya but worldwide. The study concludes by suggesting that the government puts in place strong institutions and mechanisms to prevent hate speech and some people from demeaning and undermining others using mother tongues which may lead to ethnic conflicts.

**Keywords:** Metaphor, Cognitive linguistics, Culture, Ethnicity, Tribe

### **Introduction**

This study analyses conceptual metaphors, metonymies and other conceptions of ethnicity in Kenya, a multi-ethnic country in East Africa which has experienced ethnic related conflicts mostly during the period of elections, from a cognitive linguistic viewpoint. Ethnicity is a common feature in most African countries; it shows diversity but if not handled well, it leads to ethnic conflicts (Ochiel, 2008). Many African multi-ethnic countries lacking robust structures and mechanisms for national integration and unity have experienced this problem. Ethnicity can be defined as an ethnic feature or association or link from racial or cultural tie (any group of distinct cultural tradition and origins) or belonging to a social group that has common socio-cultural values like culture, religion and languages; a tribe, on the other hand, is seen as a group of people within a geo-political region related by blood or marriage (Taaliu, 2017). Thus, ethnicity is related to culture, while tribe is associated with shared ancestors. Previous studies on ethnicity have shown that ethnic conflicts lead towards ethnic politics which are often conceived as conflicts among ethnic groups and are very common among many developing multi ethnic countries (Hashmi, 2015; Montalvo, &Reynal-Querol, 2010). Indeed, there have been ethnic conflicts in Somalia, Lebanon, Israel, Algeria, Nigeria, South Sudan, Ethiopia, Syria,

India, and even the most developed USA. May (2012) has clearly shown that ethnicity is a delicate human identity feature that manifests differently in different societies and reflects diversity in the Society whose internal harmony and stability depend on how this diversity is perceived and handled by the various governments. Many scholars (like Mathiu, 2016; Murabula, 2016; Kimotho, 2016; Yieke, 2010; Weber, 2009; Ochiel, 2008; Miguel, 2004; Sambanis, 2001; Reynal-Querol, 2001a; Petersen, Roger, 2002 among others), have devoted a lot of time to study this area which has destroyed many countries.

Kenya has witnessed inter-ethnic conflicts and politics based on ethnic alignments experienced especially during the general elections carried out after every five years as witnessed from <sup>12</sup>1992 to date (Steadman, 2017). Different causes have been mentioned in various post-election commission reports, for example, the Commission of Inquiry into Post-election Violence (CIPEV) popularly known as the Waki Commission (CIPV, 2008), Non-governmental Organizations (NGO) reports, such as Minority Rights Group International (MRG, 2008) and the Kenya National Human Rights Commission (KNHRC, 2008), as having fanned tribal animosity and hatred into Kenyans killing one another.

The USA, one of the most developed country, has also racial and ethnicity problem. Glazer and Moynihan (1963), state that ethnicity can be negative in a society. They argue that rather than eradicating ethnic differences, modern American society has created a new awareness in people which is retrogressive in a cohesive society, a concern about roots and origins whereby people live in neighborhoods dominated by people with the same origins as themselves and using their ethnic networks actively when looking for jobs or a spouse. This argument underscores the gravity of the problem of ethnicity not only in Africa but also in developed countries like America. Similarly, China, the most populous nation, according to Zang (2015), on the global stage, is often seen to be a homogenous nation when, in fact, it is a diverse multi-ethnic society, with more than 55 minority nationality groups recognized by the government. Their national integration and cohesion is attributed to the Confucian concept of cultural community which plays down ethnicity and encourages the integration of minority nationalities into the majority Han-Chinese society. However, not all countries with many ethnic groups have ethnicity as a problem. For instance, Tanzania has more than 120 ethnicities but, unlike Kenya its neighbor, has been able to unite them to form a nation; ethnicity and religion have never occupied a noticeable role in the politics of Tanzania (Omari, 1987). It is, therefore, a fact that all human beings belong to an ethnic group, whether in Europe, Africa, Melanesia or Central America and there are ethnic groups in every city from the most developed countries to the small developing countries like Kenya (Glazer and Moynihan, 1963).

The history of the Kenyan tribes has been written extensively by <sup>13</sup>Kenyan historians, oral traditionalists, archaeologists, historical linguists and cultural anthropologists, who acknowledge that Kenya, being a multi-ethnic country, was divided along ethnic lines before

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<sup>12</sup> Multi-party politics was introduced in Kenya in 1992, there before, Kenya was a one party state ruled by Kenya African National Union (KANU) since independence in 1963 from the British rule.

<sup>13</sup> Read Kenyan historians, oral traditionalists, archaeologists, historical linguists and cultural anthropologists such as Ogot (1967); Were (1967); Muriuki (1974); Ochieng (1974); Mwanzi (1977); Aseka (1989) and Onyango (2008), who have written extensively about the Kenyan ethnic communities in the pre-colonial and post-colonial period.

the coming of the colonialists, making it easier to be colonized. Consequently, Kukubor (2006) adds that ethnicity has been an issue even in the Bible (traced to <sup>14</sup>Genesis 11.7-8 KJV); there were ethnic squabbles and wars once for a while, thus, the languages we speak, the customs and traditions we hold dear, the food we eat, and the clothing we wear, all have some connection to our ethnicities.

It is a fact that if ethnicity is not handled well, it can lead to conflicts as witnessed in Africa and other areas as Horiwitz (1985), a prominent political scientist has emphasized that democracies are normally destabilized by the permanent exclusion of some minority groups from power. He said further that ethnic divisions are fixed and elections based on ethnic divisions, therefore, produce permanent winners and permanent losers based on ethnic demography. In addition, the politicization of ethnic divisions threatens democratic stability just like the Kenyan case (Onyango 2008). Similarly, Elena Gadjanova (2017) stresses that issues dealing with differences in ethnicity are rhetorical tools intended to splinter the support of a key opponent by employing narratives of ethnically motivated discrimination, victimization, or exclusion, and promising remedial action. These are the issues put forward by opposing politicians to win support from their ethnicities not knowing that they are spreading ethnic animosity. Ethnic incitements can inflame ethnic resentments, entrench existing conflicts, and limit the space for compromise on contentious issues like the case of Kenya in 2008 when the key tribal kingpins <sup>15</sup>Kibaki (Kikuyu tribe) and Odinga (Luo tribe) could not agree (CIPV, 2008).

While an extensive literature exists that links ethnicity to the emergence of civil conflicts and blaming it on political competition, exclusion of minority groups from power, colonial administration, ethnic structures, nation-building policies, religious differences, skewed allocation of resources and new media (Bratton, & Kimenyi, 2008; Collier and Hoeffler, 1998; Elbadawi, Ibrahim, 1999; Erikson, 1992; Erikson, 1998; Erikson, 1998; Harakhe, 2013; Horowitz, 1985; Kimenyi et al. 2016; KoigiWaWamwere, 2001; Mathiu, 2016; Ochiel, 2008 and Yieke, 2010), few authors have exclusively focused on the language factors. It is from this perspective that this research seeks to examine and analyze how the use of metaphorical, metonymical terms and other conceptions to refer to other tribes, can fuel ethnic animosity leading to inter-ethnic wars. For instance, in 2007, it was argued that Kenyan tribes in towns and villages resorted to talking about other tribes negatively through the use of derogatory terms or hate speech to undermine each other through the exploitation of its most susceptible fault-line: negative ethnicity, which exploded into Kenyans massacring each other.

Although investigations into various ways of promoting ethnic cohesion and national unity have been explored, linguists have not systematically and adequately addressed this phenomenon hitherto. There is insufficient research data in the influence of metaphorical language and other conceptions on ethnic cohesion and national unity. Therefore, the influence

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<sup>14</sup>Genesis 11.7-8 KJV. 7. 'Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech. 8. So lord scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth and they left off to build the city'

<sup>15</sup>Kibaki was the 3<sup>rd</sup> president of Kenya (between 2002-2013) whereby it was during his second term re-election contest (2007) between him and the opposition doyen, Raila Odinga, that there were tribal clashes between their supporters from different main tribal camps

of language on ethnic cohesion and national unity is little known. Language cannot be separated from politics; it is not only a linguistic issue but also has to do with power, prejudice, competition, discrimination and subordination issues (see Yieke 2007 &<sup>16</sup>Noam Chomsky 1979).

### Conceptual Metaphor Theory

Cognitive linguists acknowledge that the metaphor and metonymy are nexuses between the human brain and language. Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) proponents argue that we structure our knowledge about the world in terms of idealized cognitive models (ICMs); an ICM is an organized cognitive structure which serves to represent reality from a certain perspective (Lakoff, 1987). Furthermore, Lakoff (1987) identified four types of structuring principles: propositional, image schemata, metaphoric and metonymic. Of the concern here, are metaphors and metonymies. Both a metaphor and metonymy are properties of language, thought and linguistic phenomena, involving perceiving one experience in terms of another with sets of correspondences across domains, which differ only in the nature of domains involved (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; Gibbs, 1994; Grady, 1997; Langacker, 1999; Kövecses, 2002, 2005; Evans & Green, 2006 and<sup>17</sup>Jakel, 2002). Consequently, the metaphor involves two notions or conceptual domains: the Y (also called topic, target or tenor) and the X (also called vehicle or source), whereas in metonymy, conceptual mapping takes place within same domain; domain sub-domain relationship. They argued further that in CMT, we use imagination to map and understand experiences by either using metaphors or metonyms (read <sup>18</sup>Lakoff & Johnson, 1980: 35-40; Lakoff & Turner, 1989: 103-104; Gunter Radden & Zoltan Kövecses, 1999) on the basis of image schemas with ontological correspondences between the domains whereby the Y domain is abstract and understood in terms of the X domain because of sharing certain attributes (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980 & 1987; Langacker, 1999; Evans & Green, 2006). Subsequently, the process of making meaning, in this case, understanding different ethnicities in terms of animals, using metaphorical concepts is called <sup>19</sup>*metaphorization* (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980).

In this study, I analyze ethnicity metaphors and metonymies in Kenya within the Social-cultural metaphor model which is a type of resemblance metaphor where the source and target are social-culturally related (read Lakoff and Johnson, 1980; Grady, 1999, 2005; Moon, 2006;

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<sup>16</sup>In summary, Noam Chomsky (1979: 191) puts it, 'Questions of language are basically questions of power'. In addition, it is justified to argue that we depend on language in most things we do and it is language that puts people into different groups, each with different views, others lacking channels of communication, therefore, creating enemies and friends (us and them). This is what makes language an important factor in defining ethnicity because to say a language is to say society, thus, if you speak one particular language, you belong to that particular society and tribe (Yieke 2007). In Kenya there are 43 tribes, therefore, we may assume that there are an equal number of languages or more because of foreigners and their languages living or working within the country.

<sup>17</sup>Read, Jakel (2002), "Hypotheses revisited: the cognitive theory of metaphor applied to Religious texts", in: *metaphorik.de*, No. 2, pp. 20-42., for a comprehensive analyses of the nine hypotheses.

<sup>18</sup>Lakoff & Johnson (1980: 35-40); Lakoff & Turner (1989: 103-104); Gunter Radden & Zoltan Kövecses (1999) distinguish between metaphor and metonymy whereby they agree that metaphor and metonymy are closely related idealized cognitive models (ICM), whereby, in metaphor, there are two conceptual domains involved, one being understood in terms of the other, while metonymy only involves one conceptual domain, i.e. the mapping occurs within a single domain and not across domains.

<sup>19</sup>Metaphorization is based on the transfer from the source conceptual domain to the target conceptual domain. Most commonly the structure of the source concrete domains is mapped (Johnson & Lakoff 1980: 252) onto abstract target domains, where the meaning retains the semantic markings of the target domain

Gibbs, 1994; Johnson, 1987&Lakoff, 1993; Kevesces 2005; Ritchie 2013 &<sup>20</sup>Takada, et al., 2006). We also employ the Great Chain of Being (GCM) metaphor model to examine how ethnocentrism views are conceptualized, transmitted and perpetuated by means of animal metaphors and metonymies in Kenya which is a multi-ethnic country. <sup>21</sup>GCB metaphor (Lakoff& Turner, 1989; Kövecses, 2002) was employed to show how by using the metaphor against the other community dehumanizes them and spreads enmity which may lead to ethnic conflicts. We shall show how GCB metaphor allows us to conceptualize different ethnic groups in terms of nonhuman attributes using animals as the source domain.

