KENYAN ENGLISH

DOMAINS OF USE, FORMS, AND USERS' ATTITUDES

EDITED BY
MARTHA M. MICHIEKA
AND **EVANS GESURA MECHA**

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EBSCO Publishing : eBook Collection (EBSCOhost) - printed on 2/10/2023 8:14 AM via
AN: 3064592 ; Martha M. Michieka, Evans Gesura Mecha.; Kenyan English : Domains of Use, Forms, and Users' Attitudes
Account: ns335141

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LEXINGTON BOOKS
Lanham • Boulder • New York • London

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Published by Lexington Books
An imprint of The Rowman & Littlefield Publishing Group, Inc.
4501 Forbes Boulevard, Suite 200, Lanham, Maryland 20706
www.rowman.com

86-90 Paul Street, London EC2A 4NE

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British Library Cataloguing in Publication Information Available

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Names: Michieka, Martha, editor. | Mecha, Evans Gesura, editor.
Title: Kenyan English : domains of use, forms, and users' attitudes / edited by Martha M. Michieka and Evans Gesura Mecha.
Description: Lanham : Lexington Books, 2021. | Includes bibliographical references and index. | Summary: "This volume treats the sociolinguistic reality of Kenyan English. The contributors give the readers a rare glance into various contexts of English language use, such as school classrooms, radio stations, an urban pulpit, and a multilingual family setting"— Provided by publisher.
Identifiers: LCCN 2021033514 (print) | LCCN 2021033515 (ebook) | ISBN 9781793641083 (cloth) | ISBN 9781793641090 (ebook)
Subjects: LCSH: English language—Dialects—Kenya. | English language—Kenya. | Kenya—Languages.
Classification: LCC PE3432.K4 K46 2021 (print) | LCC PE3432.K4 (ebook) | DDC 427/.96762—dc23
LC record available at https://lccn.loc.gov/2021033514
LC ebook record available at https://lccn.loc.gov/2021033515

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Contents

Introduction: Kenyan English or Kenyan Englishes? 1
Evans Gesura Mecha and Martha M. Michieka

1 An Empirical Study of Regional Variations in the Kenyan English Vowel System 7
Peter Nyansera Otieno

2 The Kenyan English Accent: Segmental Features 25
Joshua M. Itumo and Martin C. Njoroge

3 Error or Flavor: An Account of the Lexical, Phrasal, and Syntactic Character of Fossilized Errors in Kenyan English Grammar 41
Ann Hildah Gatakaa Kinyua

4 Teaching English in Kenya: Reforms and Challenges in Early Years Education 59
Benard O. Nyatuka

5 English across the Curriculum in Kenya: The Reality in Primary School Classrooms and Implications on Epistemic Access 77
Peter N. Mose

6 English Language Proficiency among Secondary School Learners in Kenya: A Case of One Kenyan Rural Subcounty 97
Daniel Nyongesa Khaemba and Eucabeth Ong'au-Mong'are

7 Patterns of English Use in Kiswahili-Based Kenyan Mass Media 113
Sarah Marjie

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8 The English Language and Media Reporting on Devolution in Rural Kenya 133
Nicholas Anyuor and Omukule Emojong

9 Pulpit English in Kenya: Examples of Mediatized Sermons in Kenya 149
Reuben Kigame and Leonora Anyango

10 The Shadow of English: Multilingual Parents and Language Choice in Urban Kenya 165
Leonora Anyango

Index 181

About the Contributors 185

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Introduction

Kenyan English or Kenyan Englishes?

Evans Gesura Mecha and Martha M. Michieka

The English language has diversified and developed into nativized varieties used in various domains for different functions. In former British colonies such as Kenya, India and Nigeria, for instance, English has been indigenized and become a mother tongue to many, but still a second or foreign language to others. Due to the varying contexts of acquisition, the users of this language exhibit various competencies and attitudes.

Scholarship on the English language in Kenya has been going on for a long time, and there is extensive research covering various aspects of this language and the Kenyan language scenario as a whole. The study of the form of Kenyan English, for instance, has been approached from various core linguistic areas such as phonetics, phonology, lexicology, and syntax (Buregeya, 2006, 2019; Budohoska, 2014; Hoffman, 2011; Schmied, 1990, 2006) or from the sociolinguistic aspect (Kanyoro, 1991; Sure, 1991; Kioko & Muthwii, 2004; Michieka, 2005).

Whenever the issue of usage by a Kenyan speakers is raised, there is a nagging question as to whether we can realistically talk about the use of a British variety of English, or a Kenyan English. Although some people might still believe that the English language used is the British English variety, given the limited exposure to that specific variety and the innovative ways Kenyans use the English language, we can conclude that the language in circulation is some form of Kenyan English. In fact, Kioko and Muthwii (2004) rightfully argue that our research should focus on describing the Kenyan variety of English instead of continuing to explore the existing deviation from the native speaker norms. The questions of native speakers itself has continued to be controversial.

Over the years, there has been a bid to establish and describe a variety that would be referred to as Kenyan English. At the onset, it was construed as a

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subvariety of East African English (Schmied, 1990, 2006). The underlying assumption was that since there was an East African community, the English acquired would be fairly uniform in the region. That the English spoken in Kenya is a subvariety of an East African variety is not the case. The ongoing research indicates that there is a variety that can be referred to as Kenyan English with a number of subvarieties: non-ethnically marked varieties such as White Kenyan English, and ethnically marked varieties such as Black Kenyan English (Hoffman, 2011; Otundo, 2018). To some extent, this state of affairs arises from the distinct language policies of the countries that constitute the East African community. Even within Kenya itself, the language policies have influenced the outcome resulting in varieties of English (Michieka, 2009, 2011). These varieties of Kenyan English, whether spoken as a first, second, or foreign language, are colored to some degree by the native languages that compete with English.

The study of Kenyan English has taken a life of its own as a research area. There are a number of papers that cover issues in relation to form. A book-length work such as Buregeya (2019) does an excellent job discussing the formal features of Kenyan English. There have been attempts as well to prove that written English shows a distinct choice of phrasal forms and vocabulary that is markedly Kenyan (Budohoska, 2014; Buregeya, 2006, 2019).

The competition for usage in a number of domains is dependent on the attitudes of the speakers and the availability of the language to the users. The degree of dominance of English is determined by the degree of prestige it is accorded by the speakers as well as its availability.

The papers in this current collection constitute a unique focus on the issues that have concerned language researchers in Kenya. Contributors to this edition zoom in on the English language forms and usages to describe the reality on the ground. They address questions such as these: What are the various forms of English used in Kenya? How is English taught and used in the schools? How about usage in the mass media, in politics, in the churches, and at home? While all these topics are not new and have been researched before, the authors in this book focus on very specific contexts such as language use in a primary school classroom, English as used from the pulpit in one urban church, or even language as used by one radio station. The contributors go right into the grassroots and capture the sociolinguistic reality of the English language presence in Kenya.

The first three chapters of the book take a closer look at the sounds and vocabulary of a variety that is clearly Kenyan English. Peter Nyansera Otieno in chapter 1 examines the data of an acrolectal Kenyan English variety as spoken currently across the main language types: Bantu, Nilotic, and Cushitic, by giving an acoustic analysis of read speech using PRAAT. The research draws the conclusion that Kenyan English, especially the one considered

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to be a standard and used by professionals, is characterized by a three-way divergence of a five-, seven-, or ten-vowel system. It is not one variety of English, but rather Englishes influenced and flavored by the local indigenous languages.

In chapter 2, Itumo and Njoroge utilize feature theory to describe the phonological segments of non-ethnically marked Kenyan English. Similar to what Otieno has done in chapter 1, this chapter shows that there are distinct characteristic features associated with the vowels produced by educated Kenyans. The authors then describe diphthongs, triphthongs, as well as consonantal features that distinguish Kenyan English from other World Englishes varieties hence confirming the results of Schmied (2006) and Hoffman (2011) that there is a non-ethnic variety that is uniquely Kenyan. This is the variety that Kioko and Muthwii (2004) report as being commonly used by Kenyan professionals and the one preferred by the Kenyan population.

If users of World Englishes varieties produce forms that do not meet the prescribed grammar rules, do they fall short? Are the forms that users of these different varieties of English around the world use errors or innovations? The work by Anne Hildah Gatakaa Kinyua in chapter 3 considers some deviations from the standard British English in vocabulary, usage, and syntactic output. These deviations can be considered to be "fossilized" in Kenyan English, and these fossilized forms are attested in mainstream media footage hence meriting linguistic analysis. Whether these are considered errors or dialectal differences is a debatable topic which Kinyua leaves for further investigation.

The variety of English used in Kenya is ultimately influenced by what happens in the school where English is taught as a second language or sometimes as a foreign language. The next three chapters underscore the important role played by the language-in-education policies and the education system in promoting the English language. Bernard O. Nyatuka in chapter 4 presents the evolution of policy in reforms targeting the teaching of English Basic Education in Kenya. The chapter outlines the key policy shifts and their impact on the teaching of English. Nyatuka makes some recommendations for effective language teaching, especially during the early years of a child's education.

Peter Mose in chapter 5 explores further realities related to curriculum implementation in the Kenya primary schools, especially those in the rural contexts. Using data from a qualitative study, this author highlights the challenges of using English as a medium of instruction across the curriculum and offers some recommendations on what can be done to improve the learning outcomes. In chapter 6, Khaemba and Eucabeth Ong'au-Mong'are take a closer look at the outcome of English language teaching by the end of high school. These authors, employing specific examples from the classrooms, show that the expected proficiency levels are difficult to attain, especially for students in resource-deprived contexts.

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Despite the challenges of implementing language policies, English continues to play a significant role in various domains. In chapter 7, for instance, Sarah Marjie takes a look at the nature of code mixing in mass media and, in particular, the use of English in Kiswahili-based media. The predominance of mixed codes in which snippets of English are included in Kiswahili and vice versa is analyzed. Marjie employs the Markedness Model to explain the discourse medley that is attested in the language used by journalists both in written texts and broadcasts. Another work that highlights the importance of English in the media is that by Anyuor and Emojong in chapter 8. These authors too underscore the importance of the English language in the new unit of governance, the sub-county, especially in communicating matters related to the recent devolution. The chapter gives the reader a glimpse into the attitudes of language users in this rural context, emphasizing the fact that the English language is still held in high prestige and considered essential in communicating matters related to devolution even to contexts where a homogenous indigenous language is spoken.

In chapter 9, Kigame and Anyango take a rather bold stance to argue that there is a Kenyan pulpit English. The authors claim that this pulpit English, especially as broadcasted in the social media, influences and is equally influenced by the Kenyan society.

We close this collection with Anyango's chapter: "The Shadow of English: Multilingual Parents and Language Choice in Urban Kenya." Using narrative research, this chapter presents the stories of multilingual parents raising their children in multilingual Kenya. This chapter contributor illustrates the varied contexts under which English is acquired. The author shows that the English-acquisition contexts in Kenya are quite diverse ranging from acquisition of English as a first language to the acquisition of English as a second and even foreign language. The multilingual parents interviewed also offer a glimpse into the attitudes toward the English language and language use in general.

In brief, each chapter contributor in this current volume discusses a significant issue relating to Kenyan English in a deeper and more focused way. By zooming in on issues that could easily be glossed over, this volume advances the knowledge of the forms, uses, and attitudes toward Kenyan English.

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Chapter 1

An Empirical Study of Regional Variations in the Kenyan English Vowel System

Peter Nyansera Otieno

In recent times, there has been an increased interest in the study of World Englishes. Despite that increase, acoustic characteristics of Kenyan English vowels remain largely understudied. Mutonya (2008) sampled speakers of English from across three countries in Africa which never captured their ethnic variations. On his part, Hoffmann (2011) sampled nine male acrolectal speakers from the Nilotic and Bantu subphylum which were not representative of the linguistic diversity of Kenya. Itumo, Maroko, and Nandelenga (2017) studied the acoustic features of non-ethnically marked vowels of Kenyan English. In this chapter, I go further to analyze the gender and regional aspects of Kenyan English. This study presents an acoustic analysis of acrolectal Kenyan English from the perspective of respondents drawn from three main ethnic blocks in Kenya: Bantu, Nilotes, and Cushites. The data that is presented here consists of nine male and nine female speakers of acrolectal Kenyan English reading the "The Boy who Cried Wolf"—a 250-word passage from which we have the context of 12 Received Pronunciation English (RPE) vowels. The data were analyzed using PRAAT version 6.0.36 (Boersma & Weenink, 2017).

That the vowels of English provide a significant challenge to non-native speakers of English is well-documented in the literature. Koffi (2012) argues that vowels too have a great propensity to contribute to regional variations of any language as it shall be shown in this chapter. This is especially so for speakers whose first languages' vowel systems have fewer vowels or different vowels than those in English.

English and Kiswahili are the two most stable second languages used in Kenya. Since independence in 1963, English has been used as the language of instruction in upper primary, secondary, and tertiary institutions. However,

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few studies have been carried out on this variety of English. According to Itumo, Maroko, and Nandelenga (2017), the English spoken in Kenya can be grouped into three: white settlers' English estimated to be spoken by about 40,000 (Hoffmann, 2011), non-ethnically marked Black Kenyan English, and ethnically marked regional varieties which form blocks according to the L1 spoken in the respective regions (Buregeya, 2001; Hoffmann, 2011). In respect to Schneider's (2007) dynamic model, Kenyan English is at the last stage of differentiation as Kenya is a long-established stable nation, free from external threat and thus has room for internal differentiation. The previous acoustic studies on Kenyan English (Mutonya, 2008; Hoffmann, 2011; Itumo, Maroko, & Nandelenga, 2017) all featured non-ethnically marked Kenyan English which was unrepresentative of the country's ethnic diversity and the consequences thereof remained undocumented.

The present study employed the source-filter theory (Fant, 1960). This theory contends that when a source wave passes through the vocal tract, the energy of the source is damped at various frequencies and amplified at other frequencies. For each vowel, the vocal tract takes different shapes and frequencies at which energy is amplified and damped. As a result, each vowel has its characteristic set of formant center frequencies as seen in vowels of various languages (Libermann, 1977, p. 30). The first two formants are notably important; the first formant (F1) relates to the height of the vowel and the second formant (F2) relates to the frontness/backness of the vowel. F1 and F2 are used conventionally to plot spatial acoustic vowel variants for any language.

KENYAN ENGLISH

English language is unarguably the most widespread second language around the world and even in Kenya. According to Millward and Hayes (2012), there could be over 2 billion speakers of the language worldwide. The English used in Kenya (KenE) is modeled after standard British English/RPE, though of late, American English (AmrE) is finding inroads. Several researchers have acknowledged the existence of distinct KenE that is structurally different from either RPE or AmrE (Itumo, 2017; Buregeya, 2001, 2013; Kioko & Muthwii, 2004; Mutonya, 2008; Hoffman, 2011). For instance, Buregeya (2013) investigated many grammatical features that are assumed to be characteristic of Kenyan English. Hoffman (2011) presents a phonetic analysis of vowels of non-ethnically marked acrolectal Kenyan English (henceforth: non-E-marked KenE) where he identifies features of the KenE vowel system. Most importantly, in a work that has a direct bearing on the present study, Hoffman (2011) reports that some vowel features identified are traceable

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back to the local L1 feature pool, the direction that this study takes. In this study, I give an acoustic analysis of the vowel system and variations that occur for KenE according to ethnic variations. All major language blocks (Bantu, Nilotic, and Cushitic) have a simplified vowel system, different from RPE in their unique sense. The ethnically marked KenE monophthongs are described and compared with those of RPE that have influenced the English spoken in Kenya over the years and have been taken as a "reference point" (Moyer, 2013, p. 91). The phonetic features of E-marked KenE are acoustically determined and compared with those of the RPE (see Deterding, 1997, p. 193).

The formant value averages for males and females as reported by Deterding (1997, p. 193) were taken to be the standard on which KenE formant values were compared with by this study. These results, however, never included fundamental frequency (F0) and quantity or duration.

The influence of Kiswahili, a regional lingua franca, is a big factor to contend with as it influences a lot the pronunciation of English and when looking at the vowel systems of E-marked KenE. The majority of Bantu languages have a seven-vowel system as reported for Ekegusii (Cammenga, 2002; Otieno & Mecha, 2019). Schmied (2004) points out that the majority of East African varieties of English tend toward a basic five vowel system of /i e a o u/ (Maddieson, 2003, p. 17).

The goal of this present work is to determine the E-marked vowel systems of KenE. No work has been done to identify and determine the E-marked characteristics of KenE. The majority of Kenyan L1s have systems with either seven vowels, mostly for Bantu languages, or ten vowels for Nilotic languages. Cushitic languages, that is, Borana and Somali mainly, have a five vowel system.

For this study, I collected data from Bantu and Nilotic speakers but of more interest were Somali speakers to represent the Cushitic languages. The Somali language is a member of the East Cushitic branch of the Afro-Asiatic language family. It is used across North-Eastern Kenya, Somalia, parts of Ethiopia, and Djibouti where it is an official language. Due to a civil war that broke out in Somalia in 1992, many Somalis left their country and are now residents in Europe and America where they still use their language actively. Somalis have had contact with Egypt and the Arabian Peninsula for centuries as many groups like the Italians, British, Ottoman, and Omani East Empires have colonized Somalia regions for centuries (Conway, 2008, p. 4). Gabbard (2010, p. 15) reports that Somali has five vowels /a e i o u/. Other vowels like /ɪ ɛ ɑ/ can be collapsed as /i e a/, respectively. These monophthongs have their long counterparts as vowel length is distinctive in Somali.

This study proposes that KenE can be mapped out according to three ethnic L1 language groups in the country. It augments studies already done on

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acrolectal KenE as proposed by Hoffman (2011) and Itumo, Nandelenga, and Maroko (2018).

METHODOLOGY

Sample

The sample size was 18 participants (9 females and 9 males) all of whom were either fourth-year or postgraduate students of 1 Kenyan public university at the time of recording of the oral data. At that level of education, having gone through an education system where English is the language of instruction, the participants are expected to represent acrolectal speakers of KenE. Each of the participants was selected based on having been born and lived in the place where they spoke their L1 from birth until they started attending school when Kiswahili and English are introduced progressively, and more importantly, they attended school in areas where their L1 was still the dominant language outside the classroom setting. I used purposive sampling, especially the network sampling technique (Milroy & Gordon, 2008, p. 32) where you find a respondent who will get to also invite a friend until you get enough participants, a technique Schilling (2013, p. 213) calls "friend-of-a-friend." In this technique, the researcher makes contacts by proceeding from the initial contacts to the friend of the first contact and then to the friend of the friends, capitalizing on a natural snowball effect. Three females and three males represented each of the three language blocks in Kenya (Bantu, Nilotic, and Cushitic) as shown in Table 1.1 b.

Data Collection

The data for this study were collected at the selected university between September and December 2019. This study followed the procedure outlined by Joungman, Blumstein, and Lahiri (1998) in the collection of oral data where an informant was made to sit in an annotated room or any place where background noise is reduced as much as possible. A headphone with an attached microphone was then placed in position. The microphone was placed 10–15 cm away from the mouth and inclining at 45 degrees from the corner of the mouth to avoid distorting sounds due to direct turbulence of air gushing out of the mouth.

Lexical Items

For uniformity, all the participants used the same lexical list. Each of the words had the target vowel that was under analysis (see the complete list in

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Table 1.1 Speakers Sampled for the Study

Speaker	*Gender*	*Age*	*LI*
SM1	M	25	Somali
SM2	M	28	Somali
SM3	M	24	Somali
SF1	F	24	Somali
SF2	F	23	Somali
SF3	F	25	Somali
NM4	M	24	Luo
NM5	M	26	Kipsigis
NM6	M	27	Luo
NF4	F	22	Kipsigis
NF5	F	23	Luo
NF6	F	23	Nandi
BM7	M	21	Kisii
BM8	M	23	Bukusu
BM9	M	28	Kuria
BF7	F	25	Kisii
BF8	F	24	Maragoli
BF9	F	25	Kuria

Source: Generated by author.

Deterding, 1997, p. 194). These words were measured and their first and second formant averages were taken as RPE standards against which E-marked KenE was compared to.

Data Analysis

Data were arranged into lexical items corresponding to a given monophthong as is in RPE. Melchers and Shaw (2011) indicate that lexical identity makes use of keywords intended to be "unmistakable" whatever the accent one uses. As observed by Ladefoged and Disner (2012), several acoustic cues give a guide on identification and description of vowel sounds on spectrograms and waveforms. The vowel segments have higher amplitudes since they are articulated with an open vocal tract. They are seen to be darker on the spectrogram because of their high intensity. The procedure for describing vowels was basically in terms of duration and formant frequencies.

An accurate representation of vowels according to Ladefoged and Disner (2012) requires the relative value of formants. This is made possible by calculating the mean, that is, the sum of all scores divided by the number of observations. To address the variations between speakers, and even within the speaker, normalization of vowel data was done as in (Lobanov, 1971). The mean values for each sound segment under analysis, standard deviation,

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and normalized values form the quantitative data for this research. Qualitative data for vowel sounds are represented in charts and figures.

The data recorded for analysis of vowels was downsampled to 11,025 Hz with the CSL 4400 software and analyzed with Praat version 6.0.32 by Boersma and Weenink (2017).

The data were then analyzed statistically using discriminant analysis. Statistical significance tests were also done.

FINDINGS

The monophthongs of any language are characterized by formant frequencies and duration that place each vowel at its unique position. The frequencies are measured in Hertz (Hz) and duration in seconds. Following convention, formant frequency values are plotted on what is called "acoustic vowel space" with F1 on the ordinate/vertical axis and F2 on the abscissa/horizontal axis. F1 normally pertains to vowel or tongue height position where the vowels take the reverse order, that is, the higher the F1 the lower placed the vowel on the chart (Rogers, 2000). F2 gives the frontness or backness distinction with back vowels having lower frequencies as compared to the front vowels. In RPE, the frequency of[ɪ] is the frontmost and [ʊ] is the backmost (Rogers, 2000, p. 153). F2 also stands for lip rounding with the rounded vowels having lower F2 values as compared to unrounded vowels.

In this study, I compared the formant results of RPE as posted by Deterding (1997), as the standard, with those of the various groups of E-marked KenE speakers sampled. Any variations were noted for analysis and description.

E-marked KenE monophthongs were grouped into three in this research: Cushites, Nilotes, and Bantu. Lexical items representing each of the RPE vowels were identified and presented. The results from each block were compared with those of RPE.

Results for the Cushitic Group

The following were the results for the Cushitic group.

From the earlier results, we can easily classify all the 12 RPE vowels into five depending on the proximity of the formant values. At this point, we can leave out a fundamental frequency that represents pitch and consider three formants: F1, F2, and F3.

Female informants as shown in table 1.3 had significantly higher values than their male counterparts (table 1.2) with a p-value of 0.0004. This means that females had different ranges as compared to males, and that was

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Table 1.2 Formant Mean Values for Cushitic Male Informants

Vowels	*F0*	*F1*	*F2*	*F3*	*Duration*
i	147	450	2371	2997	97
ɪ	146	402	2114	2636	48
e	161	432	1307	2616	70
ɜ	166	634	1745	2692	86
a	148	633	1574	2753	113
ʌ	132	641	1611	2643	115
æ	194	579	1752	2725	77
ɒ	152	535	1520	2571	94
ɔ	165	513	1480	2629	120
ʊ	178	431	1307	2615	44
u	186	399	1308	2728	91
ə	136	535	1226	2455	63

Source: Generated by author.

Table 1.3 Formant Means Values for Cushitic Female Informants

Vowels	*F0*	*F1*	*F2*	*F3*	*Duration*
i	221	405	2552	2951	62
ɪ	206	403	2203	3067	53
e	210	463	1792	2822	54
ɜ	207	499	1340	2645	121
a	218	629	1345	2926	95
ʌ	191	719	1783	3090	116
æ	244	664	1639	3037	44
ɒ	196	525	1584	2832	78
ɔ	211	555	1241	2811	82
ʊ	210	405	1417	2904	53
u	251	475	1381	2919	62
ə	193	553	1371	3066	30

Source: Generated by author.

expected since males have vocal tracts that are thicker and longer compared to those of females. That is why we cannot collapse the values for both genders together.

A careful scrutiny of the numbers above, both males and females indicate that /i/ and /ɪ/ are collapsed into /i/ by these speakers; /e/ and /ɜ:/ as /e/ although some informants produced /ɜ:/ as /a/; /a/, /ʌ/, /æ/ were produced as /a/; /ɒ/ , /ɔ/ were both produced as /o/ and lastly, /u/ , /ʊ/ as a single monophthong /u/. The vowel /ə/ went anywhere to the five monophthongs mentioned earlier depending on the spellings of the particular word where the vowel occurs since many speakers pronounce a word more often as it is spelled. This comes from the fact that in all Kenyan languages, orthography is directly related to the phonetic component it represents.

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In analyzing the vowels of any language acoustically, the first and second formants are most critical as they provide the plot locations for vowel spaces. Figures 1.1 and 1.2 give vowel spaces for each vowel sound as produced by Cushitic males and Cushitic females.

As can be seen from these figures, for the Cushitic speakers, the various vowels are clustered together and not like they are in RPE plots.

To capture better the vowel acoustic concentration, the frequency means are normalized using Lobanov (1971) algorithm. Lobanov's technique involves estimating a formant's position in a linear range and can be read as

$$F^{*}N\left[V\right]s=\left(FN\left[V\right]s\text{ - }MNs\right)/SNs$$

Where: MNs = the mean for the subjects on the formant in question
SNs = the Standard deviation for the subjects on formant N.

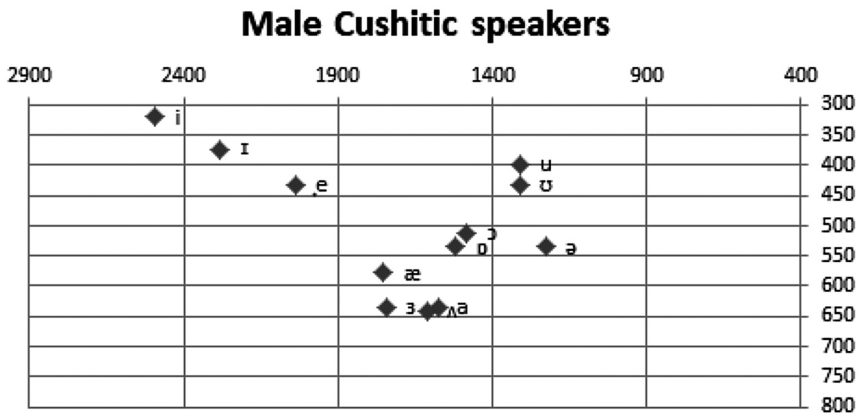

Figure 1.1 F2 × F2 Plot for Cushitic Male Speakers. *Source:* Generated by author.

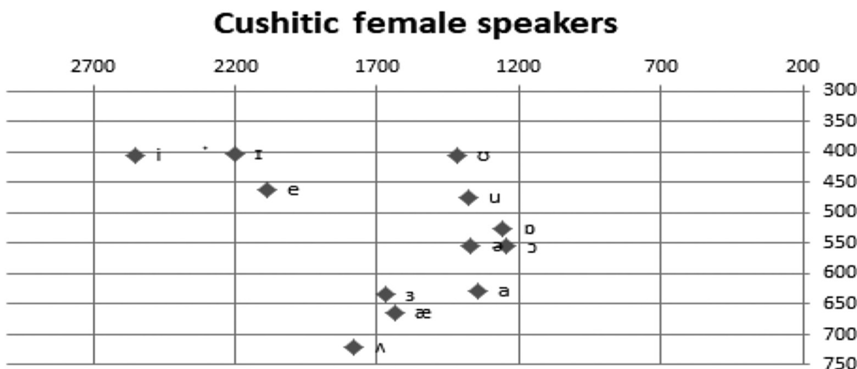

Figure 1.2 F2 × F2 Plot for Cushitic Female Speakers. *Source:* Generated by author.

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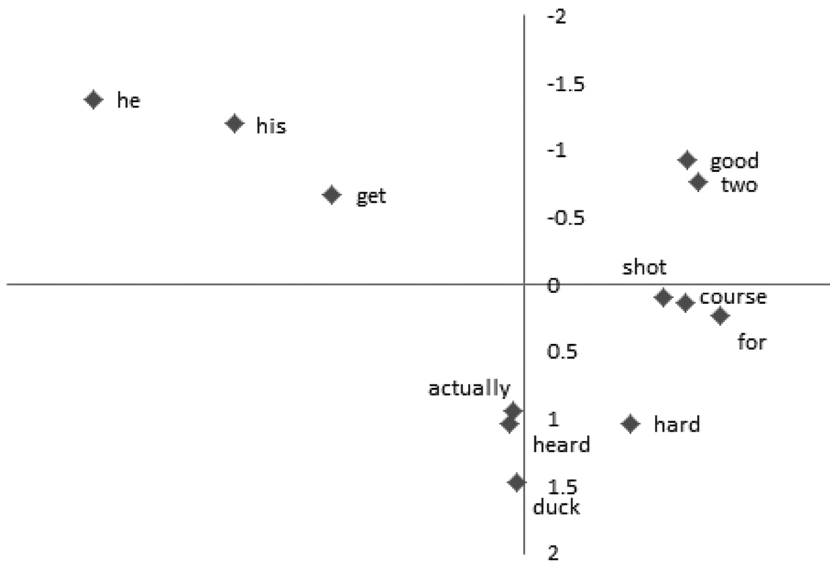

Figure 1.3 Lobanov Normalized Vowel Chart for Cushitic Speakers. *Source:* Generated by author.

This algorithm is among the best normalization procedure (Adank, 2003) since it can maintain the sociolinguistic characteristics of the informants, including characteristics like gender and regional variation. Figure 1.3 gives the dispersion of vowels on the vowel space.

After normalization, F1 which corresponds to tongue height of vowels articulated, and F2 which corresponds with frontness or backness of a vowel give about five vowel positions for the Cushitic speakers. The high front vowels [i ɪ] are taken as one monophthong. The mid-high vowel [e] is next, then [ɜ ʌ æ a] all occupy the same space hence collapsed as [a]. For the back vowels, [ɒ ɔ] occupy the mid-low position while [u ʊ] are high back. These analyses roughly give us only five vowels which are [i e a ɔ u] and this corresponds to the L1 vowel inventory for Cushitic speakers.

Results for the Nilotic Group

The following are the results for the Nilotic speakers whose average means are later compared to those of RPE to see how they correlate.

From tables 1.4 and 1.5, we observe the expected difference between the values of females and those of males ($p = 0.03$). More than that, the figures

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Table 1.4 Formant Means Values for Nilotic Male Informants

Vowels	*F0*	*F1*	*F2*	*F3*	*Duration*
i	111	236	2443	3068	60
ɪ	113	282	2428	2655	84
e	148	396	2119	2632	69
ɜ	114	489	1920	2450	111
a	114	743	1520	2540	113
ʌ	105	654	1505	2414	126
æ	115	610	1303	3017	53
ɒ	117	555	886	2531	84
ɔ	124	520	991	2912	95
ʊ	104	300	716	2237	83
u	124	341	767	2668	121
ə	105	547	917	2282	80

Source: Generated by author.

Table 1.5 Formant Means Values for Nilotic Female Informants

Vowels	*F0*	*F1*	*F2*	*F3*	*Duration*
i	224	264	2525	3283	53
ɪ	225	314	2456	3224	106
e	229	429	2270	2891	84
ɜ	242	699	1852	2980	105
a	236	896	1593	2492	80
ʌ	212	706	1683	2839	107
æ	243	535	1635	2935	66
ɒ	217	523	1384	2502	99
ɔ	234	535	1051	2944	147
ʊ	239	362	815	2656	60
u	266	274	752	2253	74
ə	214	578	1226	2647	102

Source: Generated by author.

have some semblance to the RPE values for the majority of vowels in the following manner. Figures 1.4 and 1.5 show the plots for Nilotic speakers.

The results for F1 for the Nilotic speakers show no evidence of overlap among the front vowels [i ɪ e ɜ], and also back vowels [u ʊ ɔ] are distinct. Overlap is witnessed in low and central vowels. The Nilotic speakers presented a bigger array of vowels than other groups under study. When applying the Lobanov (1971) algorithm, the vowels took the arrangement as seen in figure 1.6.

Figure 1.6 confirms the assertion that Nilotic speakers have more vowel points than the Cushitic speakers seen before. For the Nilotic speakers, there are nine vowels realized as [i ɪ e ɛ ʌ a ɔ ʊ u].

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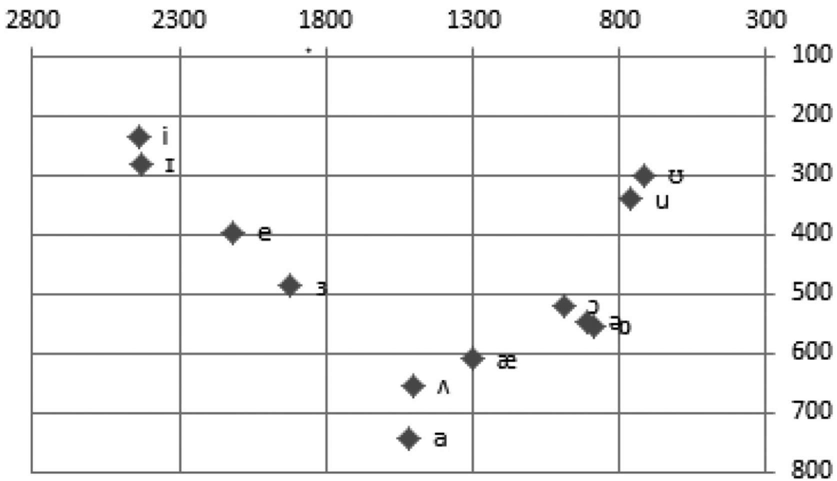

Figure 1.4 F2 × F2 Plot for Nilotic Male Speakers. *Source:* Generated by author.

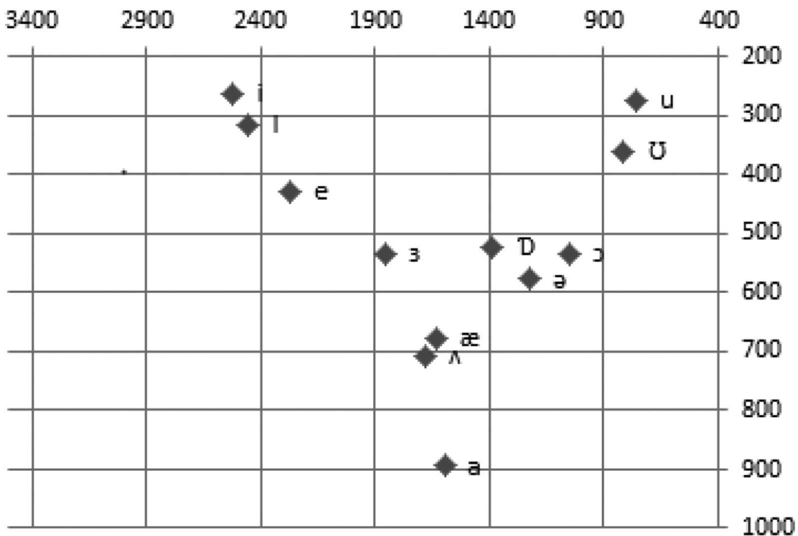

Figure 1.5 F2 × F2 Plot for Nilotic Female Speakers. *Source:* Generated by author.