## Methodology

The study adopted a qualitative design to plan, build the content and form of this study. It also enabled the researcher to determine and report the way things are (Mugenda and Mugenda, 1999). Similarly, the study made use of both qualitative and quantitative methods of data analysis to analyze and present the data. This research was conducted over a period of 6 months in both urban and rural communities in the eight provinces in Kenya (former administrative structures before the current demarcation of 47 counties). The researcher collected data from native speakers of 32 Kenyan languages using a mixture of purposive and snowball sampling (see Milroy, 1987) procedures because of the sensitive nature of the topic, by using friends to recommend other friends from the different tribes. Assisted by the research assistants, the researcher sampled 10 informants from each of the 32 ethnicities. In total there were 320 informants (160 men and 160 women) proficient in the native languages. This small sample was chosen in order to allow for in-depth investigation and analysis of data (Trudgill, 1973). Social representation was achieved, since language varies across a wide range of social dimensions within a population, such as a speaker's age, gender, ethnic identity, regional background and educational level (Podesva and Sharma, 2013). The only limitation is that the words or phrases were collected as single units; we could not capture and present the feelings, facial expressions, attitudes, intonations and other nuances associated with actual or practical speech occasions.

The researcher, assisted by a researcher assistant, recorded the terms and their meanings for accuracy. The study also used a video camera and interview schedule as methods of data collection. The interview schedule contained open-ended questions which permitted a greater depth of response, which in turn gave an insight into the feelings, background, hidden motivation, intuitions, interests and decisions of the respondents (Mugenda and Mugenda, 1999). Triangulation enabled the researcher to maximize the validity and reliability of the research findings (Golafshani, 2003). The interview method was used whereby the researcher came face to face with the subjects using an interview schedule (Seliger and Shohamy, 1990).

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<sup>20</sup> Read Takada et al. (2006) used the resemblance metaphor which they called “social-cultural metaphors” in analyzing how a woman is perceived in Japanese

<sup>21</sup> Read Lakoff and Turner (1989: 172) who argue that GCB is a metaphoric cultural model which places all the things in the universe, human beings and their properties on a vertical scale of lower and higher levels. Hierarchically, from the lowest level is occupied by inanimate substances and things, plants, animals, human beings, society, God and the universe, respectively in that order. Each level has unique features of its level and all features of a lower level but lacks the features of a higher level which is superior.

The questions were presented to the respondents who are equally proficient speakers of their native languages to provide terms used to refer to other tribes and their gloss meanings in English. The data were recorded by the researcher and the researcher assistants for accuracy.

The respondents were required, using their intuitions and memory, to give terms in their native languages which refer to other tribes and give their approximate meanings in English. Interview schedules were used when data to be collected required respondents to describe their feelings, opinions, impressions and emotions in details and depth (Kabiru & Njenga, 2009).

The data collected was non-numerical (words) and analyzed both qualitatively and quantitatively. The data obtained through interview was presented in the ethnic languages orthography and a gloss provided. The recorded data were then transcribed and thereafter coded. The transcribed data were edited in order to come up with a clean and organized copy to facilitate recall of information. Afterwards, it was followed by translation of the terms from the different languages to English. To ascertain whether the terms collected were metaphors, we customized the four steps of Praggeljaz Group (2007) model of Metaphor Identification Procedures (MIP). The first and second steps (i.e. the identification of the words and finding their meanings after transcription and translation of the words), apart from the phrases, had been done by the respondents; the third stage, the researcher used a dictionary to check if the meaning given was different from the ones given by the respondents and the images associated with it. Finally, the researcher decided if the word was used connotatively, hence metaphorical or not, by applying the weighing scales of the Cognitive Metaphor Theory. There were 500 words given by the respondents with the required attributes. The researcher then picked only 150 words and phrases relating to the animal kingdom after sorting them out and classifying them into different categories by looking at the values that were related. A list of these categories was then compiled and a finite group of patterns and sub-patterns emerged. Similarly, the images they depicted were explained and the researcher proceeded to show how these words and phrases are viewed in the societies (basing on their social cultural values and mappings using the CMT).

The Great Chain of Being (GCB) metaphor (Lakoff, George & Turner, 1989; Kövecses, 2002) was then employed to show how by using the metaphor or metonym against the other community dehumanizes them and spreading enmity which can lead to ethnic conflicts. GCB metaphor allows us to conceptualize and comprehend human character traits in terms of nonhuman attributes such as animals, in terms of better-understood human characteristics.

## **Findings and Discussion**

The data collected from the respondents were identified as metaphors and metonymies by the use of Metaphor Identification Procedure (Praggeljaz Group, 2007) and the Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) as propounded by various cognitive linguists (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980; Lakoff, 1987; Radden, 2002; Kövecses, 2002, 2006). Next is a table summarizing the terms as collected from different ethnicities.

**Table 1: Summary of metaphors and metonymies collected**

TRIBE	TERMS	TRIBE	TERMS	TRIBE	TERMS	TRIBE	TERMS
Kikuyu	9	Kuria	6	Marakwet	4	Gabra	3
Luo	8	Maasai	6	Tugen	4	Bukusu	3
Luhya	8	Kamba	5	Chuka	4	Pokomo	3
Kisii	7	Meru	5	Taita	4	Maragoli	3
Nandi	7	Rendile	5	Keiyo	4	Samburu	2
Kipsigis	6	Somali	5	Teso	4	Mijikenda	2
Sabaot	6	Swahili	5	Borana	4	Dagodia	2
Pokot	6	Turkana	5	Pokomo	3	Burji	2

Table 1 gives a summary of the tribes and number of pejorative terms and conceptions about other tribes as collected from the respondents. It shows that a total of 150 terms and conceptions about ethnicity were collected from 32 tribes in Kenya listed above. These terms were based on the contexts of how the communities perceived each other politically, social-culturally, historically, economically and philosophically. The tribes that neighbor each other had more pejorative names than those living far away. The names came about out of the constant interaction with shared ways of cognition (beliefs, history, politics, colonialism, struggle for resources, culture etc.) and to interpret them, one needs to understand the context (Kövecses 2015). The ethnicities with a big population like the Kikuyu who have produced three out of the four presidents Kenya has had since independence more names, followed by Luo, Luhya, Kalenjin (Nandi and Kipsigis), Kamba, and Kisii and others respectively. These terms are stereotypical and fallacious because most of them are based on assumptions which are generalized but in most cases, they could not be true. The terms were identified by

Metaphor Identification Procedure (Pragglejaz Group, 2007) categorized and analyzed using CMT (Gibbs, 1994, 1999, 2006; Gibbs et al., 2004; Kövecses, 1989, 1991, 2008, 2010; Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). Metaphors convey the images, feelings, values, religious beliefs, philosophy, customs and thought patterns in our cultures (Coulson, 2007).

### a) Mapping Processes

There are different cognitive processes involved in the mapping and interpretation of the terms from or within the X and Y domains. In metaphor, there are two conceptual domains involved, one being understood in terms of the other, while metonymy only involves one conceptual domain, i.e. the mapping occurs within a single domain and not across domains (this is a conceptual shift in which one conceptual entity is mapped onto another within the same frame, domain or ICM) (Radden, 2002; Kövecses, 2005; Lakoff & Johnson, 1980 and Lakoff & Turner, 1989). The social cultural metaphor (Grady, 1999 & Takada et al., 2006) was then incorporated whereby the interpretations of the metaphors and metonymies depend on the social-cultural settings of where the terms are taken from (different ethnicities). The X and Y domains are defined by similar properties during the mapping. The different ways of perception (also the properties involved in the mapping), in this model, act as the X domain and the name of the other tribe or ethnicity is the same domain for the metonymy, but Y domain for the metaphor. This model fits in this study because specific qualities of the source as understood and perceived by different Kenyan tribes, are mapped onto the target (ethnicity). The metaphors and metonymies make sense when only culturally accepted features of the source domain are leaving out or hiding irrelevant traits (Lakoff, 1993 & Jackel, 2002).

George Lakoff's Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT), was combined with three models: the Great Chain of Being metaphor (GCB), the Social Cultural Metaphor and the Metaphor Identification Procedure (MIP) models. The discussion that follows gives a summary of how the different tribes conceptualize each other and their mappings. It is important to emphasize that a study of this kind requires an understanding of the political, anthropological, historical, philosophical, geographical, social and cultural backgrounds of Kenya as a country to discover various relationships and social codes that motivate the metaphors. Next, we discuss the areas mapped invoking the CMT, GCB and the socio-cultural metaphor models with a few examples of the conceptual metaphors and metonymies to illustrate the ontological correspondences.

#### **An Ethnic group is an animal conceptual metaphor**

Ontological Correspondence:

Source Domain	Target Domain
An animal	an ethnic group

According to Hart and Long (2011) animal metaphors are powerful tools for framing our relationship with the environment. The utilization of zoogenic metaphors in everyday communication to invoke certain images and convey particular information is common. Moreover, metaphors afford people an opportunity to construct social identities by conveying prejudices in favor of a particular social group that is considered as the normative in detriment

to those individuals who do not kowtow to this group, thus, reinforcing the contrast between “the self and the other” (Lopez-Rodriguez, 2009). Ethnicity discourses have exposed the leaders on how hypocritical they are, and don’t want to follow the Kenyan constitution which advocates for any employment to portray the face of Kenya that is ethnically diverse (The Kenyan Constitution, 2010).

The unfair treatment of different tribes especially by the governments that have been in power coupled with historical and cultural differences (Erikson, 1992), has led to the different ethnicities treating each other with a lot of suspicion and calling each other demeaning names. This has led to different ethnicities perceiving each other negatively and indirectly referring to each other, often leading to the use of metaphors and metonymies to avoid hate speech which is against the law. Consequently, during communication, they resort to using animals for effective interaction as a source domain to exclude other audiences seen as outer groups.

The use of animal metaphors in everyday communication to convey specific messages is common because metaphors mirror our perception, experience and understanding of the world (Muhammad & Rashid, 2014). Likening animals to human beings is aided by the Great Chain of Being metaphor (Kövecses, 2002; Lakoff & Turner, 1989). The conceptual metaphor, AN ANIMAL IS A HUMAN BEING, is applicable in this conceptualization of ethnicity in Kenya. The conceptual metaphor has several lower levels of schematic mappings depending with the ethnic group and the qualities of a specific animal. Labeling other ethnicities as animals is demeaning and pejorative because animals are at lower level in the GCB hierarchy. From the data collected, many ethnicities perceive others as animals so as to dehumanize and despise them. The relationship is perceived to be both metaphoric and metonymic. The entities mapped here are size, strength, shape and behavior of the different animals.