Results for Bantu Group

The majority of Bantu speakers sampled for this study have L1 with seven-vowel systems as reported by Otieno, Mecha, and Opande (2020) for Ekegusii. Tables 1.6 and 1.7 give the results for Bantu speakers.

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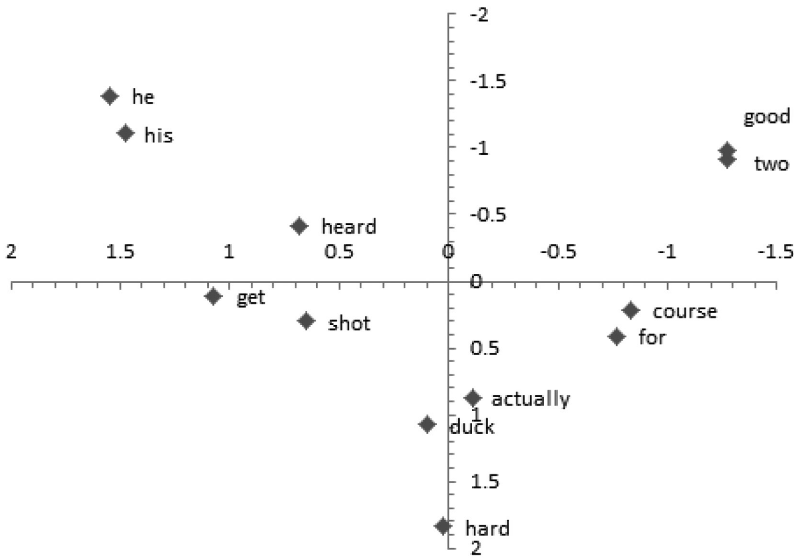

Figure 1.6 Lobanov Normalized Vowel Chart for Nilotic Speakers. *Source:* Generated by author.

Table 1.6 Formant Mean Values for Bantu Male Informants

Vowels	*F0*	*F1*	*F2*	*F3*	*Duration*
i	112	304	2573	3122	107
ɪ	113	347	2562	3039	89
e	108	470	2193	2713	52
ɜ	102	714	1760	2814	124
a	104	706	1764	2486	141
ʌ	107	740	1773	2850	107
æ	107	734	1750	2803	105
ɒ	106	534	1220	2841	93
ɔ	115	570	1121	2492	116
ʊ	120	334	979	2445	75
u	112	347	823	2429	86
ə	93	386	1099	2467	72

Source: Generated by author

There is a slight variation between the scores for females and males as seen for other groups above with a significant difference of $p = 0.0002$. Besides that the general dispersal of vowels within acoustic vowel space is similar between genders. This can be appreciated better when the points are plotted for F2 × F1 as shown in figures 1.7 and 1.8.

For Bantu speakers, we can trace out the V-shape trajectory for vowel segments on the chart. Front high vowels in RPE [i, ɪ] are pooled close together.

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Table 1.7 Formant Mean Values for Bantu Female Informants

Vowels	*F0*	*F1*	*F2*	*F3*	*Duration*
i	207	316	2516	3231	110
ɪ	196	352	2355	3166	99
e	199	505	2164	3021	72
ɜ	191	652	2056	3171	137
a	192	749	1918	2994	135
ʌ	191	716	1973	3159	102
æ	190	676	1710	2865	62
ɒ	204	584	1435	2786	100
ɔ	184	481	1080	2871	138
ʊ	187	383	1109	3202	86
u	221	385	1167	3048	95
ə	181	467	1142	3061	92

Source: Generated by author.

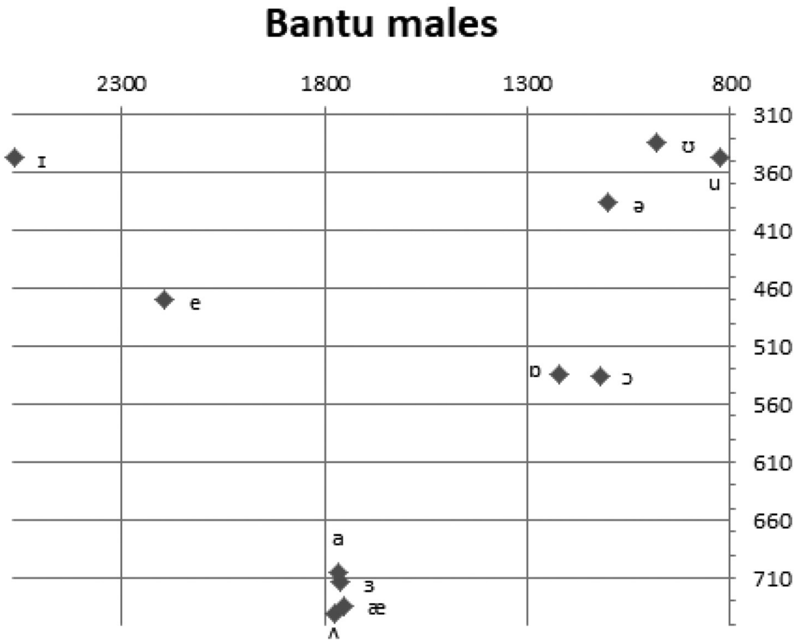

Figure 1.7 F2 × F1 Plot for Bantu Males. *Source:* Generated by author.

The same applies for [ɜ, ʌ, æ, a] that seem to be collapsed to [a]. There is a lot of overlap between the central vowels and back vowels. The schwa [ə], owing to its spelling, is taken as [ɔ]. Both [u ʊ] are collapsed into just [u].

Figure 1.9 gives normalized vowel plots for Bantu speakers. Note the chart's V-shaped arrangement of vowels. A careful analysis reveals a seven-vowel system as reported by Otieno and Mecha (2019).

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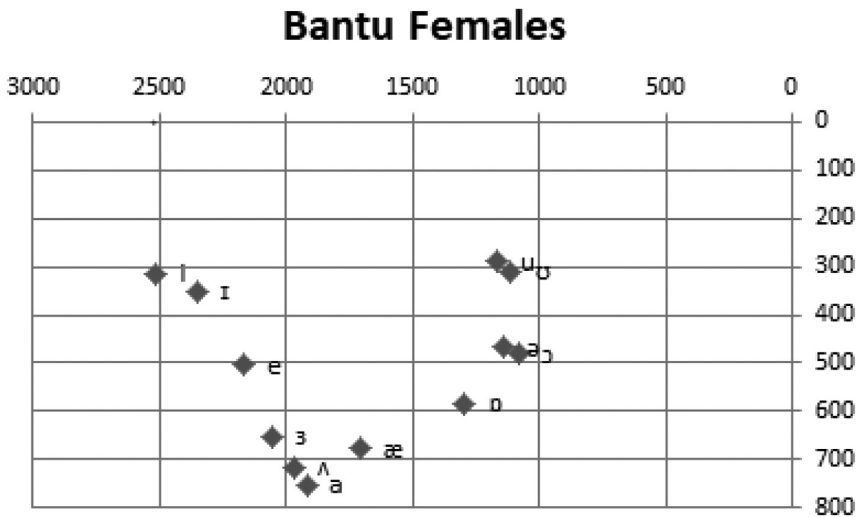

Figure 1.8 F2 × F1 Plot for Bantu Females. *Source:* Generated by author.

DISCRIMINANT ANALYSIS

Discriminant analyses for various groups reveal that original grouped cases were correctly classified by between 65% and 72%. Cushitic speakers had 65.3% of original cases correctly classified. This is lower than that reported by Paterson and Barney (1952) of 67%. The vowels were given numbers (1–12) depending on the arrangement [i ɪ e ɜ a ʌ æ ɒ ɔ ʊ u ə]. Vowel number ten [ʊ] having the lowest classification rating of 16.7%, followed by [u] at 50%. [e] and [æ] had the highest classification rates of 100%.

Nilotic speakers had a higher classification rate as 72.2% of original grouped cases were correctly classified. The vowels [i e ɜ] had the highest classification rates of 100% while [ʊ] and [ə] had the lowest classification rate of 16.7% and 33.3%, respectively. Nilotic speakers seem to have a higher approximation for the various vowels since their L1 vowel inventory has up to 10 vowels out of the 12 RPE vowels under study here.

The last group was for the Bantu speakers. The speakers had 69.4% of original cases correctly classified which was higher than the Cushitic speakers at 65.3% and lower than Nilotic speakers at 72.2%. Vowels [i ɪ e ə] had the highest classification rate at 100% while [a] had the lowest classification at 50%. It seems, here, that the more the vowels are in the L1 vowel system of speakers, the higher the correct classification rate.

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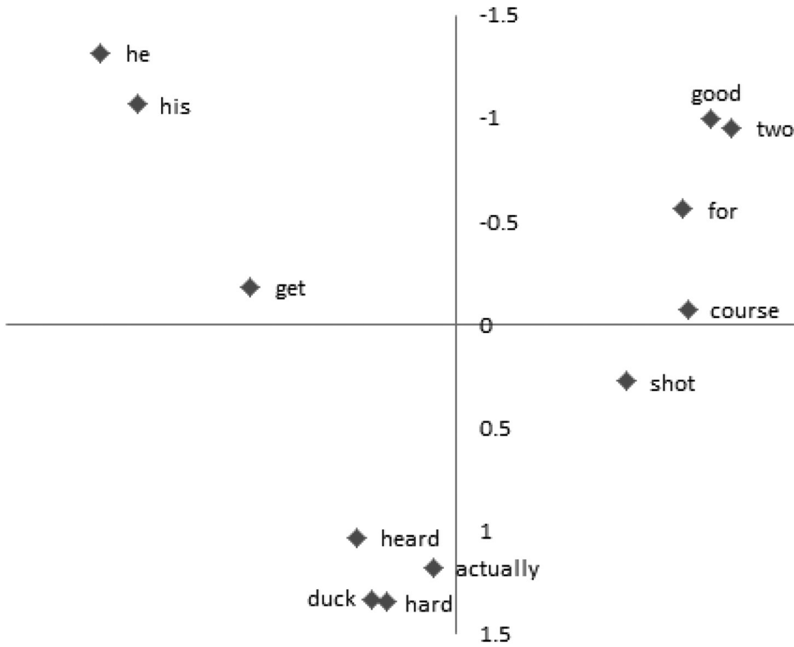

Figure 1.9 Lobanov Normalized Vowel Chart for Bantu Speakers. *Source:* Generated by author.

DISCUSSIONS

E-marked KenE vowels for the three groups studied here indicated that there were similarities between the vowel plots for English and those of the various L1s. The Luo vowels, for example, as reported by Swenson (2015, p. 113) have a semblance to Nilotic group plots I made here for E-marked KenE. For this study, I collected data for F0, F1, F2, and F3 from all the informants for the record. Yet, the focus of the analysis was on F1 and F2 since vowel height (F1) and backness (F2) are the most important acoustic attributes for describing a vowel (Ladefoged, 2006, p. 272). This is also revealed by Wilk's Lambda canonical discriminant function on tables 1.8, 1.9, and 1.10.

It can be seen from these tables for each group that the first and second formants (F1 and F2) have a highly significant p-value of $p < 0.0001$. This means that the two functions were most significant as compared to formant 3 (F3) whose significance was $p > 0.05$ which is the statistically accepted threshold.

The most distinct high vowels were [i] and [u]. Cushitic and Bantu speakers do not have the lax or [-ATR] counterparts as [ɪ] and [ʊ], respectively,

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Table 1.8 Wilk's Lambda Canonical Discriminant for Cushitic Speakers

Test of Function(s)	*Wilk's Lambda*	*Chi-square*	*df*	*Sig.*
1 through 3	.010	292.077	33	.000
2 through 3	.140	124.918	20	.000
3	.853	10.130	9	.340

Source: Generated by author.

Table 1.9 Wilk's Lambda Canonical Discriminant for Nilotic Speakers

Test of Function(s)	*Wilk's Lambda*	*Chi-square*	*df*	*Sig.*
1 through 3	.002	387.253	33	.000
2 through 3	.059	180.073	20	.000
3	.589	33.623	9	.000

Source: Generated by author.

Table 1.10 Wilk's Lambda Canonical Discriminant for Bantu Speakers

Test of Function(s)	*Wilk's Lambda*	*Chi-square*	*df*	*Sig.*
1 through 3	.001	451.886	33	.000
2 through 3	.032	217.750	20	.000
3	.887	7.583	9	.577

Source: Generated by author.

in their L1 so that their production of these sounds might be with some level of difficulty, unlike Nilotic speakers who have these sounds in their L1. Comparisons were made hereafter Baarts (2010, p. 67) interpretative framework. [e] and [ɔ] were well-approximated by the majority of the 18 sampled speakers. However, [ɜ] was the most displaced because at times it was classed with [e], and in many counts, it was classed with the low central vowel [a] for all the three groups.

CONCLUSION

This research has analyzed the nature and characteristics of E-marked KenE as produced by 18 speakers of Kenyan English, composed of 9 males and 9 females. The study has revealed that various L1 groups shape the kind of E-marked KenE vowel inventory. The Cushitic speakers collapsed the 12 RPE vowel monophthongs to approximate their 5-vowel inventory of [i e a o u]. To that extent, they had many overlaps for the said RPE monophthongs. Nilotic speakers had a greater approximation of RPE monophthongs since their L1 vowel inventory has up to 10 vowels as [i ɪ e ɜ ʌ æ a ɔ ʊ u]. Their vowel chart was closest to that of Standard English of the three ethnic

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blocks studied here. Finally, Bantu speakers whose vowel inventory has seven vowels as [i e ɛ a ɔ o u] had it easy for those vowels that are similar to those of RPE and collapsed others to fit within that range of the seven vowels. Therefore, based on these findings we conclude that the L1 of a speaker determines the vowels realized by E-marked KenE speakers.

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Chapter 2

The Kenyan English Accent

Segmental Features

Joshua M. Itumo and Martin C. Njoroge

English is a global language with close to 1.3 billion speakers. Eberhard, Garry, and Fennig (2020), in the 23rd edition of *Ethnologue*, state that among these speakers, 370 million use English as their first language (L1) and 898.4 million are non-native speakers. This means that non-native speakers of the language are more than double the number of the native speakers. This expansive growth of English is attended to by the ever-growing varieties of the language, which have been labeled *World Englishes* (Kachru, 1982). Initially, the spread of English across the world was a result of the contact of English-speaking explorers (as well as Christian missionaries) with the local communities. However, the greatest impetus for the global spread of English was ushered in by the British colonization, which opened doors for an avalanche of White settlers. This sudden occupation of the new lands brought forth diverse English varieties in the former colonies (commonly referred to as Anglophone countries because of these countries' use of English).

In his *Dynamic Model for Post-Colonial Englishes* (PCEs), Schneider (2007) describes five developmental stages that a variety goes through from the time of initial contact with settlers up to the time that it is recognized as an independent variety of English. According to Schneider, PCEs go through these stages irrespective of the historical, linguistic, and social differences between varieties in diverse geographical regions. These stages comprise the following: *foundation*, *exonormative stabilization*, *nativization*, *endonormative stabilization*, and *differentiation* (see, Schneider 2007, for a detailed description of these stages).

The acrolectal variety of the indigenous Kenyan English is spoken mainly by the "educated," that is, those Kenyans who have attained at least tertiary level of education in the local universities or college (Kioko & Muthwii, 2004). Several Kenyan researchers have commonly called this variety

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"the non-ethnically marked Kenyan English" (KenE) (Kioko & Muthwii 2004; Njoroge, 2011; Itumo, 2018; Itumo, Nandelenga & Maroko, 2018). According to Kioko and Muthwii (2004), this variety of English enjoys much prestige among Kenyans because of its association with the "educated" and "successful professionals like lawyers, doctors, engineers and successful business people" (p. 41). KenE has also been called a "standardizing" variety of Kenyan English (Buregeya, 2001), an acrolectal Black Indigenous Kenyan English (BIKE) (Hoffmann, 2011), or simply Kenyan English (Budohoska, 2014). Several researchers argue that this variety of English has reached the final stage in Schneider's (2007) model (see, for example, Buregeya, 2019; Itumo, 2018; Itumo, Nandelenga & Maroko, 2018). Other researchers (e.g., Kioko and Muthwii, 2004; Njoroge, 2006, 2011) have recommended further description of this accent. This is the motivation for this chapter. The chapter describes the phonological features associated with KenE phonemic segments.

The chapter first presents an examination of the features associated with KenE vowels. A brief explanation of both auditory-perceptual and acoustic description of vowels is given and discussed. This is followed by a description of KenE monophthongs, diphthongs, and triphthongs. An introduction of the phonemic consonants in KenE is then presented and salient differences associated with consonantal segments are discussed. Specifically, the allophonic variation of the liquid /l/ is examined. What then follows is a description of the occurrence of both the *linking r* and *intrusive r* in KenE. As relates to the obstruents, the voicing patterns associated with KenE plosives are described. Other observed features of KenE obstruents are also described. The chapter ends with both suggestions for further research and a conclusion that ties up the chapter.

KENYAN ENGLISH VOWELS

The class of vowels is clearly the most outstanding sound category that distinguishes KenE speakers from speakers of other accents. We begin this section by explaining how vowels are traditionally identified and described. The features associated with the KenE vowels are then discussed.

Approaches to Describing Vowels

Wells's (1982) standard lexical sets have been conveniently used in numerous studies as a reference point to enable comparison of a specific English accent with other accents. These lexical sets comprise words associated with English monophthongs and diphthongs. According to Melchers and Shaw (2011), the standard lexical sets

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> make use of *keywords* intended to be unmistakable, no matter what accent one says them in. Thus, "the KIT words" refer to "ship, bridge, milk . . ."; "the KIT vowel" refers to the vowel these words have (in most accents, /ɪ/). (p. 19)

Therefore, by using the "standard lexical sets," for instance, "we can now ask which vowel speakers of a particular accent have in the KIT set" (McMahon, 2002, p. 87). The seven lexical sets representing RP short monophthongs are KIT [ɪ], DRESS [e], STRUT [ʌ], TRAP [æ], LOT [ɒ], FOOT [ʊ], and the central vowel COMMA [ə]. The five long monophthongs are represented by FLEECE [i:], START [a:], NURSE [ɜ:], THOUGHT [ɔ]:, and GOOSE [u:] lexical sets. The lexical sets representing the eight RP diphthongs are CHOICE [ɔɪ], PRICE [ɑɪ], FACE [eɪ], NEAR [ɪə], CURE [ʊə], SQUARE [eə], GOAT [əʊ], and MOUTH [ɑʊ].

In articulatory terms, the description of vowels is based on the parameters of vowel length, lip rounding, tongue height, and tongue protrusion. Additionally, vowels may also be distinguished by their tenseness (+Tense) or laxity (−Tense) during their production. According to Gussmann (2012), "Tense vowels are said to require a greater articulatory effort and a more significant departure from the neutral position than lax vowels. Thus tense vowels are both higher and longer as compared to the lax ones" (p.20). For instance, the RP short monophthongs [ɪ æ ʊ] are considered lax; and they are contrasted with the long monophthongs [i: a: u:], which are regarded as tense.

The acoustic analysis of vowels mainly involves establishing the frequency of the first three formants: F1, F2, and F3. Raphael, Borden, and Harris (2012) define formants as "vocal tract resonances" (95). Frequency is defined as "the number of vibratory cycles per second" (Raphael, Borden & Harris, 2012, p. 29). If a sound wave has 350 cycles per second, then its frequency is regarded as 350 Hz. Formant frequency is obtained by determining the propagation of sound waves, and it is measured in hertz (Hz) whereby, 1 Hz is equivalent to one cycle or oscillation per second (Reetz & Jongman, 2009).

On a spectrogram, formants appear as dark lines concentrated around certain frequencies. Knight (2012) notes that "low vowels have high F1, and high vowels have low F1," and further states that "F2 is related to the frontness of the tongue, so back vowels have a lower F2 than front vowels. Lip rounding also affects F2, with rounded vowels having a lower F2 than their unrounded equivalents" (p. 70-71). Ladefoged and Disner (2012) observe that vowels "can always be accurately described in terms of the frequencies of the first three formants" (p. 47). The F1 frequency is inversely related to the tongue height such that "if the tongue is high, the first formant is low, and if the tongue is low, the first formant is high" (Rogers, 2000, p. 153). Rogers further observes the following, "The height of F2 correlates roughly with the backness of the vowel, with [ɪ] being farthest to the front, and [ʊ] farthest to

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the back" (p. 153). The other significant gesture in the articulation of vowels is lip rounding. According to Ladefoged and Maddieson (1996), both "second and third formants are also lowered by lip rounding" (p. 234).

Formant frequency values are usually normalized and then plotted on the acoustic vowel space with F1 values on the y-axis (ordinate) and F2 values on the x-axis (abscissa). Vowel normalization seeks to reduce interspeaker variance, while at the same time preserving "linguistic (and by implication) dialectal differences" (Thomas, 2011, p. 182). Numerous normalization formulae have been put forward. Adank, Smits, and Van Hout (2004) evaluated the common normalization techniques and observed that Lobanov (1971) procedure was the best in the capability to preserve "phonemic variation, reduce anatomical/physiological variation most effectively, while at the same time preserving nearly all sociolinguistic variation in the acoustic measurements" (p. 1301). This procedure is implemented in NORM, an online vowel normalization suite using the formulae:

$$F_n\left[V\right]_n = (F_n\left[V\right] - MEAN_n) / S_n$$

> Where $F_n[V]_n$ is the normalized value for $F_n[V]$ (i.e., for formant n of vowel V). $MEAN_n$ is the mean value for formant n for the speaker in question and S_n is the standard deviation for the speaker's formant n. (Thomas, 2011, p. 166)

Vowel duration, on its part, is determined by measuring the vowel segment duration on a spectrograph. The conventional units of duration are seconds or milliseconds. One second is the equivalent of a thousand milliseconds. Therefore, a segment of 0.07 seconds can be said as having a duration of 70 milliseconds. In the ensuing subsection, we will turn our focus on the features associated with the KenE monophthongs.

Kenyan English Monophthongs

How many vowels are there in KenE? This question has previously elicited different opinions that have largely been influenced by the methodological approaches adopted by the researchers. In his study, Hoffman (2011) identifies five monophthongs in KenE. The acoustic study purposively sampled nine male university students in an attempt to describe "the acrolectal Black Indigenous Kenyan English (BIKE)." Itumo's (2018) study, on the other hand, identified eight monophthongs. In Itumo's study, formant data were obtained from 14 purposively selected university lecturers: 7 males and 7 females. To normalize the formant values, Hoffman (2011) used the Lobanov algorithm, an extrinsic technique that plots the vowels on a vowel

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square. On the other hand, Itumo's (2018) initial study plotted the vowels on a vowel triangle, in line with the Element Theory approach adopted in his research. However, for the purposes of this chapter, the formant values obtained from Itumo (2018) have further been plotted using the Lobanov algorithm to enable meaningful comparison. Further, since Hoffman (2011) used male subjects, only formant values associated with male subjects in this study are used. Figure 2.1 shows the acoustic spaces for the KenE monophthongs.

In figure 2.1, proximity of the vowels as depicted in the FLEECE and KIT vowels suggests near mergers. The tendency toward a five-vowel system can be clearly discerned. Therefore, we may initially suggest that KIT and FLEECE; FOOT and GOOSE; THOUGHT and LOT; and NURSE, START, TRAP, and STRUT concatenate into four-vowel segments. These are [i], [u], [o], and [a], respectively. The DRESS vowel independently makes the fifth vowel. In KenE, the letter "e" in spelling will have the DRESS vowel. Thus, the vowel in the regular past tense morpheme {-ed} will predictably end in [-ed] in words such as "collided" [kolaided] and "painted" [pented], unlike in American and British English which will have [-id] and have these two words pronounced as [kʰəˈlaɪdɪd] and [pʰeɪntɪd], respectively. In summary, there are,

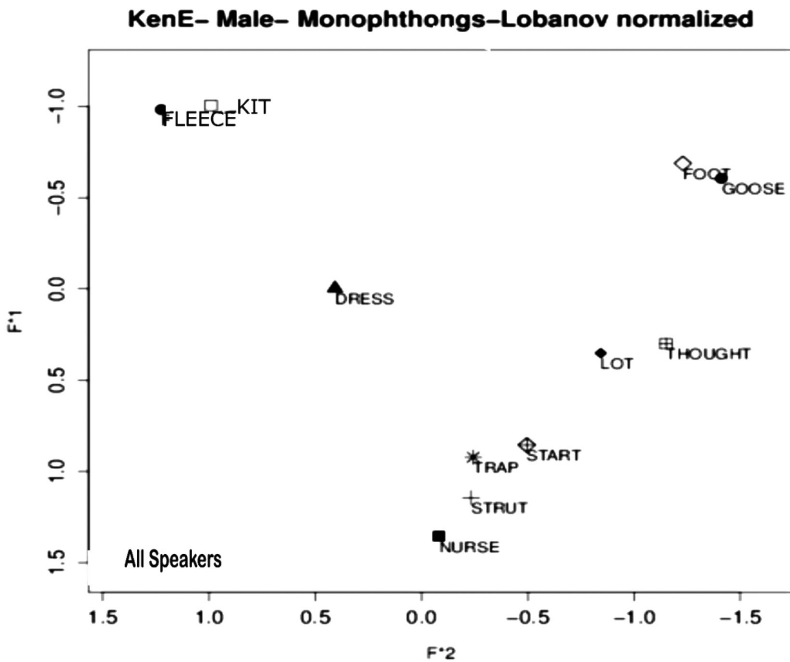

Figure 2.1 The KenE Monophthongs for Male Subjects. *Source:* Generated by author.

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qualitatively, five acoustic vowel spaces associated with the Kenyan English monophthongs.

However, further statistical analyses of the obtained vowel duration values in Itumo's (2018) study showed that KenE had three long monophthongs: /a:/, /o:/, and /u:/. This distinction was found among the female speakers in the study. The apparent gender variation was ascribed to possible socio-phonetic reasons, and suggestions for further research were made. Buregeya (2019) also notes that there is a tendency for the vowels that are followed by "r" in orthography to be lengthened. In this category are some words in the NURSE category such as "word" and "bird," and words in the START category such as "start" and "star." The two authors of this chapter further opine that FOOT vowel words with a double vowel in spelling tend to have long vowels among Kenyans. Thus, "good," "food," and "book" are pronounced as [gu:d], [fu:d], and [bu:k], respectively.

As shown in figure 2.1, the central vowels are avoided in Kenyan English. It was noted in the ensuing discussion that the NURSE vowel was qualitatively lowered to [a:]. The COMMA vowel, which is associated with schwa [ə] in RP is hardly realized in KenE speech. In Itumo (2018), tokens with this vowel were pronounced as either [a] in the initial vowel of "about"; [e] in words such as "the"; [u] in "to"; and [o] in cases such as the first vowel in "collide." Schmied (2006), while referring to the phonology of East African Englishes (EAfrE) in general, states, "The central vowels /ʌ/, /ɜ:/ and /ə /, as in *but*, *bird*, and *a*, are avoided and tend toward half-open or open positions /a/ and /e/" (p. 193).

There is, however, a generation of young urban Kenyans, and particularly women, who seem to fancy the central vowels. It is not uncommon to perceive the COMMA and NURSE vowels in the casual exchanges of these urbanites. Majority of Kenyans, however, frowns upon such pronunciations, and they have slighted these aberrant youths and derogatively labeled them "*Slay queens*." This term is "slang," probably for young licentious women who dress provocatively to seek the attention of wealthy men.

Kenyan English Diphthongs

We begin our description of KenE diphthongs with an anecdote. A recent clip attributed to one Member of Parliament and a chairman of an association, caused amusing exchanges on WhatsApp forum for lecturers at a Kenyan university. The exchange emanates from the parliamentarian's pronunciation of the word "onus." Below is an excerpt of the lecturers' posts.

Lecturer A: (Captioning a video clip). Anus or Onus? Bure kabisa! *(Useless!) Chairman mzima (a substantive chairman).*

Lecturer B: Maybe he meant exactly what he said.

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Lecturer C: What he said is an anatomical fact. Why do you condemn him?

Lecturer D (From the Department of Linguistics): He's actually closer to the Received Pronunciation than we all are. The transcription for onus is /əʊnəs/. The beginning diphthong has a schwa onset, which is closer to /a/ than the /o/ that we use.

One obvious reason for the sensational post among the lecturers is that KenE is heavily influenced by spelling. Thus, many words with "a," "e," "i," "o," and "u" will be pronounced with [a], [e], [i], [o], and [u], respectively. Therefore, the word "onus" has a short [a] vowel resulting from spelling pronunciation of "a." Second, many of the words with the FACE vowel are monophthongized in KenE. Therefore, when KenE speakers do not pronounce "anus" as [anas] by dint of the spelling, they will pronounce the word as [enas] and not [eɪnəs], as is the case with British English or American English. This is the case for words such as "day" /deɪ/, "gave" /geɪv/, "name" /neɪm/, "came" /keɪm/, and "face" /feɪs/, which, in KenE, have the DRESS vowel, thus, [de], [gev], [nem], [kem], and [fes], respectively. Acoustically, this phenomenon is manifested by level (straight) formants on the spectrograms as illustrated in figure 2.2.

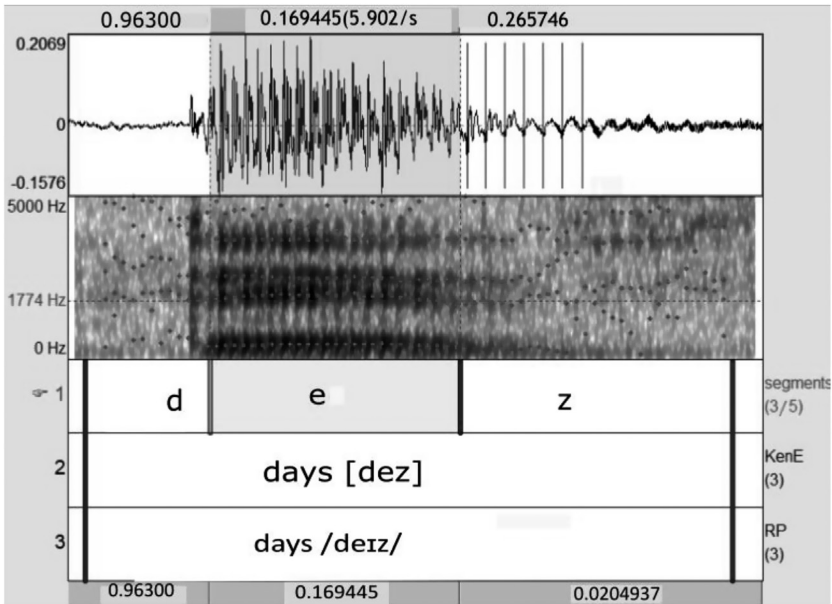

Figure 2.2 Spectrogram for FACE in the Word "Days" by a KenE male speaker. *Source:* Generated by author using Praat software (Boersma & Weenink, 2016).

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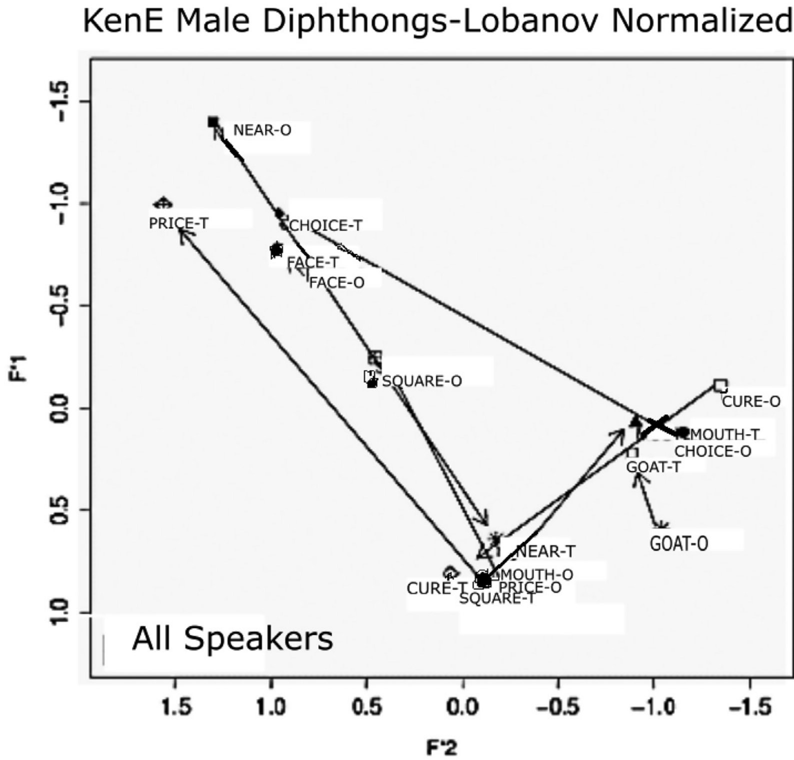

Figure 2.3 The KenE Diphthongs in the Male Subjects' Pronunciation. *Source:* Generated by author.

In Figure 2.2, a level formant two throughout the vowel segment indicates that the segment is monophthongized. This is also evidenced by both the "onset" and "offset" mergers on the vowel chart shown in figure 2.3.

However, the FACE diphthong appears in a few words such as "maid" and "raid." Paradoxically, the word "said" has the FACE vowel, unlike its status in the two major varieties of English (British English and American English) which pronounce it as [sed].

The "GOAT" diphthong is predictably monophthongized in KenE and realized as [o]. As noted previously in the anecdote, the word "onus" is pronounced as [onas]. Other words which illustrate the monophthongization of [əʊ] to [o:] are "so'/səʊ/, "no" /nəʊ/, and "low" /ləʊ/, which are realized as [so:], [no:}, and [lo:] in KenE, respectively.

Below is a quotation from Schmied (2006) which summarizes findings on the diphthongs of the "African Englishes":

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> Diphthongs tend to have only marginal status and to be monophthongized. In the diphthongs /eɪ/ and /ɑʊ/, the second element is hardly heard in many African Englishes (as in Scotland), thus they almost coincide with the /eˁ/ and /aˁ/ phonemes. Diphthongs with a longer glide are preserved, but they are not really pronounced as falling diphthongs, i.e., with less emphasis on the second element than on the first, but rather as double monophthongs (e.g., /oɪ/ /ɑʊ/). All the centering diphthongs (/iə, eə, up) tend to be pronounced as opening diphthongs or double monophthongs (/ɪa, ea, ua/). (p. 193-194)

From the preceding discussion, we may conclude that there are six distinct diphthongs in KenE. The FACE and GOAT diphthongs are monophthongized. Table 2.1 summarizes the KenE diphthongs.