Table 2: Showing lower level mappings of the linguistic expressions and their cognitive metaphors

## Lower level mappings

LINGUISTIC EXPRESSIONS	COGNITIVE METAPHORS
The Abagusii conceptualize the Maasai as <i>abamanyi</i> or <i>chinsanako</i> (blackants)	A HUMAN BEING IS A BLACK ANT (TRIBE X IS A BLACK AUNT)
The Luo call the Kikuyu, <i>joka bimbe</i> (monkeys)	A HUMAN BEING IS A MONKEY
The Borana also call the Turkana, <i>goregerm</i> (gorillas),	A HUMAN BEING IS A GORILLA
The Abagusii perceive the Kikuyu ethnic community as <i>ebisusu</i> (hare)	A HUMAN BEING IS A HARE
The Borana also perceive the Rendile as, <i>war gala</i> (wild animals)	A HUMAN BEINGS ARE WILD ANIMALS
Marakwet ethnic group perceive the Luhya ethnic group as <i>teriit</i> (birds)	A HUMAN BEINGS ARE WILD ANIMALS

## Lower level mappings

LINGUISTIC EXPRESSIONS	COGNITIVE METAPHORS
The Luhya refer to the kikuyu ethnic group as <i>chinjukha</i> (snakes)	A HUMAN BEING IS A SNAKE
The Luhya also call the Kikuyu, <i>kamasilili</i> (cockroaches)	A HUMAN BEING IS A COCKROACH
The Marakwet refer to the Luhya as <i>sikirei</i> (donkeys)	A HUMAN BEING IS A DONKEY
The Luhya refer to the Kalenjin as <i>Chimbwa</i> (dogs)	A HUMAN BEING IS A DOG
The Kikuyu refer to other tribes as <i>omena</i> (dagaa) Others call them <i>mbuta</i> (Nile perch)	A HUMAN BEING IS FISH
The Kikuyu call the Somali and the Meru, <i>thambori</i> (goats)	A HUMAN BEING IS A GOAT

## Lower level mappings

LINGUISTIC EXPRESSIONS	COGNITIVE METAPHORS
The Borana refer to the Kikuyu, Akamba, and the Meru as <i>goljer</i> (pigs), the Marakwet conceptualize the Kikuyu as <i>tolā</i> (pigs)	A HUMAN BEING IS A PIG
The Borana also call the Dagodia, <i>warghala</i> (camels)	A HUMAN BEING IS A CAMEL
<b>METONYMIES</b>	
The Kisii refer to the Kalenjin as, <i>Chiombe</i> (cows), the Nandi conceptualize the Maasai as <i>pigabtichi</i> (Cattle Keepers), the Luhya refer to the Kalenjin ethnic group as <i>hikhafu</i> (cows)	PROPERTY FOR THE OWNER CONCEPTUAL METONYMY THE THING/PROPERTY FOR THE OWNER ANIMAL/PRODUCT FOR THE OWNER
The Borana refer to the Kikuyu, Akamba, and the Meru as, <i>goljer</i> (pigs)	FOOD FOR THE EATER

As seen from table 2, there are many lower level mappings. This corresponds to the different types of animals referred and depending on the attribute mapped (Jackel, 2002). Metaphorically, the Abagusii conceptualize the Maasai as *abamanyi* or *chinsanako* (black ants); therefore, the metaphor, A HUMAN BEING IS A BLACK ANT. This is because the Maasai used to fight with the Abagusii before the coming of the Europeans over cattle rustling at the borders. The Maasai were known to attack at night unnoticed like the ants, the implication being that they are hostile, harsh, primitive, arrogant, and savages who have no regard for human life.

The Luo call the Kikuyu, *jokabimbe* (monkeys); thus the metaphor, A HUMAN BEING IS A MONKEY. The Luo have a belief that the monkeys are the most mischievous and selfish animals (Bowker, 2013); they believe that the Kikuyu are selfish people politically because they can only support their own. This is just a stereotype but the perception is given credence because the two tribes have been at loggerheads politically since independence; rare for them to be on the same side of the political divide. The Borana also call the Turkana, *goregerm* (gorillas), giving rise to the metaphor, A HUMAN BEING IS A GORILLA. The Borana are brown, tall with lanky hair whereas the Turkana are black and decorate their bodies with tattoos making them look like gorillas to the Borana. It is a term meant to despise them that they are dirty people and animal like because of their dark complexion. The Abagusii perceive the Kikuyu ethnic community as *ebisusu* (hare; a small bodied plant eating animal with long ears seen in many African folk tales as a witty animal); therefore, the metaphor A HUMAN BEING IS A HARE. The hare is the concrete source domain whose conceptual structure (such as tricky, sly, clever, proud, independent, etc.) is transferred to the abstract target domain of a human being. The name is given to the community because they are viewed as tricky, rich, cunning, witty and sometimes sly (Hitchens, 2008) because they mobilize other communities to vote for them during elections but they have never supported any other community in leadership positions which is a negative portrayal in Kenyan politics (Kimenyi & Bratton, 2008).

The Borana also perceive the Rendile as, *war gala* (wild animals) because the Rendile live in the forest and are known not to have houses, as a result, are not seen as human beings, hence, the metaphor, HUMAN BEINGS ARE WILD ANIMALS. The qualities mapped here are primitivity, poverty and the bad behavior of animals from the source domain (animals) to the target domain (people) in this the Rendile ethnic group. Also the Marakwet ethnic group perceives the Luhya ethnic group as *teriit* (birds) because the community is known to be lazy with households having many children who are malnourished, therefore, seen as a community that does not bother on what to eat tomorrow just as birds that eat whatever comes on their way without bothering on the future.

Furthermore, the Luhya refer to the kikuyu ethnic group as *chinjukha* meaning snakes. This is an indirect reference to mean that they are enemies who pretend to be good but hiding ill feelings and motives. The Luhya also call the Kikuyu, *kamasilili* meaning cockroaches. The kikuyu ethnic group is the largest ethnic group in Kenya and is known to be all over the country. The group is associated with hard work. Sometimes the hard work is misconstrued to mean thieves who can employ anything to gain what they want sometimes trampling on other people's rights, thus compared to cockroaches which thrive in dirty places with dirty tricks. Also, the Marakwet refer to the Luhya as *sikirei* (donkeys) because the community is known to work as manual laborers in other people's farms and houses, hence seen as poor and ignorant workers sometimes taken advantage of and can't be leaders just like the donkeys in Orwell's novel (*Sutherland, 2005*). In Kenya's political arena, they are to be "used and dumped".

A dog is a domesticated animal associated with faithfulness, servant hood and security provision although, also perceived negatively as stupid or blind followers of others (Bowker, 2013). The Luhya refer to the Kalenjin as Chimbwa (dogs) because in the Kenyan security department is mostly manned by people from the Kalenjin community. It is a 'despised' profession because it is associated with <sup>22</sup>corruption. Therefore, the Luhya conceptualize the Kalenjin as corrupt and stupid who follow their leaders blindly like the way dogs follow their bosses.

Moreover, the Kikuyu, the most populous tribe in Kenya that has had three out of four presidents since independence, refer to other tribes as *omena* (a Luo term for dagaa; a type of small fish found in Lake Victoria); hence, FISH IS A HUMAN BEING. The qualities mapped here are the smallness and weakness, which derogatorily translates to mean that they can't be given leadership because they are few, weak and intellectually not endowed with leadership skills. They refer to themselves as *mbuta* (also a Luo term for Nile perch), meaning a big fish that is strong, rich and powerful with the same qualities transferred to the whole tribe. This is also in line with the orientation conceptual metaphor, BIG IS STRONG and SMALL IS WEAK (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980).

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<sup>22</sup>Ministry of Internal Security was labeled the most corrupt ministry in Kenya (Transparency International, 2018 & Mamdooh, 2019)

The Kikuyu call the Somali and the Meru, *thambori* (goats); thus, the metaphor, A HUMAN BEING IS A GOAT. The two tribes are known to chew <sup>23</sup>khat (miraa) which is food for goats and widely grown in Meru and some parts of North Eastern Kenya. The implication of the reference is that the community is poor and weak, therefore, not human beings because of chewing leaves meant for animals. The Borana refer to the Kikuyu, Akamba, and the Meru as *goljer* (pigs); consequently, the metaphor, A PIG IS A HUMAN BEING. This is because the Borana are predominantly Islamic and don't eat pork in keeping with Islamic *sharia* that considers pigs an abomination; on the other hand, the Kikuyu, Akamba, and the Meru are Christians who keep and eat pork and are hence seen as pigs to despise them because pigs are normally perceived as dirty and greedy animals, and subsequently, these are the qualities mapped from the pigs to human beings to degrade them (*Menchhofer, 1990*). Similarly, the Marakwet conceptualize the Kikuyu as *tola* (pigs) meaning that that they are greedy and selfish people who can't support other communities in Kenyan politics.

The Borana also call the Dagodia, *war ghala* (camels); thus, generating a lower level metaphor, A HUMAN BEING IS A CAMEL. Traditionally, the Dagodia kept a lot of camels because their land is dry and these animals are drought resistant. Camels are drought resistant animals which survive for a long time without water in desert conditions, carrying heavy loads while travelling for long distances. The qualities mapped are miserly, poverty and stupidity to human beings as the target. When human beings are perceived as animals, it is a way of demeaning them to show that the particular tribe is animal-like and primitive. It is true that the position of an animal in the GREAT CHAIN OF BEING metaphor makes its transference positive or pejorative (*Milić, 2013*).

### **Property for the Owner Conceptual Metonymy**

Metonymy is mapping that only involves one conceptual domain, i.e. the mapping occurs within a single domain and not across domains or ICM (*Radden, 2002; Kovecses, 2005; Lakoff & Johnson, 1980 and Lakoff & Turner, 1989*). The conventional metonym, THE THING/PROPERTY FOR THE OWNER (*Lakoff & Turner, 1989*) was extensively used by the respondents. The Kisii refer to the Kalenjin as, *Chiombe* (cows), because the Kalenjin are known to love cows so much; in fact, they believe that cows were given to them by God, hence, making them the true owners of cows. It was a common allegation from the respondents from other ethnicities that they are cattle rustlers (stole livestock from their neighbors).

On the other hand, the Nandi conceptualize the Maasai as *pigabtichi* (people who love livestock and its products). Similarly, the Luo ethnic tribe refers to the Maasai as, *Jokwath* (cattle); this is a true case for the metonymy: ANIMAL/PRODUCT FOR THE OWNER. The Maasai are known to be cattle keepers and by calling them so, is derogatory, therefore perceived as primitive. The Kikuyu call the Somali and the Meru, *thambori* (goats). The two tribes are known to chew khat, a kind of leaves eaten by goats which is widely grown in Meru and some parts of North Eastern Kenya. The Borana refer to the Kikuyu, Akamba, and the Meru as, *goljer* (pigs), because the

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<sup>23</sup> A plant which grows in the arid and semi-arid region of Northern, and North Eastern parts of Kenya normally food for goats but sometimes used as a drug that makes one lose sleep chewed mostly by long distance drivers

Borana are predominantly Islamic and don't eat pork. On the other hand, the Kikuyu, Akamba, and the Meru are Christians who keep and eat pork, hence seen as pigs to despise them because pigs are normally perceived as dirty and greedy animals (Orwell, 2009), mostly shunned totally by the Islamic religion. The Borana also call the Dagodia, *war ghala* (camels), traditionally, the Dagodia kept a lot of camels because their land is dry and these animals are drought resistant.

In addition, the Luhya refer to the Kalenjin ethnic group as *chikhafu* (cows). This is metonymical because the Kalenjin are known to be cattle keepers in Kenya, hence the conceptual metonymy, PROPERTY FOR THE OWNER. Similarly, the Luo ethnic group refers to the Kalenjin as *dhiang'dhok* (cows) with the same metonymical connotations of being cattle keepers; however it also indirectly means that they are cattle rustlers.

It is a fact that animals are extensively used metaphorically and metonymically to represent certain types of human beings with their behavior, in most cases they are used to connote negative meanings in many cultures because of the higher order form relegated to human beings compared to that of animals, as reflected in the Great Chain of Being (GCB) (Lakoff & Turner, 1989).

## Conclusion

In this study, we have expounded on the resemblance metaphor using the socio-cultural model (Grady, 1999 & Takada, 2006). In the light of the present research, it is evident that metaphors and metonymies pervade the lexicon of Kenyan mother tongue languages and show how different ethnicities perceive each other and form networks for conceptualization in concrete terms as animals, therefore the cognitive metaphor, A HUMAN BEING IS AN ANIMAL. Hence, besides structuring and restructuring the physical world, conceptual metaphors actually structure who we are, in this case, as Kenyans through the way we chose to mark ourselves when our forefathers decided to give us our designations in the world, our true, and as we still do when we create new ones.

In addition, metaphors depend on socio-cultural settings, and cognition is deeply related to our understanding of society and culture, therefore, the cultural specificity of ethnicity in Kenya should be appreciated. We can also conclude that metaphor unites reason and imagination, creating an imaginative reality to give an insight into the everyday experience (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980). Similarly, the interpretation of these terms depend on the context (historical, political struggles, colonialism, struggle for resources, ideology etc.). Furthermore, it is evident that metaphors create mental images, reflect the culture of people and create avenues for communication.

In a nutshell, in the field of cognitive linguistics, metaphor is no longer thought of as a mere decoration of language, but functions as a cognitive instrument. It pervades people's everyday language. Language and thought are correlated and indispensable. Since language is fundamentally metaphorical, the conceptual system that governs people's everyday talk, thought and even action is fundamentally metaphorical. Metaphor is regarded as a way of thinking about or conceptualizing the world. From cognitive perspective, metaphor functions as a "bridge" for people to gain a better cognition and understanding of the new, abstract and

not well-delineated concepts. Therefore, metaphor is adopted as an analytical tool in many discourses. However, the main deficit for this is “metaphors are selective and they represent a part, but not the whole, of the phenomena they describe” (Weade & Ernst, 1990, p. 133).