Kenyan English Triphthongs

English has five triphthongs, which are formed by the diphthongs ending in /ɪ/ and /ʊ/ + the sound /ə/. All these triphthongs comprise of a schwa at the end of each of them. According to Roach (2009, p. 19), these triphthongs are "eɪ + ə," "ɑɪ + ə," "ɔɪ + ə," "əʊ + ə," and "ɑʊ + ə" in such words as "layer," "fire' "loyal," "mower," and "power," respectively. Predictably, KenE speakers pronounce the schwa in these segments with the COMMA variants [a], [e], [o], or [u] as discussed earlier. The other rules relating to the first "diphthongal" elements apply as discussed earlier. The two triphthongs which begin with the FACE and GOAT vowel in RP in words such as "layer" and "power," respectively, have a monophthong and a subsequent glide that has the acoustic characteristics of the second vowel. Therefore, layer and power are pronounced as [leja] and [pawa], respectively. These monosyllabic words (in British English and American English) are, therefore, disyllabic in KenE.

Table 2.1 Realization of RP Diphthongs in KenE

Lexical Set	*Example of Token Word*	*RP Vowel*	*Realization in KenE*
PRICE	*time*	[ɑɪ]	[ɑi]
CHOICE	*boy*	[ɔɪ]	[oi]
FACE	*gave*	[eɪ]	[e]
CURE	*poor*	[ʊə]	[ua]
NEAR	*fear*	[ɪə]	[ia]
SQUARE	*there*	[eə]	[ea]
GOAT	*so*	[əʊ]	[o]
MOUTH	*out*	[ɑʊ]	[au]

Source: Generated by author.

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KENYAN ENGLISH CONSONANTS

The group of English consonants comprises sonorants (semi-vowels, liquids, nasals) and obstruents (plosives, fricatives, and affricates). The semi-vowels [w, j] and the nasals [m, n, n] do not reveal significant variation with other varieties of English across the world. In this subsection, we will describe features relating to the liquids and the obstruents. Most of the differences in the broad consonantal class are in these two classes.

Variation in KenE Liquids

According to Hannisdal (2006), the lateral liquid /l/ in RP maintains the allophonic opposition between clear [l] and dark [ɫ] in prevocalic versus postvocalic terminal position, respectively. This means that if /l/ occurs word initially, it is clear [l], and if it occurs word terminally after a vowel, it is velarized [ɫ]. The velarized allophone is commonly referred to as "dark l."

Itumo (2018) observes that KenE speakers do not have the allophonic distinction between the clear and dark l as found in British English. Instead, the alveolar lateral is invariant at both syllable onset (O) and syllable coda (C). There is also the case of vocalization of /l/ in KenE whereby segments with /l/ at the end of a syllable are realized as vowels. Buregeya (2019) describes the "non-realization of the sound /I/ in the last syllable." In other words, the coda may be dropped altogether as in "call" "[ko:]" and "told" "[to:d]."

Just like in RP, the /r/ glide is phonetically realized as the post-alveolar approximant [ɹ] among educated KenE speakers. The ensuing discussion will focus on three variants of this glide which distinguish many varieties of English across the world, namely *linking r*, *intrusive r*, and *"r-coloring*." The linking r is common in RP. In their *Manual for English Pronunciation*, Skandera and Burleigh (2011) describe the "linking r" as "the case with words containing a normally unarticulated final /r/, like *far, four,* and *czar*." The authors provide a historical account of this feature by stating the following:

> "In the past, these words were pronounced with a final */r/* in all phonetic environments, they then lost their final */r/* in the course of the centuries, and the final */r/* now reappears as a linking *r* only when followed by a word-initial vowel. (p.59)

In KenE, only a small minority of speakers use this variant. Gender seems to have socio-phonetic implications on the use of this sound. In Itumo's study (2018), 28 carrier expressions with the linking *r variant* were examined among 14 male and 14 female university lecturers. In the study, both men and women did not pronounce more than half of the tokens with the linking r.

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The larger percentage of the university lecturers who used the *linking r* were women. This finding has socio-phonetic implications, and more research needs to be done on this sociolinguistic variation pattern.

Skandera and Burleigh (2011) define the intrusive *r* as a “link between two consecutive vowels belonging to different words or, less commonly, to different syllables within the same word through the insertion of an *r* that has no historical justification” (p.59). They describe this phenomenon as a type of liaison which involves removing the hiatus in sequences of consecutive vowels. For instance, they observe the following:

> The hiatus in the sequences *media event, visa application,* and *shah of Persia* and in the word *drawing,* for example, may be removed through the insertion of an intrusive *r,* as in [ˈmedɪər ɪˈvent], [ˈviːzəræplɪˈkeɪʃn], [ʃɑː rɒv ˈpɜːʃə] and [ˈdrɔːrɪŋ].

Itumo’s study (2007), to the best of our knowledge, is the only available study that has so far examined intrusive *r* usage among Kenyan speakers of English. The study described students in a Kenyan high school who had statistically significant variation for the intrusive “r.” This variant was associated with a “Protestant group of girls (the Christian Union girls)” who seemed to use it as a marker of their speech, ostensibly to mark themselves out from the rest of the students (who were regarded as “not born again’) in the school. This was, however, a case study from a very small sample, which cannot justifiably be generalized to the entire Kenyan population. Besides, the subjects in the study do not measure up to what other studies have described as speakers of the non-ethnically marked KenE. Further study in this area therefore beckons.

Before we turn to the KenE obstruents, it is important to also mention that this variety is non-rhotic, and speakers who attempt to color the *final r* are said to speak with a twang that mimics the Americans. Like the case of the central vowels, those who “twang” are frowned upon for showing that they have been to the United States.

The Kenyan English Obstruents

The production of obstruents involves either a complete obstruction of the airflow in the vocal tract or a narrow constriction that impedes the airflow. The class of obstruents comprises the fricatives, plosives, and affricates. RP has nine fricatives. These are the labio-dental [f v], dental [θ, ð], alveolar [s z], post-alveolar [ʃ ʒ], and the glottal fricative [h]. There are six plosives in English. These are the bilabial /p, b/; the alveolar /t, d/; and the velar /k, g/. English has two affricates: /tʃ/ and /dʒ/ (Roach, 2009; Cruttenden, 2014).

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With the exception of the glottal fricative [h], the English obstruents "are typically considered a pair with respect to the feature [voice]" (p. 237). The segment on the left is considered voiced.

One area where KenE voicing distinction is obscured by spelling pronunciation is that of the diagraphs "th." Words with "th" in most Englishes are pronounced with either [θ] as in "thought," "threaten," and "third' or [ð] as in "the,' "their," and "they.' Itumo's (2018) acoustic study revealed that the waveforms of both [θ] and [ð] were characterized by significant voicing. This was done by the use of the Voice Report (VR) measurement.

In *Praat*, the VR of a segment represents the fraction of pitch frames that are analyzed as unvoiced (Boersma & Weenick, 2016). Therefore, VR expresses the percentage of sections of time which do not have glottal pulses. In Itumo (2018), Female subjects recorded a VR of 41.82% and 47.89% for /θ/ and /ð/, respectively. Male subjects, on the other hand, recorded 47.64% and 43.62% for /θ/ and /ð/, respectively (p. 333). Further, ANOVA analysis did not reveal any significant voicing differences in these two fricatives.

Finally, the salient features of KenE plosives have mainly been described in Itumo (2018) and Itumo, Nandelenga, and Maroko (2018). The latter, a journal paper, made two key observations:

> First, the KenE voiceless plosives (/p, t, k/) were mostly neutral: their VOT duration ranged from 29 ms to 32 ms. Second, their voiced counterparts (/b, d, g /) were observed to be fully voiced, with a voicing lead ranging from 30 ms to 80 ms compared to "between 20 ms before and after voicing begins" reported for GB voiced plosives by Gut (2009, p. 159). (Itumo et al. 2018, p. 14)

In comparison to British English, Cruttenden (2014) observes that "there is a voiceless interval consisting of strongly expelled breath between the release of the plosive and the onset of a following vowel, e.g. pin, tin, kin [p^hɪn, t^hɪn], k^hɪn]" (p. 164). He further states that "the values for aspirated stops are generally around 40-75 msecs" (p.164). Gut (2009) also provides the acoustic correlates of aspiration in General British English in the following statement: "For the voiceless plosives in English, the typical VOT ranges between +40 and +80 milliseconds" (p.159).

Buregeya (2019) also reports of instances of KenE substituting /dʒ/ for /ʒ/ in words of French origin. Further, Buregeya reports of epenthesis whereby vowels are inserted to split a consonant cluster. For instance, an English word like "enmity" (RP- [enmɪtɪ]) is most likely to be pronounced as "enemity" [enemiti]. Further, words which have an "s" followed by a "vowel" grapheme and a consonant such as in the words "season" [siːzn] and "lesson'[lesn] in

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British or American English will have the last vowel pronounced in KenE as [si:zon] and [leson], respectively.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

The chapter has highlighted the features that mark KenE, the variety of English spoken by educated Kenyan speakers. The description of vowels and consonants that characterize this variety of English has been given and illustrated. What has emerged from the chapter is that KenE has unique features that distinguish it from other varieties in the use of both vowels and consonant sounds. The chapter submits that KenE variety that is described earlier is not ethnically marked and is used by most educated speakers and professionals who have been exposed to English language for a long time, through schooling and other sources of input. This is especially because English is an official language in Kenya and is the medium of instruction in Kenyan schools.

The chapter has noted that KenE has eight monophthongs, [i, e, a, a:, o, o:, u, u:]. Vowel length, however, remains controversial. Further study, which accounts for sociophonetic variation, is thus recommended. It was also observed that the COMMA vowel, which is associated with the RP schwa, [ə] has four phonetic realizations in KenE [a, e. o, u] which were conveniently labeled as COMMA-a, COMMA-e, COMMA-o, and COMMA-u. A detailed study to determine phonotactics of these four variants in KenE is recommended. The chapter has also described the KenE diphthongs and mainly noted that the FACE and GOAT vowels are usually monophthongized.

Further, the chapter has described the common consonantal features that distinguish KenE from other English varieties. In particular, it has been observed that this variety of English does not have the allophonic variation of the "clear" and "dark l." Both the intrusive *r* and the linking *r* have been observed to vary across genders. However, there is scarcity of research on these two liaison features and further study is therefore recommended.

This chapter also observed that KenE does not distinguish the two interdental fricatives. Since tokens with both segments received a considerable amount of voicing, it is suggested that KenE "th" diagraph be represented by the voiced interdental fricative. Lastly, with regard to the plosives and affricates, it was observed that KenE does not aspirate the fortis plosives. The lenis plosives, on the other hand, are characterized by a VOT lead. Indeed, as the chapter has highlighted, KenE has its unique features that make it distinct from other varieties of English.

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Chapter 3

Error or Flavor

An Account of the Lexical, Phrasal, and Syntactic Character of Fossilized Errors in Kenyan English Grammar

Ann Hildah Gatakaa Kinyua

The study of World Englishes consists of identifying varieties of English used in diverse sociolinguistic contexts globally and analyzing how sociolinguistic histories, multicultural backgrounds, and contexts of function influence the use of English in different regions of the world. Pragmatic factors such as appropriateness, comprehensibility, and interpretability within the communities where the English language is used justify the varying faces of English in all the regions where it is used. Kachru (1997, p. 68) defines the quality of "nativeness" in World Englishes in "terms of both its functional domains and range, and its depth in social penetration and resultant acculturation." A community acquires "native" English-speaking status as it uses English in a broader and greater number of societal contexts. This process, however, is shaped by the historical role of English in the community (e.g., as the language of a colonizing force). It is this interaction between functionality and history that leads to the nativization of English in a particular society or population group. Consequently, Kachru argues, the English language belongs not only to its native speakers but also to its various non-native users throughout the world, a position supported by Widdowson (1994) who avers that the very fact that English is an international language means that no nation can have custody over it.

Accordingly, there have been raging debates regarding the labeling of certain forms that users of English as a Second Language (ESL) produce. In Selinker's (1972, 1992) Interlanguage (IL) theory, second language learners' competence is based on an interlanguage continuum between their first (L1) and their second (L2) language. If their output is different from Standard

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English (American or British), it is regarded as an error (mainly interference of L1), and if they continue producing errors and then the errors become fixed or fossilized. This position is supported by Quirk (1990), who stressed the need to uphold one common standard in the use of English and advised teachers of English to focus on native norms and native-like performance in a bid to preserve intelligibility among World Englishes and therefore preserve the function of English as an international language. Widdowson (1994) also supports the need for intelligibility among world Englishes and posits that teachers of English should aim at developing in students a proficiency which approximates as closely as possible to that of native speakers. This is in line with Yule's (2003) definition of Standard English as

> the variety which forms the basis of printed English in newspapers and books, which is used in the mass media and taught in schools . . . it is the variety normally taught to those who want to learn English as a second language. (p.226)

However, Kachru (1985) observes that standard forms may be irrelevant to the sociocultural realities in which members of the Outer Circle use English. He, therefore, resists any attempts to label the Englishes in the Outer Circle as deviant or deficient and fossilized, since certain utterances considered errors may be perfectly acceptable in the local Englishes in which they occur. Bhatt (2005) gives the following example:

a. You have taken my book, isn't it?
b. You are soon going home, isn't it?

These are undifferentiated tag questions that are nevertheless acceptable in Indian English as determined by cultural constraints of politeness (politeness principle of non-imposition), giving the tag a social meaning as opposed to a grammatical meaning. Ekpe (2007) makes a similar observation when he says that Nigerianization of English language occurred when people started expressing English language naturally in a way that reflects their socio-cultural norms without unnecessarily sounding bookish, thus: "there is no road in Nigeria that a drive will be held permanently to a position without a gradual movement no matter how slow, thus, we have 'go slow' not 'traffic hold ups' in Nigerian roads" (p. 84).

While not strictly wading into the raging debate of whether the forms that World Englishes speakers produce are errors or not, in this chapter I present certain features of Kenyan English in the light of Widdowson's (1994) proposal that a world English could be a grammatical system that marks the users as a member of the community which has developed that system for its own social purpose. This is because whenever a language leaves its home and

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settles in another geopolitical region, it must acquire the local color of its new environment (Awonusi & Babalola, 2004).

In his explication of Nigerian English (NE), Jowitt (2007) observed that all speakers of NE (whether by education or occupation criterion) have certain features in common: the presence of some nonstandard forms in their usage which the most proficient NE speakers and native speakers of English would regard as errors and those that they would regard as variants. He made a comprehensive catalog of the peculiar forms of NE at different grammatical levels and labeled them as Popular Nigerian English (PNE). Accordingly, PNE is a set of forms that are stable and occur regularly in the usage of Nigerians in general. Noting that these are stable "Nigerianisms" which occur in the usage of near total of NE speakers but differ from Standard English, Jowitt further predicted that some PNE expressions that are widespread may in future be recognized as the national Standard. By the same token this chapter seeks to identify features of Popular Kenyan English (PKE).

Since English has been used as a second and official language in Kenya for a long time, it is normal to expect the English in Kenya to manifest features which distinguish it as a bona fide variety of World Englishes. This variety exhibits distinctive phonological, lexical, morphological, and syntactic features as a function of the different linguistic environments in which it functions. However, as Jowitt (2007) observes of NE, there are certain forms that are stable and occur regularly in the speakers' usage despite their specific ethnic origins. Thus, it is the case in Kenya where despite varied L1 systems, there are many points of convergence in the usage of nonstandard forms of English which can therefore be labeled PKE.

Following the colonial experience and the consequent language policies, Kenya, as many other African countries, is classified as an ESL country. This means that English is the language of instruction at all levels of learning, it is the language of business, of the media and the law, of science and technology, and also the language of national and international communication. In all these uses, as Schmied (2006) notes, the type of English spoken depends largely on two factors: the level of education of the speakers (the length and degree of formal education in English) and their social position (the necessity for and amount of English used in everyday interactions). The English learned at school may be reinforced outside school, especially in mixed-marriage or highly educated families where a "native-like" variety is used as a primary language of communication. This is in line with Kachru's (1986) profiling of World Englishes as not transmitted directly through native-speaker settlers, but rather among the community that uses the English. In his discussion of ownership of English, Widdowson (1994) depicts Standard English as a membership club and warns about the danger of falling short thus, "And if you express yourself in writing which is both ungrammatical and badly

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spelled, you are not likely to be taken very seriously" (p.381). It is indeed the case, as Schmied (2006) correctly observes, that in Kenya "broken" English or "school English" is usually looked down upon and ridiculed.

English in Kenya is a stable postcolonial variety that is used as an interethnic lingua franca in private domains. It is the medium of instruction as well as the language spoken in parliament and court rooms. However, in all these domains the variety of English used is not homogenous across the country, but rather depending on the native language of the user. The variations themselves could be phonological, morphological, or lexical as well as phrasal and syntactic, resulting in varieties that reflect distinct flavors from the L1 of the speakers. Constant use of some of these "flavored" forms, which are often errors when judged against the Standard British English variety, has resulted in their fossilization and consequent spread across linguistic backgrounds, and have even found their way into the mainstream media. This chapter is an in-depth analysis of these lexical, phrasal, and syntactic English language forms that are uniquely Kenyan, with attempts to trace their etymology. Their "acceptable" equivalents in Standard English have been supplied. The analysis has been made from actual instances of spoken and written language gathered from speakers across the country.

In one of the earliest attempts at documenting the variety of English spoken in East Africa and the common errors that speakers manifest, Hocking (1974) made a prediction that has largely turned out to be true: in twenty years, some of the forms that he had identified as mistakes would have metamorphosed into acceptable forms of a local, East African form of English. This prediction is in agreement with the fourth stage of Schneider's (2003) evolutionary pattern in the formation of New Englishes, endonormative stabilization, in which the process of nativization of English is completed to the extent that the indigenous norms are widely accepted on grounds of a new local self-confidence which makes it no longer necessary or desirable to remain oriented toward the British standard. Many of these common errors and mistakes have substantially been discussed by Buregeya (2006) and Schmied (2006), among others. It is also a fact that Kenya's teachers of English, especially in secondary schools, endeavor to eliminate most of these errors as part of their daily mandate in teaching English, and a gifted student of the language soon learns the correct usages. Additionally, in designing the English examination, the Kenya National Examinations Council also largely focuses on these grammar areas to test the success or otherwise of the learners in mastering the target structures. This chapter, however, goes beyond those structures and concerns itself with those errors the learners will have failed to get rid of by the end of high school. Many of the structures discussed have become commonly accepted in every day usage of English among Kenyan speakers, so much so that, the author proposes, there are teachers of English who themselves are

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not aware that the structures are errors, having received the same from their teachers and other speakers around them as the process of fossilization of the forms began and progressed. Following Widdowson's (1994) observation that World Englishes develop for a social purpose, the chapter attempts to explain the contextual backgrounds that may have motivated the evolution of the Kenyan English forms discussed.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Data for this chapter has been discussed in the light of Systemic Functional Grammar (Halliday, 1973). Halliday's tradition is more interested in the way language is utilized in social settings to attain a specific target (O'Donnell, 2012). Consequently, great importance is placed on the function of language, such as what language is used for, rather than on the structure and form Systemic Functional Grammar studies the language through meaning. According to Halliday (1973), language users unconsciously say what they choose to say out of several options available to them in the language they use, and the choice is functionally determined. This implies that function influences the structure and organization of language. Halliday believed that linguistics should describe actual sentences with many functions and without a deep structure, and that the central concern of linguistics should be the study of the language through meaning (Almurashi, 2016). All languages involve three generalized functions or metafunctions. First, there is the ideational metafunction through which a speaker expresses his/her experience of the external world and his/her own world of consciousness. Second is the interpersonal metafunction which is concerned with the interaction between speaker and addressee and the way they choose the grammatical resources available to them to enact social roles. Last, there is the textual metafunction that weaves together the other two functions to create texts. A text occurs in a context of situation (COS) which uses sociolinguistic factors to facilitate interpretation (Opara, 2019). Systemic Functional Grammar theory has been applied in this chapter to describe the lexical, phrasal, and syntactic features of PKE and the sociolinguistic factors that may have influenced the evolution of these (unique) forms.

METHODOLOGY

Data for this chapter was collected informally over a period of 20 years from in classroom interactions with learners by the author who has been a high school teacher and an ESL lecturer. Data for the chapter was gathered from

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a pool of 10 high school teachers of English with several years of teaching experience. The teachers were asked to identify common mistakes and errors that their learners constantly made in their writing and speech, and suggest the possible motivations for those errors. The teachers were further asked to point out those errors that they still struggled to eliminate among the learners, and also those that were commonly tested in the Kenya Certificate of Secondary Examination (KCSE).

Further data has been collected informally from spoken and written texts over a long period of time from daily interaction with mass media such as Public television and radio, from various social media posts and from natural speech as produced by Kenyan speakers in their daily interactions: for example, at home, during office meetings, and church and political gatherings. Being a longtime teacher of English helped the author in making judgments about errors and mistakes, those errors that are fossilized and those that teachers are still struggling to eliminate among their learners. All the examples used in the text are generated by the author based on personal experience and daily interaction with Kenyan English.

DATA PRESENTATION

The linguistic structures that Kenyan speakers commonly produce are presented followed by correct forms in Standard English. Where possible an attempt is made to explain the contextual motivations behind the manifestation of the said error, in line with Halliday's (1973) tradition. Data is presented in order of what may be considered to be lexical, phrasal, and syntactic errors, respectively.

Lexical Errors

**Dirtify*. The term is often used in place of dirty. Kenyans dirtify surfaces, not *dirty* them as should be. Several verbs end in the suffix –fy such as beautify, purify, simplify, so it must feel quite right and natural to generalize the morpheme –fy to *dirty*. However, *dirty* is one of those words that exhibit conversion as a word formation process with no overt change of morpheme from one word class to another thus remaining *dirty* as adjective and a verb.

Schooling: this word is a noun and a synonym for education. Kenyan English has, however, turned it into a verb complete with the inflectional properties of regular verbs (-ed, -ing, -s). In correct usage one should say, "I had my schooling at Kenya High School." However the Kenyan usage for the term

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finds expression in constructions such as, “I was schooling at Kenya High School or I schooled at Kenya High School.”

**Anyhowly:* The most productive derivational morpheme for the formation of adverbs of manner is –ly, usually attached to adjectives as in careless-ly, hopeful-ly, and stubborn-ly. However, certain words such as seldom and often denote the same without bearing the adjective –ly. The word *anyhow* belongs in this class of words that adequately express meaning without the –ly affix many Kenyans attach to it as in the following correct usage:

You may assemble the parts anyhow as long as they work.

Severally: Consider the following sentence:

Jane talked to the five men severally.

The regular Kenyan interpretation of the sentence is that Jane talked to the said men a number of times, probably to persuade them to do something. The Standard English interpretation of this sentence, however, is that Jane talked to the said men separately, each at a time. *Severally* is a synonym for *separately* but in Kenyan English, the word is often used to refer to doing something repeatedly or many times.

**Table room*: This is a common and easily understandable space in Kenyan houses. In many households in rural Kenya, it was, and is still, common to have two structures: one, a smaller one which serves as a kitchen, and another, usually bigger, comprising the sleeping quarters and the room with a table that serves a number of functions, including a room for children to study and for general socialization. In Kiswahili and Kimeru, the word table has long attained synecdochy, whereby it is used to signify the room that holds it and everything else contained there. It is no wonder then that the table room, a room alien to native speakers of English who instead have the *living room*, exists for Kenyans.

Tarmac (tarmacking): In Standard English, this word is used in aviation to refer to a plane idling on a runway, usually waiting for clearance to take off. In Kenyan usage, however, this word has long acquired a unique meaning, that of ostensibly walking long distances and moving up and down, as they say, or from one place to another in search of a job. I guess the usage rests on the imagery of the long distances that tarmac roads may well be, or probably the hardship of walking on one (for lack of bus fare) on a hot day. At any rate, all this serves to communicate the hardships of the job-seeker.

**Beddings:* Most low-income Kenyans may not have bedding on their beds, and one can see why: a mattress, a pair of bed sheets, a blanket or two, and

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a bed cover or a duvet to boot ..., how can all these be captured in a noun not marked for plural with the ubiquitous –s. The word bedding, however, is a hyponym, an item regarded as a general item that subsumes other items. Granted, grammar teachers are still struggling to inculcate this concept into the minds of the learners, aided by such other hyponyms as equipment, stationery, cutlery, and furniture, which are subjected to much the same Kenyan treatment. Notably, Schmied (2006) observes that this tendency to add –s to collective nouns is quite common in New Englishes.

**Overspeedin*g: On the face of it one may even wonder what could be wrong with this vocabulary. After all *over-* is a productive morpheme that is applied to lexemes of different word categories with a stable meaning. Attached to adjectives it denotes having too much of a certain quality, as in *overconfident* and *over-excited*. Attached to verbs, it means to do something to an excessive degree . . . *over-eat, over-examine*, so indeed where is the problem in *overspeeding*? The problem lies in the fact that speeding is simply that: speeding. One is either driving at an acceptable speed or one is speeding. In his discussion of Indian English, Bhatt (2005) presents similar over-applications of productive morphemes to form locally acceptable words where, for example, they apply the productive prefix *pre-* to *pone* to form *prepone*, the opposite of *postpone*.

Fatal: One quite natural consequence of speeding is suffering fatal road accidents. The word *fatal* belongs to the category of words that in pragmatics communicate entailments, also known as logical implication, a situation where the truth of an utterance requires the truth of the other. Consequently, when one says, *Jack was involved in a fatal road accident*, it will be ridiculous to ask, "*Is he dead*?" because death is entailed in *fatal*. Interestingly, though, in Kenyan English, people somehow survive fatal road accidents, so you can still harbor some hope of seeing your loved one again if a Kenyan reports that they were involved in a fatal road accident. Following such debacles in witness accounts on scenes of accidents, these particular expressions have found their way into comedies so that survivors are taken to the morgue and those who survived the fatal crashes are taken to hospital.

Operate: If you are one of the lucky survivors of these crashes, chances are that you will be operated on. The "tragedy" in Kenyan English is that you will be operated, much like a machine, and not *operated on*. For many Kenyan English speakers, the word *operate* lacks the mandatory preposition *on*. Schmied (2006) makes a similar observation in the usage of the verb *operate* without the appropriate preposition as in the sentence:

*I am a Matatu driver operating route 44.

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Here this minibus driver *operates along* route 44. The same fate is suffered by the verb *discriminate* which Kenyans use without the requisite preposition *against.* A Kenyan speaker will most likely say,

- I was discriminated at the hospital because I didn't have an insurance card. instead of "*I was discriminated against at the hospital . . .*"

This is possibly as a result of L1 systems, especially Bantu languages, where the prepositional aspect is taken care of by the applicative morpheme (-ĩr- in Kimeru) and the passivizing morpheme (-w-) just before the final vowel of the verb that denotes that the action was received as in the examples below:

Arathĩnjirwe ĩgoro. (He/She was operated on yesterday.)
Nindaathinjirwo. (I was operated on.)
Alichinjwa jana. (He/ She was operated on yesterday)

Reply: Many Kenyans simply do not reply *to* a letter, rather they *reply the letter*. This usage is especially common among Bantu speakers as a result of L1 transfer where *reply* is used in an accusative form, to result in a direct form like, "**I replied my sister's letter*" and not the correct form thus: *I replied to my sister's letter*. However, in correct usage, the verb *reply* requires a prepositional complement.

Hang: This word is polysemous, and is used as both verb and noun. When used as a verb, the lexeme happens to have two past tenses: *hanged* and *hun*g. What is lost to many Kenyan speakers of English, though, is that the first form, *hanged*, is used only in reference to hanging of people; that is, people are *hanged* while everything else—clothes, pictures, and others—are *hung*. Unfortunately for majority of speakers, *hun*g as a form simply does not exist, resulting in such hilarious constructions as:

- We hanged all the clothes.
- The computer hanged before I could save my work!

Meet: This word is discussed here only in the sense where it is commonly used in constructions where *find* would be more appropriate. It is not uncommon to hear an expression like this one below:

- When I got home I met my mother washing clothes.

While in its many elaborations the word *meet* when used as a verb has the constant meaning of coming into contact with, it does also seem to connote

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two objects meeting "halfway" to make that contact. It is therefore inappropriate in a sentence such as the one above where the mother is "happened upon" as she washes clothes. The correct form therefore will be "When I got home I *found* my mother washing clothes."

Receive: This word which came into the English language from Latin after the Norman conquest of England in 1066 is part of a group of words containing bound roots, such as -ceive, -ling, -mit, with fairly stable meanings within the words in which they occur (Katamba & Stonham, 2006). -Ceive, appearing in words like conceive, perceive, and receive, conveys the meaning "to get; obtain." It is therefore easy to see why it is in widely accepted usage as a way to say that a woman is having her menses, probably because the period comes to her. No wonder one of the many euphemisms of referring to the menstrual period is to say the woman is having "visitors," who are generally "received" into a home. More so, the verb is subjected to the inflected usages of regular verbs, so that a woman will confidently say, "I am receiving" with the progressive reading on the verb owing to the constancy of the experience. However, this usage is alien to native users of the English language who simply happen to have their period.

Seeing, hearing: This appropriation of the progressive aspect on verbs is one of the commonest and widely accepted violations of English grammar in Kenya and elsewhere. Verbs denoting sensory experiences are supposed to be instantaneous experiences, not progressive, and should be in the infinitive form. This therefore renders ungrammatical expressions like,

- I am seeing him now. (cf. I see him.) This is correct, however, when used in a figurative sense: I am in a relationship with him.
- Are you hearing me? (cf. Do you hear me?)
- Are you understanding me? (cf. Do you understand me?)
- I am having two cars. (cf. I have two cars.) Having is acceptable in the sense of partaking, as in, "I am having lunch at the university cafe."
- How is the food tasting? (cf. "How does the food taste?")
- Are you smelling something rotten here? (cf. Do you smell something rotten here?)
- I am agreeing with you. (cf. I agree with you.)

Borrow: consider the following clause which one can easily find on social media or even hear during social gathering conversations as people share their childhood experiences:

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> "One of the many great memories of growing up was being sent to a neighbour's kitchen to borrow fire in the morning."

This is an experience many readers of a certain age from the Kenyan society can especially identify with, so they must also remember that when they got a few live coals from a neighbor to stoke up their own fire, they did not ever return the live coals they had been given in the first place. They did not borrow the coals; they simply asked to be *given* some. In Standard English, to borrow is to get something temporarily, so that one may ask, "*May I borrow your pen for a minute*?" Unfortunately, the word *borrow* is one that I know from experience to be misused from the earliest days of ESL learning, so that it is a common phrase in primary and high school classrooms, when a learner seeks permission instead of saying "I came to ask for permission," he/ she will instead say,

- May I borrow permission?
- I came to borrow permission.

Ignorant: In commonplace English usage, this word, an adjective, is forced into a nonexistent close relationship with the verb *ignore*. The adjective *ignorant* strictly means "to lack knowledge of," and this consequent lack of knowledge is given the noun *ignorance*. The verb *ignore* means "to fail to pay attention to," so that one may correctly say, "*When I tried to speak to him he ignored me.*" This does not, cannot, mean that when I tried to speak to him he treated me with ignorance, or that he was ignorant toward me, any more than Hosea 4:6 "My people are perishing from ignorance" can mean that the people are perishing because of ignoring God. If you have no idea why he ignored you, you can thus correctly say, "*I am ignorant of why he ignored me*." Semantically, the words *ignore* and *ignorant* are not related, no doubt one of the many baffling idiosyncrasies of the English language.

Whooping: one of the devices used in achieving lexical cohesion is collocation. The word *whooping* consistently keeps the company of the word *cough*, but not in Kenyan English, where, for example, robbers make away with a **whooping fifty million shillings*, or a sophisticated gadget or something costs a *whooping* sum of money. In correct English usage, it is the word *whopping*, which means very large, or extremely, that is appropriate for use in, for example, "*The robbers made away with a whopping fifty million shillings*" or "*He was whopping drunk when he came home last night*" respectively. Sometimes I wonder whether it is the inattention to correct spelling, so that one fails to appreciate that it matters whether it

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is the doubling of the vowel (whooping) or that of the consonant (whopping) that differentiates these two words, not just semantically but also phonologically.

Phrasal Errors

**My names are*: Typically, many Kenyans are identified by a baptismal, maiden, and then the surname, so it makes sense if they are seen as "names." Four "names" such as Ann Joy Murugi Nyaga can be expressed as a "name." Many official documents ask for the first name, the maiden name and the surname. This situation might have added to the fossilization of this particular perception that we have names and not a name.

**A word of prayer*: This is an expression one is likely to hear in every gathering where those present have to pray before they begin their business, and even better when minutes of the meeting will be taken, so it will go into record that the meeting began not just with a prayer but with *a word of prayer* by so and so. While I have no empirical support as to the origins of this expression, my guess is that it stems from the association with the Word (commonly understood among Christians as God's message in the Bible) since in most cases, those appointed to pray, also by choice, may begin by sharing an excerpt from the Word.

Isn't it: For all practical purposes this is the only question tag that most Kenyans carried out of the English grammar classes, never mind the many attendant rules on the correct usage of question tags, complete with the notable exceptions to the rules. I am actually almost convinced that only English grammar teachers make the effort to apply correct usage of question tags to English sentences, albeit half-heartedly as well, maybe because they are aware of the gross violations of grammar attendant to sticking "isn't it" to every other statement! Bhatt (2005) concedes that this is a common error in Indian English that is nevertheless necessitated by the pressure to observe social politeness.

**Wreak havoc*: This is a common expression on Kenyan news media, in expressions such as the ones below:

- *The floods have wrecked havoc.
- *The criminal gangs have wreaked havoc.

In one of his weekly articles of *Mark My Word*, the columnist Philip Ochieng, no doubt exasperated by Kenyans' usage of this phrase, quipped, "If havoc

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itself has been wrecked, then why is anyone worried?!" The answer is simple . . . everyone should be worried because havoc is not wrecked . . . it is wreaked! So we should be hearing correct usages like, "The floods have wreaked havoc in Narok." I guess because floods are known to be utterly destructive and causing such wreckage then Kenyans find it easier to attach *wreck* to floods.

Sleeping late: the Kenyan English usage of this phrase may not be conceivable to a native speaker of British English, for whom *sleeping late* means staying in bed long after waking time, also expressed as having a *sleep-in*. It is common to hear a Kenyan say, "**Last night I slept late*." This is meant to convey the meaning that in Standard English would be achieved by, "Last night I went to bed late." This is especially common among Bantu speakers as a consequence of direct transference of L1 usage, whereby they go to sleep, not to bed.