Finally, because of the primacy of the mother languages, we suggest more studies of socio-cultural metaphors and metonymies in other languages to enable a comparative study to determine how similar or different ethnicity is conceptualized in other countries. Also, the government should put in place strong institutions and mechanisms to prevent people from using some metaphors and metonymies in their mother tongues which boarder on hate speech, and people from demeaning others leading to ethnic conflicts. From the above discussion, we realize that mother languages are a big source of knowledge; we therefore, recommend more studies in different mother tongues not only in Kenya, but also, in other African countries.

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## Mother Tongue, Identity and Culture

Kiama Muthumbi  
Chuka University

### Abstract

Language plays a huge role in promoting relations between people. Mother tongue, in particular, is regarded as a key element in communicating culture, familiarity, social status and cultural identity. As Nelson Mandela once said, *'If you talk to a man in...his language, that goes to his heart.'* Mother tongue, therefore, brings about a sense of belonging and identity since when people communicate in their mother tongue, they are able to acknowledge their roots and appreciate the history of their existence. Mother tongue brings about the unique and distinct identity of an individual through the names and naming systems, artistic skills, knowledge systems and cultural practices that the individual adopts. Despite the numerous benefits of using mother tongue in promoting culture and identity, the evolution of culture in the contemporary world has acted as a hindrance to the use and growth of mother tongue. In many places in the world, popular languages have been held more highly compared to the mother languages and people have resulted to restricting the use of their mother languages to ritualistic functions. Language genocide is becoming more popular when people forego their own mother tongues and adopt other languages fully. The result of language genocide is the complete disappearance of languages. Efforts have been put in place to redeem the glory of mother tongue language. For instance, the International Mother Language Day (IMLD) adopted in 2000 to be celebrated every 21<sup>st</sup> day of February. People from all over the world have been able to use this day to explore the significance of mother tongue languages as well as to come up with ways through which mother tongue language can be sustained despite the current trends of language in the world.

**Keywords:** Mother tongue, Identity, Culture, Language, Naming systems, Language genocide.

### Introduction

In the growth and development of an individual, language is significant since one is able to communicate their thoughts, feelings, needs and emotions. As one grows older, language not only communicates what an individual is thinking or feeling but it also becomes an expression of their identity and culture. Mother tongue, in particular, has the ability to identify a person with a particular way of life (Albury, 2017).

*'If you talk to a man in a language he understands, that goes to his head. If you talk to him in his language, that goes to his heart.'*

**Nelson Mandela**

Nelson Mandela is a significant icon in the history of Africa due to the role he played as a leader in South Africa. Mandela understood the importance of mother tongue in communicating; he believed that it was the best way to reach an individual (Farhat, 2018). The concept of mother tongue is wide and there are many definitions to the term. Skutnabb-Kangas (2008) gives four definitions of mother tongue which are worth noting in this paper.

<b>Criterion</b>	<b>Definition</b>
ORIGIN	The language one learns first
IDENTIFICATION a.) Internal b.) External	a.) The language one identifies with b.) The language one is identified with by others
COMPETENCE	The language one knows best
FUNCTION	The language one uses most

**Table 1: Definitions of Mother Tongue (Skutnabb-Kangas, 2008)**

The first criterion used by Skutnabb-Kangas is origin; mother tongue can be the language that one learned to speak first. The second criterion is identification, which can be internal or external. Mother tongue as internal identification refers to the language that one identifies with while external identification states that mother tongue is the language that one is identified with by other people. The third criterion of defining mother tongue, as provided by Skutnabb-Kangas, is competence, which shows that mother tongue is the language that one knows best. Last but not least, mother tongue can be defined by function which refers to mother tongue as the language one uses most. The definitions provided can be applied depending on the context. Identity refers to the individuality of a person; the sense of belonging of a person towards a certain group. Culture, on the other hand refers to the shared customs, norms and values of a person that influences the thoughts, behavior and opinions of the person (Satyan, 2010). Mother tongue is a strong tool that is used to promote one's identity and culture since it not only gives one a sense of belonging to their native group, but it also helps one identify with the customs associated with that particular group (Satyan, 2010). Understanding and promoting the use of mother tongue is significant in passing down the traditions of a certain community from one generation to the next.

The purpose of writing this paper is to illuminate the importance of mother tongue, more particularly, through its relation to identity and culture. The information provided in the paper will also stress on the importance of using mother tongue as a tool of national unity rather than separation due to the differences found in individuals.

### **Mother Tongue and Identity**

The identity of an individual is the label that one attaches to themselves as belonging to a particular group (Owen, 2011). One such label could be gender identity, which identifies a person as male or female or a national identity where one can associate themselves with a country, like being Kenyan. The focus of this paper, however, is on linguistic identity and how one can identify themselves to their native language.

Many people, especially those in the developing nations have been experiencing significant changes in their traditional settings. Urbanization has taken root, not only in the industries and infrastructure but also at the grassroots level, the family setting. Growth and development are positive but on the other hand, they have their negative consequences. People have taken to ways of identifying themselves that have not been there in past. In Kenya, English is the major foreign language that has been adopted and rapidly gained precedence over the use of mother

tongue for many communities in the country. Swahili is a native language for some communities in Kenya, but it has also been spread over the country and taught in schools.

English and Swahili are the national languages in the country and their importance cannot be downplayed in promoting national unity. The problem comes when the children grow gaining competence in the two languages but fail to grasp the basic knowledge of their own native languages. A child may be a product of the intermarriage between a Kisii and a Luhya but they fail to identify themselves with either of the two ethnic communities and there comes about the issue of an identity crisis. At some point, the child may be confused as to which group he can associate himself with.

Mother tongue helps an individual gain self-confidence and self-worth as they interact with people whom they share the language with. Many people can attest that it is an exciting experience when one goes out of the country or is in a foreign place and they meet an individual who shares their mother tongue. The joy and excitement is a product of the identity that is shared with the individual. Mother tongue also cements the sense of belonging through the history shared in the language spoken. One may learn as many languages as they can, but true identity will be felt when they are able to embrace the beauty of their mother tongue by learning, understanding and speaking it.

#### Mother tongue and culture

*'Language, any language, has a dual character; it is both a means of communication and a carrier of culture'.*

***Ngugi wa Thiong'o***

Culture is a way of life, as is language (Owen, 2011). The mother tongue one uses speaks volumes about who they are (their identity), how they are (their culture) and where they have come from (their history). Mother tongue is unique in nature since it is a part of a certain community that came up with the language, has used the language and developed it over time.

Mother tongue communicates culture and it can be used to identify the individuals of a certain community to their native location since it communicates the specific components of an individual and their traditions. Through mother tongue, components like the names, naming systems, foods, knowledge systems, music or customs can be communicated from one person to another (Owen, 2011). Cultural togetherness can be enhanced through the use of mother tongue since there is better understanding between people who speak the same native language.

Culture can be a factor to the continuity of the use of mother tongue. As time goes by, people have taken the notion that mother tongue is not as important as it was some few years ago and, therefore, do not take much interest in teaching their children to appreciate their mother tongue. With the increasing efforts reestablish the importance of mother tongue, for instance, by having the International Mother Language Day, there may be hope for increasing the significance of the use of mother tongue in the world (Nguyen, 2018).

## Language Loss and Language (linguistic) Genocide

*'I am always sorry when any language is lost, because languages are the pedigrees of nations'.*

**Samuel Johnson**

Farhat (2018) revealed that 43% of the languages spoken in the world are endangered. There are approximately 6000 languages spoken in the world. In every two weeks, a language disappears. Loss of linguistic identity is the first stage of ethnic loss, followed by the loss of cultural identity, antonymic identity and finally, ethnonymic identity (Batibo, 2015). Language loss stands to be a great hindrance to the use of mother tongue languages in the world since it prevents the continuation of a language from one generation to another.

The causes of the loss of linguistic identity can be as a result of many factors. Political policies, educational policies, intermarriages, discrimination, immigration and lack of pride in one's mother tongue are some of the factors that contribute to the loss of a language. Taking discrimination, for instance, some people may not be welcoming to an individual who does not share their mother tongue and end up making offensive remarks about their identity. Such kind of discrimination may make an individual resolve to never using their mother tongue to avoid being insulted.

Linguistic genocide was first used by the United Nations in 1948 where the term was used to refer to the prohibition of the use of a language of a group (Rovira, 2008). Linguistic genocide was taken to be a crime against humanity since people, especially in education, were forced to use a particular language and avoid the use of another completely. An example of linguistic genocide can be the forced use of Portuguese in Brazil for the immigrant families (Rovira, 2008). The languages that are given preference over the native languages of people are known as killer languages. In the event when a language is prohibited from being used in publications or in speech, the identity and culture of the group of people is at risk of being lost. The people whose language has been suppressed will not be able to freely express themselves or develop themselves through their language. The long term effect of language loss and linguistic genocide is the extinction of an entire language group.

All is not lost, however, since there is a way to save the mother tongues from being completely wiped out. There should be more campaigns aimed at increasing the use of mother tongue all the way from the family level to the international level. Children should be taught their mother tongues from an early age so that they can identify themselves with their cultural identities as early as possible (Warren, 2017). In addition to that, the policies made in the country should not suppress the use of mother tongue but rather enhance the use of mother tongue across the country. Other languages should be learnt and used **in addition to** mother tongue and not **instead of** mother tongue. For the preservation of the mother tongues that are present in the world, records should be kept in writing, audios and videos for future generations to get a better understanding of the languages long after the pioneers of the languages have gone.

## Conclusion

In language, one's beliefs, values and culture are found, and despite the many definitions of mother tongue, it is certain that the use of mother tongue creates an enormous effect on the identity and the culture of an individual. The use of mother tongue may have been affected by other languages that threaten to 'kill' the native languages present in the country and the world but there is hope that the situation can be salvaged. There is pride and an increased sense of belonging that emanates from the use of mother tongue by a group of people and this should create a basis for the campaign for the use of mother tongue from the local to the international level. Despite the unique nature of mother tongues, the use of mother tongue should not be used to bring division between people in a particular society. The use of mother tongue should, instead, aim at promoting unity and culture in a country since cultural diversity is a positive feature in a country. All in all, mother tongue language is living wealth to a society and as **Jack Edwards** pondered, *'What is a nation without a mother tongue?'*

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Lucy Mandillah

Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology

### **Abstract**

Africa is still trapped in serious socio-economic and political problems that have placed her among the 'underdeveloped' Continents for decades. The problems range from poverty, diseases, political unrest, lack of moral values, among other problems. Among the mentioned problems, the Continent continues to be faced with the challenge of establishing peace and development. Numerous peace initiatives have been launched on the Continent. Vast amounts of resources have also been utilized to craft peace agreements which have often collapsed under the weight of competing interests. Therefore, it is necessary to examine whether there are other peace building strategies that can be adopted to complement existing efforts in promoting peace and justice on the Continent. Little attention has been given to the role of African indigenous languages and culture in an attempt to build peace and promote social solidarity. It is against this background that this paper examines the invaluable nexus between African indigenous languages, culture and development with particular emphasis on how African oral traditions could be used as vehicles of peace building for development in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. The paper is based on literature review of some African oral traditions such as proverbs, songs, taboos, totems and narratives whose subject matter is centred on the theme of truth, justice and peace. The paper argues for and demonstrates that African indigenous languages are an important resource for development and should be fully enshrined within the curriculum at all levels of learning, the Constitution and the language policies in order to develop, promote and preserve them.

**Keywords:** Africa's Agenda 2063; African oral traditions; Education: Culture; Semantics; Indigenous languages; SDGs

### **Introduction**

Africa is still trapped in serious socio-economic and political problems that have placed her among the 'underdeveloped' Continents for decades. The problems range from poverty, diseases, political unrest, lack of moral values, among other problems. Among the mentioned problems, the Continent continues to be faced with the challenge of establishing peace and development. Numerous peace initiatives have been launched on the Continent. Vast amounts of resources have also been utilized to craft peace agreements which have often collapsed under the weight of competing interests.

The achievement of the global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and their 169 targets and 304 indicators would create long-term economic benefits for the Continent and beyond. Consequently, the United Nations has adopted the view that "development is simultaneously economic, social, ecological and cultural" (Bartoli, 2000). However, the recognition that African indigenous languages are one of the major drivers and enablers for achieving SDGs has not been fully emphasized (Batibo 2000 ; Bamgbose 2011). Indigenous languages in African countries are restricted to a few domains of use and the less formal ones which undermine their use and survival. As a result, development in Africa has slowed down because important communication relies on foreign languages such as English, French and German. Ogunsiji

(2001) posits that, no other language can effectively displace one’s mother tongue for development. According to him, development can only take place within the social reality with which language is the sole determinant. For example, a nation like China has attained a development feat with the use of her indigenous culture, tradition and language.

Other linguistic researchers such as Wa Mberia (2004, 2009, 2015); Kanana (2011) ; Muhochi, (2015) ; Engholm (1994) ; Sapir E (1963) ; Ogunsiji (2001) and Wallnock, J. (1969) have laid emphasis on the use of indigenous language in achieving development. The thrust of their work lies in the fact that language is the hallmark of a people’s identity, needed in boosting their self-confidence, motivation and innovation that drive development.

According to Sapir (1963), language does not exist independent of culture. The relationship between language and culture is dual in nature in the sense that language is part of culture as well as a vehicle through which culture is expressed. It is interesting to note that Africa is one of the regions in the world with an extensive linguistic and cultural diversity of thirty percent (30%) of the world languages which translates to an average of 50 African languages in each country, (UNESCO (2003). This represents about a third of the world’s estimated 6,000 plus languages as illustrated in table 1 below:

**Table 1: Distribution of World languages**

<b>Region</b>	<b>Number of Languages</b>	<b>% Total</b>
Europe	230	3%
The Americans (South, Central, North)	1,013	15%
Africa	2,058	30%
Asia	2197	33%
Pacific	1311	19%

*Source: UNESCO (2003)*

In this view, researchers like Abdalla (1984) argue that “third world countries must see development based on the assertion of their cultural identity. Similarly, Ozumba (2004) advocates for the need of African countries to maintain their cultural heritages by striving to develop without complete westernization.

Consequently, it is necessary to examine whether there are other peace building strategies that can be adopted to complement existing efforts in promoting peace and justice on the Continent for development. In this regard, little attention has been given to the role of African indigenous languages and culture in an attempt to build peace and promote social solidarity.

It is against this background that this paper examines the invaluable nexus between African indigenous languages, culture and development with particular emphasis on how African oral traditions could be used as vehicles of peace building for development in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

As aforementioned, language and culture are prismatic paradigms for development, yet, they are being played down for the exclusivist employment of foreign languages, culture and value

system. This article argues for a radical need to revive the use of indigenous languages and culture in a variety of contexts. Thus, indigenous African languages contain information on aspects of life such as people's philosophy and worldview, peace and conflict resolution and social values. Such information is embedded in oral traditions such as songs, narratives, legends, sayings, riddles, proverbs, puns, similes and metaphors. There is need for such information and knowledge to be retrieved, preserved and used for the good of African societies towards the attainment of SDGs and Africa's Agenda 2063. This would enable Africans to remain focused and committed to the ideals envisaged in the context of a rapidly changing world.

## **Materials and Methods**

The paper is based on literature review of some African oral traditions such as proverbs, songs, taboos, totems and narratives whose subject matter is centred on the theme of truth, justice and peace. The secondary sources used included books, journal articles, daily newspapers, government reports, articles, seminar papers, MA and PhD theses. Data was qualitatively analyzed and presented thematically.

## **The place of African oral Traditions for Truth, justice and peace**

Sustainable development is anchored on three pillars: Social, Economic and Environmental dimensions. It is upon these three pillars that the results of this paper are based.

## **Conflict Resolution for Sustainable Development**

Maintenance and restoration of peace and security is a hallmark to sustainable development that is enshrined in the social and economic pillars of SD. The SDG 16 calls for the promotion of peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels. This could be achieved through the proverbs and oral narrative below:

### ***Proverbs***

(1) Agbajo owo ni a nfi so aya (Yoruba, Nigeria)

**Translation:** Unity is strength.

(2) Ajeji owo kan ko gberu dori Eni kan kii je awa de (Yoruba, Nigeria)

**Translation:** A single hand cannot lift a luggage to the head. An individual does not make a community.

(3) Ai kowo rin ejo ni n fi iku pa won (Yoruba, Nigeria)

**Translation:** Lack of unity in the community makes it susceptible to danger

(4) Kekur lala olgejep. (Samburu, Kenya)

**Translation:** Members of the same family are open to each other and can discuss anything

(5) Abaguma bobalwa amatumu. (Mashi, Congo)

**Translation:** Brothers who get along will always defeat the enemy

(6) Amalasiile namasiro okhuvira amaachi (Tachoni, Kenya)

**Translation:** Blood is thicker than water

(7) Botbeupeukbo be teunyen ban a boromevo'o. (Eton, Cameroon)

**Translation:** Major problems have solution with the old men.

(8) Akabiiya kakasiribungwa mumasika (Kabras, Kenya)

**Translation:** A funeral avails the opportunity for reconciliation

(9) Ametsulila keeranga olwikho (Wanga, Kenya)

**Translation:** When by-gones are revisited they kill relationships (Reconciliation, peace)

(10) Agba kii wa loja ki ori omo titun o wo (Yuruba, Nigeria)

**Translation:** The elders cannot be present in the market place and still experience a Phenomenon of wrong child birth.

(11) Enu agba ni obi tin gbo (Yoruba, Nigeria)

**Translation:** It is on the mouth of the elderly that the kola gets ripe.

### ***The legend of Gipir & Labongo***

#### **(12) Legend (Luo oral narrative)**

Long time ago, two sons of the King (Rwoot) had a quarrel over the spear and bead. Their inability to resolve the quarrel peacefully culminated in the death of Labongo's child in an effort to recover the bead and the subsequent separation of the brothers, Gipir & Labongo, one going North of the Nile and the other North East.

### ***Discussion***

Language is a double-edged sword. Whereas languages can be the cause of conflict, quite often, it is used for conflict prevention and resolution. Conflict management in traditional African society and even today is centred around traditional laws and customs expressed through oral traditions such as rituals, taboos, songs, proverbs, legends among others. The logic underlying the choice of oral traditions for conflict resolution is that indigenous languages enjoy an emotive dimension with their speakers than other languages (Wa Mberia (2009). Such oral traditions are considered with awe and obeyed by those they apply to.

By examining the legend of *Gipir & Labongo* (12) and proverbs (1-11), people can learn virtues such as unity (1-6), reconciliation/forgiveness (7-11), the importance of kin ship ties (4, 5 &6) and the need for conflict resolution by elders (7 &10).

The *Yoruba* proverbs "*Ajeji owo kan ko gberu dori Eni kan kii je awa de*" (a single hand cannot lift a luggage to the head) and '*Ai kowo rin ejo ni n fi iku pa won*" (lack of unity in the community makes it susceptible to danger) stresses the need for unity among people for peaceful co-existence.

On the other hand, a proverb from *Congo*, "*Abaguma bobalwa amatumu*" (brothers who get along will always defeat the enemy) and "*Amalasiile namasiro okhuvira amaachi*" (blood is thicker than water) underscores the importance of keeping strong kinship ties for peace and harmony.

On a similar note, proverbs such as "*Botbeupeukbo be teunyen ban a boromevo'o*" (major problems have solution with the old men) among the Eton tribe in Cameroon and "*akabiiya kakasiribungwa mumasika*" (a funeral avails the opportunity for reconciliation" among the *Kabras* in Kenya stresses the need for reconciliation and forgiveness which are also key aspects in peace and conflict resolution.

Similarly, the *Gipir & Labongo* legend demonstrates the side effects of conflicts such as displacement. The legend stresses the need for peaceful resolutions of the same. The legend can also be used to educate members of a community on responsive leadership qualities. Responsive leadership is one of the key aspect of conflict resolution. Chinyowa (2001) is in support that, oral traditions within the African culture is a way of passing on traditions, codes,

values of acceptable behaviour, as well as upholding and preserving good social order. Far from being a mere source of entertainment, the oral traditions help to shape the people's behavior, train their intellect and to regulate their emotions.

The identified legend and proverbs are still applicable in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century when Africa's main challenge for the next 50 years is the realization of the African Vision of "building an integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa, driven by its own citizens representing a dynamic force in the international arena". Within the context of Agenda 2063, the African citizenry expects that by 2023 a peaceful, stable and secure Africa would be realized. Thus, during conflicts, victims cannot productively contribute to development leading to economic, material and socio-political exclusions and estrangement such as unemployment, poverty, diseases, death, lack of education, alienation, displacement, rape and marginalization.

Some of the indicative implementation strategies to achieve the above target is to develop and/or implement mechanisms for prevention and resolution of conflicts at the local and national levels, including the use of alternative dispute resolution mechanisms. The use of oral traditions can be incorporated as an implementation strategy to help mitigate bloody conflicts such as those that were witnessed during the post-election violence in Kenya in 2007/2008, actual genocide in Rwanda, tribal and ethnic clashes that are still being witnessed now. This would also be a strategy towards the achievement of Aspiration 2 of agenda 2063 which calls for an integrated continent based on the ideals of Pan Africanism and the vision for Africa's Renaissance.

Furthermore, African indigenous languages are an important resource for development and should be fully enshrined within the curriculum at all levels of learning, the Constitution and the language policies in order to develop, promote and preserve them. Nakashima (2012) posits that the loss of indigenous knowledge has severe consequences for younger generations as it weakens their social capital, which may reduce their ability to respond to ecological and socio-economic challenges.

## **Conclusion**

This paper has examined the role of oral traditions to sustainable development. The findings from this paper have shown that the reverence of oral traditions by tribes in traditional African society was significant in enhancing peace, conflict resolution and reconciliation. The paper has drawn upon both literal and metaphoric meanings of proverbs and a legend a cross African tribes in Kenya, Cameroon, Nigeria, and Congo and their teachings as a way to highlight their developmental implications in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

The paper argues for the adoption of African oral traditions as one of the implementation Plan for the 10-year Science, Technology and Innovation Strategy for Africa (STISA-2024). The implementation of STISA 2024 is integral to achieving the AU Agenda 2063 and SDGs, based on the Continental aspirations for inclusive growth, sustainable development and social integration, drawing upon the potential of African people, for its delivery.

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The role of Indigenous Econaming System in Mitigating Exploitation of Wildlife Species and Habitat Loss: A case of Lubukusu and Lukabarasi languages in Western Kenya

1Makarios Wanjala Wakoko, 2Benard Angatia Mudogo  
Kibabii University <sup>1</sup>, Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology<sup>2</sup>

### Abstract

The language associated with the environment around us is a discipline worth of ecolinguistics study. Aspects of direct contact with seasons of the year, rare plants and animals and agricultural practices are very important from the point of view of ecolinguistics. The linguistic systems of the Bukusu and Kabarasi indigenous societies cherished different plants and animals by naming new-borns after them. By doing so the ecosystem earned a special place and was therefore venerated. This paper reports on the findings of an investigation that focused on the econaming system in Kabarasi and Bukusu societies that sought to ascertain the role of econames in mitigating overexploitation of wildlife species and habitat loss. The rationale of this position is that such practices have the potential to mitigate disruption of the ecological processes essential in maintaining long-term biodiversity. The paper also aimed at comparing the meanings and representations associated with the econaming systems in both Kabarasi and Bukusu naming systems. A combined method of data elicitation from Lubukusu- Lukabarasi and the native speaker's intuition was used to collect data. Animal and plant econames that relates to the environment were inferred for analysis. The indigenous Lubukusu and Lukabarasi names were correlated with the associated ecosystems among native speakers of these languages. The analysis revealed that the meanings associated with econaming system among the Kabarasi and Bukusu is one of the strategies that can be employed to ensure the sustainable use of wildlife resources and, therefore, to forestall problems of over-exploitation and habitat loss. The indigenous language practices are presented as more cost-effective, more socially acceptable and having minimal risk of failure.

**Key words:** Lubukusu, Lukabarasi, Wildlife species, Habitat loss, Econaming

### Introduction

The naming system is a reflection that shows the identity of the people. The paper sought to establish the names related to the environment (econames) among the Kabarasi and Bukusu, languages. According to Lewis et al (2016), these two languages belong to the Luhya macro-language of Western Kenya. The paper focuses on Lukabarasi and Lubukusu language practices which are manifested the naming system related to the ecosystem. The investigation is motivated by the fact that retentions of indigenous language practises have promising potential to enhance the cheapest sustainable resource use and conservation and, therefore, realize the desire for ecological and social sustainability.