If at all: In Kenyan usage, this phrase helps form a conditional clause in usages such as:

- *I'll tell him what you said, if at all he comes.

In this case, the condition may occupy the sentence initial position. In correct usage, however, this phrase usually stands alone and not as part of an embedded clause, and is typically in sentence final position, as in the construction, "*He will arrive at five o'clock, if at all*." The phrase basically casts some doubt on the erstwhile proposition with the simple meaning *if it happens at all.*

**Many a times*. The plurality of the noun is marked on the quantifier *many*, therefore it would be redundant to mark it again on the noun *time* as happens in the speech of many Kenyans, in which one often hears the form **many a times*. This usage violates a most basic rule of grammar, where the indefinite article *a* which should only be used before singular nouns is used before a plural noun thus: **a times*.

**Slowly by slowly*: This is how Kenyan speakers get through an arduous task, probably an extension of the meaning captured in the Kiswahili proverb *Pole pole ndio mwendo*, literary translated (slow, slow is the way to go). However, this phrase does not exist in Standard English where, instead, the idiom *slowly but surely* is used. The Kenyan version violates a basic rule as far as borrowed forms are concerned: idioms must be borrowed whole and should not be manipulated to conform to the flavor or reality of the importing

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language. In this way, *kick the bucket* remains as such, so that a community with no buckets but pots cannot make it *kick the pot* and hope to retain the same meaning (die).

**First class cousin*: This is a relation that exists only in Kenyan English, where it is supposed to refer to the daughter or son of the brother or sister of your own mother or father. No doubt a very close relation, second only to your brother and/or sister, a significant fact in the intricate web of African family relations in which, if we are serious enough and had the motivation and the resources, we could probably trace our family tree and relations all the way to Adam and Eve! But no matter how deeply you want to distinguish your close cousins from the rest of the relatives, if you are doing it in the English language, then they are simply first cousins, not first-class cousins as they are commonly called in PKE.

**Comprise of*: This is used in similar syntactic environments as *consist of*. The error in the Kenyan application of this verb is attaching the preposition *of* that is mandatorily attached to *consist*. This means *comprise* means *consist of*, such that we should say, "The village consists of ten families," or "The village comprises ten families." However, there are exceptional usages in which comprise used in the passive may be followed by *of*.

Discuss about/enter in(to)*: These two usages represent the common error of introducing prepositions where they are not necessary. *Discuss* as a verb should be followed by a direct object complement: *We discussed the project in detail* (not *We discussed about the project*). I suppose the genesis of this error is rooted in its relation to the verb *talk*, where we generally *talk about* things. On the other hand, the error in *enter into* could be rooted in the epistemic awareness that when we enter a place we are also going into the place (She entered into the room*), hence the redundant usage.

A more generally persistent problem with usage of prepositions in Kenyan English relates to overuse of certain prepositions and avoidance of others, a phenomenon Mwangi (2003) calls underdifferentiation, and which Schmied (2006) labels a safety strategy. Consequently, frequently occurring complex prepositions (like *because of*, *according to*, and *due to*) occur more frequently, while less frequently occurring and even more complex ones (like *in front of*, *in favor of*, *by means of*, *in the light of*) occur less often. By the same token, more specific prepositions like into, across, or off are avoided in favor of frequent ones like of, on, and in.

**Put effort*: Kenyans generally put effort into an endeavor. However, British users of English *make effort* when they want to achieve something. The

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correct usage of the word *put* in this regard also includes the particle *in*, thereby making it a phrasal verb: *put in*. Consider,

> *I *put a lot of effort* to complete the assignment on time.
> I *made a lot of effort* to complete the assignment on time.
> I *put in a lot of effort* to complete the assignment on time.

**Do a mistake*: Regardless of how much effort one makes, every once in a while one is likely to *make a mistake*, not *do a mistake* as many Kenyan speakers are inclined to say. To express the same meaning, do will hold only if the speaker says that they *did* something badly. In other words, to make a mistake is to do something badly.

CLAUSES

I don't think: This is a ludicrous declaration which commonly appears in productions such as,

A: Will you be here by five o'clock?
B: No, I don't think. (cf. I don't think so.)

While substitution is a device used to achieve grammatical cohesion, turn B lacks a necessary overt substitute *so* to qualify the clausal substitute, giving it a syntactic form where its meaning may not be recoverable from turn A.

**You better*: Kenyan English users often use this common clause as in the sentence below:

> *You better come at five* . . . in place of the full clause: *You had better come at five*.

This error may probably arise from the fact that *You had better is* often used in its contracted form—*you'd better* and learners fail to get the contraction in fast speech thus learning the erroneous form *you better*.

**All what I know*: This particular error was the motivation behind Hocking's (1974) titling of his book *All What I Was Taught and Other Mistakes. What* is an interrogative wh-word that is commonly used in error in syntactic environments where *that* is more appropriate.

**Me I*: This is common as in the clause *Me I don't know*. It is an almost indelibly imprinted error in the language of many Kenyan English speakers.

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As a universal principle, a clause should have only one noun phrase (NP) as specifier of tense phrase (TP). This kind of usage is in violation of this principle, and the error is aggravated because the two pronouns denote one and the same referent. More so, *me* is an objective case pronoun that should not appear in specifier position.

This usage is also one of the errors resulting from L1 influence, especially among Bantu speakers, where such constructions always begin with the respective personal pronoun. Consider,

Mimi *si*jui (Kiswahili)	I don't know.
Mimi <u>*na*</u>jua (Kiswahili)	I know.
Yeye *ha*jui (Kiswahili)	He/she doesn't know
Ni *ntĩ*kũmenya (Kimeru)	I don't know.
Ni *nĩ* nkũmenya(Kimeru)	I know.
Bo *ba*tĩkũmenya (Kimeru)	They don't know
Bo *nĩba*kũmenya (Kimeru)	They know.

The corresponding morphosyntactic person properties inherent in the specifier are also marked on the verb as in the italicized sections, which bear negating or focus marking morphemes. It is possible that *Me I* is a result of transferring the double marking of subjects from L1 to L2.

**Come with*: This is often said to a person who has gone, for example, into a different room from where the speaker is seated. So one will say to one who has gone into the kitchen,

- Come with a cup.

Among Bantu speakers, this amounts to direct translation from the various L1s, with slight morphemic variations meant to capture the first grammatical person which is usually attached to the root, as in Kiswahili *Ni*-let-ee kikombe or Kimeru *Nd*-et-er-a gĩkombe. You will note that there is almost no way of marking the grammatical goal in *Come with a cup* without being too wordy (e.g., by adding *for me*). This is, however, easily correctable by using the correct Standard English equivalent *Bring me a cup*, in which the goal (me) and the theme (cup) are easily marked.

What are the news today: This may be used in expressions such as,

- Those are news to me.

The lexeme *news* belongs to a category of words that are plural in form (because they bear the regular plural marking morpheme –s) but singular

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in meaning. Some others in the group are politics, series, measles, and Mathematics (as do all the other educational disciplines ending in –s). To attain subject–verb concord these nouns must be followed by verbs and specifiers that also denote singularity as in the following respective examples: What *is* the news today? *That* is news to me. Other correct usages include,

> Politics *does* not interest me. (not *Politics *do* not interest me.)
> Her news *was* really shocking. (not *Her news *were* really shocking.)
> Mathematics *is* boring to me. (not *Mathematics *are* boring to me.)

Possibly this is as a result of the fact that the news usually is a collection of informational items and, therefore, it sounds more appropriate to refer to it in the plural.

CONCLUSION

As indicated earlier, this chapter discusses fossilized errors that characterize PKE as judged against Standard English in the light of Yule's (2003) definition of standard language. The presentation of the acceptable standard forms is a recognition of the existence of an ideal which Quirk (1962) defines thus:

> Standard English is basically an ideal, a model of experience we seek when we wish to go beyond our immediate community with members of the nation as a whole or with members of a wider community: English speakers as a whole. (p. 100)

No attempt has been made to delve into phonological (being even more widespread merit a study on their own) or typological errors, or commonplace and sometimes hilarious literal translations from L1 to English which have, however, no universal currency as far as the Kenyan context is concerned. The question worth considering is if these should continue to be viewed as errors or creative innovations that flavor the Kenyan variety of English.

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Chapter 4

Teaching English in Kenya

Reforms and Challenges in Early Years Education

Benard O. Nyatuka

The medium of communication remains a crucial tool as it enables children to interact with their immediate environment. This is especially important in the process of socialization since it facilitates acquisition of vital skills such as listening, speaking, and literacy. Similarly, the medium of instruction enables learners to fluently express themselves and develop desirable competencies with regard to the foundational reading and writing skills (Republic of Kenya, 2017). According to Riley (2006), teaching English in the early years of formal education contributes immensely to both the learning of the skills and processes of literacy as well as the use of spoken language.

There is a body of research evidence that suggests that the foundation of literacy is laid in the first two years of schooling, and that access to a high-quality education in the early years is key to the success of the educational system (Brien, 2012; USAID, 2020). Thus, literacy is fundamental to success in formal education, to learning and to the development of thinking. Riley (2006) asserts that the link between academic success and high levels of literacy occurs, first, through allowing access to the curriculum and, second, by enabling the individual to achieve educationally and to complete and be successful at school. Medwell, Wray, Minns, Griffiths, and Coates (2014) define literacy as having the skills necessary for effective reading as well as writing. Literacy, therefore, involves the proficient use of language.

A highly literate population is essential for an advanced society, and this is important for both humanitarian and economic reasons (Riley, 2006). At an individual level, literacy determines quality of life, personal growth, and self-image, and the ability to function in an ever-changing and increasingly technological world. Being literate allows access to knowledge, offers the

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ability to make choices, and to achieve self-fulfillment. At a national level, the smooth functioning and economic prosperity of our society depends on a well-educated, flexible, and highly skilled workforce.

Being one of the official languages of communication in Kenya, the teaching and learning of English is emphasized in the early years of education: the two years of pre-primary and three years of lower primary school education. The learners are expected to be taught the foundational skills of reading and writing in the English language at the earliest opportune time. Teaching primary English involves ensuring children learn the skills and processes of literacy and speaking (Medwell et al., 2014). In speaking and listening, children need to learn to listen to both the literal and implied messages in communication. According to UNESCO (1953, 2010), literacy is a human right and addresses the ability to make meaning of letters and sounds, thus making sense of written codes. Literacy is supposed to be taught in the first language or the mother tongue of the learner for ease of communication with others and for the promotion of learning (Republic of Kenya, 2017). The mother tongue equips learners with language skills to enable them to acquire a second language more proficiently and achieve more academic success. Nyaga and Anthonissen (2012) observe that Kenya's language-in-education policy supports mother tongue education as the ideal approach to developing language and literacy skills of young learners. This policy has been informed by findings of various past national education commissions, committees, and taskforces. As per the Constitution of Kenya, both English and Kiswahili are the official languages of communication while the latter is recognized as the national language (Nyatuka, 2014; Republic of Kenya, 2010). Except in the early years of education, English remains the medium of instruction in all Kenyan educational institutions.

Although the national language policy stipulates that the language of the catchment area be used as the medium of instruction in grade one to three (UNICEF, 2016; Trudell & Piper, 2014), most schools flout this policy and instead use English or a mix of three languages for instruction. It is, therefore, not surprising that English is extensively used as the medium of instruction even in grade one, and fluency in the language is highly valued. Due to this value placed on the English language, even the national policy that supports local language use as a medium of instruction is often appropriated in ways that nullify the intended pedagogical as well as cultural impact of the policy. Dubeck, Jukes, and Okello (2012) have observed that there is a mismatch between pro-mother tongue education policy and pro-international language classroom practice in Kenya. Lack of instructional materials in the mother tongue and a concern that students who do not begin instruction in English upon school entry will be disadvantaged when they take exit exams, combine to increase the use of English in the early primary grades (UNICEF, 2016).

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Even though teachers are aware of the national policy promoting the mother tongue, local languages are not recognized as languages of instruction. This is partly due to the linguistic heterogeneity in some of the classrooms and the fact that teachers themselves often do not speak the local language. It is worth noting that Kenya has more than 40 culturally diverse groups of people, each with its own language.

It is important that the early years' practitioners and teachers carefully plan the implementation of a language and literacy program involving the mother tongue. There is a need to consider the significant number of children for whom English is an additional language. The faces of bilingualism are many, and educational settings need to consider the out-of-school lives of children. According to UNICEF (2016), although both Kiswahili and English serve as lingua francas, the latter has always been taken to be the official medium of instruction from grade one while Kiswahili is taught as a subject. Between the two sanctioned languages of instruction, English is the preferred medium of instruction, although teachers report that their students generally read better and participate more in Kiswahili than in English (Dubeck, Jukes & Okello, 2012). English enjoys high prestige among educated Kenyans.

The language policy in education firmly entrenches the old colonial pattern to the extent that the mother tongue is used as a medium of instruction and taught as a subject for only three years of an individual's school career (UNICEF, 2016). Many speakers of Kenya's non-dominant languages also have strong reasons to value English. Access to formal education is particularly important to members of culturally marginalized communities who must master dominant forms of cultural practice, including the language, if they are to gain access to mainstream political and economic institutions (Trudell & Leila, 2007). English is deemed the gateway to upward social mobility and, therefore, many parents and guardians encourage the use of English even when the child uses a different language at home (Ogechi, 2003). Indeed, English plays a key role in the country's legal, economic, and educational systems (Kioko & Muthwii, 2001). Many parents, guardians, and head teachers insist that English be used not only from grade one but also even in kindergarten due to the fact that it has a greater sociolinguistic market. However, Kembo-Sure and Ogechi (2009) document the failure of the prevailing English-focused ideology to facilitate learning, especially in science and mathematics. The transition from the mother tongue medium to English is premature as it denies children the opportunity to develop cognitive and intellectual skills in their first language, which they can later transfer to English.

Major curriculum reforms have been undertaken in the country since the colonial era, which affect the use of English, particularly as the language of instruction. This chapter discusses those reforms and the attendant challenges.

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The chapter then makes recommendations for the way forward with a view to strengthening both the teaching and learning of English at the early years cycle of education in the country.

ENGLISH TEACHING REFORMS IN EARLY YEARS EDUCATION IN KENYA

In this section, key curriculum changes in the teaching of English in the early years of education are traced from the pre-independence era, through independence to the present. To better understand such reforms, an effort has been made to discuss the various education systems or curricula followed during these periods.

Pre-independence Education

The introduction of modern education was largely done by the Christian missionaries of various societies long before Kenya was politically colonized (Nyatuka & Bota, 2014; Bogonko & Sifuna, 1986). Thus the missionaries greatly helped in the spread of English, particularly through the use of Bibles written in the language. Kenya fell under British rule in 1885 and this reinforced the use of English during the colonial period. Kioko and Muthwii (2001) argue that although the introduction of English early in the colonial history of Kenya played a significant part in the growth of nationalism, it no longer enjoys this role today. Kibui, Athiemoolam, and Mwaniki (2014) as well as Nabea (2009) argue that the colonial government officials controlled the teaching of English to the natives so as to get low-cadre staff in their administration as well as in their business enterprises, including farms. English was taught in such a way as to discourage many of the Africans from proceeding beyond the primary school level of education. The British settlers held the view that well-educated Africans would not accept low-cadre jobs. This reasoning made Africans establish the Kenyan independent schools in the 1920s that taught English without any restrictions.

In 1929, English became the lingua franca (Kioko & Muthwii, 2001). Kiswahili, which was widely spoken in the entire East African region, was encouraged by the colonial administration alongside English until 1953 when it was banned. The African Education Report of 1949, popularly known as the Beecher Report, and others produced in the early 1950s recommended the introduction of English at the lower primary school (Kibui, Athiemoolam & Mwaniki, 2014; Nabea, 2009). Kembo-Sure and Ogechi (2009) observe that English was the most revered and powerful language during the colonial period while the mother tongues were being used for

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mundane communicative purposes in private life. English was instrumental to an individual's access to white-collar jobs, to European thought, and to other privileges (Kioko & Muthwii, 2001), and as Kibui, Athiemoolam, and Mwaniki (2014) observe, English is yet to be free of this elitist stature even to date.

After Independence, 1963–1984 (7.4.2.3 Curriculum)

Upon gaining independence in 1963, Kenya embraced the British system of education in which students spent seven years in primary school, four in ordinary secondary school level, two in advanced secondary school, and at least three years at the university (7.4.2.3) (Nyatuka, 2014). At independence, due to the shortage of English-trained teachers, any teacher who could speak English, whether trained or not, was expected to teach English language and use it in instruction of other subjects (Kioko & Muthwi, 2001). In most cases, the trained teachers themselves had been taught and trained by non-native speakers of the language, and their English was not necessarily modeled on the native speaker variety. The language policy did not change with change in government as party manifestos before and after independence were not concerned with language (Mbithi, 2014; Organization of African Unity, 1986). The usual practice was to honor the foreign European languages with the exclusive status of official languages.

Attainment of independence, however, stripped English of some of the prestige it had enjoyed during the colonial period. There was more tolerance of non-native usage of English, as seen in the success story of the African Independent Schools (Kioko & Muthwii, 2001). English was increasingly used to communicate the sociocultural experiences of the people. This way, it was no longer seen as a foreign language but as one of the languages in the repertoire of the multilingual speakers. The fact that the language teacher was a non-native speaker who had been taught and trained by non-native users of English made the task of teaching the British standard variety, especially speech skills, a very difficult one, indeed a nightmare. The English taught then could not be claimed by the British as theirs. It was starting to change and gain local favor. Despite that, Kenyans continued to prefer English above other languages.

The preferential treatment of English in Kenya, as Mbithi (2014) and Ricard (2004) observe, produced, in turn, an elite government which shunned the indigenous languages. It is important to note that the Education Commission, popularly known as the Ominde Report (Republic of Kenya, 1964), ratified the use of English as the medium of instruction (Mbithi, 2014; Nyaga & Anthonissen, 2012). It recommended teaching English right from grade one as a medium of instruction as well as a subject.

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In a later recommendation given by the National Committee on Educational Objectives and Policies, often called the "Gachathi Report" (Republic of Kenya, 1976), Kiswahili was to be made examinable at primary school and the vernacular languages be used as medium of instruction during the first three years of primary school. The report highlighted the crucial issue of inadequate relevant mother tongue instructional materials. However, for foreign languages, it was noted that there were foreign governments who were quietly expending resources in the teaching of their languages. The fact that teachers and students could now use Kiswahili and mother tongue inside the classroom was taken by teachers to mean that they no longer had to use English language correctly (Mbithi, 2014). Indeed, many teachers of other content areas have been heard telling students not to pay much attention to English as it is a foreign language.

Through the Presidential Working Party on Establishment of a Second University, commonly referred to as the Mackay Report (Republic of Kenya, 1981), Kiswahili was made a compulsory and examinable subject at all levels of the education system. The net effect of this reality, irrespective of what the policy may be on paper, is that the quality of the English language skills of the general populace became very poor (Mbithi, 2014). To date, there is plenty of evidence of poor mastery of the English language, including in the local newspapers, on television, inside the classroom, and predictably, in the falling standards of education. Mbithi (2014) argues that indigenous languages should be accorded official language status and receive support and encouragement at all levels of the education system but not at the expense of the English language. He reasons that improved linguistic capabilities in the first language would bear similar fruits in the second, third, and subsequent languages. In the 7.4.2.3 system of education, the mother tongue was understood to be the first language of the majority of the children in the class. This was the case especially in the urban and peri-urban schools where Kiswahili, which was the language familiar to a majority of the children in the classes, was used as the de facto medium of instruction.

Post-independence, 1985–2014 (8.4.4 Curriculum)

Due to criticism of the 7.4.2.3 system of education as laden with foreign content, being examination-oriented and producing individuals largely for the white-collar jobs, the 8.4.4 curriculum was introduced in 1985 (Nyatuka, 2014; Sifuna & Otiende, 1994). However, it was soon realized that the content in the new education system was overwhelming the learners. Consequently, the issue of overload in the primary curriculum was addressed by a reduction in the number of subjects and content in the different subject areas (Republic of Kenya, 2011). The reorganization of the syllabi was done in such a way

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that mastery of the knowledge, skills, and attitudes required at the end of the primary cycle could be ensured. The reduction of subjects and content was intended to ensure that the cost of education on both the government and the citizens was significantly reduced. In each subject area, the resources required for the implementation of the curriculum were suggested. These resources could either be improvised or obtained from the local environment. Some teaching and learning experiences and assessment methods were also suggested.

In particular, the English language syllabus adopted a thematic approach to teach the various language skills (Republic of Kenya, 2011) with themes being derived from things and situations that learners are likely to encounter in everyday life. The objectives of the primary education curriculum in Kenya included the ability of the learners to acquire literacy, numeracy, creativity, and communication skills, to enjoy learning and develop desire to continue learning, to develop the ability for critical thinking and logical judgment, as well as individual talents, and to promote social responsibility and make proper use of leisure time.

In the lower primary school, the general objectives of teaching English were that the learner should acquire listening skills, the ability to understand and respond to information and instructions appropriately; and speaking skills, the ability to use correct pronunciation, the stress and intonation used to express needs and feelings, convey information, and relate experiences. Other objectives included reading skills so as to be able to read and understand instructions, read for information and for pleasure, and develop vocabulary and sentence structures; and writing skills so the learner could express their own feelings and ideas meaningfully and legibly in English structures.

During the first three grades, English was taught as a subject, while mother tongue was used as the medium of instruction.

Post-independence, 2015–Present (2.6.3.3.3 Curriculum)

In a move designed to address the country's development plan, the sustainable development goals, globalization as well as internationalization of education, Kenya has embraced the 2.6.3.3.3 system of education to replace the 8.4.4 one. Thus, it is hoped that the new syllabus will adequately remedy the maladies associated with the former system. To facilitate this changeover, the Basic Education Curriculum Framework (BECF) has been developed. The purpose of the BECF is to provide a comprehensive conceptualization of reforms in basic education, that is, pre-primary education, primary education, secondary education, and inclusive education (Republic of Kenya 2017).

Among others, the BECF outlines the vision for the curriculum reforms, including the overarching mission, the pillars of the reforms, appropriate

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pedagogical practices, general learning outcomes, teaching and learning resources, and proposed formative and summative assessment approaches. The BECF also outlines the core competencies to be achieved including creativity and imagination, communication and collaboration, digital literacy, critical thinking, and problem-solving. The other competencies are learning to learn, citizenship, as well as self-efficacy.

The general learning outcomes for early years' education are to demonstrate basic literacy and numeracy skills for learning, to communicate appropriately using verbal and/or non-verbal modes in a variety of contexts, to demonstrate appropriate etiquette in social relationships, to apply creativity and critical thinking skills in problem-solving, and to explore the immediate environment for learning and enjoyment. Other learning outcomes are to practice hygiene, nutrition, sanitation, and safety skills to promote health and well-being; demonstrate the acquisition of emotional, physical, spiritual, aesthetic, and moral development for balanced living; demonstrate appreciation of the country's rich and diverse cultural heritage for harmonious coexistence; and apply digital literacy skills for learning and enjoyment. As seen from this list of objectives, it is evident that language will play a key role if these are to be achieved.

At the pre-primary level, language activities are designed to facilitate learning as children use language to interact within their immediate environment. Language serves as a medium of communication and as a critical component of socialization as it equips learners with skills that are necessary for listening as well as developing literacy skills (Republic of Kenya, 2017). The essence of language activities at this level is to develop oral, reading, and writing readiness competencies in order to lay the foundation for language acquisition. The medium of instruction at the pre-primary level is the language of the catchment area. This is a deliberate move made to enable learners to express themselves fluently and to assist them to improve the listening ability, concentration, understanding, and memory. And, at the lower primary school level, learners continue being taught appropriate literacy as well as being introduced to the English language activities.

Despite the many attempts that have been made in improving the teaching and learning of language and English in particular during the early years of education in Kenya, critical challenges remain and the next section discusses some of these challenges.

CHALLENGES IN TEACHING ENGLISH IN EARLY YEARS EDUCATION

The teacher is the most critical participant in an educational reform, particularly in one that touches on what goes on in the classroom, and therefore

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teacher training and innovative skills are necessary although not sufficient conditions for effective learning. There are other prevailing conditions which pose a challenge to the teacher, hence impeding learning (Anyiendah, 2017). Indeed, teachers face numerous challenges in and out of the classroom.

One of the key challenges is the mismatch between language policy and the actual practice. There is continued use of English, an unfamiliar language, as a medium of instruction at this level of the education system. This creates anxiety and stalls effective classroom participation (Uwezo, 2015; Kodero et al., 2011; Ngwaru, 2010). Mundy (2008) reiterates that limited classroom language opportunity for learners to practice the language stands out as a formidable challenge. Nyaga and Anthonissen (2012) have also observed that practices in the classrooms seem to contradict the language-in-education policy in all the contexts so far investigated in Kenya. There are instances where Kiswahili is supposed to be taught as a mother tongue, yet the local or ethnic language is used as the medium of instruction. Furthermore, class notes at times are given in English because examinations and textbooks are written in the same language. Among others, this is an indication that practical aspects of the language-in-education policy are not synchronized with the examination system, especially where mother tongue is offered as a subject and a medium of instruction.

Inconsistencies regarding the use of language are also evident (Nyaga & Anthonissen, 2012). For instance, there is much code switching between Kiswahili and English in the teaching of nonlanguage subjects. Research shows that even the English language lesson is not taught purely in English as the same switching and mixing of codes prevails. Ironically, although teachers themselves continuously code mix and code switch between Kiswahili, English, and sometimes Sheng, they are not quite comfortable whenever the pupils do the same. Code mixing and code switching are normally observed in situations where the teacher is translating content from English to Kiswahili, since the teaching materials are in English, and fails to find the Kiswahili equivalent for an English word. This challenge is compounded by the fact that there are generally no explicit guidelines given to teachers on how to go about it in a multiple language environment. Thus, teachers are left to interpret for themselves what this means or to find some compromise that appears to be the best solution.

Another common challenge is that of language attitudes. Research indicates that learners have negative attitudes toward English. This may be due to their limited competence in the language, thereby preventing them from actively participating in classroom activities (Anyiendah, 2017; Uwezo, 2012; Uso, 2006). Given that English is either a second or third language to some learners, most of them have difficulties comprehending its structures or understanding communication in the language. Limited proficiency in a

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language can often result in frustration and hate for the language. Evidently, primary school teachers struggle to help learners achieve the expected proficiency. Gathumbi (2013) as well as Kanga'hi et al. (2012) observe that the English language curriculum at the primary school level is overloaded, making it a major hurdle for effective classroom practice. Together with the challenges of handling large classes and the acute shortage of teachers, this puts a strain on the teachers' capacity to provide quality language work to the learners. The teacher–learner ratio in most of the public primary schools in Kenya is not proportional (Muchiri, 2009). As per Glasson (2009), the policy demands that inclusive learning pose a challenge in the already swollen classrooms since it compromises individual attention as a result of the diverse needs of the learners vis-à-vis teachers.

Another major challenge to the teaching and learning of English during the early years education in Kenya is the limited access to resources, especially the lack of relevant textbooks (Muthwii, 2004). Other impediments to effective learning and teaching include overcrowded buildings, noisy and unsafe environments, poorly ventilated classrooms, and water and sanitation facilities which are not supportive to the learners and the teachers (Mchungwani, 2018). Absenteeism is equally a challenge, especially among children from socioeconomically disadvantaged backgrounds. These children remain absent from school due to lack of various school necessities, while some refrain from school to take care of siblings, or attend to their family animals and farms, among others (Nyale, Mwawasi & Muli, 2018; Ngwaru & Opoku-Amankwa, 2010). These economically disadvantaged families where these children come from are reported to have minimal parental involvement in children's learning (Njogu, 2008).

Negative as well as dominant coercive relations of power affect the teaching and learning of English. More often than not, both teachers and parents perceive all the power to be vested in the school (Nyatuka, 2021; Ngwaru, 2010). These key stakeholders end up ineffectively playing their respective roles in the provision of education to children including provision of language instruction. The degree of interactions between the family and school are shaped by differences as well as resemblances in the sociocultural capital of these institutions. Teachers, for instance, are sometimes accused of selectively paying attention to certain pupils, which creates feelings of discrimination. The students who receive more negative attention are likely to get frustrated and discouraged, while those who get positive attention end up loving school and instruction. Also, verbal criticism of learners by both teachers and family members decreases children's self-esteem and confidence level, making them harbor negative feelings about themselves (Ngwaru, 2010). Epstein et al. (2002) hold that well-organized, systematic, and sustained efforts to align cultural capital with the home and school result in enhanced collaboration

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that is useful to both parties. Schools have generally been found to reward the learners according to their cultural capital. For instance, the teachers tend to communicate more easily with the learners and families who have a common background. This includes paying more attention and specific support to them (Chrispeels & Gonzalez, 2006).

Another formidable challenge that teachers at the early years education level in Kenya encounter is the low degree of specialization with respect to the number of subjects one can teach. The fact that a primary school teacher is expected to teach all subjects, including English, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Kiswahili, Mother Tongue, and Religious Studies in the country (Nyaga & Anthonissen, 2012), negates the conventional spirit of specializing in a given area, thereby compromising the quality of education provided. Similarly, the practice of sending a teacher to any part of the country regardless of one's first language disregards the practical implementation of the demands of the language-in-education policy.

THE WAY FORWARD

This section discusses the way forward with respect to the teaching and learning of English in the early years of education, laying emphasis on the essentials of teaching English at this cycle of the education system. Embracing these fundamentals could go a long way toward addressing the challenges discussed earlier.

Primary English, according to Medwell et al. (2014), is about empowering children with a range of skills, knowledge, and attitudes for schooling and for life. These authors assert that the study of language, and English in particular, is a gateway to every other subject in the curriculum. In other words, primary English is focused on children acquiring the skills, knowledge, and attitudes to become empowered readers, writers, speakers, and listeners. Children should not only decode and encode written English but also be critical about what they read so that they can identify the perspective of the author and the intended effects on the reader. To achieve this, they need to read a wide range of appropriate texts. They should also learn to write in a technical sense. This includes expressing themselves so as to achieve their purposes for writing. In addition to skills and knowledge, primary English also involves the acquisition of attitudes that seek to enable children to find reading fiction an enjoyable experience (Medwell et al., 2014; Brien, 2012). If language is taught this way, children will be motivated to do more as far as learning English is concerned. It also entails the aim of training children to find nonfiction persuasive, interesting, and useful. Similarly, this teaching is meant to make children learn from listening as well as from speaking. The

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way the texts are treated by teachers and children develops specific attitudes toward language and learning.

If children are to benefit from language instruction, there is need to better understand the crucial essentials of teaching as well as learning English, especially in early years of schooling. This section deals with the specifics of teaching the skills of literacy, speaking, listening, reading, and writing.

Teaching Literacy

Teachers need skills to plan, monitor, and assess learning in English, including literacy. They particularly need to know about the new curriculum and a good deal about what children have already learned, as well as how they have been taught (Medwell et al., 2014; Riley, 2006). They also need to appreciate the fact that language development is never always linear, as both individual needs and strengths have to be considered. It is important to reinforce the fact that teachers need to have excellent language knowledge themselves in order to competently analyze and address errors. Brien (2012) states that great teachers have purpose, knowledge, enthusiasm, sensitivity, and a sense of fun. Such are the strengths that teachers, especially those of the English language, are expected to have. Effective English teaching should also include frequent demonstrations, especially in teaching literacy and spoken language. The reality that children's language learning does not just occur in the classroom should be appreciated. Teachers should organize special events which include extracurricular activities, as these greatly help children develop special interests. Family participation needs to be mutually supportive and respectful as well.

Teaching Speaking and Listening

Both speaking and listening are considered to be the foundation of nearly all successful learning in the primary school years (Piper et al., 2018). Little can be achieved in education if learners have not acquired listening and speaking skills. Brien (2012) asserts that teachers have a great influence on children's speaking and listening, but so do homes, peers, as well as the media. In particular, teachers are advised to work sensitively with children whose home dialects differ from those demanded in the education set up. More importantly, teachers have to model both good listening and speaking. Listening and speaking skills need to be taught as consciously and carefully as every other aspect of the English curriculum.

In spoken language, children need to be able to listen not only to the literal sense of what is said but also to critically evaluate the veracity, relevance, as well as intent of what they hear (Medwell et al., 2014; Brien, 2012). By doing

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these, children are prepared to become critical listeners. They are also expected to become critical speakers, that is, being able to speak appropriately and effectively in a wide range of situations, whatever the purpose of the speech is. The fact that there are many processes that characterize children's learning of spoken language should also be recognized. These involve immersion in meaningful talk as well as the use of approximations, among others. As a key objective of the early years' education, oral language proficiency is particularly important for learners. The use of rhymes is particularly known to help increase children's vocabulary in addition to enhancing phonemic awareness.

Teaching Reading

Reading is a complex process in which both decoding and understanding work together (Brien, 2012). Accordingly, understanding, in its many forms, is the purpose of reading, and teachers need to model both how to read and why to read every day. Children are known to make little progress unless they enjoy reading and find it purposeful and rewarding (USAID, 2016; Riley, 2006). Teachers need to perform a wide variety of activities to teach reading; for instance, in teaching phonics for reading and writing, phonic knowledge and understanding is quite essential for reading and spelling. In order to realize the anticipated objectives, phonics must be fast-paced, systematic, and engaging.

Teachers should also model the sounds of English and use the technical terminology accurately (Brien, 2012). Children should be encouraged to use their phonic knowledge in every curriculum area, particularly in learning a new language. It is advisable that children read enlarged texts. This way, they can see the text and read with the teacher. This is one of the reasons why big books are popular in children's early years of education because they make it possible for teachers to read with the students. The use of environmental print is also important as it helps children make connections between reading in school and the outside world.

Teaching Writing

Language might be described as the set of symbols we use to represent our immediate lives as well as experiences and ideas that happen to be far away from us. According to Medwell et al. (2014), language also gives us an opportunity to represent abstract concepts. These authors also hold that language is functional and oriented toward meaning. Furthermore, they assert that language is encoded meaning and, therefore, successful use of it demands the ability to decode. The codes of language occur at three levels, including word, sentence, and text.

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Writing, which starts with thinking and talking, is considered to be the most demanding of the language forms. This is because writing requires several skills and types of knowledge to be synthesized. Due to this, teachers are supposed to be active participants in all parts of the writing process. Children need to be taught and allowed to make their own writing decisions. In particular, motivation can be enhanced by making writing purposeful and relevant to children's reading preferences (Medwell et al., 2014; Riley, 2006). Compositional and secretarial skills and knowledge need to be balanced in instruction and teacher response. Indeed, this is a key aspect of progress across the entire curriculum and so must not be underestimated. Writing should be enjoyable and rewarding for everyone. Accuracy in writing and clarity in presentation are vehicles for conveying meaning.

Integrating the Skills

While these skills have been addressed separately, it is important to remember that the skills work together and none of them stands alone. Children need to be taught how to make decisions about the sentence structure and punctuation, which will convey their meaning most effectively both in writing and in speaking. They need to know about the technical aspects of speaking, listening, reading, and writing if they are to use these skills effectively. The technical aspects include a vast range of specialized knowledge, for instance, knowing the sounds of English, word order in sentences, and how to listen for the key points from a text. Medwell et al. (2014) and Riley (2006) hold that the most important and complex knowledge children must gain is how to orchestrate their skills and understanding regarding reading, writing, speaking, and listening effectively. To do this, children need to know about successful texts, especially the written examples of literature on nonfiction, spoken discussions, or reports.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

English is one of the official languages of communication and instruction in Kenya. Indeed, the importance of the English language in the early years education level of learning cannot be overemphasized. A variety of proposals have been made over time that are meant to make the teaching and learning of English effective during these early years of education. The proposals range from planning to ensure progress, assessment and targeting, to using technology to embracing inclusive learning and the teaching of English (USAID, 2019a, b). To ensure good progress in both the teaching and learning of English, relevant schemes and resources come handy in planning for a

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specific class (Brien, 2012). Efforts should be made to ensure that planning moves children toward independence, bearing in mind that they usually learn more from doing than listening. Such key teaching strategies as modeling, demonstrating, sharing, and guiding will probably occur in every lesson. Planning for English and literacy is said to effectively work through the phases of speaking and listening as well as reading and writing.

To cater for the needs of trainees in their initial teacher training in early years of education, Medwell et al. (2014) advice that the relevant courses should enable them to have sound knowledge of the required subject(s) and curriculum areas and to promote and maintain pupils' interest, as well as address misunderstandings. Such courses should also enable the trainees to demonstrate a critical understanding of developments in both the subject and the curriculum areas, and foster the value of scholarship. Similarly, the trainees need to be prepared so as to understand and be responsible for fostering high levels of literacy, articulacy, and the correct use of Standard English. Efforts should also be made to enable the trainees to have a clear understanding of systematic synthetic phonics.

As far as inclusive learning and teaching of English is concerned, Brien (2012) observes that inclusion in literacy is about being involved with as it is much as appropriate for the full curriculum and the language life of the class. Since success in education often depends on success in literacy, teachers should strive to prioritize it. Good inclusive teaching is known to be more about a teacher's attitude than specific techniques. It should also be acknowledged that children are different, and thus all bring knowledge and understanding to their language learning. Indeed, some of them even bring burdens, and therefore, individual targeting is central to making meaningful progress. In addition to offering frequent demonstrations, the National Assessment System for Monitoring Learner Achievement (NASMLA, 2010) and Medwell et al. (2014) recommend that for effective English teaching, teachers should talk about language, make learning goals clear, have expectations and targets, and use language purposefully. Also important is to play with language, practice its use, develop independence, offer feedback, and celebrate success.

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Chapter 5

English across the Curriculum in Kenya

The Reality in Primary School Classrooms and Implications on Epistemic Access

Peter N. Mose

Primary school education lays a foundation for further learning and skill development at high school and postsecondary training at colleges and universities. At this level, the basic principles of literacy (the ability to read and write) are introduced to children. For the initial levels—that is, kindergarten and lower primary—children are trained "to read" but—in many education systems globally—from 4th grade, they are supposed "to read to learn." Reading has to happen in a language, and research in the reading sub-discipline indicates that for effective reading with understanding, the reader must have developed an oral knowledge of the language in question (Baker, 2012; Cummins, 2000).

Literature shows that children acquire the skill of reading much more easily in their mother languages or first languages than in second or foreign languages. The reason for this is that it is easy for a child with primary phonological awareness of his/her first language to decode words when reading. Phonological awareness has been known to positively influence reading skills (Alidou, 2006; Coyne, 2015; Harris, 2011). This is the basis for both African educational sociolinguists and applied language researchers, suggesting the use of mother/first languages whenever and wherever possible for basic literacy teaching. According to research on literacy development in Africa and other multilingual contexts, the use of mother tongues presents a number of benefits, including ease of acquisition of a second language, facilitating negotiation of knowledge between learners and teachers, and enhancing learning, resulting in better scores across the curriculum (Alidou, 2006; Cummins, 2008). One language education expert states that

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> no acknowledged expert in psycholinguistics and second language acquisition will suggest that children *in developing countries and minorities or poor communities can switch from mother-tongue education by the end of grade/year 3 to the second language and also achieve well across the curriculum* by the second half of primary school or in secondary school. (Heugh, 2006, p. 68; emphasis ours)

Heugh's (2006) position has been confirmed by research in diverse second language educational contexts in the Americas, Europe, and Africa (Baker, 2012; Cummins, 2000; Thomas & Collier, 2002). This position, however, is "contradicted" by various arguments in favor of English and other exotic languages as languages of education. Some parents and teachers, for instance, show negative attitudes toward the use of mother tongues as languages of instructions. Some governments, especially in developing countries, would rather look for alternatives to leaner spending in education (it is economical to use one or two languages in education, Bamgbose, n.d.). Additionally, there is widespread ignorance, even among elites, on the primacy of language in literacy teaching and learning (Mose, 2017; Obanya, 2004).

In Kenya, the language in education policy prescribes the use of languages of the catchment area to teach basic literacy up to 3rd grade (Mose, 2015). This is followed by transition to English from 4th grade onward. As this literature study indicates, there are significant gaps concerning the success of the use of the English language in teaching content knowledge past 3rd grade when mother tongues are dropped and English adopted. This chapter looks at the provision of the language in education policy (the use of English across the teaching of all subjects in the curriculum) after 3rd grade against actual primary school classroom realities. Classroom research indicates that the use of English is a popular choice among stakeholders in the education sector (Mose, 2019; Nyaga, 2013), but studies indicate a trend that seeks a critical discourse on the language question in the basic education level of education.

HISTORY OF ENGLISH IN KENYA

English was introduced in the country in the nineteenth century by the British. Initially, it was not a language taught to indigenous people but to privileged races. It was introduced for the education of Africans after the 1920s in a phased manner (Gorman, 1974). Its perceived significance was captured in the first education commission of 1963 (by the Ominde Commission), which recommended its universal use in teaching all subjects from 1st grade. The commission gave several reasons for this choice, including the fact that English makes possible a systematic development

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of language study and literacy which would be very difficult to achieve in the mother tongues; quicker progress would be possible in all subjects; the foundation laid in the first three years would be more scientifically conceived and, therefore, would provide a more solid basis for all subsequent studies than was possible in the old mother tongue teaching; the difficult transition from a mother tongue to an English medium, which could take up much time in primary five, was avoided; and the resulting linguistic equipment was expected to be much more satisfactory, an advantage that could not fail to expedite and improve the quality of postprimary education and learning of all kinds. Looked at from the position English occupies presently in the education system in Kenya, one would say that the Ominde Commission's (1964) recommendations played a foundational role in entrenching English into the important role of medium of instruction in Kenya. The recommendations seem to have held captive public attitudes toward the language as a tool of education throughout the education system, and the attitudes seem intact after more than half a century.

Subsequent education commissions confirmed the role of English in the education system, and, to date, the language is in universal use in the educational institutions both private and public; it is a service subject across the curriculum (Okwara, Shiundu, & Indoshi, 2009). There is, however, a striking omission in the implementation of the English language of instruction policy in education. There is often widespread nonuse of languages of the catchment area in the teaching of content subjects up to the end of 3rd grade (KIE, 2012).

ENGLISH ACROSS THE CURRICULUM AND THE KENYAN CONTEXT

The use of English to teach all subjects from 4th grade is technically referred to as English/Language across the Curriculum (E/LAC), Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL), or Language for Understanding across the Curriculum (LUAC, Deller & Price, 2007). LAC is premised on the theory that language is acquired most effectively through rich, comprehensible input with the conscious focus on message not form, and that foreign language proficiency can improve by concentrating on learning the content of an academic discipline through that language. Researchers say that students can use language to learn and that teachers can organize language in the classroom to assist learning (Kecht, 1999; Krashen, 2002). According to Sadtono (2012) and Lughmani, Chen, Gardner, and Chan (2017), language development is the responsibility of all areas in the curriculum, and different areas of learning involve highly specialized language styles, technical vocabulary,

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text types, and illustrations. Consequently, teachers need to understand how language is used in the content areas and share this with learners.

For Anglophone countries like Kenya and a host of others in Africa and elsewhere, the assumptions underlying EAC, according to Sadtono (2012; cf. Obanya, 2004), are as follows:

a. In the era of globalization, the global language is English, so it is expected that school graduates should be able to use English effectively.
b. Science and technology develop fast, and the language used is English, as such school graduates are expected to be able to keep up to date with science and technology.
c. Students learn English better if they are taught using English, which is meaningful to them, so they will be more motivated.
d. In the era of globalization, the lingua franca is assumed to be English and, as such, it should be taught well lest Anglophone countries are left behind.

Indigenous language scholars, however, contest much of Sadtono's assumptions arguing that international charters and agreements provide for language rights, so the concept of "super languages" is internationally illegal and dissonant with actual classroom realities in multilingual contexts. The so-called super languages are part of the reasons for "linguicide" that threatens thousands of languages across Africa and parts of Asia with extinction (Skutnabb-Kangas & Dunbar, 2010). According to Deller and Price (2007), EAC is effectively implemented by observance of the following principles:

a. The process of teaching-learning is highly interactive.
b. Depending on the subject and level of proficiency, sometimes students are given more talking time, and sometimes teachers talk more, especially when they deal with complex subjects.
c. When the class is being interactive, teachers talk less in front of the class.
d. Lessons are made more interesting and involve more activities.
e. Texts are simplified.
f. Texts are made more visual.
g. Analysis of the language which supports student needs.
h. Activities are adopted to different subjects.

Teachers in Kenya seem unable to implement the principles by Deller and Price (2007) citing heavy workload and other challenges (Anyiendah, 2017; Gathumbi, 2013; Kodero et al., 2011). Some English as a foreign/second language contexts, however, seem to be keen on the principles, and they report positive outcomes (Lughmani et al., 2017).

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The use of English as a language of instruction across the curriculum in Kenya has had challenges, including noncomprehension of content by learners, delayed acquisition of grade-level literacies by thousands of learners in primary schools, and grade repetition (Piper, Shrouder, & Trudell, 2016; Uwezo Kenya, 2013). In one study, Piper, Shroeder, and Trudell (2016) state that

> the evidence is that a single-minded focus on English in Kenyan primary school education is not yielding strong learning outcomes. While prioritizing English as the language of instruction has indeed resulted in children who are better at pronouncing English . . . their mastery of the English language is inadequate for them to understand what they are reading. The data suggest that three years of using English as the predominant language of instruction can impart basic skills in decoding and recognizing words, but not the level of English language mastery necessary to understand the meaning of those words. (p.147)

This observation questions the categorical preference for English at all levels of education and the unquestioning assumptions about the epistemic outcomes of an English-dominated curriculum. The perennial questions that construct the national discourse with regard to EAC include: Is English a second or foreign language in Kenya? Are children adequately exposed to English, which is facilitative of acquisition and learning of the language? Are the appropriate methods used in its teaching? Are teachers effectively trained to deal with challenges of teaching the language as a subject and teaching it through content subjects? As subsequent sections indicate, teachers use various means to deal with poor English literacy in the teaching of the various content subjects.

METHODOLOGY

Location, Population, and Sampling

This study was conducted in Kisii County of Kenya at four linguistically homogeneous rural primary schools. These are schools located outside urban centers and are, generally, linguistically homogeneous (Mose, 2019). It is for this category of schools that the language in education policy in Kenya prescribes the use of languages of the catchment area for teaching and learning content subjects up to 3rd grade before transitioning to English from 4th grade. The language of the catchment area for these schools is Ekegusii, one of the Bantu languages of Kenya spoken by all teachers and pupils in the sample schools. Linguistically homogeneous schools were sampled in order to control for pupils or teachers who might be coming from

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other linguistic backgrounds, hence influencing language toward a particular direction.

Six upper primary classroom teachers and pupils (4th, 5th, and 6th grade) were purposively sampled as the subjects in the study. Teachers were sampled for classroom teachers and, therefore, interact with learners on a daily basis; they assess the learning progress and are, therefore, conversant with learning challenges among the learners. Classroom teachers possess critical learner data that no other stakeholder in education might possess. They understand the realities of taking children through a curriculum, diagnosing challenges, and trying to address difficulties. They also assess curriculum outcomes via both classroom tests and other examinations. The teachers were assumed to be information-rich in curriculum delivery trends. The pupils, being the actual consumers of the curriculum delivery process, were a suitable category of subjects.

Data Collection Instruments

Three instruments were used in the study: in and out-of-classroom observations, teacher interviews, and document study. In-and-out-of-the-classroom observations were conducted since studies have shown that students' spoken language generates meaningful data considering that children learn to speak before they can write (Shah & Harthi, 2014). Additionally, observed spoken language features are a pointer to stages of language acquisition/learning, language errors, and any other features that form part of data for analysis. Interviews with classroom content subject teachers were adopted to both corroborate observed language behaviors and obtain the actual teacher knowledge and beliefs about their daily practice in the classrooms. The documents observed were teacher's notebooks and lesson plans. EAC implies that content subject teachers are language teachers too (Uys et al., 2007), and so it was important to see how this concept—if ever considered in teaching—is reflected in teacher planning and preparation for teaching

Data Collection

Research in Kenya requires one to obtain permission at various offices before embarking on a study. With a National Council for Science Technology and Innovation permit, permission from the county director of education at Kisii County was sought for and obtained, after which the head teachers of sample schools were contacted to facilitate the study at school levels. The head teachers in turn asked teachers to facilitate the study on the dates agreed upon. First observations were conducted across the four schools before other data collection techniques were used. In each of the schools, the first author

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sat in a classroom (4th, 5th, and 6th grade) during the teaching of a content subject (social studies, science, and mathematics) and observed teacher and learner language use during the interaction. Notes were taken down during the observations. Out-of-classroom observations were also conducted during break time. The number of out-of-classroom observations at each of the four schools was as follows: school one, three observations; school two, two observations; school three, three observations; and school four, four observations. Classroom observations were as follows: school one, six observations; school two, seven observations; school three, five observations; and school four, six observations.

After observations, interviews were conducted with both head teachers and classroom teachers before a study of their lesson plans and teaching notes. These three approaches were a source of diverse data with regard to English across the curriculum in the sampled primary schools.

Data Analysis

This was a qualitative research without numerical data. Researcher notes, transcribed interviews, and document study notes were the data analyzed. There was a reading of the notes, interview transcripts, and document study notes. Themes from one data set were compared with those of another set in order to come up with main themes across at least two data sources.

FINDINGS

Features of Language Used in the Teaching of Content Subjects

Unqualified Use of Technical Terminology

In all the four schools and in all the individual content subjects observed, there was a generous use of technical vocabulary during lesson delivery. In most instances, teachers did not clarify terms before or during the class presentations, except under two circumstances: when a learner asked a question regarding a word whose meaning they did not know and when a teacher's question was not answered. Asked why they did not teach these terms, four of the six teachers said that there would be no sufficient time to explain vocabulary and be able to complete the syllabus in time. Guidelines on LAC, however, insist that content teachers are language teachers who need to teach a number of language skills (Mohan & Beckett, 2003).

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Use of First Language Equivalents

There is common use of Ekegusii equivalents in situations teachers felt that the pupils did not understand a concept. This is captured in the following excerpt from a science lesson in 4th grade:

> Teacher: This is what I told you yesterday that domestic is *ebianka* [literally, of home], those animals at home, *yaani* [literally, that is] chicken, goats, and others. . . . So environment is *ebitoetanaine*, those things around us like trees, rivers. And finally . . . pairs is *bibere* [literally, two things], any things if they are two we say a pair. (Classroom observation, school three, 4th grade, science lesson)

From our study we observed that this approach to clarification of terms happens in a "congested" environment that might not support development of English syntax proficiency. The approach is unlike use of the target words in sentences to enable pupils contextualize them. We, further, observed that the translations were not part of teacher preparation but haphazard and unrehearsed. Further evidence from this section indicates that these translations seem to come and are put to use at the spur of a moment.

Code-Switching

There is significant use of code-switching in content classrooms. Teachers admit this and explain it thus:

> Sure, we mix. The kids don't understand sometimes, so at least when we mix *kidogo* [Kiswahili for "a little'], at least they can catch up. Like you see they know more Swahili more than this English. Mmm and they know more mother tongue than Swahili. So we mix, and if we see they respond then we proceed. (Teacher interview, school one)

The response confirms what literature in multilingual educational contexts claims. The teacher says that they code-switch across three languages. Although classroom code-switching is supported by some pedagogy researchers (Malik, 2010; Storch & Wigglesworth, 2003), it is a bit difficult to imagine how young primary school pupils in this study will develop effective proficiency in English syntax with sentences straddling three languages, especially in a cognitively demanding science classroom situation.

Nature of Classroom Interaction in the Teaching of Content Subjects

Teacher Dominated

Observed classrooms show that teachers speak inordinately most of the time. This was observed in all the schools and classrooms observed. The practice

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is not only against the principles of child-centered education which demands that the learner is made the center of the teaching and learning process (Lai, 2008; Madlela, 2014) but also bears negatively on the principle of use of English across the curriculum. Classrooms need to be dialogic, allowing learners to express their intuitions and imaginations so that teachers can shape them. Experts in EAC research state that teachers need to plan their teaching in order to generate learner–teacher interaction (Sadtono, 2012). The teacher should do this as a way of drawing learners to the specific register in the various disciplines.

In the interviews, teachers admit that their classes are generally teacher dominated with the following typical response from them:

> This is something we are used with because learners do not speak in class, we have to continue teaching. Even if you go to standard seven or even eight, it is the same case. Some good ones occasionally can speak some sentences but many don't. (Teacher interview, school three).

The teacher indicates that this is an established practice, but one which bears negatively on effective and quality education. The practice denies learners an opportunity to negotiate knowledge and share imagination (Garrett, 2008).

Learner Telegraphic Responses

In all the schools and classrooms observed, telegraphic responses were a common feature. Examples of recorded instances of learner responses include (*Note: The learner names used here are pseudonyms*),

Teacher: Who is a good citizen Omoti?
Pupil: Does not fight.
Teacher: Yes. Kerubo, who is a good citizen?
Pupil: Obeys.
Teacher: And others, who is a good citizen? Siika.
Pupil: (He keeps quiet) . . . (Classroom observation, school four, 5th grade).

In the observation, the teacher had no problem with the short answers; he continued with the lesson without reference to the answers or even an attempt to have the pupils answer the questions using longer expressions. For instance, he could enrich Omoti's response by adding to his answer *A good citizen is one who does not fight his friends* and that of Kerubo with *A good citizen obeys government rules.* A number of reasons might account for this lack of teachers seeking to suggest longer sentences, one of which might be the current multiple choice nature of tests and national examinations. Further,

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teachers are not trained to teach language skills in content subjects (O'Connor & Geiger, 2009). Telegraphic responses were confirmed by teachers:

> Our pupils are like that, sir. Even if you repeat and repeat, tomorrow will still be same thing. But composition they can write longer composition. (Teacher interview, school five).

Telegraphic responses serve short-term purposes, those of passing in the classroom tests and later the national examinations but fall short of making learners practice and master basic correctness in language use and knowledge of discipline-specific vocabulary in the English language.

Nature of Learner–Learner Collaboration

Since at least an average of every three pupils have access to a textbook, observations indicate that pupils would rather engage fellow pupils in trying to understand a concept. In one observation at school one in 5th grade, a teacher was teaching water animals and a tadpole was introduced. In Ekegusii, tadpoles are referred to as "ebimungurieta." Pupils seemed to know the creatures but could not describe them to the classroom as individuals. The teacher decided to ask pupils discuss it among themselves. They were able to do this, but it was not being done in English but in Ekegusii with occasional words in English. When asked why pupils prefer to use their first language, the specific teacher said,

> Yes, when among themselves, they speak mother tongue and they know a lot. But they know some English but they don't speak it. May be if we insist. (Teacher interview, school three)

The teacher indicates that pupils might have some passive knowledge of English, and this is possible. Research indicates that speaking a second language is a prerequisite to mastering its other aspects (Baker, 2012; Krashen, 2002), an aspect that seems to be ignored in EAC practice in content subject teaching in the site of this study. The possible difficulty in the use of English by pupils can be attributed to scarcity of contexts of use of the language outside classrooms. Researchers indicate that due to restricted use of English in the classrooms, it is difficult for the acquisition of the language (Dearden, 2015).

Teacher Beliefs about English Language Teaching/Learning

Specific language teaching/learning beliefs abound among teachers (Barcelos, 2003; Bernat & Gvozdenko, 2005), and these seem to affect what teachers do,

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and how they do it. The following are content subject teachers' beliefs about English language teaching and learning.

English Teacher's Role

During the interviews, teachers stated that the role of teaching good English lies with the language teacher in the school. Most of the respondents indicated that a teacher who teaches English in any one grade has a responsibility to teach proper/standard English. A teacher from school four said,

> English, the one who teaches the subject according to the time table is likely to teach pupils to know the language. As for people like me who teach social, my work is to teach them to know social things not grammar or verbs or plural. (Teacher interview, school four)

The response contradicts a basic theory of pedagogy in the sense that, ultimately, the pupil will know whatever concept in a particular language and express it accordingly in both spoken and written forms. It is known in Kenya—and actually in all of Africa and other English as a second language contexts—that primary school teachers are trained to teach all subjects on offer in the primary school curriculum. This implies that, by default, every teacher is a language teacher—at least where English L2 is the medium of instruction. But this is not part of emphasis both at teacher training college and in the schools.

Learners Already Have Command of Language

There is widespread belief that transition to the English language medium implies mastery of English. Teachers indicated that the learners they teach know the English language, and they understand what is taught based on their scores in the tests:

> These pupils know a lot only we don't know what is their problem when we ask them to speak the language. Because they write answers in English in assignments and exams, why can't they speak it now? But we know they know. (Teacher interview, school one)

Studies show that mastery of a second language is to use it effectively as a language of instruction in second language learning contexts like Kenya might take in excess of eight years (Cummins, 2000, cf. Baker, 2012), and that is if the teaching programs have sufficient resources. The Kenya National Examinations Council (KNEC) keeps decrying the level of English proficiency at both the Kenya Certificate of Primary Education (KCPE) and at

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the Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) examinations yearly. In one of their reports they state that a significant segment of the KCPE candidates did not have sufficient proficiency to express themselves intelligibly in composition writing (KNEC, 2015). This is supported by the fact that for many years, the national average score in the English subject is below 50% in addition to below average national averages across the subjects. Part of the reason for poor fluency in written forms of English among primary and secondary school graduates in Kenya might be lack of institutionalizing the concept of EAC and resourcing it for effectiveness.

Teaching in English Reinforced by Code-Switching

The teacher-dominated teaching-learning in the primary school content subjects in the site of study provoked the question of how pupils are made to understand concepts, and the response was,

> we make sure they understand by translating and mixing with mother tongue. Many things we teach they know and we prove it when we say it in the mother tongue and then they say, yes, that one we know. So switching to mother tongue helps us a lot. (Teacher interview, school two)

The teacher's claim was observed in classrooms during a science lesson. A teacher was explaining the functions of the digestive system and mentioned the stomach, pancreas, intestines, and feces. The words sounded strange to the 4th-grade pupils, and at that point the teacher asked learners to discuss in groups how they think the food they eat works. They were able to identify all the words the teacher had written on the board in their mother tongue with ease. One reason for reverting to one's L1 is poor proficiency in the second language in question.

How Teacher Beliefs Are Reflected in Lesson Plans and Teaching Notes

Lesson Plans Written Without Highlighting Subject-Specific Technical Words

In the document study, teachers' lesson plans were studied. Lesson plans are mandatory documents that teachers prepare before attending lessons. They are a reflection of the term's scheme of work, and they capture, generally, the content a teacher teaches during the specific lesson. In school three, a teacher was teaching about pollution, and technical terminology used in the lesson included *pollution*, *environment*, *observe*, *pollutant*, *dust mask*, *safety*, and

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cause *harm*. The teacher had not explained the meaning of each of the terms in the lesson plan.

In the actual lesson observed, he did not explain the terms either, but taught the lesson as planned. The only thing he did was to occasionally use the Ekegusii equivalent of those terms and in some cases a description of some terms. For example, below is a sample description of dust mask:

> masks protect you from breathing in smoke or dust. Mask *buna ekerangachibu* [like a handkerchief] can protect you from breathing in *erioki* [smoke]. You can tie it here on your face if you pass in a smoky place. (Classroom observation, 5th grade, science lesson, school three)

This usage was revisited during the teacher interviews with the question, "Why do you not teach the meaning of technical words like pollution in your lesson plan and during the lesson?" The response was,

> Aaaa I don't define words because this is science. The work of teaching meanings of words is the work of Mrs. X, she teaches English. If you teach meanings, when will you finish the syllabus? (Teacher interview response, school three)

In response to why he used some words from the local language (Ekegusii) and the teacher said,

> To bring them closer to home. Masks are not common in the village but each pupil at least has a handkerchief even those cut from their old clothes. They are able to relate easily now. (Teacher interview, school three)

Classroom language experts (Deller & Price, 2007), however, insist that when second languages are used to deliver the content curriculum, there should be effort to explain concepts in the second language to facilitate effective mastery of the content in that language. For that reason, collaboration between language teachers/lecturers and content teachers is encouraged to support learning.

At one school during a social studies lesson, the following words were used both in the lesson plan and during the actual lesson whose topic was "Resources and economic activities": *Resources*, *county*, *protect*, *economic*, *trade*, *methods*, *importance*, *types*, *industries*, *benefits*, *enterprise*, *project*, and *earn*. It is expected that the teacher would explain, unambiguously, each of these words, and more, before embarking on presenting his content which was not done. This observation was brought up during the interviews. The teacher was asked why he did not define these technical content subject-specific words, and he responded,

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> Those ones, yes. I always tell the pupils to look for meanings in the dictionary if they don't know words in the notes. And sometimes I allow them to ask a question if they don't understand. And sometimes the English teacher can explain to them. (Teacher interview, school one)

The response reveals significant gaps in teacher understanding of the EAC approach to content knowledge teaching; the teacher believes that pupil should find meanings in the dictionary after the lesson. There is a possibility the pupils might lose track of what the lesson was about and fail to draw the connection of those words in the context they were used. Across the sample schools, content subject teachers indicated that teaching vocabulary and word meanings was the responsibility of the English teacher, and that contradicts best practices in EAC approach to teaching content knowledge.

DISCUSSION

Primary school education in Kenya, as it is globally, is meant to build learner capacities to be able to acquire critical knowledge and skills for survival and as a foundation for further acquisition of advanced skills in high schools and postsecondary institutions. Since education is a communication process between a teacher and pupils, the process must be free from any barriers to effective communication. In the Kenyan context, the language of education after 3rd grade is English, a second language to most children attending primary schools, especially those from rural areas. The language in education policy governing teaching of content subjects from 4th grade has its foundation in the first postindependence education commission of 1964, which prescribed use of English across the curriculum from 1st grade. The policy was reinforced by Gachathi's 1976 commission report (Republic of Kenya, 1976) and subsequent commissions and ministry of education policy papers.

The findings of this study bring to the fore the attitudes, beliefs, and practices that inform instruction of content subjects in primary schools. These seem to stem from teacher education, established practice in the schools, and an education system that does not seem to periodically interrogate the foundation of LAC. Actual classroom teacher–learner interaction indicates that content subject teachers are not prepared to effectively implement an EAC approach to their teaching, an omission that has important implications on knowledge acquisition by learners. When barriers are erected in the way of communication, that is, that learners are unable to discuss and state their convictions in classrooms, then such classroom processes need adjustment. These teacher practices seem to stem from teacher beliefs about language

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acquisition and learning and teaching as a whole, which are not supported by classroom research from English L2 situations.

Research from English as a second and foreign language contexts indicates that the use of second languages as languages of instruction requires significant investment in EAC programs in order to achieve results. These include teacher training programs with EAC components, content teacher motivation that they may invest time to teach language skills, teacher in-service programs to update their skills, and increasing (for pupils) second language input contexts to facilitate acquisition and learning of the second languages in question. The foregoing practices seem to be irreducible minimums for the realization of desired outcomes. English across the curriculum, as a language learning theoretical position, is premised on Krashen's idea that foreign language learners will acquire the L2 most effectively through sizeable input which they can understand whereby the conscious focus is on meaning not form (Sadtono, 2012).

The architecture of English across the curriculum in Kenya, from this study, does not seem to adhere to tested principles for success in building proficiency among learners, and a number of factors account for this, including a single-minded preference for English education at all costs. Other factors include the practical challenges like the absence of cooperation, collaboration among teachers teaching English and content subjects; research indicates that EAC is one of the best approaches in a context like this (Lughmani et al., 2017). But the missing link to laying a foundation for improved success in English across the curriculum in Kenya is prioritization of geopolitical and economic considerations before pedagogical technicalities that inform the success of LAC programs anywhere.

The findings indicate that there is need of urgent steps to reengineer the conceptualization and practice of English across the curriculum in Kenya in order to realize the national goals of education, the objectives of language education and achievement across the curriculum. The discourse must not be pertinent sociolinguistic considerations but the foremost objective which is epistemic access by millions of learners in basic education in the country. In the current scenario, radical and sometimes unpopular approaches might be adopted, including premeditated and structured code-switching in classrooms and adopting a degree of bilingual education models. On code-switching as a technique, scholars indicate that it can serve a core pedagogic purpose in L2 language classrooms (Taha, 2008; & Yao, 2011), and bilingual education has been found to facilitate both proficiency in reading L2 and acquisition of knowledge across the curriculum (Cummins, 2008).

Research evidence unambiguously suggests that learner attainment across the curriculum is inextricably linked to advanced proficiency in the language of learning and teaching (Department of Basic Education, RSA, 2012). But

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in several contexts in English as a second language learning contexts, including Kenya, Cummins' (2000) basic interpersonal communication proficiency (BICS) is often mistaken for Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP), which is language mastery that is advanced and used for negotiation of knowledge across the curriculum. The development of CALP, according to classroom language experts, requires generous input from vocabulary from social studies, science, mathematics, and information communication technology, and so on. This is the condition that makes teacher education, knowledge, and attitude reorientation urgent to both English L2 learning and epistemic access in primary schools in Kenya. Teachers must be made aware that basic literacy in the language of teaching must be in reading, writing, visualizing, and critical literacies. Added to these, content subject teachers must know that children need to master listening, speaking, reading, viewing, writing, and presenting information in each of those subjects. A further emphasis must be made that teaching English language skills in all subjects is not a once-off event but a perpetual activity that must precede teaching of all subtopics in content subjects (Department of Basic Education, RSA, 2012). These seem to be bare fundamentals since schools will also need to invest in well-trained teachers and readers. Schools must also institute specific guidelines, emphasize the changing role of the teacher, and adopt best international examination practices.

The alternative to investing heavily to achieve effective English across the curriculum instruction is an "undesirable" one; this is adopting mother tongue-based bilingual education in which some subjects will be taught in English and others in the languages of the catchment area. These are models that have been used in Canada, the United States, and in some European countries with desirable outcomes (Lauchlan, Parisi, & Fadda, 2013; Pecency, 2010; Schwartz, 2013). The use of languages of the catchment area will—in what is referred to as cross linguistic transfer—support the acquisition and learning of English (Baker, 2012; Cummins, 2008). It is an alternative that might seem unpopular since public attitudes and government interests seem to be in favor of English. This is the alternative since even the British Council admits that effective implementation of EAC has not been achieved in the many countries where it has been adopted (Dearden, 2015). They state that in many countries, educational infrastructure does not support quality English medium of instruction provision. There is a shortage of qualified teachers, a lack of stated expectations of English language proficiency, few pedagogical guidelines to lead to effective English medium of instruction teaching/learning, and an absence of English medium of instruction content in initial teacher education (Dearden, 2015).

It has been assumed in the Kenyan education system that by the end of 3rd grade, learners are proficient enough to learn in English, but research

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indicates otherwise (Piper, Shroeder, & Trudell, 2016; Uwezo Kenya, 2013). However, research from other parts of the continent show that transition to English at that level has had negative implications on learning outcomes, with its attendant negative corollaries on transition, grade repetition, below average attainments, and so on (Trudell & Shroeder, 2007; UNESCO, 2008; Williams, 2006). The theoretical foundation upon which the teaching and learning of English in primary schools in Kenya is based is not supported by classroom practice.

CONCLUSION

English, a second language to many Kenyans, is used in the country as the only language of teaching across the curriculum from 4th grade onward. Both historical records and classroom and school-based research indicate that schools do not adopt international best practices in the use of the language for teaching content subjects. Evidence indicates that priority is given to attitudinal preferences and local and international geopolitical interests at the expense of investment in both technical and human infrastructure to support an effective EAC practice. The findings of this study point out significant deficits in teacher education, individual teacher beliefs and practices, and a single-minded preference for English not based on any established theoretical position.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings from this study, we suggest the following. First, that large-scale classroom research is conducted to determine the actual practices and their epistemic outcomes. Second, that a national stakeholders' discourse is conducted to determine a path that might improve English and content learning outcomes. There seems to be two approaches with research backing that is either a strongly supported English across the curriculum program or a language of the catchment-area-based bilingual education. Theoretically and practically speaking, there seems not to be a middle ground that can change the history of poor L2 (English) learning and overall curriculum outcomes.

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Chapter 6

English Language Proficiency among Secondary School Learners in Kenya

A Case of One Kenyan Rural Subcounty

Daniel Nyongesa Khaemba and
Eucabeth Ong'au-Mong'are

Languages of former colonial masters have continued to play a significant role in their African colonies. They have been used or are still being used either as official or national languages. In other contexts, they are considered nuances for wider communication. These languages continue to hold prestigious positions around the globe. According to Crystal (2003), English is a symbol for the themes of globalization, diversification, progress, and identity, and is rapidly becoming the first global lingua franca. In Kenya, English has held the position of an official language since the country gained independence. Only recently did Kiswahili, which is also a national language, attain a similar status of an official language in the 2010 constitution. Most Kenyan elites identify themselves more with English, therefore continuing to maintain the status quo by speaking English.

Due to the important position of English and Kiswahili in Kenya, secondary school learners in Kenya are expected to be either bilingual or multilingual. Having had English as the language of instruction, and Kiswahili as a required subject offered and examined in the schools, the students are expected to have acquired some level of mastery in these two languages to claim them as part of the languages within their repertoire. However, these students exhibit different levels of mastery of the languages that they use.

Various factors contribute to the varying levels of proficiency exhibited by the learners by the time they join secondary school and even when they exit secondary school. These factors include the availability or lack of English in the learner's immediate environment, the resources available to learn the language and the influence of other languages within the learner's environment.