Using examples and data drawn from Lubukusu and Lukabarasi languages, this paper attempts to uncover some of these potentials on which policy-makers and conservationists can capitalize to mitigate exploitation of wildlife species and habitat loss.

The Kabarasi and Bukusu have a rich tradition with respect to their naming systems where children are named after a well-structured system of kinship relations. In some cases, these names may reflect different plants species, venerated animals, and seasons of the year or even nature. In recent times however, the meaning of these names is continually becoming vague and others are completely getting lost. Lindo and Bundsgaard, (2000: 10-11) affirm this assertion by stating that as the environment changes, “the language level that changes quickly is the lexicon”. This change is influenced by three dimensions, including ideological, social or sociological, and biological dimensions (Widayati et al., 2017). There is therefore need to investigate and document the significance of indigenous traditional practices that have direct implication to the ecosystem.

This would establish the potential role of traditional African linguistic practices in contributing to conservation goals. In this light, the paper therefore investigated the structure and meaning of selected Kabarasi and Bukusu eponyms as one way of documenting the significance of such language practice in mitigating environmental degradation. These linguistic practices are presented as more cost-effective, more socially acceptable and having minimal risk of failure. Furthermore, the idea of revitalizing these linguistic customs coincides with the concept of reviving indigenous languages that contributes significantly to global environmental protection agenda. Furthermore, due to failure to recognise and incorporate the local communities in environmental conservation, considerable numbers of species in Kenya ecosystem are threatened with extinction, mainly because of anthropogenic impacts such as over-exploitation, habitat destruction, introduction of exotic species and pollution.

Ecolinguistics is the study of interactions between existing languages and their environment (Haugen, 1972). Thus, the ecolinguistic study focuses on changes in the physical environment of speech that have an impact on language change (Liebert, 2001). Theoretically, a language that is in a certain area has a close relationship with the environment and the speaker community. Humans as users of language and the environment as living spaces of language, influence each other. This is motivated by the fact that there has been minimal interest in the role of indigenous languages in environmental conservation measures in Western Kenya. This is despite the fact that although the use of wild species and their habitats remains the foundation for human survival all over the world, there is a huge risk of losing these species.

Kenya, like most African countries relies on external sources to fund its conservation programmes. The main sources are international donors and tourists from overseas. However, dynamics of political, economic and social factors undermine the reliability and sustainability of these sources. Reliance on external sources can, therefore, jeopardize conservation objectives. Traditional language practices, on the other hand, can be economically affordable

and sustainable compared to other strategies. For instance, no huge funds are required to make communities revitalize the economizing systems governing resource use and conservation.

### **The Role of Economizing in Ecological Conservation**

Gomez (1998) and Rucker (2005) note that names, as words by which reality is known and spoken of, are the most meaningful lexicon in the vocabulary of any language, and they are an important part of the language inventory as they not only name the environment, but also store all the distinctions about the fauna and flora. Traditional naming systems are common in virtually all traditional societies. Among the Kabarasi and Lubukusu communities in Western Kenya, the naming systems are significant markers of a person's part of belonging in a family and entire society. Furthermore, Harder (2008) identifies two different kinds of human names; personal names and first names. Harder (2008) further notes that a person's first name is also known as forename or Christian name among English speaking people while the last name is also called family name or surname. The last name indicates a person's family background. This paper neither focuses on family names that link the people with their environment.

The Kabarasi and Bukusu communities attach great value to traditional naming practices. In this regard, economizing can be viewed as mutual co-existence between the traditional societies and the ecosystem. It is, therefore, apparent that recognition of these economizing practices will be an important factor in complementing current economic incentives seeking to motivate people to support conservation efforts. Furthermore, as argued by Murphree (1993), support for such traditional language practices can help to undo a misunderstanding instilled by the colonial system among local people that nature belongs to the white man.

Reviving the economizing practices can also be part of a solution to inadequate funding which is one of the major constraints to conservation work. Current conservation strategies in Africa are principally dominated by law enforcement – an expensive undertaking calling for huge investment in terms of manpower, vehicles and firearms (Leader-Williams *et al.* (1990 )

Ecocriticism is based on the idea that the physical world and the human culture are connected and are affected by each other in the way the society uses language in relation to the environment. It can be reflected the relationship between the people and the environment they live as represented in language. Ecocritics study the ways nature is portrayed in the language choices and attempt to analyze their relevance with environmental crises. Hence the study of nature is directed towards an understanding of the imbalance of the eco system in the contemporary world. The present day environmental predicament is a sure result of the age old practice of exploitation of nature and abuse of the environment for the benefit of human civilization.

Language is comprised of values, beliefs and norms shared by a group of people. In this sense, language use may influence its users' perceptions of the world. Such perceptions may influence what users of a particular language consider important, and suggests courses of action that are significant to the environment. The rationale for current investigation seeking to revive and

promote indigenous language practices as a conservation option is backed by several arguments. One is that the use of such practices coincides well with the philosophy of co-management approaches that advocate sharing of power, rights and responsibilities between the state and local resource users (Berkes 2003). Furthermore, the fact that the local communities have regular interactions and are more familiar with wildlife and plant species in their environment than other potential actors makes them one of the best managers of the ecosystems, who contribute effectively to current conservation efforts.

The investigation of Kabarasi and Bukusu naming systems as part of ecolinguistic studies in is an attempt to document the significance of language practices in environmental conservation from ecological parameters, namely environment, diversity, and interrelationship, interaction, and interdependence (Fill and Muhlhausler, 2001). Furthermore, Agrawal and Gibson (1999) caution that failure to involve communities actively in management of their resources leads to destructive use of resources. In this regard, attention was given to the economizing practises as key in conserving the environment

### **Theoretical Framework**

The investigation is based on Sibee (2015) Evaluation Theory. Stibbe (2015, p. 84) defines evaluation as 'stories in people's mind; whether an area of life is considered good or bad'. In line with Stibbe's definition Evaluation Theory can be linked to language expressions from the opinions of speakers or writers with a number of semantic dimensions and parameters. Furthermore, language evaluation can relate to the assessment of entities or propositions, such as good or bad, important or unimportant, comprehensive or incomprehensive, possible or impossible, sincere or insincere, expected or unexpected. Similarly, Hunston and Thompson (2005) define evaluation as a term of expression of attitude or the position of speaker/writer's views or feelings about the form or proposition being discussed. This theory is relevant in analysing the relationship between econames and ecological conservation among the Kabarasi and Bukusu communities.

### **Methodology**

A corpus of both male and female names was selected. A random sample of twenty (12) respondents drawn from Lukabarasi and Lubukusu respondents were selected with each language group providing 6 informants. The main instruments of data collection were structured face to face interviews and native speaker intuition. In particular, data was drawn from a cross-section of ages, the two sexes and the sub-clans. Selected 50 proper names were analyzed ecocritically according to their forms and meaning.

In respect of the face to face interviews, respondents were asked to provide five most common and varied male names and an equal number of female names and their meanings as well as the circumstances of their use. The responses were recorded on a notebook. A backup tape recorder was used for future reference.

## Results and Discussion

Ecocritical analysis of the names under study involved semantic and pragmatic analysis of each name collected as well as an analysis and discussion of the semantic association of individual names to the related ecosystem. In order to carry out the analysis as well as the discussion appropriately, a framework of analysis is provided. The framework features three categories generating Lukabarasi and Lubukusu econames and these are: econames related to plants, econames related to wild animals and econames related to nature. These are discussed in detail in the following sub-sections;

### Econames Associated with Plants

With respect to plants, Lukabarasi and Lubukusu speakers consider specific plant species to be of religious and spiritual significance. Consequently, these species play a symbolic role in the naming system in the respective clans and tribes. To underscore the importance of plant species some families name their male and female kin after these plants as shown in Table 1 below;

Table 1: Table showing econames associated with plants;

Econames	Language	Gender	English gloss
Matore/Kutore	Lukabarasi/Lubukusu	male	bananas
Mung'onye	Lukabarasi	male	sugarcane
Nasokho	Lubukusu	male	Herbal drugs used for defence
Shimuli/Simuli	Lukabarasi/Lubukusu	female	flower
Nanderema	Lukabarasi/Lubukusu	Female	A type of wild vegetable
Nabalayo	Lubukusu	female	Green grams
Khaemba	Lubukusu	male	Type of sorghum
Mabonga	Lubukusu/Lukabarasi	Male	weeds
Makhanu	Lubukusu	male	simsim

With respect to econames associated with plants, the analysis consisted of semantic scrutiny of the collected names under this category as shown in Table 1. Data in Table 1 above reveals the naming of both male and female children after plant species that were revered. The econames reveal that fact that the Kabarasi and Bukusu communities have regular interactions and are more familiar with the plants in their environment which makes them the best managers these species, and could contribute effectively to their current conservation efforts. This is also in

line with different scholars, (Agrawal and Gibson 1999; Emerton 2001) who have cautioned that failure to involve communities actively in management of their resources leads to destructive use of resources. In this regard, communities can be actively involved in managing resources if their traditional practices such as econaming are cherished

Indeed, there exist both similarities and differences in the giving of econames in Lukabarasi and Lubukusu and Lubukusu languages. First of all, both Lukabarasi and Lubukusu make use of ecocritical principles in their naming systems. For instance, names of plants provide a significant source domain in how names are given. For instance, the physical appearance of a plant, and believes associated with them are used metonymically to stand for the personal names. For instance, a beautiful baby girl is named *shimuli/simuli* (flower) in both Labras and Bukusu communities. This means that flowers were adored and well taken care because of just as people would. Similarly, the naming of children by Lubukusu speakers as *nabalayo* (green grams) reflects how the crop was adored by the Lubukusu speakers. This would definitely result into efforts to cultivate and care of the crop. Secondly, the following common econames were shared by the two languages: *Mabonga* (Weeds), *Nanderema* (wild vegetable),. These shared econames may be said to be motivated by the common language group shared by both Lukabarasi and Lubukusu.

However, not all the plants econames were similar in both Lukabarasi and Lubukusu. For example, the name *mung'onye* (sugarcane) existed in Lukabarasi while *Nasoko* (herbal drugs), *Navalayo* (Green grams), *Khaemba* (sourghum) and *Makhanu* (Simsim) were found to be associated with Lubukusu. This means that each community had a unique way of giving econames.

### **Econames Associated with Wild Animals**

Wild animals provide one of the major sources of naming among the Kabarasi and Bukusu Communities. The collected data revealed that, to a certain extent, among the Kabarasi and Bukusu, people are sometimes likened to wild animals. In this light, animal names are often used to connote different characters attributed to the new-borns as shown in Table 2 below:

**Table 2: Table showing econames associated with wild animals**

<b>Econames</b>	<b>Language</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>English gloss</b>
Wamboko/Imboko	Lukabarasi/Lubukusu	male	buffalo
Vutalanyi	Lukabarasi	male	lion
Wangwe	Lubukusu/Lukabarasi	male	leopard
InzofuWanjofu	Lukabarasi/Lubukusu	male	elephant
Masibili	Lubkusu	Male	Dung beetle

Yiswa/Naswa	Lubukusu/Lukabarasi	female	termite
Nany'eni	LuKabarasi	female	fish
Kusimba	Lubukusu/Lukabarasi	male	mangoose
Nandemu/Inzukha	Lubukusu/Lukabarasi	male	snake

The data collected established that both Kabarasi and Bukusu communities coexisted with wildlife. For instance, children's econames were given on assumption that they reflected the character of the animal whom the child is named after, with the hope that the traits will be passed on to the new bearer of the name or discouraged for that matter. Therefore, these wildlife animals play a symbolic role in the respective clans and tribes. To underscore the importance of totemic species new-borns are named after the species. In this regard, animal names like *Yimboko/Wamboko* (buffalo), *Kusimba* (mangoose), *Nandemu/Yinzukha* (snake) and so on are often given to the Kabarasi and Bukusu male children who are likened to the wild animals that they are named after. Furthermore, totemic status is assigned to these animal species. Such cultural practise has a significant role in the species survival as they are less subjected to human impact, and are protected through language systems that prohibit their hunting, killing, consumption or destruction of their habitats.