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While students from elite homes and neighborhoods might have access to the English language outside the classroom, most other students only access the language in the school and rarely have an opportunity to use it outside the classroom. It is therefore almost expected that those who have access to the English language through television, radio, Internet, or even family members who speak English will have acquired more proficiency by the time they join secondary school unlike their counterparts from homes and communities where English is not used. The latter group is negatively impacted and is, therefore, not likely to have acquired a high level of proficiency by the time they join secondary school. Learners from low-income urban environments are also negatively impacted by the use of Sheng, a hybrid code mix which has become a popular mode of communication among urban youths. While their goals of communication are comfortably achieved through the use of Sheng, the opportunity to practice English, the official language and language of instruction, are reduced or limited for these learners from those low-income communities that use Sheng. The students also come to the secondary school classroom from socially diverse primary schools. Some students may join secondary school after completing several years in boarding primary schools where English is widely used, therefore giving them opportunity to practice and master the language, while others go through primary schools where both teachers and students use an ethnic language for the majority of the lower primary school years.

Although English is officially recognized as the language of instruction, many teachers and students often revert to their native languages or non-official forms of language for various reasons. Kabellow, Omulando, and Barasa (2019) observe that teachers and learners use official and non-official forms of English during classroom instruction, and they suggest some reasons for the preference of these non-official forms. One of the reasons is that the use of these other forms facilitates communication in the classroom. In addition, such forms are widely used in the environment. As a result, learners are able to readily identify with such forms. In other circumstances, these languages enable the learners to understand and appreciate the culture of their people and to enjoy interaction with their friends without any inhibitions. Regardless of the reasons given, any failure to use English in the classroom or outside the classroom limits the learner's opportunity to master this language of instruction. Clearly, it is a learner's right to be able to use the language he/she is most comfortable with to communicate, but if the ultimate goal is to attain proficiency in English, then something needs to be done to improve the chances of acquiring the language.

The purpose of this chapter is to examine English language proficiency among secondary school learners in rural Kenya. The study focuses on errors made by 12th-grade learners in select areas in their written compositions.

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Language proficiency is a measure of how well an individual has mastered a language. This is determined by how the individuals express themselves in the communication process. Listening, speaking, reading, and writing are the skills that are considered in language proficiency. None of these skills are independent of the others, and communicative competence requires mastery of all these skills together.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction of English Education in Kenya

Any natural language has a number of functions. The main ones are communication and interaction among people. English plays a crucial role in Kenya's education system. It is not only a subject that is taught in schools, but it is also a medium of instruction for teaching all other disciplines except for Kiswahili and foreign languages like French and German. English has been the medium of instruction in Kenya for a long time. Before a language is adopted for such a function, it requires clear and specific policy, and any policy formulation and implementation requires deliberate government efforts and commitment. Proper guidelines need to be laid down to ensure effective execution. Language policies at any given time or era provide direction on the use of English as a tool for teaching other subjects in Kenyan secondary schools.

As Muthiani (1986) and Mazrui and Mazrui (1995) observe, the history and origination of language planning and language policy in Kenya involves three groups of people: the missionaries, the colonialists, and politicians in both pre- and postindependence Kenya. Missionaries were among the first groups of people to introduce what could come to be considered a language policy in Kenya. To the missionaries, education was useful in the soul winning process, and it was important for the converts to be able to read the Bible and other religious texts. This group was the first one to introduce formal education in the country. Chimera (1998) asserts that some of the earliest Western education was introduced in Kenya as early as 1848 by Dr. Ludwig Krapf, a German national who initiated the establishment of mission schools and stations. Ludwig was not alone in this endeavor but was accompanied by other members of the Christian Missionary Society (CMC) in their effort to convert the indigenous people into Christianity. Githige (1982) in describing the role of missionaries has stated that "Missionaries regarded their role as one of penetrating into the native peoples, challenging native beliefs and customs, and changing the whole tribal way of life through education and evangelization" (p. 113). The missionaries, however, did not necessarily

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believe that the English language was the best medium to reach the natives, and they preferred to use the indigenous languages.

The United Missionary Conference held in Kenya came up with recommendations on language use in schools. One of the recommendations was the stratification of the education structure into tiers, and classification of schools based on where they were located, with a proposal for the use of different languages in teaching. At the elementary level I–III, vernaculars were used as medium of instruction in village schools. The conference provided for use of Kiswahili in central mission schools during the first few years of primary school, and then English took over from there all the way to the university level (Gorman, 1974).

The second key players in the introduction of English education in Kenya are the colonialists. On their part, colonialists wanted to have one or more codes that could be used for interaction with the natives or the Kenyan indigenous people. The goal was not to introduce English to everyone, but just to a few as selected by the colonial master. In fact the access to the English language was restricted and intentionally so. As Nabea (2009) states,

> [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. (p. 122)

The English language was not intended for the masses but for the elite, a practice that has stayed around to the present day. During the colonial period, the English language was rationed to the public on racial grounds. There were three main races in consideration: the Europeans, Indians/Asians, and the Africans. Of course, European schools had the best teachers and were also supplied with adequate teaching and learning resources. English was the medium of instruction all the way from the first year of school. The Asian schools came second after the European schools. For this category of schools, English was used for teaching other disciplines from grade four, and later the entire secondary schools. African schools were discriminated against such that English was only used from upper primary. Moreover, these schools had limited resources and their teachers were not sufficiently qualified. The goal was to limit the amount of English acquired by Africans. As Nabea (2009) says,

> [T]he colonial administration grew apprehensive over the teaching of English to Africans shortly before the 1920s. There was realization that English education interfered with the goal of maintaining a subordinate class of workers, forcing it

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> to review the education policy. Kenyans who had imbued a lot of English book learning were reluctant to do menial work, while preferring to take up white collar careers. (p.123)

This rationing of English to the indigenous people made the language an even more precious commodity that everyone yearned to acquire. Parents wanted English for their children, for they recognized the benefits that came with the mastery of the language.

After gaining independence, several committees and commissions were established to address the question of the language of instruction policy. Their recommendations supported the use of English as a language of instruction in both primary and secondary schools with other changes proposed from time to time. For example, the Ominde commission of 1964 was pivotal in the policy matters that later led to the enactment that established the Kenya Institute of Education (KIE) (Bogonko, 1992; Sifuna, 1990). Despite the many commissions that have been set to oversee the language policy, implementation continues to be a challenge and the teaching and use of English around the nation has remained imbalanced. As a scarce commodity, English continues to be rationed with some getting a bigger share than others. While, English is the assumed language of instruction after year three of primary school, not all schools implement that policy, and proficiency levels continue to vary according to language accessibility and availability. Despite this disparity, learners all around the country use the same curriculum and are expected to compete for the same national resources such as entry to the limited higher institutions of learning and the job market where English plays a key role. There is evidence that a positive correlation exists between English proficiency and performance in subjects that are taught using English in secondary schools. Learners who have English proficiency do well in tasks in the disciplines where the language is the tool of instruction. Those who perform dismally in these areas, usually, are less competent in English.

Learners' Mastery of English

Kenya secondary school learners' proficiency in English can be determined by how they perform in various tasks in the subject and in the other content areas where English is used as a language of instruction. According to the KIE (2006), one of the objectives of secondary education in Kenya is acquisition of knowledge, skills, and attitudes for development of the self and the nation. Teaching and learning of English focuses on the skills in grammar, listening and speaking, and reading and writing. These objectives are important in guiding teachers, learners, and those tasked with supervisory roles in the education sector. According to the KIE (2006), some of these objectives

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include making learners think creatively and critically, read fluently and efficiently, and speak accurately, fluently, confidently, and appropriately in a variety of contexts. Roy-Campbell (2014) observes that

> the Kenyan secondary school English syllabus adopts an integrated approach to teaching English, merging the teaching of literature with the teaching of language skills. It also focuses on the four domains. For listening and speaking there is an emphasis on pronunciation drills and listening comprehension exercises, as well as oral literature, with role play, debates and presentation of oral reports and drama. (p.90)

As this author observes, the syllabus, if fully implemented, should result in communicative competence among the learners. The goal is to build all the necessary skills of language and prepare the secondary school graduate to function fully in the English language.

Although English is taught in Kenya as a second language and most of the learners, especially those from the rural areas, interact with the language after they have acquired one or more other languages, by the time they join secondary school, most of them will have had almost eight years of exposure to the English language. This is assuming that the learners were introduced to the language as a subject right from the first year of school, and have had five years of using English as the language of instruction. Arguably, English should be one of the disciplines in secondary schools posting impressive results in national exams. This is due to the fact that as a school subject, English instruction is given the highest number of lessons in all the classes. At the moment, the upper classes (11th and 12th grades) have eight 40-minute English lessons in a week while the lower classes (9th and 10th grades) have six. This time is distributed to cater for the key skills to be acquired in both language and literature.

Despite the many hours dedicated to the English language instruction, attainment of proficiency in the English language remains low in some schools. Barasa (1997) notes that one of the factors which negatively impacts English use and student performance in the subject is a disregard for the language policy in many schools. He partly blames this on "new generation teachers," who are not versed in the language and tend to use "sheng" in the classroom and within the school premises. "Sheng" is a pidgin-like hybrid language that is used mainly by youths in urban areas, with major contributors in its creation being Kiswahili and English. It has been argued that this new youth language has a negative impact on learners' use of English since it is closely associated with the English language, yet it does not have grammatical rules guiding its use.

Studies have been conducted to investigate some of the factors that impact English learning and to try and explain the poor performance in the language. Nyabwansu (2013) investigated school-based factors influencing students'

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performance in English language at Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education in Kaplamai division, Trans Nzoia County. He found out that most students have the notion that they cannot do well in English, therefore they do not make significant effort aimed at improving their performance. This researcher also observed that other learners are not sure of the purpose of English and its application in their lives, and, therefore, they do not take keen interest in it. The learners, especially those in rural settings where one homogenous indigenous language is used, fail to see where they will need to use the English language outside the classroom. Moreover, some learners are largely affected by their backgrounds where their native language is embraced as the main language of communication on a daily basis. These students might not see a possibility of ever leaving their villages to travel to places where use of English will be required.

Some secondary school learners, based on the background they have had, cannot grasp and therefore seldom fathom complex concepts taught in English due to their low levels of proficiency in the language. Their communication and interaction with other students and their teachers are greatly hindered. In fact, a majority of the learners who transition to secondary schools from primary schools where English was not used much struggle to construct well-coordinated sentences. Some may even be unable to read even at secondary school or be reading way below their level. They generally have limited vocabulary and are less fluent. The Ministry of Education Science and Technology (2015, p. 13) cites the Uwezo East African Survey of 2012, which noted that 7 out of 100 learners in class 8 were not able to read a simple story in either English or Kiswahili. This is in spite of the fact that English is a subject of instruction and an examinable subject in middle and upper classes of primary education.

UNESCO (2014, p. 13), reporting on literacy levels among learners in Kenya, noted that one in every five learners between the age of 15 and 24 cannot read in English. Most of the learners in this age bracket are secondary school students. Despite this observation, one would wonder whether performance in examinations is the explicit parameter that gauges an individual's competence in a language. Such argument is tenable as much as the explanation is two way. Performance in an examination could be a product of many factors, some of them being non-linguistic. However, responding to tasks in an examination correctly would mean an understanding of the contents of the subject and the language of instruction in which the examination is presented.

English Teaching and Learning as a Second Language in Kenya

Whether English is a foreign, second, or first language in Kenya is a debatable topic. All these terms can be applicable depending on the context of language learning and acquisition. Mackay (2006) defines second language learning as

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the process of acquiring a nonnative language that is spoken by the community where the learner is living. This is different, therefore, from foreign language learning, which is the process of acquiring a nonnative language that is not spoken by the surrounding community. Since English is spoken in Kenya and many people have their respective native languages, they learn English as a second language. As much as we acquire language when we learn it, language learning and language acquisition are not exactly the same concepts. Language learning is deliberate, and it is a product of formal teaching while language acquisition is a product of subconscious process (Krashen, 2003). Despite these differences in meaning, the two terms are sometimes used interchangeably.

Learning a new language in a nonnative context as Mackay (2006, p. 450) argues is arguably more difficult and much less likely to end in complete mastery or fluency. Mackay further observes that adult learners usually take years to reach a level of proficiency that most children attain before they are three years. Most Kenyan children start school at the age of four years, and this is the time when most of them begin to learn English. These children come to school having acquired natively one of the over 40 Kenyan native languages. Once these children have acquired these mother tongues as their first language, they then learn English at school as a second language. As they learn a new language in the schools, there is often a likelihood of transferring some of the features of their native languages into the new target language.

The question of the impact of one's first language on second language acquisition has been an issue of discussion for a long time. Behavioral theorists of 1950s and 1960s like B. F. Skinner, for instance, argued that errors produced by second language learners that include mistakes in word order could be as a result of interference from the learner's first language (Mackay, 2006). This position was challenged in the 1970s by Chomsky, who argued that each individual has innate capability to learn language. The language acquisition device (LAD), which is an internal mechanism, according to Chomsky (1965), enables language learners to acquire any language with ease. Despite this Chomskian argument, which sounds like good news to second or foreign language learners, some of our Kenyan English learners continue to struggle with the English learning process and show signs of being influenced by the first language.

METHODOLOGY

Research Site and Participants

The study was conducted in Kisii County, Kenya. Kisii County is inhabited by the Abagusii, whose native language is Ekegusii, a Bantu language spoken natively in the Kisii and Nyamira counties of Western Kenya. Purposive sampling was used to obtain 10 schools in one subcounty in Kisii County. This

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was aimed at having learners from different linguistic backgrounds within the subcounty. Two out of the schools selected were boarding schools while the remaining eight had both day and boarding students. Although the schools are located in Kisii County, the students admitted in the schools come from diverse linguistic backgrounds and speak different Kenyan ethnic languages. Permission was sought from respective principals for their students to participate in composition writing, whose work was used in this study.

Stratified sampling was done, each gender forming a stratum. The intention of having male and female learners' written compositions analyzed separately was to find out whether there is a correlation between the two strata based on the various aspects considered for language proficiency. The specific subcounty where the study was done had 42 secondary schools and a total of 9,242 learners in the 12th grade. Out of these, 4,762 were boys while the girls were a total of 4,480. It is from this population that a number of schools were sampled. The 12th grade learners are expected to have completed or almost fully covered the high school syllabus. They are, therefore, expected to be more proficient in English. Simple random sampling was used to pick ten 12th grade students from each school per strata so as to obtain learners whose native languages are varied. There were 10 boys and 10 girls per school, giving us a total of 100 boys and 100 girls who were all then examined for English proficiency.

Data Collection

The participants were involved in composition writing. All the participants were given the same writing prompt. The students were asked to write an essay that elaborates on the expression, "All that glitters is not gold." The choice of the topic was necessary for learners to have a task of similar difficulty and ensure uniformity, where learners would write not only on the same context but also on more or less similar content. The topic was considered general enough not to advantage any particular group.

Respective teachers of English explained to their learners the meaning of the expression and its context of use before the students started writing their composition. This would ensure little deviation in the content of the compositions written. The learners were given 90 minutes to complete the task.

RESULTS

This study was both qualitative and quantitative in nature. According to McMillan and Schumacher (2010), qualitative data analysis involves collecting data, organizing it, transcribing it into segments, coding the data, describing it, categorizing the data, and developing patterns.

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Table 6.1 Number and Percentage of Errors per Gender

Errors	*Frequency of Use*				
	Boys (N)	*Boys (%)*	*Girls (N)*	*Girls (%)*	*Total Errors*
Incorrect Tenses	167	50.76	162	49.24	329
Incorrect Prepositions	112	47.66	123	52.34	235
Incorrect Use of Adjectives	71	51	68	49	139
Improper Sentence Structures	58	47.15	65	52.85	123
Inappropriate Vocabulary	43	47.25	48	52.75	91
Misspelled Words	118	49.37	121	50.63	239

Source: Generated by authors.

The study employed typological analysis together with content analysis. Le Compte and Preissle (1993) define typological analysis as follows:

> It is a classificatory process where data are put into groups, sub-sets, or categories on the basis of some clear criterion such as acts, behaviors, meanings, nature of participation, relationships, settings, and activities. (p. 257)

Typologies are a set of phenomena that represent subtypes of a more general category or set. Typological analysis is the process of second coding where descriptive codes are drawn together and put into subsets (Miles & Huberman, 1984). Selected areas of error were the categories of data. This categorization also was based on gender. Content analysis on the other hand was used to examine, analyze, and verify selected categories of the errors in the learners' written compositions, which were the content and data of the study. The errors in the various categories were enumerated and tabulated. Calculations by use of percentages for the various categories of error were done and presented in the forms of tables.

Six areas were selected for examination. These were use of tenses, prepositions, adjectives, sentence structures, choice of vocabulary, and orthography. Several errors in these areas were identified from the learners' written compositions. The various errors identified in the written compositions were enumerated per category and gender. As shown in table 6.1, percentages were generated to discuss the amount of errors that may be indicators of poor mastery of the English language.

DATA ANALYSIS

Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and presented using percentages and frequencies which were summarized in form of brief descriptions

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and frequency tables. One way in which learners were portrayed as having poor mastery of English was in their incorrect use of tenses. A tense is any of the forms of a verb that may be used to show the time of the action and the state expressed by the verb, that is, past, present, or future.

The high school English curriculum covers the tenses, and by their 12th year, learners are expected to have mastered the concept. In their writing, the participants were expected to use the past tense, but a large percentage, as shown in table 6.1, instead substituted that with the simple present tense. The following sentences 1–3 show some of the errors that the learners made. Instead of using the past tense verbs *made*, *started*, and *tried*, the learners used the present forms as seen here:

(1) Once upon a time I had a friend that *makes* me happy.
(2) My friend *starts* changing behavior.
(3) I *try* to tell him to change his behavior.

In these examples, although the context of the writing required that the participants use the past tense since the events they were described happened in the past, many learners opted for the verbs in the simple present tense. Tenses involving modals were also incorrectly used. A modal or a modal auxiliary verb is a verb such as “can,” “may,” or “will” that is used with another verb (not a modal) to express possibility, permission, or intension. The following sentences are examples of such usage, and instead of using the past tense modals, here too the participants used the present tense.

(4) I prepared myself so that we *can* start our journey.
(5) Every day I *will* go to my grandmother’s house.

As shown in table 6.1, 50.76% of these tense errors were made by boys, while 49.24% were made by girls. We can conclude that slightly more boys than girls made the tense errors, although the difference is not significant.

Subsequently, many learners could not use appropriate prepositions in sentences. A preposition is used before a noun or a pronoun to show place, position, time, or method. Some of the incorrect prepositions would be seen in the following sentences. Instead of *by* in sentence (6), *at* in (7), and *for* in (8), the participants had the following underlined prepositions:

(6) Gold is a stone admired for many people.
(7) My sister left our bags on the bus station.
(8) We were late to our journey.

Slightly more girls, 52.34%, made preposition errors than boys, 47.66%.

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A third observed error was in the use of two or more adjectives to qualify the same noun. When adjectives follow each other in a sentence, there is an order in which they should appear. Following are examples of sentences constructed by learners in which use of adjectives did not consider the correct order. Instead of *Beautiful Kenyan* and *black leather*, the participants had the following order

(9) *Kenyan beautiful* girls were invited.
(10) They wore leather black shoes.

Of all the adjective errors made, 51% were made by boys, while the remaining 49% were made by the girls.

Some sentence structures used by a number of learners flouted rules of grammar. This resulted in sentences whose meanings were not clear. In other cases, there was redundancy in communication due to unnecessary duplication of information. In the construction of sentences with the intention of communicating their ideas, 52.85% of improper sentence structures were made by boys, while the other 47.15% were made by girls.

Incorrect choice of vocabulary was also an area of difficulty among some secondary school learners. Some learners used words and phrases that they did not understand. An example of such is use of "drug abuse" in sentence (11):

(11) I took a lot of drug abuse.

To this learner, drug abuse is a substance or something tangible, which is not the case.

Of all the errors made in the use of vocabulary, 47.25% were by boys and 52.75% by girls.

On the part of orthography, several words were misspelled by the learners as in the following examples:

Misspelled word	the correct word
*Sayed	said
*Snick	sneak
*Encourge	encourage
*Dispoited	disappointed
*Disapoint	disappoint
*Displined	disciplined

Girls made slightly more spelling errors (50.63%) than the boys (49.37%), although the difference was not significant.

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DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Incorrect use of some words in a sentence leads to contextual disharmony. Inconsistencies in verb forms, for example, can lead to clash in time as in example (1). "Had" and "makes" could not be used together the way they appear in the sentence. From the findings, there is evidence that the use of various verbs forms was the most challenging area to learners adding up to a total of 329 errors.

On the individual words, use of prepositions was the most challenging among the parts of speech, as language is arbitrary and there are no specific rules that determine how these words are used. This resulted in choice and use of some incorrect prepositions. Similarly, the use of two or more adjectives in a sentence follows a specific rule, and like in the case of prepositions, learners need to have understood how the concept works. Failure to master this would result in incorrect use of these words in a sentence as shown in the previous examples. This knowledge is part of grammatical competence assumed to be acquired over time and with continued exposure to given structure. For instance, an adjective which shows opinion usually precedes that one of nationality. *Beautiful Kenyan girls* would therefore be considered correct and not *Kenyan beautiful girls*. If learners are exposed to this structure often, then they will develop automaticity and over time will not experience difficulties ordering adjectives correctly. The choice of appropriate vocabulary in English by learners is equally important in communication for it determines their proficiency in that language.

It is no doubt that examination of more written compositions and expanding the scope of analyzed areas for errors would reveal more areas of difficulty for the secondary school learners in Kenya. Despite that, some errors in a number of misspelled words, for instance, might have arisen from fast writing and failure by learners to proofread their work after writing. A testing environment may also have an impact on the learners. It may be interesting to see if the learners make similar mistakes when writing in a more relaxed environment.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings of this study reveal that many secondary school learners have not attained proficiency in Basic English despite the fact that this is their language of instruction. This was demonstrated by the number of errors the participants of this study made in their writing. The study concludes that errors made by 12th-grade learners are not limited to a specific group of students. They are common to other learners at that level. This

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is because the sample involved in the study consisted of learners from different linguistic backgrounds who are influenced by their respective mother tongues. Gender also does not significantly determine levels of proficiency in English among secondary school learners in Kenya, at least as shown in this study. Although this study did not involve a large population to allow for generalized conclusions, we can still give some general recommendations.

First, the Ministry of Education (MoE) should consider changing the pedagogical approaches to make curriculum delivery more learner-centered. This would give room to learners to express themselves in English more often to achieve automaticity than is the scenario at the moment. By so doing, they would be able to correct the errors that they make in the course of their presentations with the help of their teachers. Nyarigoti (2017) claims that in spite of the efforts geared toward ensuring learners have necessary language skills, there has been continuous outcry over the deteriorating level of English language proficiency in educational institutions and the job industry. He advocates for the adoption of new approaches that give students multiple opportunities to learn relevant language skills.

Second, a reading culture ought to be encouraged among secondary school learners. This may be done by exposing them to books that sharpen their language skills like novels, works of poetry, and short anthologies. Reading widely allows learners to conceptualize rules of grammar and operationalize them in the process of writing. It is worth noting that no language skill is learned in isolation. The skills involved in the reading and writing domains, for instance, are inseparable, and each contributes to the other.

Last, the MoE, through the Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development, should make deliberate efforts to integrate the teaching and learning of English in the instruction of other subjects that use this language. This would make learners more conscious of the English they use in the learning of other subjects and avoid most of the common mistakes they make. The more practice and exposure the learners have, the greater their proficiency. Furthermore, teachers from other content areas would contribute to the development of their learners' language proficiency, which in turn could result in improved performance in these other content areas.

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Chapter 7

Patterns of English Use in Kiswahili-Based Kenyan Mass Media

Sarah Marjie

According to Defleur and Ball-Rokeach (1996) and Valkenburg, Joachen, and Walther (2016), mass media communication is a technology which helps in message transmission among a large number of people at the same time. This type of communication through the media could be spoken or written, which may include radio and television, cinema, newspapers, and the new and fast-emerging Internet (Jucker, 2003). The media, according to Lunt and Livingstone (2001), has become an integral part of our everyday lives, our social relationships, and our very identity. Therefore, it has psychological, linguistic, and social influence on us (Burrage, 1969; Bednarek, 2010). This chapter looks at the influence of what I termed as a sociolinguistic-type concerning language use in Kiswahili-based Kenyan media. Indeed, until recently, English was the predominant language for publishing online, for radio and television discussions, and for newspaper reportage (Nedashkivska, 2010), and Kenya was not an exception. However, situations have changed, and the presence of linguistic diversity in the media and the Internet is becoming a reality in the global village.

This linguistic diversity can be seen through the African context because of its multilingual nature. For instance, Africa is linguistically blessed, and the best value Africans can place on their linguistic diversity is to let their languages be experienced, seen, and known worldwide. In Africa, language is an integral part of the culture, but language policies implemented give a different impression of the value placed on their linguistic inheritance (Pawliková-Vilhanová, 1996; Ogechi, 2003; Spolsky, 2004; Bastardas-Boada, 2012; Oduor, 2015). This, in turn, affects the number of languages used in the respective countries, especially on radio, television, Internet communications, and newspaper (Bodomo et al., 2009; Spolsky, 2004; Bastardas-Boada, 2012). Sometimes, the position of the language in the hierarchy of

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the language policy greatly affects the type of language used in everyday communication and in mass media communications. Although the language policy in Kenya has Kiswahili and English as official languages and only Kiswahili as the national language (Ogechi, 2003; Oduor, 2015, Michieka, 2005; Michieka & Ondari, 2016), English still has great influence on language use in the Kenyan media.

This chapter, which is mainly descriptive in nature, investigates the use of English in Kiswahili-based Kenyan Mass Media. It also determines the place and pattern of English use in the Kiswahili-based Kenyan Mass Media. The chapter argues that English has penetrated so deep into Kenyan sociolinguistic repertoire that one can still find English used in Kiswahili-based mass media. This is because English is so dominant in Kenyan discourse that it ends up being used even partially in almost all other discourses. After looking at Kenya and its linguistic diversity, the chapter discusses language policy and then looks at current research on language and media. The model, data, and methodology are discussed. The chapter finally presents evidence of the use of English in some Kenyan media outlets that have designated the use of Kiswahili as their sole language of publication.

LINGUISTIC PROFILE OF KENYA

Kenya is an African state that has the Indian Ocean to the Southeast, Tanzania to the south, Uganda to the west, South Sudan to the Northwest, Ethiopia to the north, and Somalia to the Northeast. The capital city is Nairobi. According to Eberhard et al. (2019), the population of Kenya is estimated at 48,397,527 million people. Kenya has about 68 ethnic languages, among which the most widely spoken are Kiswahili, Kikuyu, Kalenjin, Luo, and Luhya (Mackenzie, 2000; Eberhard et al., 2019). However, regardless of the linguistic diversity, and as stated in the introduction, Kiswahili and English are the only two main lingua francas (Michieka & Ondari, 2016; Dzahene-Quarshie & Marjie, 2020). Although both languages are used in official correspondences, only Kiswahili is used as the national language. Prior to this, English had been the only official language since independence.

English is used in official settings, such as for communication in parliament, in high courts, and for international and diplomatic interactions, while Kiswahili is used as the language for communication in the lower courts and sometimes in parliament (Ogechi, 2003). As a national language, Kiswahili is used by the masses as a language for wider communication within the country, for example, for interethnic communication. Kenyans also use Kiswahili as a language of business within the country and as an interregional language with their East African neighbors (Pawliková-Vilhanová, 1996). All local

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languages are used in everyday conversations (Ogechi, 2003; Negash, 2011). Pawliková-Vilhanová (1996) and Ogechi (2003) mention that about 75% of Kenyans are trilingual, and they speak English, Kiswahili, and at least one Kenyan indigenous languages.

Regarding the language of education, children are taught in local languages during the first three years of primary education in Kenya, and English becomes the language of instruction in upper primary. Dzahene-Quarshie and Marjie (2020) observe that Kiswahili has been a compulsory subject in primary and secondary schools since independence. Michieka and Ondari (2016) argue that although Kiswahili and English are co-official languages, Kiswahili is sidelined in the choice of language of instruction in schools, being limited to use only during the first three years of school in urban centers. Even then, both Ogechi (2009) and Michieka and Ondari (2016) observe that there seems not to be a clear-cut language policy on language of instruction especially in the urban centers regarding the use of Kiswahili. The implication of this is that right from the onset, English has been prioritized over Kiswahili, although both are supposed to enjoy the same privileges.

In addition, the mass media in Kenya (television, radio, and print materials) use either Kiswahili or English as a language of communication. Nevertheless, some media houses use one of the popular local languages in the community as their language of communication. It is worth mentioning that most hip-hop songs known as “Genge” are composed using both Kiswahili and English.

Deducing from the language policy of Kenya, this chapter argues that the greatest focus on language in Kenya has been on the position of the language in the official contexts. This has made the language of instruction take a particular trend in Kenya. With this observation, this chapter argues that the introduction of English at an early stage in Kenya as the language of instruction has made Kenyans to have long contact with English. This is because English is introduced as the medium of instruction as early as in the primary schools in Kenya, whereas Kiswahili is taught as a subject during that time. In addition, as has been noted earlier, two or three languages may be used complementarily in teaching in Kenyan primary schools, depending on the subject under discussion on a given day and the location of the school. Languages used by teachers could be English-Kiswahili and or English-Kiswahili-native language code-switching in urban, peri-urban, and rural schools, respectively (Ogechi, 2009). This means that code-switching (i.e, the use of English and Kiswahili) is a phenomenon that is introduced at an early stage in the life of the Kenyan pupil. The effect then extends into their communicative events. This might explain why Kenyans use English even in Kiswahili-based communication.

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MEDIA AND LANGUAGE

Communication is an activity of exchanging information and meaning across vast distances in space and time using various technical or natural means, whichever is available or preferred (Barnlund, 2008; Valkenburg et al., 2016). It requires a sender, a message, a medium, and a recipient, although the receiver does not have to be present or aware of the sender's intent to communicate at the time of communication (Berlo, 1960). The communication process is complete once the receiver understands the sender's message. It could be verbal, such as in speaking on radio and television, in cinemas, or written such as in letters, newspapers, and the Internet. In any communicative process, language is required. Parameswaran (2008) refers to language as one of the major characteristics of media. This means that language plays a very vital role in communication in the mass media. For most scholars, language and mass media are inseparable entities. According to Bell (1991), media language can tell us things about both the media and language. Thus, the media uses some language features that are also found in ordinary speech communities like the case of Kenyan media. Expounding on that, I posit that journalists are aware of the language situation in Kenya and, therefore, use English even in Kiswahili-based media outlets. Bell (1991) explains further that media in a way plays a significant role in affecting language either positively or negatively in the society, in that media turns to be the mirror of a society and culture of a group of people. This means that media language, in the same way, can affect attitudes and opinions in society through the way it presents people and issues.

Media develops language and language develops media (Lunt & Livingstone, 2001; Willie, 1979). Regarding development of language by media, these authors argue that most learning occurs outside the classroom and that more information is conveyed through the press, magazines, radio television, and on the Internet than in school and other learning centers. Media aids language development more than any learning institution (Lunt & Livingstone, 2001; Schäfer, 2011; Thorne et al., 2009; Willie, 1979). This is not to say that there are no problems in language learning with regard to the mass media. Sometimes, as Bahrani and Sim (2011) argue, news contents and the linguistic difficulty of the broadcaster pose challenges for language learning in television news. These authors recommend that audiovisual texts with greater iconic combinations are likely to be more comprehensible for language learning.

In another instance, Bahrani and Sim (2011) argue that the linguistic incompetence of the audience or society may sometimes affect language learning negatively. This is usually true in situations of linguistic competence, when one is learning a foreign language through the media (Oroujlou, 2012;

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Dzahene-Qurshie & Marjie, 2020). Evidence from Dzahene-Quarshie and Marjie (2020) revealed that East African migrants living in Ghana learn Ghanaian languages through the media. The media has a strong influence on language learning, so the language used in the media is important. Most Kenyans learn Kiswahili from media. The other scenario of language developing media can also be said to be true when the language used by the media is a standardized form or language of wider communication in the community. This encourages many people to prefer listening to a particular media because the presenters of the other stations may not be very proficient in the language being used or do not use a language of wider communication.

Besides, the language a media uses gives perception about their target audience. This can be said of most media houses where lack of proficiency in a language may dictate language choice of broadcasting. In this regard, the audience increases depending on the language(s) used by a particular media. These languages could be local ones (e.g., Kikuyu, Luo, etc.) in the catchment area or Kiswahili and English. If the language used is perceived to bring the people together as Kiswahili does in Kenya, a wider listenership is achieved. In the past, only one language was used in the mass media, namely English (Crystal, 1997; Crystal, 2001). However, currently multilingualism is increasingly common in the mass media. The aim is to raise some minority languages to the same status as English (Grin, 2000). English used to dominate the mass media in Africa even after colonialism, but now the call by Africans for the use of indigenous or minority languages in most communicative events has enabled the use of multiple languages in the mass media. This may have prompted some media outlets in Africa, especially in Kenya, to use Kiswahili. However, English still plays very significant roles in broadcasting in the Kenyan media. It is, however, not strange at all to hear English being mixed with indigenous African languages on radio and television programs as well as on the Internet and in the newspapers. My observation of most media houses in Kenya where Kiswahili is their main language of broadcasting is that English still holds a strong position in almost all of their discourses. English dominates most of the state-owned media houses where Kiswahili is used to discuss issues in some sessions.

Mass Media in Kenya

This section briefly introduces the media in Kenya, specifically radio, television, and Internet blogs. Before getting into the specifics of media, I want to discuss briefly the Media Council in Kenya. The Media Council is a statutory body which regulates the media in Kenya. This is an independent national institution established by the Media Act, 2007 (Ismail & Deane, 2008). It oversees the regulation, discipline, and conduct of journalists in Kenya. The

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council gives accreditation and registration of both media houses and journalists, handles complaints from the public, and publishes yearly media audits on the freedom of media in Kenya.

The media in Kenya includes more than 90 FM and more than 15 television stations and some number of Internet-based sites, magazines, and print newspapers (Sang, 2015). Most radio and television stations are privately or state-owned. The state-owned media is Kenya Broadcasting Company (KBC), whereas the private-owned ones are Nation Media Group, Standard Media Group, Radio Africa group, Royal Media Service, Media Max Communication Group, etc. In relation to coverage, some of the popular stations are KBC, Citizen FM, Radio Maisha, Classic FM, Capital FM, Easy FM, X FM, Metro FM, Homeboyz FM, and so on. Similarly, television stations with more viewers and coverage are KBC TV, NTV, Citizen TV, and K24. These radio and television stations use either Kiswahili or English as their language of publication. There are also some privately owned vernacular-based radio and television stations, including those that broadcast in Kikuyu, such as Three Stones TV, Njata TV, Kameme and Coro FMs; in Kalenjin, Chamgei FM, Kass FM, and Rehema FM, and Kass TV; in Luo, Lake Victoria; in Luhya, Mulembe FM; and Mbaitu FM in Kamba (Ismail & Deane 2008; Meghan & McIntyre, 2019).

In the case of Internet coverage, all mainstream media houses have websites that they use to convey news and other information. There are also online magazines, blogs, and websites. These include *Daily Post*, inairobi, Kenyamoja, Kahawa Tungu, Buzz Kenya, Mpasho News, YouTube Kiswahili blogs, and many others (Ismail & Deane, 2008; Meghan & McIntyre, 2019).

There are two national newspapers published in English, *The Daily Nation* and *The Standard*, and one *Taifa Leo*, published in Kiswahili. Other papers such as *Business Daily*, *The Star*, and *The East African* are published in English, and they focus on regionally based special issues such as business and finance.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The use of Kiswahili and English in communication is an example of code-switching/code-mixing as posited by Myers-Scotton (1993, 2000, and 2006) and Nilep (2006). The term "code-switching" (also known as code-mixing), which deals with foreign words inserted at inter-sentence, intra-sentential levels, and inter-utterance levels in this chapter, is adopted from Myers-Scotton (2002). This is chosen because her definition deals with single and multiword items that are used in such communicative events like the ones in this chapter. This involves the systematic alternation of two or more

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languages during conversation. The Markedness Model is a sociolinguistic theory that accounts for social indexical motivation for language alternation. It considers how people choose language to signal their group membership or personal relationships, or to construct their identity (Myers-Scotton, 1993, p. 478). The model claims that language is used by speakers to index Rights and Obligation (RO) sets and for abstract social codes in operation between participants in a given interaction. They choose one linguistic item over the other, and this depicts the identity of the speaker. This identity is not established, but it is realized through the negotiation of choice of code or language. These ROs are negotiated by speakers to establish a social position, based on norms established by the community (Myers-Scotton, 2000, p. 139). The RO give speakers or writers the choices of language they want to use other than the expected one (that is to borrow or code-switch).

Myers-Scotton (2000) explains that there are two types of codes: marked or unexpected code and unmarked or expected code. The marked choice is not the preferred language, whereas the unmarked choice is the preferred language. In language alternation, if the speaker uses the marked/unexpected code to achieve an intended result in conversation, then the unexpected code becomes a marked choice. The marked choice is used to contrast with the listener's expectations. Marked choice sets different ROs in place of the unmarked choice, which is often accompanied by other prosodic features. This means that the speaker is trying to negotiate a different right and obligation set. On the other hand, the unmarked choice is the expected or preferred one. It is "conventional (indexing an unmarked RO set) given the salience of who the participants are and of other relevant situational factors" (Myers-Scotton, 2001, p. 9). It sets the principles for the ROs for communication and dictates the guidelines for conversation or otherwise what Myers-Scotton refers to as the "status quo" (1993, p. 120) (cited in Myers-Scotton, 2000, p. 145). Unmarked choices are characterized by a general agreement about the corresponding RO sets, or norms of an exchange. I situate this study within the unmarked choice.

In the Markedness Model, the unmarked choice could be "sequential": that is, switching from one unmarked choice to another unmarked choice. Myers-Scotton (2000) further explains that such sequences occur when the participants recognize that "the change from one type of exchange to another has altered the expected rights and obligations balance, and therefore the relevance of the indexical quality of one code vs. another" (p. 146). I categorize the data on Radio Maisha and YouTube blog as a sequential type where speakers on radio and writers on the blogs switch from Kiswahili to English. This has altered the RO goals of the news outlets where Kiswahili is designated as the language of broadcasting. I explain, however, that the use of Kiswahili and English are common to the media and their audience. They

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use both languages as unmarked choice to lay emphasis or to display double identity. The choice of the two codes is unmarked because on the platforms, that is, radio and blogs, although Kiswahili is the language for transmission, one cannot say that the hosts as well as guests are not proficient/ or even competent in English. Thus, one is expected to have knowledge of Kiswahili as well as English, because English has played and still plays a significant communicative role in the life of Kenyans. Both languages in this context, therefore, fall under a sequence of switching, that is, switching from one common language to another common language. I therefore rely on the tenets of the Markedness Model (Myers-Scotton, 1993), where in this chapter, one is expected to have knowledge of Kiswahili and English on radio and blogs.

Unmarked choice could also be "overall" when both participants know the two languages being used. Here the two codes could be unmarked because both the speaker and the listener understand both languages, implying that the situation has not changed. The context of newspapers can be likened to an overall pattern of language use/alternation. "Language alternation" is a cover term for borrowing and code-switching in this study because the English words found in the language do not alter nor change the situation. In this instance, both the writer and the reader understand those established words since they are "conventional" forms in the language.

METHODOLOGY

The data for this study were gathered from three public domain sources: Kiswahili-based radio stations, YouTube Kiswahili blogs on the Internet that display songs and discussions in Kiswahili, and newspapers published in Kiswahili. Because the study intended to analyze mass media coverage on oral and written communication, Radio Maisha was selected for the radio and spoken category. YouTube Kiswahili blogs (Internet) and Taifa Leo (newspaper) were also selected for the written category. Television, movies, and news items were not included because programs aired, especially on television, are usually songs without much discussion. Those programs that have discussions are usually in the mornings and are very brief, although they also use Kiswahili and English. These media were chosen because they use Kiswahili as their sole language of communication. The preference for Radio Maisha is because it is among the public radio stations that have a wider listenership coverage. It has frequency modulation in almost every county, province, and constituency in Kenya. For the Internet category, a particular, YouTube Kiswahili blog was selected. The blog displays or plays only Kiswahili songs, and the language of discussion of bloggers is Kiswahili.

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Taifa Leo was selected because it is the only newspaper that publishes news items in Kiswahili.

The data was collected through the following procedures. For the radio category, I listened to Radio Maisha from morning till evening for five working days (Monday to Friday) excluding weekends, thus, 24 hours times 5 days making 120 hours. This was done by recording and transcribing the programs aired. The kind of samples used to gather data according to Bell (1991) often ranges from recordings of many months of broadcast news, or stories from a hundred different countries to just a single news clip or radio program. For YouTube Kiswahili blogs, Kenyan Kiswahili Bongo flava song discussions were downloaded. Comments were downloaded from the YouTube blogs (www.youtubekiswahilisongs.com). Fifty utterances were gathered from which those that have Kiswahili-English, only Kiswahili and only English were selected.

News items from Taifa Leo newspaper were also randomly collected. These were news items reporting daily activities with regard to politics, social, economics, health, soccer, and everyday lifestyle of the Kenyan people. Fifty news items were gathered from Kenya within which English items were grouped into parts of speech. They are public and available on the newsstands, and so access to the information was not difficult (see Bell 1991). As Bell (1991) explains, news items are in the public domain and everybody has access to them.

Discussions on Language Use in Kiswahili-Based Kenyan Media

This section discusses the use of Kiswahili with English in Kenyan mass media. I investigate Radio Maisha, YouTube Kiswahili blogs, and *Taifa Leo* newspaper. These mass media were chosen because, although their target language of communication or readers or listenership is solely Kiswahili, they often code mix with English. The speakers (hosts, guests, and bloggers) have negotiated a kind of unmarked code which has become an accepted norm. I argue that because the language policy of Kenya has Kiswahili and English as its official languages, as unmarked codes, these Kiswahili-based media have no choice but to alternate between Kiswahili and English in their communication. The use of English as the language of instruction in schools could also trigger the extensive use of English found in Kiswahili discourses of Kenyans.

Radio Maisha

Radio Maisha, literary translated as "Life Radio," is a Kiswahili-based radio station owned by the Standard Group Limited, and has Kiswahili as main

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language of communication. The slogan for the radio station is *Tuko Mbele Pamoja*, "we are in the lead together." Judging from its name and slogan, it is evident that the target listeners are Kiswahili speakers, but presenters and hosts of the programs usually code-switch between Kiswahili and English. These three-hour programs are aired at specific times beginning at 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 a.m. the following day.

The first program of the day that starts at 6:00 a.m. is called *Maisha Asubuhi* literary translated as "Maisha in the Morning." Topics aired on *Maisha Asubuhi* range from sending birthday wishes to loved ones to advise on relationship issues. Below are a few examples of conversations on the birthday session showing sequential pattern of markedness.

Typically, a text message is sent to the hosts of the program informing them about someone's birthday. There is usually either a wife or a husband celebrating the birthday. When the hosts call the couple, the one who is not celebrating the birthday is allowed to sing a birthday song to the celebrant spouse. The birthday song is sung in English after which there is exchange of pleasantries by the couple as seen in examples 1–3 below for Maisha Asubuhi (Mwakideu & Jelang'o, 2017).

(1) Wife: *hello, mambo*
Hello, how are you?

(2) Husband: *poa sana*
Very fine

(3) Wife: *ninakuwish happy birthday na kusema nakupenda sana, yaani I want you to be the love of my life*
I wish you a happy birthday and say I really love you, that is, I want you to be the love of my Life.

The next session is *Bunge la Maisha*, or "Maisha's parliament." In this session, members of parliament or stakeholders in the government are invited to discuss critical issues in the country. This is done amid announcements, advertisement, and news reports. Here are a few examples from a conversation between one of the hosts and a guest from Bunge la Maisha (Mwakideu & Jelang'o, 2017).

(4) Host: *sasa hii, mambo ya security inakuwaje, now Kenyans are worried*
Now, how is the issue on security? Kenyans are worried.

(5) Guest: *sasa, serikali ilijaribu to make out the flash spots in the area, halafu bring everybody who helped the al shabaab to book. Government is working assiduously kufanya marekebisho*
Now, the government is trying to make out the flash spots in the area, and then punish the perpetrators who helped the Al shabaab. Government is working assiduously to change things.

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These announcements that follow these programs are also done in a code mix of Kiswahili and English as seen in the announcement read in example 6 below.

(6) Host 1: *kumbuka kwamba azam TV inaleta burudika sana. There are about 82 channels and you just pay a little zaidi ya 10ksh for a month. It is cheap kama unalipa 870 ksh for it. Nenda tu kugrab your own. Kuna zile movies za Afrika na mengi sana. Tena iko na high definition.*

Remember that azam TV brings you so much entertainment. There are about 82 channels and you just pay a little over 10ksh. for a month. It is cheap if you are paying 870 ksh for it. Just go and grab yours. There are African movies and more. Again, it has high definition.

The next session is called is *Lipa Deni*, "pay your debt." In this session, a person can send a message to the host complaining about their debtor. The host then calls both the creditor and the debtor, and the debtor asked by the host to pay his/her debts. *Maisha Asubuhi* ends with *Hali Halisi*, meaning "pure life," which discusses issues concerning love. This program ends at 10:00 a.m. Throughout the sessions, discussions of the hosts, panelists, and phone-in-sessions have sequential mixes of Kiswahili with English. Here is an example on *Hali Halisi* (Jelang'o. 2017):

(7) Host: *unashida gani?*

What is your problem?

(8) Guest: *daktari mimi nilikuwa na dem na she has left me, na ninaumia sana*

Doctor, I had a girlfriend and she has left me, I am in pain.

The next program *Staarabika*, "be civilized," is broadcasted from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. *Staarabika* discusses everyday issues mainly involving domestic or family issues. The host usually poses questions and allows listeners to call in and share their ideas and opinions. Here is an example of the code-switching that goes on in the program.

(9) Host: *Kuna mzee moja ambaye anataka amwoe msichana as young as his daughter. Nasikia wasikilizaji wanasema avumilie amwoe huyu. Haha. Sometimes life is very funny. Avumilie na afanye nini?*

There is an old man who wants to marry a girl as young as his daughter. I hear listeners saying she should just put up with him. Sometimes life is very funny. Why should she tolerate him? (Njogu, 2017)

These issues are discussed by way of phone-in-sessions where most callers do not mix Kiswahili with English at all, whereas others, who are comfortable

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with using the two languages, do so. After, there is a *Maisha Konnect* program from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., which discusses entertainment issues looking at East African songs, the artists involved, and whether or not they are doing well in the music industry. There are also phone-in-segments that allow callers to congratulate their favorite artists or mention names of artists who are doing well or not in the entertainment industry. Also, the hosts in this program, male and female, alternate between Kiswahili and English. This program uses Kiswahili with much English because it is youth oriented. Here are a few examples of conversations between the hosts discussing some musicians in the music industry (Mwende & DJGitts, 2017).

(10) Host 1: *Mie, I think this musician amekuja kuhang around. Unafikiriaje?*
As for me, I think this musician has come to just hang around, what do you think?

(11) Host 2: *I think tumpe the benefit of the doubt because everybody is trying his or her chance in the industry.*
I think we should give him the benefit of the doubt because everybody is trying his or her chance in the industry.

The above program paves the way for the next program *Maisha Jioni*, or "Maisha in the evening," from 4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m., and the hosts discuss diverse issues ranging from politics to the economy and daily life. The hosts also allow time for callers to contribute to some issues happening in the country. This program, too, involves code-mixing as seen in the example below (Ajaab & Korosso, 2017)

(12) Host 1: *katika pita pita zangu siku moja nilimwona mwanamke alikuwa na mtoto mchanga. Alimbeba huyu mtoto mgongoni na akabeba matunda beseni kichwani. Alikuwa anavuka barabara kubwa hapa Nairobi. Unajua haya mabarabara kuna magari kama matruck. Kuna ufujo na traffic that day. . . . Wasikilizaji piga kuniambia wanawake tumefanya kosa gani? Namba ya kupiga ni 070211. . .*
One day, while I was roaming the streets of Nairobi, I saw a woman carrying a baby on her back as well as carrying a basin full of fruits on her head. You know these roads there are big tracks. There was confusion and so much traffic that day. . . . Now callers please call and tell me what crime have we women committed? The number is 070211.

This continues until the beginning of the next program, which is aired from 7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m., where some Francophone and Taarab music (a music genre common in Kenya and Tanzania) are played. The program finally ends for the commencement of the next program from 10:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m.

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YouTube Blog

Kenyans also alternate between Kiswahili and English in conversations on YouTube blogs. The site gives bloggers the opportunity to make comments on Kiswahili songs or videos. Since this platform is a Kiswahili-based one, I expected the language to be Kiswahili, but Kenyans who chat on this YouTube blog use both Kiswahili and English in their conversations or chats as shown in the examples below (DJ Perez, 2018):

(13) *TB: Hi guys someone tell me what's the name of the first song. I would like to make my comments in Kiswahili lakini wengine would make so much fun of my Kiswahili sio kisanifu that I am scared! . . . They keep me sane hapo. We do have some Kenyans who are really doing good things . . . I know you all know "Ogopa DJs" and "Black Supremacy" . . . I love Bongo!*

I would like to make my comments in Kiswahili, but some of you would make so much fun of my Kiswahili because it is not a standard type, so I am scared! . . . They keep me sane here. We do have some Kenyans who are really doing good things . . . I know you all know of Ogopa DJs and Black Supremacy . . . I love Bongo!.

(14) Blogger Z: *Unataka mwimbaji wa nyimbo ipi, maana hii ni mix ya waimbaji tofauti.*

Which musician's song do you want, because this is a mix of different songs.

Examples (13) and (14) show a code-switching between English and Kiswahili. There are also chats that are in English only as shown in (15) while others are in Kiswahili only as shown in the example (16):

(15) D O: *Very good mix reminds me of my holidays in Sweet Zanzibar back in 2011.*

(16) S N: *hiyo ni sauti poa sana, una bahati kwa kuwa na sauti kama hiyo, Mungu aendelee kukubariki bukuku. kila siku. . . . Napenda nyimbo zako.*

This is a very good voice, you are lucky to have such a voice and God should continue to bless you well. Every day. . . . I like your songs.

Taifa Leo

Taifa Leo, meaning "The Nation today," is the only Kiswahili newspaper in Kenya. Although *Taifa Leo* publishes in Kiswahili, there are terms that have been borrowed from English although those terms have adopted Kiswahili

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phonotactics and rules (see Mwita, 2009). The data used for this study collected such terms that have been confirmed as borrowed and adopted by the Kiswahili language (see Marjie-Okyere, 2013). The following are examples from *Taifa Leo* (Cherono, 2018)

(17) *Afisa wa polisi wa utawala, alimpiga risasi na kumjeuri mkubwa wake kabla ya kujitia*
katika kambi ya Haujubey, kaunti ya Garissa Jumapili iliyopita. Konstabo . . . *Gavana wa Bomet.*

(18) Afisa aliyejeuriwa alipelekwa katika Islamic Hospital kabla ya kuhamishwa hospitali ya . . .

The words in example (17) above, such as *afisa*, *polisi*, *kambi*, *kaunti*, and *konstabo*, *gavana*, are borrowed from English *officer*, *police*, *camp*, *county*, *constable*, and *governor* respectively. Example (18) has *Islamic Hospital*, which is a name of a hospital and so it is spelled as it is in English, but the second word *hospitali* is written in Kiswahili phonotactics. The *Islamic Hospital* is a name of a proper noun and name of the hospital, and so the name cannot be Swahilized. On the other hand, *hospitali*, which is used in its general sense, is Swahilized.

Other examples from *Taifa Leo* September 26, 2018 (Mwaura, 2018) are *seneta "senator," spika "speaker," kesi "case," rasta "dreadlocks/rasta" droo "draw," finali "final," mechi "match," daktari "doctor," kolabo "collaboration," meneja "manager," picha "picture,"* and so on.

Some advertisements in the newspaper are written in English only, Kiswahili only, or in both Kiswahili and English. Examples from the data below:

(19*) Ni kusoma na kudrive. Win 10 pick -ups with Daily nation*
It is to read and to drive.

(20) *THE FINAL DRAWS ARE HERE . . . , JOIN MANY OTHERS WHO HAVE ALSO INVESTED IN THIS IDYLLIC LIFESTYLE, WIN BIG WITH DAILY NATION*

In the advertisements above, example (19) has instances of code-switching between Kiswahili and English, whereas example (20) is in Kiswahili, only illustrating the code-switch between Kiswahili and English (see Dzahene-Quarshie, 2013).

Sequential Pattern of Code-Switching

The data from both Radio Maisha and YouTube show a sequential type of code-switching that is either intra-sentential (within sentence) or

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inter-sentential (at sentence level). Myers-Scotton (1993) stipulates that in choosing a code, a speaker evaluates the markedness of their potential choices, determined by the social forces at work in their community, and decides either to follow or reject the normative model. One of the constructs of this model states that in the study of language alternation, one language could be unmarked and the other marked. It also stipulates that there is the tendency for both languages to be used in alternation. This current study argues here that the speakers and writers concerned are the best determiners of language choice. Two reasons can be given for this choice.

The first reason for using Kiswahili-English by Kenyan media is the fact that both languages are common to them, as seen from examples (1) to (12). Going by the national language policy and the language of instruction in Kenya, I argue here that using Kiswahili and then switching to English is a common alternative to the speakers. This is therefore not different in the cases of Radio Maisha and on YouTube Kiswahili platform. Although the change from Kiswahili to English has altered the expected ROs balance, this is not surprising. That is why we see such instances where after Kiswahili is used, the hosts, guests, and YouTube bloggers switch to English, a language common to both.

The hosts on Radio Maisha as well as the YouTube bloggers alternate between Kiswahili and English. This shows that all the hosts, guests, callers, and bloggers on Radio Maisha and the YouTube Kiswahili platform are fluent in both Kiswahili and English. They therefore decide to use both languages as a matter of choice because both languages are available to them. This assertion is also claimed by Nedashkivska (2010), who argues that language use on media could be a reflection of the choice of language in a particular society. I argue that the presenters and listeners have a sequential choice of markedness to make because of the strong influence English has in the country.

The second reason for switching into two different codes is an ability to encode two identities and the breadth of experience associated with them. The examples discussed earlier support Myers-Scotton's views of negotiating identities by means of code alternation. This could also be done for stylistic purposes since English has acquired prestige in Kenya, and therefore writers feel graceful using Kiswahili and English. Myers-Scotton (1993) believes that these code switches are just to show the ability to speak two languages, as well as to satisfy a socially useful situation by bilinguals as identity creation. All the programs and most of the Radio Maisha programs are aired in both languages, and, in general, the hosts on Radio Maisha code-switch between Kiswahili and English.

For YouTube blogs, the fear of being ridiculed for lack of fluency in Kiswahili sometimes makes bloggers alternate between Kiswahili and English as shown in example (13). The switch to English is a normal option

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on the platform as has been argued. However, we see comments in example (15) written in English only and (16) written in Kiswahili only. These instances show that the bloggers can write in Kiswahili but decide to write in English only as a matter of choice. Although the platform is for Kiswahili members, the writings are not restricted to Kiswahili; they have a choice, and it is up to them to decide which language to use.

Overall Pattern of Language Use

The examples shown above from *Taifa Leo* display an overall pattern of language use where we see English items as established in the language. The unmarked choice could be "overall" when both participants have knowledge in the two languages being used. The choice of the two codes is unmarked because in newspapers, one is expected to have knowledge of Kiswahili as well as the established borrowed English words. In this instance, each alternation need not have any special significance, but rather it is the overall pattern of using two varieties which carry a policy/social meaning (Myers-Scotton, 2000, p. 146).

Generally, newspaper contributors/writers are Kiswahili–English bilinguals who are competent and aware of the borrowed words. Myers-Scotton (2000), however, argues that there are instances where the use of two codes could represent an unmarked choice as in cases where, although there are English items in newspapers, these words are nativized, thereby exhibiting a kind of an unmarked choice. This could be linked to the national language policy as well as the expansion of Kiswahili. Policy makers believe that Kiswahili must be promoted, hence the need to integrate foreign words into the language and treat these words like native words. In *Taifa Leo* newspaper, knowledge of Kiswahili and English is expected, as the use of English borrowed words in Kiswahili by writers in this context has become habitual or the norm. We, however, found some instances where English items in the Kiswahili newspapers were treated as English items which are still unmarked choice in Kiswahili-based texts. This could be seen from the way other English items are portrayed through advertisements in the same newspaper columns.

Comparing the two written communicative events, it is evident that newspaper and YouTube blog writers/contributors have different orientations toward English items when writing. English items were spelled as though they were Kiswahili words by newspaper contributors/writers, whereas they are spelled as English items in YouTube blogs. The English used in YouTube blogs is the same as that used on Radio Maisha. We suggest that the newspaper writers/contributors consider themselves Swahili speakers whose interest in using English items arises from the desire to make Kiswahili their national

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language useful in discussing diverse topics. This view explains the adaptation of a spelling system that nativizes/Swahilizes the English words. On the other hand, we find that YouTube bloggers consider themselves bilinguals on par with radio presenters with claims to both English and Kiswahili. The two identities that emerged from our analysis are captured in the spelling of English words on YouTube using English conventions, while the English words used in newspapers are largely spelled using Kiswahili rules.

CONCLUSION

This chapter looked at the use of both Kiswahili and English in Kenyan Kiswahili-based mass media. The study shows that although these media are Kiswahili based, they often use English words or phrases. The code-mixing could be attributed to the language policy of the country that expects Kenyans to be competent in both Kiswahili and English, the two official languages. The English language has a significant place in Kenyan language policy, especially in its role as the language of instruction from primary to university level. The use of Kiswahili–English code-switching is not for other social meanings such as a marked one, but rather sequential and overall patterns. Code-switching between these two languages also displays the double identity of the users.

The newspaper writers choose Kiswahili over English and as such use the Swahilized words in writing, unlike their counterparts in YouTube and the radio who retain English words or phrases without subjecting these English words to the process of Swahilization. Newspaper writers have Swahilized English items to indicate that these terms have been borrowed and have become Swahili items. Once in a while when English words retain their English spelling in certain contexts, it is mainly for the purpose of achieving certain goals such as their use for advertisements.

Unlike the newspaper writers, radio presenters and YouTube bloggers believe that foreign words should be kept foreign, so they alternate between Kiswahili and English in writing sequentially. Whenever these two groups use an English term, they do not Swahilize it like the newspapers do. It is not that these groups of writers are not aware of what goes on in the newspapers, rather they have decided to switch to this form of usage as a way of creating identity with the English language, which has so far been associated with prestige, sophistication, and reverence.

The study has shown that these media presenters, Internet bloggers, and newspaper reporters alternate between Kiswahili and English frequently. They also, as a matter of choice, sometimes decide to write in only one language for strategic reasons. We can therefore conclude based on our findings

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that Kiswahili and English are used widely in media by even those that have Kiswahili as their main language of communication.

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Chapter 8

The English Language and Media Reporting on Devolution in Rural Kenya

Nicholas Anyuor and Omukule Emojong

Devolving power and resources have improved development and strengthened administrative structures in many countries. Before the devolution revolution, many governments across the globe had centralized power. Consequently, how and what to share with the local governments was a decision of a central government. In some countries such as Kenya, this led to unequal sharing of resources; regions believed to have had strong opposition got little or no resources, and this eventually affected the spirit of unity and development (Odinga, 1967). However, this scenario changed in the late twentieth century when many countries yearned and fought for devolved governments or what some scholars call "devolution revolution." This was the period when the devolutionary trend spread throughout the world leading to some states forming countries (Rodriguez-Pose & Gill, 2005). It was this devolutionary wave, for instance, that swept off former countries and gave birth to new states, a case of the 15 republics of the former Soviet Union that later became independent states. Czechoslovakia peacefully split into the Czech Republic and Slovakia, and four new states emerged out of war-torn Yugoslavia (Rodriguez-Pose & Gill, 2005).

In Africa, decentralization has been one of the most fundamental changes to governing structures for many years. Since 1990, many African countries have attempted to democratize power and decentralize it to the lower levels such as municipalities, districts, provinces, regions, and states in order to promote development and quality of governance. Dickovick and Riedl (2010) argue that in Africa, decentralization (including devolution) has promoted democracy by improving transparency, or through enhancing government responsiveness to civil society. However, some African countries have opted for devolution for different reasons. For example, in South Africa,

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promoting local government was aimed at rebuilding local communities and environments as the basis for a democratic, integrated, prosperous, and truly nonracial society following the trauma of the apartheid regime in the country (Kauzya, 2007). The struggle for decentralization in Kenya, according to Odinga (1967), was as a result of bad governance, poor resource sharing, and allocations in the country where some regions were neglected while others enjoyed more as a result of political alignment.

Media and Kenya's fight for devolution can be traced back to the colonial period. As leaders made ways to have the Lancaster Constitution, local and international print media covered the events in support of the constitution that allowed for devolution. The establishment of devolution in the Lancaster Constitution did not go far; it was rewritten by the Kenyatta government immediately after independence. Wa Gĩthĩnji and Holmquist (2012) observe that

> the ink was barely dry on the Independence constitution negotiated at Lancaster House when the first post-independence government of Jomo Kenyatta began to rewrite it. The Lancaster House constitution was in many ways a compromise to safeguard Britain's continued interests in the country while allowing for self-rule. This was accomplished by means of a constitution that sought to limit central government. (p. 57)

This transition brought in another wave of fight for a new constitution with the content of devolution. Kenyan media once again joined different groups in this second fight and became very instrumental teaming up with the church and other activists to criticize the wrongs of the government (Ochilo & Wanyande, 2011).

Media is expected to play a critical role pointing out the ills of society, not only during the struggle for constitutional change but even during implementation of the new constitutional dispensation. Nyabuga (2017) argues that "the media, as a watchdog, [is] thus considered a key actor in the development of a cleaner government and State mainly because it could guard against the abuse of power and mismanagement of national resources" (p. 108). After the promulgation of the Kenya 2010 constitution, for instance, Shollei (2014) argued that the media indeed had the responsibility to inform and educate people about the functions and operations of the county governments that had been created by the new constitution. The media is expected to shift attention from the regular reports on political duels and instead focus on important matters on devolution development. Olang (2014) avers that it is the responsibility of the media to assess how citizens have benefited from devolution and what needs to be done better.

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After the introduction of multiparty politics in Kenya, as Orao (2012) observes, there emerged an increased number of media outlets: from one national broadcaster in radio and television and three main newspapers to over 100 newspapers and magazines, and a number of broadcast outlets.

> This uncontrolled growth can be confirmed from the government's claims that they have run out of frequencies to allocate to new applicants. The floodgates opened with the licensing of the first ever FM station in Kenya, Capital FM, in 1996. Since then, the number of FM stations targeting different age groups and classes has risen. (Orao, 2012, p, 80)

Language use in Kenyan media, both in print and broadcast, has also undergone tremendous growth in both indigenous and foreign languages. Many FM radio stations have come up mainly broadcasting in various local languages, while televisions and print media mainly use English and Kiswahili. Radio services continue to reach a wider audience in Kenya compared to other media outlets such as print. Since radio stations mainly use the Kenyan indigenous languages, they play an invaluable role in everyday communication in most of the rural communities in Kenya. On the contrary, except for the Nation Media Group's *Taifa Leo*, which is written in Kiswahili, all other mainstream newspapers are written in English. This makes English a crucial language in information dissemination as it competes with local languages in the media. Orao (2012) argues that the spread of English in Kenya has actually provoked the Kenyan government into recognizing the use of local languages for communication in efforts to promote the nation's original culture and tradition. The government has therefore made attempts to promote indigenous languages as means of communication, especially in the rural areas.

It is within this understanding that this study has examined how the English language used in print media has spread into the villages regardless of these attempts by the government to promote local languages. The overarching question is: How has the English language been used in print media to inform and educate Kenya's rural population on matters of devolution? Informing people and educating them on operations and activities of county governments in Kenya offers opportunities to understand the structures of the devolved units as stipulated in the Kenya's 2010 Constitution, therefore enhancing democracy, accountability, and transparency in governance. Many studies have been conducted on media and devolution, but nothing substantial has been done on assessing the role the English language plays in informing and educating people about the execution of county governments in rural Kenya.

Most studies, especially those on print media have largely focused on the general media coverage of Kenya's devolution analyzing the general stories

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on devolution (Iberi, 2014) but have failed to analyze the language use in these newspapers in communicating to people in rural Kenya. This is the gap this current work has sought to fill.

THE KENYAN MEDIA INDUSTRY AND LANGUAGE USE

The first media in Kenya was established long before Kenya gained independence, and as Ochilo (1993) observes, it was mainly the work of

> European missionaries, immigrant communities and the colonial administration . . . they also used the media as "a device to maintain the status quo." In other words, the media in this setting had very little to offer to the indigenous people during the colonial period as the media remained in character and function European oriented and reflecting basically the dominant influence of the West. (p.19)

Considering the role media played then, it is no wonder that nations like Kenya have taken a while to establish a media that serves indigenous people. Media has tended to be private business that serves various goals. Only one media house, the Kenya Broadcasting Corporation (KBC), is public. Other companies like the Standard Group, the Nation Media Group, and the Royal Media Services, which control a large viewership and radio audience, are commercial (Nyanjom, 2012). As Otieno and Ndonye (2020) observe, "Most mainstream media outlets in Kenya are either owned by politicians or are closely affiliated to some powerful political class in Kenyan society" (p.78).

Some media houses like the Nation Media Group also operate in neighboring countries such as Uganda and Tanzania as well. The state-owned KBC is mainly funded by the government and partly from advertising. On the Internet media, Kenya leads the East African region in connectivity, mobile phone use, and social media engagement whereby mobile devices are the main means of access. It is estimated that by June, 2019, there were 43 million Internet users in Kenya, comprising 83% of the total population ("Kenya Profile–Media," 2019). These different forms of media employ language to get their messages across to the Kenyan people. Since language is a powerful tool in communication, the language a media adapts is crucial.

Kenya is a highly multilingual context with over 40 ethnic languages, with English and Kiswahili as the official ones. English was adopted as the only official language at independence. There may have been various reasons for the choice of English as the official language, one of the reasons being the need to link the country with the outside world. English has remained a

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significant language worldwide, and despite its history as the language of the colonial master, many former British colonies and even those countries that were never colonized continue to use this language as a way to connect globally and participate in the technological, scientific, and overall international community. English plays a key role in science, media, technology, and international travel, to mention just a few. Any nation, Kenya included, would therefore want to emphasize the use of English in media.

Kenyan media comprising print, television, radio, and the Internet use English, Kiswahili, and the other indigenous languages at different levels. Some radio stations that serve urban areas use both English and Kiswahili, while those serving rural areas mostly use relevant vernacular languages but to some extent engage their audiences in English and Kiswahili as well (Otieno, 2013). A number of FM radio stations have come up mainly broadcasting in various local languages, while televisions and print media continue to use English and Kiswahili (Orao, 2012).

In print media, apart from Nation Media Group's *Taifa Leo*, which is written in Kiswahili, all other mainstream newspapers are written in English. The *Nation* newspaper, which has been studied in this chapter, is written in English.

Kenya's Print Media Subsector

The earliest print media in Kenya included *Taveta Chronicle*, published by Rev. Robert Stegal of the Church Missionary Society (CMS), which started its operations in 1895 (Ochilo & Wanyande, 2011). Currently, Kenya has more than 100 newspapers and magazines, including weekly and monthly magazines (BBC, 2014), with major newspapers being *The Star, The Standard*, *Daily Nation*, *People Daily*, and *Taifa Leo*. Nation Media Group also owns the *Business Daily* (published five times a week) and *The East African*, a weekly newspaper that focuses on business and political issues in East Africa. The Standard Group also publishes *The Nairobian*, a paper that mainly writes on social issues affecting people across the country. A number of gutter print and tabloids are also sold on the streets in a number of urban areas. Print Media audience is generally smaller than radio and TV audiences in Kenya (Media Council of Kenya, 2020). According to a survey conducted by this same council, although newspapers are less frequent sources of news and information on a national scale compared to television and radio, the newspapers are still fairly widely read in the major urban centers. The survey further puts the top newspapers in circulation in Kenya as *Daily Nation* at 47%, *The Standard* at 27%, and the *Taifa Leo* at 8%, among others.

The Media Council of Kenya reported that the newspaper readership in Kenya in 2020 was at 25%, an increase of 2% from what it was in 2019.

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The report further indicates that 51% of Kenyans access newspaper by purchasing their own copies. Around 2009, the Kenya Audience Research Foundation (KARF, 2009) estimated the print readers in Kenya to be around 6 million. Out of this, 36% read a single print, compared to 44% and 20% who read two and multiple publications respectively. The research indicates that in a month, 10.5 million readers consume the print media in Kenya that also include magazines. On a daily basis, 3 million Kenyans read the print. In content, the survey shows that 5% of readers read local news, 85% Sports, and 83% international news. Magazine inserts are read by 52% of Kenyans (KARF, 2009). Currently, there are 20 newspapers with regular circulation in Kenya, reaching over 22.25% of the country's adult population, according to the report by the Media Policy and Research Centre (2015).