Among the Kabarasi for instance, killing a totemic species a person is named after is believed to cause misfortune. This belief in the language practise has forced people to care for the sacred species. Colding and Folke (2001), lauds such cultural practises for their economic affordability, their reliability and sustainability. According to Campbell and Hofer (1995), African wildlife rich areas are threatened. This is attributed to wildlife poaching and habitat destruction, particularly due to increased hunting for home markets and pressure from local people to open protected lands for community use. However, the collected data revealed the potential significance of traditional econaming systems in thwarting depletion of wildlife species, which serves as a key incentive to the role of indigenous language in ecological conservation.

In this light, human population growth has profound direct and indirect effects the survival of wildlife-rich areas in Africa.

### 4.3 Econames regarding Nature

*Table 3: Table showing Econames Associated with Nature*

Econames	Language	Gender	English gloss
Kuloba	Lukabarasi/Lubukusu	male	soil
Shitoyi/Wetosi	Lukabarasi/Lubukusu	male	mud

Kundu	Lubukusu/Lukabarasi	male	beast
Kutsuru	Lukabarasi	male	forest
Nafungo	Lubkusu	Female	rubbish
Shitikho	Lukabarasi	Male	Well
Washisino/Nabisino	Lubukusu/Lukabarasi	female	virgin land
Namatsi/Mechi	Lubukusu	male	water
Shalo/Sialo	Lubukusu	male	world

Significant point of interest in the collected data about Lukabarasi and Lubukusu eponyms that concerns nature is how the process of naming is related to life and death. For this reason, the traditional naming system after nature among the Kabarasi and Bukusu command high loyalty among these communities due to strongly held beliefs that a failure to observe such naming rules could cause misfortune. A case in point is successive deaths of babies which may cause the parents to give up naming the latest baby after a person or animal of good virtue. Instead the baby is named after things that have the potential to ‘threaten’ the ‘spirits of death’ and this arises after the parent’s worry over the possibility of yet another death. This explains the custom of naming of children as *Nafungo* (rubbish), *Kuloba* (bad soil), *kundu* (beast), *shitoyi*,/*wetosi* (mud) etc. In this regard, nature was seen as larger than life for its possibility of defying even the most feared concepts like death. The invincibility of the environment gave it a special status in the ecosystem.

For the Kabarasi and Bukusu, nature was divine. The earth, rivers, hills, caves, and different other components of the environment held divine powers and destroying them was akin to playing with death. Children are therefore in some cases named not after personalities, but after physical features such as rivers *Kuthuru* (forests), *Namatsi/Mechi* (water) *Washisino/Navisino* (virgin land), *Washisino Nabisino* (virgin land), *Shalo* (world) etc.

Such names were believed to hold supernatural powers hence protecting the bearers of such names in their lives. Thus, generally, these naming practises are unambiguously accepted by society members, who believe that such names possess divine or religious power. This reality can serve as an entry point for conservationists in efforts to revive and promote the conservation role of these practises

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

The investigation established that loss of habitats in Kenya has contributed notably to local extinctions and vulnerability of flora and fauna in different localities, including protected areas comprising the rich wildlife species and significant forest cover. In presenting the potential of

indigenous language practices in ecological conservation, this paper began by recognizing two major global conservation problems; species overexploitation and habitat loss. The paper focuses on indigenous language practices as one of the strategies. In some parts of Western Kenya, conservation benefits immensely from these language practices, despite minimal recognition in official conservation policies, while in other parts efforts to revive them are essential. The paper recommends that policy-makers should accord greater attention to the economizing practises so that local people's conservation role is fairly acknowledged and potential synergies with conservation objectives realized. Further, there is need for more research on traditional cultural practices to unearth more potentials and possible avenues of contributing effectively and efficiently to conservation. Prohibitive laws should be relaxed to allow uses that are not destructive as a way of providing a link between local communities and resources and, therefore, incentives for conservation.

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Nafasi ya Lugha ya Mama/Kwanza (L1) katika Mtaala wa Umilisi katika Shule za Chekechea nchini  
Kenya.

Shadrack Opunde  
**Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology**

### **Ikisiri**

Makala haya yanakusudia kutoa misingi muhimu ya nafasi ya Lugha ya mama/kwanza katika mtaala wa umilisi nchini Kenya. Kwanza yanataja kwa ufupi dhana ya Lugha ya mama/kwanza, pili yatajadili mtaala wa umilisi katika viwango vya chekechea na ufundishaji wa lugha, tatu yatajadili utekelezaji wa mtaala wa umilisi katika shule za chekechea nchini Kenya. Lugha ni wenzu muhimu wa kupitisha maarifa, tajriba, tamaduni na amali za jamii mbalimbali. Lugha ya mama/kwanza ni lugha ambayo mtoto huayapata katika mazingira yake ya awali katikwa utoto wake. Mabadiliko katika mitaala ya elimu ni jambo ambalo hutokea mara kwa mara kutegemea mahitaji ya nchi. Kwa kuwa taifa la Kenya lina lugha nyingi za mama, mtaala huu hutambua umuhimu wa jinsi maadili na amali hizi za jamii zinaweza kurithishwa kutoka kizazi kimoja hadi kingine. Licha ya kwamba mtaala huu unatambua nafasi ya lugha ya mama katika kukuza wanafunzi kiakili, inasikitisha kuwa ni lugha nne pekee za mama. (Gikuyu, Luo, Kamba na Kisii) zilizohushishwa katika maandalizi ya dhamira, mada, stadi na nyenzo za kufundishia. Makala haya kwa hivyo yananuiya kubainisha nafasi ya lugha za mama katika kukuza na kutekeleza mtaala wa umilisi nchini Kenya kwa kuchunguza kifani nafasi ya Taasisi kukuza mitaala nchini Kenya, KICD. Aidha yatachunguza nafasi ya wadau wengine pamoja na nafasi ya mwalimu katika kutekeleza malengo ya mtaala huu.

### **Maneno muhimu**

*Mtaala wa umilisi (CBC), Lugha kwanza, Shule za Chekechea*

## **1.0 Utangulizi**

Nchini Kenya, mnamo mwaka wa 2019, Taasisi ya Kukuza Mitaala nchini (KICD) ilianzisha rasmi utekelezaji wa mtaala wa umilisi. Mtaala wa umilisi hutambua lugha ya kwanza na mazingira ya mwanafunzi kama nyenzo kuu ambazo mwanafunzi anaweza kutumia kujifunza umilisi kadhaa. Licha ya kwamba mtaala huu umeidhinishwa kutekelezwa katika viwango vya shule za chekechea na msingi, utekelezaji wake ungali na shaka hasa ikizingatiwa kuwa masuala ya kimsingi hayakuzingatiwa kwa mfano maandalizi ya walimu.

Mtalaa wa umilisi hutambua umilisi au ustadi fulani, na huwezesha wanafunzi kukuza kila stad kwa kasi yao wenyewe kwa usaidizi wa mwalimu. Mtalaa wa umilisi hujiondoa kutoka kwa mfumo rasmi wa madarasa, ambapo wanafunzi hujifunza somo hilo hilo kwa kasi ile katika kikundi cha wanafunzi wenzao. Mtalaa wa umilisi humwaandaa wanafunzi kimaisha na kumpa mwanafunzi stadi za kikazi zinazomwezesha kuwa kiongozi bora, aliye na mahusiano mazuri kutegemea muktadha, mazingira na aliye na uwajibikaji.

Wanafunzi hujifunza kibinafsi, badala ya kujifunza katika makundi. Wanaweza kukuza umilisi au ustadi ambao wanahitaji au wanaweza kuchanganya seti nzima ya umilisi katika

kufuzu kamili, katika viwango vya cheti, diploma au shahada. Mtaala huu hukuza mielekeo chanya miongoni mwa wanafunzi kwa kuwa wanafunzi huhamasishwa kuhusu haki za kibinadamu, utiifu na ukuruba mzuri miongoni mwao ( Wario, 2019)

Ikiwa wanafunzi wanaweza kudhihirisha umilisi au ustadi fulani, kupitia mtihani au aina mbali mbali ya tathmini, wanaweza kuruhusiwa kwenda kwa kiwango kinachofuata bila kurudia ya hapo awali.

## **2.0 Historia ya mtaala wa umilisi**

Mtaala huu ulianzishwa Marekani katika miaka ya 1960 kutokana na dhana kuwa, wanafunzi hawakuwa na stadi zinazohitajika kumudu maisha baada ya kumaliza elimu. Iltarajiwa kuwa walihitaji elimu ambayo ingewapa maarifa, stadi na mielekeo bora ili kujenga umilisi mpana wa kusuluhisha matatizo ya kila siku.

Mtaala wa 8-4-4 wa elimu ulianzishwa mnamo mwaka wa 1985 kufuatia mapendekezo ya Tume ya Mackay 1981. Mtaala huu uliongozwa na falsafa ya elimu ya kujitegemea kibinafsi. Mtaala huu ulikuwa mpana mno na haukuangazia elimu ya kiutekelezaji na ujifunzaji wa stadi za kiutendaji. Mtaala wa umilisi ulianzishwa kwa sababu mtaala wa 8-4-4 haukutoa dira imara ya kielimu katika kutambua na kukuza talanta za wanafunzi katika elimu yao ya mwanzo ili kuwaandaa kukabiliana na ulimwengu wa kazi.

Kutokana na ripoti ya kamati ya Jopo-kazi la Prof Odhiambo kuhusu upangaji wa sekta ya elimu ili kuwiana na ruwaza ya Kenya ya 2030 na Katiba ya Kenya 2010, Serikali iliandaa Session Paper No. 2 of 2015 kuhusu Ubadilishaji wa elimu na mafunzo nchini Kenya, Makala haya yaliongozwa na falsafa ya elimu ya taifa inayozingatia elimu kama nguzo kuu ya kukuza na kuendeleza binadamu. Elimu inahitaji kumwandaa mwanafunzi katika fani zote za maisha kiakili, kihisia na kihulka ili kuwa na mwanafunzi mwadilifu. Ruwaza ya Kenya 2030 na Session Paper No. 2 of 2015 hutambua kwa kina mchango wa sayansi, teknolojia na uvumbuzi (G.O.K, 2015)

## **3.0 Lugha ya kwanza (L1) katika mtaala wa umilisi**

Kimsingi, lugha ni chombo kikuu cha mawasiliano, fikra na kitambulisho cha jamii. Kila mwanadamu huzaliwa katika jamii ambamo lugha hutumiwa kufundishia utamaduni na falsafa yake. Taasisi ya Kukuza Mitaala nchini Kenya, (KICD) inapendekeza ya kwamba, lugha ya kwanza itumike katika ufundishaji wa maarifa na stadi mbali mbali katika maeneo tofauti. Lugha ya kwanza ni lugha ambayo mwanafunzi huipata katika mazingira yake ya awali na ni lugha ambayo mtoto anajua anapoingia shuleni. Lugha hii ndiyo huweka msingi wa kujenga maarifa ya wanafunzi..

Utafiti wa Worldbank, UNESCO na mashirika mengine unashadidia matumizi ya L1 katika kufanikisha ujifunzaji wa awali. Lugha hii inafaa kutumiwa kufundisha maudhui na mambo mengineyo katika silabasi. Stadi za kusikiliza na kuzungumza hutumika sana katika elimu ya chekechea kwa hivyo husaidia kukuza maarifa ya wanafunzi. Stadi ya kusikiliza humsaidia mwanafunzi kupokea habari na huchangia ujifunzaji wa stadi za kuzungumza, kusoma na kuandika katika Kiswahili. Stadi ya kuzungumza humwezesha mwanafunzi

kujieleza na hivyo kuzungumza ifaavyo. Aidha husaidia kuleta mahusiano mema na kutangamana katika jamii. Stadi ya kusoma husaidia mwanafunzi kujipatia habari na maarifa kutokana na yalioandikwa na kuimarisha kumudu msamiati wa wanafunzi. Stadi ya kusoma aidha hukuza hamu ya wanafunzi ya kujifunza maishani. Stadi ya kuandika ndiyo ngumu sana katika msururu wa stadi nne kuu za lugha. Humwezesha mwanafunzi kujieleza kupitia ustadi wa kushika kalama na kuonyesha herufi mbalimbali kwenye karatasi ambazo hubeba maana tofauti. Sarufi ni kanuni ambazo huelekeza matumizi ya lugha kisahihiki kimaandishi na kimatamshi. Mada ya sarufi ni muhimu kwa sababu hudhibiti kanuni za lugha ambazo humpa mwanafunzi umilisi ufaao wa lugha

Walimu wanakiri kuwa, wanafunzi wanapotumia L1 katika ujifunzaji, ushiriki wao darasani utaimarika na hivyo kuimarisha ujifunzaji wao. Kwa hivyo, ni dhahiri kuwa, umilisi wa L1 ni nyenzo muhimu sana katika ufundishaji wa maudhui mbalimbali katika mtaala wa umilisi.

#### **4.0 Utekelezaji wa mtaala wa Umilisi katika shule za chekechea**

Mtaala wa umilisi una misingi yake katika nadharia ya Umilisi na Utendaji ya Noam Chomsky (1968) katika mkabala wa sarufi geuza maumbo zalishi. Katika mkabala huu, sentensi ina umbo la nje ambalo ndilo hujitokeza katika usemaji na inapoandikwa na umbo la ndani ambalo huwa limefichika na kujidhihirisha katika umbo jingine wakati wa kuongea ( maana). Sentensi huweza kuwa na maumbo ya nje mawili tofauti lakini inarejelea umbo la ndani moja. Nadharia hii aidha inasisitiza kuwa, japo umilisi ni muhimu, utendaji ni muhimu pia katika kupima uelewa wa wanafunzi. Wanafunzi hawana budi kutenda kwa ustadi fulani baada ya kubwia umilisi.

Data za makala haya zilitokana na hoja na kauli za washikadau kadhaa. Baadhi ya hawa washikadau ni; Taasisi ya Kukuza Mitaala nchini Kenya chini ya Wizara ya Elimu, walimu wa shule za chekechea, vyama vya walime miongoni mwa wataalam wengine.

Katika majaribio ya utekelezaji wa mtaala wa umilisi katika shule za chekechea, lugha za kwanza nne (Luo, Kikuyu, Kamba na Kisii) zilitumika katika maandalizi ya dhamira, maudhui, mada, stadi na nyenzo za kufundishia. Katika majaribio haya, mbali na matumizi ya lugha nyinginezo, L1 ya mwanafunzi ilipewa kipaumbele katika ufundishaji wa maarifa mbalimbali. Hata hivyo, nchi ya Kenya ni taifa la lugha nyingi ikilinganishwa na zile ambazo zimefanyiwa majaribio.

Mtaala wa umilisi unanuia kumpa mwanafunzi umilisi katika sehemu kuu saba mathalan,

Kwanza, mawasiliano na ushirikiano. Uwezo wa kuwasiliana ni sifa kuu inayodhihirisha kujikomaza kwa mwanafunzi. Mawasiliano ni mchakato wa kuhamisha taarifa kutoka chombo kimoja hadi kingine. Aidha ni mwingiliano unaohusisha ishara kati watu wawili au zaidi katika kubadilishana mawazo, habari au maoni kwa maneno, maandishi au ishara. Mawasiliano humwezesha mwanafunzi kukuza fikra, hisia au mawazo ili kufikia lengo lililokubaliwa au mwelekeo uliokubaliwa. Ushirikiano unadhihirika wakati wanafunzi wana uwezo wa kutangamana na wenzao kwa urahisi ili kusaidiana wala si kuleta ushindani miongoni mwao

Pili, uwazaji na utatuzi wa matatizo, huu ni uwezo wa wanafunzi kukabiliana na matatizo yanayowakumba kwa kuzingatia misingi ya urazini. Mwanafunzi hana budi kupata umilisi katika nyanja hii ili kuweza kukabiliana na masuala ibuka katika mazingira yake ya kila siku.

Tatu, ubunifu, huu ni uwezo wa mwanafunzi kuweza kutatua changamoto ambazo tayari zipo lakini hazijapatiwa ufumbuzi baado au changamoto zilizopo kwenye soko au jamii kwa kipindi husika. Mwanafunzi hana budi kutambua na kutumia njia zilizopo katika kusuluhisha matatizo mapya yanayoibuka katika katika jamii kwa mfano mifumo mipya ya uzalishaji mali au teknolojia.

Nne, uraia ambao ni hali ya mtu kutambulika chini ya sheria kama mwananchi mwenye haki zote kama mzalendo wa nchi yake. Mwanafunzi sharti akuzwe katika kuipenda nchi yake pamoja na kulinda na kuheshimu vitu vyote vya nchi yake, rasilimali na itifaki za nchi yake. Wanafunzi sharti wafahamu kuwa wao ni Wakenya na utamaduni wao sharti uhifadhiwe kwa minajili ya vizazi vilivyo na vijavyo.

Tano, ujuzi wa kidijitali ambao unakuzwa wakati vifaa vya kiteknolojia vinapotumiwa kusikiliza, kuzungumza, kusoma na kuandika. Ujuzi wa kidigitali una nafasi kubwa katika kuboresha maisha ya mwanafunzi kwa sababu humuunganisha na jamii mbali mbali. Teknolojia ya kidijitali imepenyeza katika sehemu zote ulimwenguni na mwanafunzi anaweza kutumia fursa hii kujifunza na kuboresha maisha yake.

Sita, hamu ya kuendelea kujifunza. Elimu katika nchi husika kuwa katika tao kadhaa. Elimu ya shule za chekechea huweka msingi wa kujifunza wa mwanafunzi. Mwanafunzi sharti aweze kumudu masomo yote katika utao fulani ili aweze kupiga hatua katika ule unaofuata. Aidha inakuzwa wakati mwanafunzi ana ule uwezo wa kuweza kujisomea mwenyewe hasa wakati anapopewa kazi ya ziada na mwalimu.

Saba, kujiamini ambako kunahusisha kuweka maarifa na stadi alizozipata mwanafunzi katika kukusanya, kuchambua, kupanga na kuhakiki habari na mawasiliano kwa njia mwafaka zaidi. Aidha kunahusisha kushirikiana na wengine na kutumia mikabala ya kisayansi katika kusanisi, kukuza ubunifu, uvumbuzi na kusuluhisha matatizo. Aidha kujiamini kunahusisha kujitambua, kujenga ukakamavu, uwajibikaji kujitolea na kuwa na haiba ya juu. Hukuza wanafunzi walio na ukomavu, uungwaji mkono na uwasilianaji bora na hivyo kukuza viongozi bora.

Katika kutekeleza ujifunzaji,

## **5.0 Changamoto za utekelezaji wa mtaala wa umilisi**

ingawa hii ilitokea miaka michache nyuma, na tunayo ripoti kama hii ya KICD inayoelezea changamoto zinazokabili CBC, sina uhakika Kenya ilikuwa ikisikiliza. Hapa kuna Changamoto 10 zinazokabili Utekelezaji wa mtaala mpya wa msingi wa Ustadi nchini Kenya:

Kwanza, unatilia mkazo mahitaji ya waajiri bila kuzingatia maandalizi wanafunzi katika mabadiliko yanayohitajika siku zijazo. Waajiri kwa mfano huangazia sana umilisi na utendaji wa wafanyikazi wao kwa wakati huo bila kuangazia mabadiliko ya usoni.

Pili, ukosefu wa fedha- kwa sababu ya haraka katika mandalizi, majaribio na michakato ya utekelezaji, rasilimali nyingi za fedha zinahitajika. Rasilimali hizi zinazohitajika ni kama malighafi kadhaa, nguvukazi pamoja na nyenzo anuwai. Kwa mfano maandalizi ya walimu kupitia warsha na semina tofauti kuhusu mtaala huu mpya. Vile vile, ufanyaji wa majaribio kabla ya utekelezaji wa mtaala huu pamoja na tathmini tofauti kabla ya kutekelezwa rasmi kwa mtaala huu

Tatu, mtaala huu hufai katika masomo ambayo ni vigumu kuigiza umilisi fulani au ambapo ujuzi mpya unahitaji kutunzwa haraka. Umilisi tofauti huchukuwa muda tofauti kutegemea tofauti za kibinafsi za wanafunzi.

Nne, ni mtalaa ambao umeboreshwa na unaokusudiwa kuandaa makundi ya wanafunzi maalum na sio mtindo unaopendelea kufunza wanafunzi wengi. Hali hii hutokana na kauli kuwa kila mwanafunzi hudhihirisha umilisi na utendaji tofauti katika nyanja tofauti za kielimu.

Tano, Mtaala wa umilisi huhitaji mazingira na rasilimali tofauti ambazo hutofautiana kutoka shule moja hadi nyingine nchini. Kwa mfano kila lugha ya kwanza ina utamaduni tofaut ambao unafaa kurithishwa kutoka kizazi kimoja hadi kingine.

Sita, mtalaa wa umilisi ni mpya katika muundo wa kujifunzia na utekelezaji wake haupaswi kufanywa kwa haraka.

Saba, ukosefu wa waalimu walioandaliwa katika kutekeleza mtalaa huu. Semina na warsha za walimu zilizoandaliwa zilikuwa hafifu na hazikuwawezesha walimu kufundisha kwa kuzingatia utaratibu huu.

Nane, miundombinu isiyofaa. Mtalaa wa umilisi unahitaji madarasa vya kisasa, maabara, vituo vya ubunifu na teknolojia katika viwango vyote. Takriban shule zote nchini Kenya hazina miundo msingi bora inayohitajika katika kutekeleza mtaala huu.

Tisa, ukosefu wa vitabu vya kuelekeza ufundishaji huu. Vitabu vilivyochapishwa vilikuwa na makosa chapa kwa sababu ya ukosefu wa uhariri wa kutosha.

Kumi, unazingatia sana umuhimu wa umilisi katika ujifunzaji na kupuuza mchango wa jamii katika ujifunzaji.

## **Hitimisho**

Lugha ambayo mtoto anaijua anapoingia shuleni ni muhimu katika kujifundisha mada husika na maarifa mengine yanayopatikana katika mtaala. Mtaala wa umilisi umekita kwa misingi kuwa, ukuzaji na ujengaji wa umilisi wa kutenda ndiyo kiini cha mtaala huu. Mtaala huu unanuia kupima uwezo wa mwanafunzi katika mawasiliano kwa kuangazia uwezo

wake wa kuzungumza, kusikiliza, kusoma na kuandika pamoja na kujieleza katika lugha ya mazungumzo na ile ya ishara. Katika kufanikisha mtaala huu, kuna aina mbali mbali za umilisi ambazo hutegemea uwanja wa ujifunzaji. Mwanafunzi anafaa kudhihirisha weledi katika umilisi kadhaa ili aweze kupiga hatua katika kiwango kingine cha ujifunzaji. Ingawa muda wa kuwa na weledi katika umilisi fulani hutofautiana kutegemea mwanafunzi, shabaha ambazo mwanafunzi anafaa adhihisirisha kamwe haziwezi kubadilika. Hali hii hutokana na uwazaji wa kisaikolojia ambao huzingatia tofauti za kibinafsi katika ujifunzaji.

Lugha ya kwanza ina nafasi kubwa katika ufundishaji wa umilisi kadhaa katika shule za chekechea. Hii ni kwa sababu wanafunzi hujifunza kwa kutumia lugha ambayo wana umilisi kwayo. Lugha hii inaweza kutumiwa katika kufundisha aina mbali mbali za umilisi kama vile utamaduni, mazingira na stadi tofauti za lugha. Aidha hali hii itapelekea wanafunzi kujitambulisha na jamii yao. Kwa hivyo matumizi ya lugha ya kwanza ya mwanafunzi yanafaa yawe nguzo imara katika ufundishaji wa umilisi kadhaa katika mtaala wa umilisi. Wajibu wa shule ni kutumia lugha ya kwanza kama msingi imara wa kuibua na kukuza maarifa ya mwanafunzi. Licha ya kwamba taifa la Kenya lina makabila na lugha nyingi, Taasisi ya Kukuza Mitaala Nchini inahitaji kuwa msitari wa mbele katika kubuni maudhui, dhamira, nyenzo na falsafa za kufundishwa katika maeneo tofauti ili kukuza umilisi huu.

Kwa kuangazia umuhimu mtaala wa umilisi, wadau wote hawana budi kubainisha misingi ya kinadharia ya mtaala huu. Aidha mtaala huu ni muhimu katika kuwaandaa wanafunzi kukabilana na masuala ibuka, kupata mielekeo bora ya kimaisha pamoja na kujitambua katika jamii kwa ujumla.

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