Overview of the *Nation* Newspaper

This study looked at the readership of the *Nation* newspaper in rural Kenya. As mentioned earlier, *Nation* newspaper is written in English and distributed all over the 47 counties in Kenya. The *Nation* newspaper was started in 1958, just a few years before Kenya's independence by an Englishman, Charles Hayes. At this time it was a Swahili weekly paper called *Taifa.* However, *Taifa* was bought by His Highness Prince Karim Aga Khan IV. In 1960, *Taifa* became a daily paper and changed its name to *Taifa Leo*, which again later changed its name, under the guidance of Michael Curtis, to *Daily Nation*, an English version of *Taifa Leo* (Nyambuga, Nyaga, & Njoroge, 2015).

The paper was by then published by East African Newspapers Company, which was later named the Nation Media Group. The *Daily Nation* paper is published every weekday. There are also weekend editions published on Saturdays and Sundays—*The Saturday Nation* and *The Sunday Nation*. Today, the *Nation* is the most read newspaper at 47%, followed by the *Standard* at 27%. The *Nation*, in all its editions, is also available online (Media Council of Kenya, 2020).

THE IMPACT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE ON SOCIETY

Even though colonial power was not liked by the colonies, the English language, which is the former colonial master's tongue, has surprisingly been embraced by the colonies across the globe. Use of the English language is so widespread that many countries, such as Kenya, have adopted it not only in the informal sector but also in the formal sectors such as in learning

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institutions, judiciary, and governance, among others. English is the most common language globally spoken by a quarter of the world's population (Isutsa, 2015).

English language has penetrated deep into rural areas. This indicates how it is a language of importance—thus making it key in promoting governance and development in the world. This is supported by the projection of *The Economist* (2011) that by 2050, nearly half of the world's population will be proficient in English, indicating how English has already become more important in promoting global growth politically, economically, socially, and culturally. As developing countries seek to compete in the global marketplace, English is the language in which most negotiation and marketing schemes must use. English appears in the world's top ten languages with Chinese, Hindustani, Spanish, Russian, Arabic, Bengali, Portuguese, Malay-Indonesian, and French (Plonski. & Teferra, 2013).

In Africa, English has become one of the languages commonly used even as the continent currently has more than 1,000 local languages. Over 26 countries in sub-Saharan Africa use English—either as the only official language like in Nigeria, or as an official language alongside another African language like in Kenya, where Kiswahili, an African language, is used together with English. In Rwanda, English became an official language after the 1994 genocide; however, it is argued that more extensive language policy changes occurred in 2008. This was the time the government created plans to present English as an official language of instruction in public schools, a move that replaced French as the dominant second language taught in Rwanda (Plonski & Teferra, 2013).

Demand for use of the English language in Africa has continued to grow. African countries are indeed using all means at their disposal to promote use of the English language in different sectors, both formal and informal. Therefore, the language has been crucial in development. In fact, in some informal sectors, such as the *jua kali* (informal small-scale industrial sector) in Kenya, people use English among other languages for communication in their day-to-day interactions. In the counties that were created after the promulgation of the Constitution of Kenya, 2010, the English language has been used in discussing issues that promote development, such as engagements in public participation, writing speeches, writing policies, and meetings with development partners.

MEDIA REPORTING ON DEVOLUTION IN KENYA

Access to information is core to transparency and accountability in a government. It is through information flow that public oversight is facilitated, thus

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improving governance. When citizens are made aware of what is happening in their government, they feel valued as members of society, and their involvement can promote public accountability. Media and politics are two strongly interconnected components, and because many people rarely interact with politicians directly, media's informational role about local government policies and happenings are necessary and important. Therefore, the right to communication and information is imperative and should be catered for because it guarantees the quality of information that is disseminated to the people.

In a democracy, truthfully informing the people is the job of the press and the government officials (Sullivan, 2012). In every political communication effort, media is instrumental in promoting human rights by educating and informing people on matters that happen in the society and in the government. It is argued that without a wide array of information, people's opinions and views would be limited, and there will be limited development. Journalists need to highlight challenges and manage expectations through communicating clear and accurate messages to the public. Citizens should get factual and credible information in order to make independent judgments and informed choices. Media can be used by the political and professional leaders to highlight issues of legislation and implementation timelines so that voters are aware of what is happening (Sullivan, 2012).

It is the responsibility of the government to provide information to its citizens and to educate them on how the government runs its business for the benefit of the people. Clearly the tax payers need to see and understand how their money is used. The media therefore serves an important role of disseminating information and creating awareness. By so doing, media can influence the thinking of the people. In South Africa, for instance, the educational role of media was evident when media was used to educate people about democracy. Media played a significant role in educating black South Africans about good governance and was also used to challenge or perpetuate a discriminatory regime through ideological structures (Smith, Sauer, & Clemens, 2016).

On devolution in Kenya, media is expected to educate their audience on the operations and activities of the county governments. The media have contributed to the opening up of the political space and political transition alongside other nonstate actors within the civil society by educating the people. Immediately after independence, the media in Kenya played a significant role in educating the public about democratic movements that were to bring the multiparty democracy. It is through the media that political activists have fought hard to ensure devolution is achieved through the referendum to enhance democracy, service delivery, and resource sharing in Kenya (Ochilo & Wanyande, 2011).

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METHODOLOGY

Study Site

The study was conducted in one rural subcounty in Western Kenya. Since the study was aimed at seeking to find out media use of the English language in rural Kenya, this particular subcounty was selected because it is one of the rural subcounties as classified in the Kenya Population and Housing Census (2019).

Research Design

This study used sequential mixed method design. Mixed methods research designs can be classified into two categories based on whether the qualitative and quantitative data are gathered concurrently or sequentially (FoodRisc Resource Centre, 2016). In the sequential mixed methods design that this study used, the data were first collected using quantitative method where questionnaires were administered to 399 respondents of the selected subcounty. This was followed by qualitative method where 21 key informants were selected, three from every ward in all the seven wards in the subcounty.

The quantitative part of the study informs the qualitative part of the research to confirm the findings of quantitative part of survey study. This design is better than either qualitative alone or quantitative alone as it provides strengths that offset the weaknesses of these two separately. For example, quantitative research is weak in understanding the context in which people or concepts interact, and qualitative research makes up for that weakness (FoodRisc Resource Centre, 2016). On the other hand, qualitative research is seen as deficient because of the potential for biased interpretations made by the researcher, and the difficulty in generalizing findings to a large group.

This design of mixing both qualitative and quantitative methods enables the researcher to gain in breadth and depth the understanding and corroboration of the study, and at the same time offsets the weakness that is inherent to using each approach on its own. Therefore, by using both types of research, the strengths of each approach could make up for weakness of the other (FoodRisc Resource Centre, 2016).

According to Blum, Pelto, Pelto, and Kuhnlein (1997), use of key informants involves interviewing a select group of individuals who are likely to provide needed information on a particular subject, and the number should range between 15 and 35. Therefore, this study selected 21 informants from various professions such as teachers, county government administrators, opinion leaders, and local political leaders.

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Questionnaires were sent to 399 respondents of the selected subcounty in Western Kenya. The target population of the selected subcounty for the study was 176,162, according to Kenya Population and Housing Census (2019). From this, by use of Yamane's formula of n = N/1 + Ne(2), a sample size of 399 respondents was arrived at, which was eventually distributed according to population of each of the seven wards of that county.

Sampling Procedures

The researchers used the purposive sampling method to select 21 key informants after asking local community leaders about people living in the area who were good sources of information regarding English language, media, and devolution. A household-based systematic random sampling was used to pick the 399 respondents for this study. This was a representative sample that gave this research validity for the general target population.

Research Questions

1. To what extent does *Nation* newspaper inform and educate residents of the subcounty about devolution matters?
2. To what extent have residents of the subcounty embraced use of English language in the newspaper massaging on devolution matters?

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Out of 399 questionnaires that were administered to residents of the selected subcounty, 387, or 97%, were returned. This is a good response adequate for a study. On the questions of the informational and educational roles of the *Nation* newspaper and on matters of devolution, out of 399 respondents, 271 (70%) agreed that they read the *Nation* newspaper for information and that the paper educates them on matters devolution. The remaining 100 (25%) reported that they read the paper for national issues, while 28 (7%) reported that they did not read the paper at all.

On the question of embracing English language, 263 respondents (66%) reported that they embraced use of English language on matters of devolution, while 136 (34%) said that they did not. On qualitative data, all the 21 informants responded, out of which 19 (90.5%) agreed that English language is significant in devolution communication, while 2 (9.5%) disagreed.

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How Does the *Nation* Newspaper Inform and Educate Residents of the Subcounty about Devolution?

From the results discussed in the previous paragraph, it is evident that more respondents reported that they are informed and educated by the contents of the *Nation* newspaper on matters of devolution in the subcounty. Even though the newspaper is written in English, it plays a key role in informing and educating people on the operations and activities of county governments in rural Kenya. This could mean that some residents of this subcounty understand English well, and so they buy newspapers to get informed and educated on what the county governments are doing in their efforts to deliver services to the people.

This finding concurs with what was found in interviews where, Mr. L (all participants were assigned pseudo names for purposes of anonymity), one of the Nation Media Group's sales officers in South Nyanza, admitted that love for the *Nation* newspaper has made the Group, the producer of the newspaper, to distribute more copies to this selected rural subcounty. He confirmed that the Nation Media Group distributes an estimate of 20 copies daily to the small villages in the subcounty, among others in the area.

> We are targeting teachers, retirees, medics, among others who actually fight over copies. They have no problem understanding English and then people still trust what is written in the newspapers more than even what they listen to over the radio. All copies I send every day are sold. (Mr. L, April 24, 2020)

This assertion is similar to what Ms. J, a local chief in one of the subcounty wards, made. She argued that even though people listen to local radio stations, some residents from the villages, including retirees, send for copies of newspapers from the nearest towns, some of which are over 50 kilometers away.

> They trust newspapers more than radio since they get detailed information. Radio lacks such details. Some villagers send local bus drivers for newspapers in Sori and Migori towns-over 50 kilometers away. When newspapers arrive, many will be waiting to pick their copies and read in turn. Those who will have read tell others what is in the paper, which everyone here believes is the gospel truth. (Ms. J, April 25, 2020)

Mr. P., a retired teacher from one of the subcounty wards, admitted during the interview,

> We cannot do without newspapers. We buy them from the nearest trading centers to get information.

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A number of scholars have also supported this argument that the role of media to inform and educate people about governance is crucial, as it makes citizens aware of the operations of a government, thus enabling the people to hold the government accountable. In his argument, for instance, Shollei (2014) claims that it is necessary for the media to play their role on matters of devolution by informing people about functions of county governments, roles of the governors, and of the county assemblies.

Extent to Which Subcounty Residents Embrace Use of English in *Nation* Newspaper about Devolution

The results discussed earlier show that more residents of this rural subcounty, 263 (66%), agree that they embrace the use of English language in communicating a variety of issues, including matters of devolution. About (34%) of the study population, however, reported that they did not embrace the English language as a means of communicating key matters to the community. Although a majority of this subcounty residents speak Dholuo as their first language, English has found its way into several official domains, such as in schools, churches, offices, local meetings, and other institutions.

In the qualitative data, the key informants who were interviewed agreed that English has taken center stage in this rural subcounty, to the extent that some words have replaced Dholuo words especially as used by the younger generation. Mr. D, one of the ward administrators interviewed, agreed with this idea, and gave examples of words such as "devolution," "roads," and "public works" which are often easier said in English for faster communication than in Dholuo. Mr. D stated:

> Some residents around here, especially the youth, do not even know these words in Dholuo, but they know them in English

As seen from the findings of this study, even though there are other languages used in this county, English is still being embraced by many people when discussing matters of devolution. The key informants agreed that the language has actually penetrated the rural county, so much that it is even used for debates and discussions on matters affecting the local people.

Mr. B., a Business Information Management expert and a political commentator from the subcounty, observes that the English language has gained base and has become an invaluable language of communication that many would use when "discussing serious issues." He states that

> English has become one of the main languages through which rural people engage in debate over matters affecting their communities. Citizens find it easier

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> to question devolved authorities, make inquiries and critique their leaders using English than their local dialects. (Mr. B. April 24, 2020)

This is supported by Mr. T, a retired teacher from one of the subcounty wards who argued that even though more people listen to vernacular radio stations in the region, the main language used in print remains English. This argument elevates English as the language of development. People use the English language in rural Kenya to discuss matters of governance, devolution, and to hold leaderships accountable. This fact is supported by Mydans (2007) who argues that English has become the second language of many, making it a language that promotes oneness, diplomacy, trade, interactions, and communication among humanity.

The interviewees in this study reported that their county government uses English to communicate to all its residents, both rural and urban. This has been supported by one of the county's communication officers, Mr. JB, who revealed that the county's Department of Communication uses English language to communicate most of the issues and operations of the county government to the people of the county.

> English has become popular and we use it in communicating to the people around us, including our residents in the sub counties. We advertise job opportunities in English, we address press in English and speeches for the Governor are also written in English. Even on issues of policy we educate our people using English in workshops and seminars. (Mr. JB, April 25, 2020)

Mr. JB further reported that the county, being a cosmopolitan one, cannot limit itself to the use of local languages only in addressing serious issues, and that the use of Kiswahili, English, or both is necessary. This agrees with Owolab and Nnaji (2013) who have observed that use of indigenous languages is more likely to serve a divisive rather than a unifying role in a multilingual society. This is true for a county like the one where this study was done, which is home to several ethnicities including Luos, Kurias, Kisiis, Kikuyus, Luhyas, Asians, Somalis, and remnants of different communities from neighboring countries such as Uganda and Tanzania.

The study found that out of the 21 informants, 19 of them (90.5%) agreed that residents of the selected subcounty use the English language for devolution communication in public meetings and other meetings with the county government staff, and other devolution and or development stakeholders. Mr. G, a county government staff and a resident of one of the wards in the study site subcounty, agreed that English language has become popular in the rural areas in Kenya since many people have gone to school and studied the language at different levels. He predicts a future where newspapers written

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in local languages will lose market compared to ones in the English language because the new generation is more interested in the English language than in the vernacular languages. He explains how he thinks the education system has influenced language use in this rural community:

> During our childhood, Dholuo was taught in schools. We learnt how to read and write it. But this is not there in most schools today. However, English is taught from pre-unit to the highest level of education in Kenya. This has made some of our children unable to even write or read well in our mother-tongues. But do wonders in English language. So we cannot underrate English. (Mr. G. April 23, 2020)

The demand for English is high in many countries across the globe and many people, including those in the rural areas like this subcounty we researched, embrace the language for different reasons such as for development, governance, trade, professionalism, and career, among others (Plonski & Teferra, 2013).

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

From the foregoing results and discussions, we conclude that media is a good tool for communication to local people on matters of devolution. Print media plays an important role in informing and educating rural people about activities and operations of the county governments in Kenya. Many citizens in rural areas, where newspapers reach, value and trust the print contents, making print media invaluable in information dissemination about devolution in Kenya.

While there are many local languages used to communicate with people about issues of devolution, the English language has indeed penetrated rural Kenya and many people use it in communicating serious issues of development that include the operations and activities of county governments. English has developed and has been embraced so much that users find it easier to use some English words instead of finding equivalents in vernacular languages.

Considering the significant role the English language is playing in rural Kenyan politics, and based on the findings of this study, the authors recommend that more local newspapers written in English should be published by the county governments or media investors with massages of devolution. The media houses should consider distributing more newspapers to rural Kenya so that more people can be reached with right messages about their county governments. The existing radio stations with programs in English should also

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consider enhancing their areas of coverage to reach rural Kenya since the residents of these rural areas seem to appreciate programs delivered in the English language. Finally we recommend that the county governments should make use of social media platforms for official activities such as public participation and advertising, using English as an official language to reach out to many people.

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Chapter 9

Pulpit English in Kenya

Examples of Mediatized Sermons in Kenya

Reuben Kigame and Leonora Anyango

The pulpit is the heart of the Christian sermon and a critical center of liturgy. Whether wooden, glass, or digital, every pulpit functions as a place of both worship and authority. When sermons are issued from the pulpit, they are projected to the audience, and the preachers have the primary aim of making sure that their audience, the church, receive the sermon with interest and enthusiasm. The preacher gives a message and causes the audience to participate by listening or responding by nodding, laughing, crying, saying words like "amen," or, in rare cases, booing. Jurgen Habermas (1964) saw such a church setting as a realm in which public opinion could be formed. He added that a portion of the public sphere comes into being in every conversation in which "private individuals assemble to form a public body" (p. 49). Unlike business entities or professional organizations, a pastor and his/her congregation enjoy the freedom of social interaction. Therefore, one of the major aims of the preacher as an actor in the public sphere is to keep the church alert and hold their attention to the end. Since average sermons mostly last between 20 minutes and 1 hour, holding the audience's attention is of paramount importance. One of the key elements that may assist in this process is style. For the preacher who is bound to be on the same pulpit multiple times in a week or month, varying this style is key to attracting not only the same audience but also new people. Adeniyi and Bamigbade (2017) state that

> style is guided by the principle that a speaker has alternatives and choices among which he chooses to speak at a given period of time for certain reasons and to a particular audience type; hence, he does not speak the same way in all occasions. In some sense, these varied choices may bear varied social meanings. (p. 12)

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The choices a speaker makes in the church carry with them "varied social meanings" because the sermon carries with it social, cultural, and political messages that the audience relates to. Sermons do not occur in vacuums; they are the fabric of societal successes and struggles. They speak to the congregation and are meant to carry meanings that they in turn would agree with.

While preachers command and exude their own statuses on the pulpit, the onus is on them to reach their audience, and they do so through style. Britt (2011), speaking of African American preachers and their style, posits that "preaching styles allow speakers to cloak themselves with the status and respect of a preacher while simultaneously evoking an interactional framework that encourages audience agreement in the form of 'amen'" (p. 10). The "amen" may come spontaneously from the audience or encouraged by the preacher.

Pulpit language, especially in the African or African American context, therefore, is a classic example of speaker–audience relationship that seeks to elicit an immediate overt display of this relationship in the form of audible responses and actions. This is from the common shared heritage of African storytelling where the storyteller and the audience are both active participants.

Bell (2010) states that, "the sociolinguist's core question about language style is 'Why did this speaker say it this way on this occasion?'" (p. 32). He further expounds on this by explaining that the sociolinguist's search can be summarized into three points. First, s/he is looking for an explanation as to why a certain style is being used. The second factor is the choice, which involves a "that way" instead of a "this way" (p. 32). Finally, he states that "the context of style is a *speaker*—a first person, an I, an ego, an identity or identities—together with the *situation* s/he is in" (p. 32). Bell's theory of style and audience design is tailored for the pulpit situation in every way. We cannot separate the speakers from their situation on the pulpit, and neither can we not keenly look at why and how the speaker delivers this message on the pulpit. Further, Bell points to what he calls "the gist of audience design" (p. 33). This includes things like how the speaker designs his/her style "primarily for and in response to their audience." Later in this chapter, we will revisit Bell's work and apply it to a Kenyan preacher as an in-depth example of how audience design fits into pulpit language/English.

We would be remiss if we do not note that freedom of speech and worship both contribute significantly to how preachers design, deliver, and disseminate their messages. This freedom also manifests itself in the audiences in both sheer numbers and the response that is elicited. In the following sections, we discuss how the change in Kenya's constitution that led to greater freedom

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of speech influenced the Kenyan pulpit preaching. We give reasons for the rise of Kenyan pulpit English, as well as show the uniqueness of the Kenyan pulpit to its audience. Finally, we take a case of pulpit English and analyze it in-depth using Bell's points on audience design.

METHODOLOGY

In this chapter, we used the qualitative method of purposive sampling. We utilized purposeful sampling to select the preachers that were analyzed in order to find the ones whose language fitted well with the theoretical framework of the study. One female preacher, Reverend Natasha, was chosen for the way she uses language in the pulpit. Her chosen sermon (Natasha, 2018) fitted in well with the theoretical framework that the authors wanted to use, that is Bell's audience design. Palys (2008) states that purposive sampling is synonymous with qualitative research and continues to indicate that sampling is "a series of strategic choices about *with whom, where, and how one does one's research* (emphasis is ours). This statement implies that the way that researchers sample *must be tied to their objectives* (emphasis is ours)" (p. 698). Preachers use language differently, and the way Rev. Natasha displayed hers was suitable for an in-depth study. Other preachers were also studied for the way their language has been influenced by Kenya's sociopolitical landscape.

PULPIT ENGLISH IN THE KENYAN CONTEXT

In the following sections, we briefly analyze pulpit discourse in Kenya following the repeal of Section 2(a) of Kenya's constitution in 1992, which led to greater freedom of speech and the liberalization of the air waves. The freedom to speak and use the expanded mediascape brought with it new entrants in preaching and a free style in producing radio and television programs partly inspired by American televangelism and the new political freedom following the clamor for multiparty democracy. The new church pulpit space made it possible for preachers to experiment with language and technology in a new way, leading to unique vocabulary, imagery, and symbols in order to attract converts or simply build media audiences.

In this discussion we assume that this political shift introduced a new kind of church discourse that drastically shaped Kenya's English and now characterizes some of our national vocabulary. It is not uncommon to walk into an office in Nairobi, Kisumu, or Mombasa and hear someone tell you, *your visit is a blessing*, *wherever you step is blessed*, *you have come at the right*

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time, or *God's time is the best*. The secretary might see you off and utter the words *be blessed*, or simply *blessings.* On the other hand, what can we make of the packaging of Christian announcements of meetings or merchandize on radio and television using business language? As Kigame (2018) observes, "Church event announcements employ phrases such as 'money back guarantee' or 'You cannot afford to miss this' in order to increase sign-ups" (p. 170). This is the extent to which the language of Kenya's pulpit has gradually become the language of the office and, in the same way, the language of business become the language of the pulpit.

In our discussion, we interrogate this post-liberalization development by asking three main questions. First, what factors have contributed to the formation of Kenya's pulpit English? Second, what difference is there between the pre-liberalization and post-liberalization pulpit in Kenya? Finally, what is unique in Kenya's pulpit English?

Like an African pot that sits on three stones, we anchor our discussion on three theoretical tools, that is, speech act, discourse analysis, and mediatization theories. This current work employs the first two to examine the intention and meaning carried in sentences, and to analyze select sermon texts and mediatization to interrogate the convergence of religion and media. Our perspective is largely drawn from several authors in the fields of language and media studies and our connection to both fields. While one of us speaks and writes in many languages and has taught English as a second language for more than two decades, the other has been involved with media for nearly as long, including establishing and running a radio station for nine years. We, therefore, use our cumulative experiences to interrogate the different aspects of the discussion.

Although many excellent studies exist on Homiletics as well as the use of electronic media for preaching, there is limited study on how Kenya's pulpit language has evolved and coalesced into some kind of new dialect, complete with specific pulpit terminology, idioms, nuances, symbols, and meanings. Kenneth Ross (1995) observes, "It must be conceded at the outset that preaching is not a field which lends itself very readily to empirical research" (p. 5). Yet this can only be maintained if Homiletics, Hermeneutics, and Systematics are viewed as being nonempirical. We, therefore, argue here that we are not reinventing the interest in pulpit studies, but reading its language within a specific definition. We are interested in understanding how the English-speaking church in Kenya has contributed to what may be called "Kenyan English."

As a multicultural society, Kenya is home to nearly 50 major language groups. It is, therefore, difficult for national communication to be conducted in all these languages. The *Constitution of Kenya* (2010) states in chapter 2 Article 2 that Kiswahili and English are the official languages of the Republic.

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This makes both languages the preferred modes of communication in most of the country's institutions, including schools, courts, electronic media, and religious institutions such as churches and mosques. This is more evident in urban centers than in villages where vernacular languages dominate. Most churches use Kiswahili and English in their music, notices, prayers, and sermons. As one of the two official languages, the use of English in many urban congregations thus unites Kenyans from many different ethnic communities and fosters national values as articulated in Article 10 of the Constitution.

Pastors use English to reach their audiences from both live and electronic pulpits for different reasons and with different abilities of expression. In order to effectively appeal to their audiences, pastors and teachers employ common and new words to engage their audiences. While the Bible in its different versions forms the fundamental source of language for pulpit discourse in English, a pastor may introduce new words and phrases in order to make his/her audience understand the message better.

THE RISE OF KENYA'S PULPIT ENGLISH

Although the origins of Kenya's pulpit English are many and diverse, we discuss five main ones. These include but are not limited to: the Bible, education, travel, other languages, and the electronic media.

The Bible

Most preachers in Kenya who use English in their preaching extensively utilize the Bible in its various versions and translations. The older preachers tend to read and preach from the King James Authorized Version officially released in 1611 in England. Their sermons, hymns, and prayers make use of phrases that are no longer common or easily understandable to the modern audience. Whether live or broadcast, the use of the King James Authorized Version is viewed as sacred and evocative of a deep sense of awe.

The older the pastor, the more likely he/she is to use the Authorized Version of 1611. In congregations that preserve the liturgy that is patterned after the Authorized Version, such as the Anglican Communion, variations may be made depending on whether the service attendees are young or older. For instance, the 11:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. services at the All Saints Cathedral in Nairobi utilize the older liturgy while the 9:30 a.m. Youth and Teens' services use newer versions.

There are many alternative versions that preachers use. Besides the *King James* and *Good News Bible*, they read from the *Living Bible*, *Amplified Bible*, *the Message*, *Revised Standard Bible*, new American standard Bible

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and the New International Version. Originally translated from Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek, these English versions shape pulpit language depending on the preacher's exposure. The version that a preacher prefers influences his/her pulpit English and the English that reaches the intended audience.

Education

To preach to an urban congregation one would have to be educated in the official languages, but especially English. One's inability to speak English in Kenya is often associated with illiteracy and low social status. Hence, most urban preachers preach in English, whether they use good grammar or break the language if they want to appeal to an elite congregation.

Kigame (2018) observes that "the level of education a preacher has will be correspondent to his/her ability to apply concepts or explain the sermon content, and that, "In certain instances, the specific field of training prior to preaching may influence the sermon content" (p.168). In his study, he gives examples of three renowned preachers in Kenya, Bishop Dr. David Oginde of the Christ Is the Answer Ministries (CITAM), Dr. Judy Mbugua, and Bishop Wilfred Lai, and shows how they cite authors or use technical language in their preaching based on their areas of expertise and training. Dr. Oginde, for instance, who is an architect by training, enjoys sermons to do with construction, such as sermons on Jesus as the cornerstone, sermons about the Tower of Babel, and about Noah's ark. The preacher's English is, therefore, influenced by his educational training. But how about preachers with little educational training?

Those preachers who have little educational training make up for their lack of the English language or vocabulary with emotive discourse, repetitions, and sounds. Oluoch (2007), citing Asher and Simpson, observes that sometimes Pentecostal preachers may also place great value on "impassioned discourse as evidence that the speaker is being moved by the Spirit, a feature that may result in disordered sentence structure." She adds that this may include the use of repetition, gestures, and movements (p. 12).

We could therefore conclude that the more educated the preacher, the more content and elaborate English language use in the preaching, and the lesser the preacher's education, the more repetition, audience involvement, and charismatic inflections.

Travel

In most Kenyan English sermons, one can find influences of travel that inform the preacher's vocabulary, accent, and the kind of technology used from the pulpit. Beginning with vocabulary, it is easy to tell that a preacher

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has either traveled to a foreign country or been exposed to such foreign lands and culture by taking on the idioms and expressions associated with such places. Traveled preachers will elicit words and expressions that are not common in Kenyan English, such as *when I was flying from*, or colloquialism that is foreign to Kenya's context, for example, "I'm gonna tell you a couple of things . . . and you bet I know what I'm talking about." A preacher's accent and vocabulary may be influenced if they have had an opportunity to travel and spend some time outside the country. They might have a bit of American, British, Indian, Nigerian, or South African accents if they have been to those places. Some of the preachers who have traveled outside the country, which is also an indicator of their social status, might preach from an iPad, phone, laptop, or use other gadgets previously not readily available in the country. Drawing from Western church settings, such a preacher may encourage the screening of church announcements or put together a rock-style band complete with electric guitars, synthesizer keyboards, and drums. The preachers may prefer to hold the services at a cinema or community hall.

Other Languages

As an official and national language, Kiswahili is used by most citizens for everyday communication and socialization. As a result, Kiswahili tends to permeate many pulpit discourses. Depending on which part of the country a preacher is from, mother–tongue influence in pronunciation or mere interjection with vernacular speech into an English sermon is common. Code-switching between two or three languages is practiced. Such mixing may serve to connect with an audience from one's ethnicity or to communicate a thought when the preacher cannot fully translate the concept into English or Kiswahili. The pulpit English is therefore a blend between Kiswahili, English, and Kenyan indigenous languages resulting in a unique variety of English.

Electronic Media

Perhaps the greatest factor that has contributed to the formation of Kenya's pulpit English is radio and television. With media giving the church the agency to experiment with new ways of doing church, a new entity was born. Kenyan pastors not only use technology but they also bring the language of technology to the pulpit. For example, a pastor may introduce his/her sermon by discussing a recent Premier League or news event. This extensive media usage is not accidental. It is as a result of liberalization of the airwaves and the new electronic pulpit. In the next section, we look at the main difference

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between the live pulpit and the electronic one, and we do this by comparing preliberalized and postliberalized media usage by Kenya's preachers.

PRE-LIBERALIZATION AND POST-LIBERALIZATION PULPITS IN KENYA

Before the repeal of Section 2(a) of Kenya's 1963 Constitution, preaching was heavily censored. The Religious Department of the Kenya Broadcasting Corporation (KBC) worked closely with the National Council of Churches of Kenya (NCCK) to vet who could go on air and who could not. Before liberalization, the church groups and pastors that were invited to minister on KBC radio or television did not pay for such appearance. During that time, religious broadcasts were not a one-man show. NCCK and the religious department at KBC vetted and gave preaching opportunities randomly. This discouraged the creation of religious empires. There was a lot of editing so that not everything someone said went on air. This scenario, however, changed when the KBC was liberalized and commercialized in 1989. Now the stage was available to those who could afford it, and preachers had to do their best to win the competition.

Most of the English preachers were aired on the English Service of KBC. They used this electronic pulpit to influence the audience with biblical themes, ranging from family responsibilities to the protection of values such as truthfulness, honesty, humility, self-control, and patriotism. If a preacher was not considered patriotic, then his/her sermon was not aired. For that reason, most sermons before liberalization sounded similar and rehearsed, utilizing related phrases like "let us pray for our beloved president" or "let us learn to forgive one another." These phrases were mostly employed not as biblical injunctions but patriotic jargon. In this way, the radio and television sermon language before liberalization made the church like an extension of government. After liberalization, there was a lot more freedom to package sermons, including open criticism of the government. With the increased freedom of the media, more preachers could participate. Some media houses looked for pastors who were a lot more critical in their sermons than those who sang the praises of the president and the state. Although heavily commercialized, the post-liberalization preachers were also bolder and greater risk-takers.

For our discussion, it is important to note that this commercialization of the airwaves also introduced commercialized pulpit language. Most sermons moved toward giving to God or the pastor tithes, and they emphasized the prosperity of givers. In an interview Kigame had with journalist Dennis Okari, several common words in the post-liberalization era were highlighted: Okari observed that Kenya's Electronic Church used several words and phrases "that

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had to do with prosperity, for example, "mbegu" (seed), "Sadaka" (offering), and "miujiza" (miracles). Other phrases included "the power," "the number on your screen," "God will richly bless you," "Give and it shall be given back to you," "the anointing," "breakthrough," among others (Kigame, 2018, p. 115).

The prosperity-centered language differs from the pre-liberalization pulpit discourse in significant ways. Pre-liberalization period sermons emphasized expository quests for truth surrounding the themes of salvation, holiness, and purity, the return of Jesus Christ, and virtues such as love, forgiveness, honesty, gratitude, justice, and equality.

The pre-liberalization church also largely operated its services guided by books and service sheets. This made it a print media church. People sang from hymn books, and bulletins were prepared and distributed to the congregation by ushers. Preachers used notes to preach and asked congregants to write down notes. On the other hand, the electronic church is a digital church. Everything is on the screen or reachable by turning on the dial. The sermon is illustrated by titling, imagery, and other aids, and one can receive the announcements via a text that scrolls at the bottom of the screen while watching and listening. Listeners can even give their offering digitally via telephone or computer.

THE UNIQUENESS OF KENYA'S PULPIT ENGLISH

Kenya's pulpit English differs from that of other countries primarily because of its political, socioeconomic, and cultural contexts. We briefly look at how these three aspects set Kenya's pulpit English apart from that of other African countries and the rest of the world. As we have already observed, sermons do not occur in a vacuum. If we look at other countries in Africa, their pulpit language will appeal to their own situations, while others also apply to the African cultural platform in general. Wendland (2016) studied a layman preacher, Shedrack Wame, who preaches in Chichewa. To reach his audience, Wame seeks to bring to them the word of God in a way that they can easily understand, depending on their background and situation. This is because a

> lively oratorical re-telling, rather than an explicit citation or reading, of the text is a much more natural mode of communication in a largely oral-aural society that has a long history and a still vigorous tradition of various verbal art forms. (p. 882)

Coupled with this, Wame also uses his traditional background that is shared by his audience to drive his point home. Wendland adds that Wame not only

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appeals to the Chewa customs and way of life in general, "but in particular to the rich store of 'wisdom literature' (or orature) that is available in ancient oral art forms, such as, proverbs (in particular), wise sayings, riddles, and allusions to the 'moral' of well-known traditional narratives" (p. 884). Being that Wame preaches in Chichewa, his sermons would be so specific to his people and language.

In the same way, Kenya's preachers use the sociocultural landscape familiar to the audience in their preaching. Beginning with political influences, it is vital to note that politicians love large gatherings, so churches become natural recipients of their visits, especially before general elections. Sometimes these visits are accompanied by financial donations which are defined as "offerings." Due to these regular visits, political jargon begins to penetrate the church pulpit space as politicians are called upon to address congregants. Sooner or later, pastors, worship leaders, and church elders begin to use such jargon when addressing church members. Terms such as *hustler*, *ugali*, or *Ocampos' envelope*, which have adopted specialized meanings in Kenyan politics, have found their way to the pulpit as well.

The term *hustler*, for instance, which has come to be associated with the Kenyan deputy president William Ruto, has penetrated Kenyan English usage, and it means to "work hard." While this is more of a slang term used particularly by the youth to imply that one seeks a means of survival by doing anything humanly possible and doing whatever job is available, the term has made its way to the pulpit as well, as pastors try to appeal to a certain kind of audience. *Ugali*, a Kiswahili term for a common Kenyan dish made out of cornmeal became popularized by the National Rainbow Coalition (NARC) government to refer to bribes or corruption. The term found its way to the pulpit, and thus a preacher may be heard talking against *ugali* from the pulpit when condemning bribery. Clearly, the Kenyan pulpit English is influenced by the sociopolitical experiences of the Kenya people, and that English equally influences the public.

Last, there are cultural dynamics that shape pulpit language in Kenya today but may pass without notice. For example, the African culture does not ordinarily talk about sexuality openly. As Miller et al. (2011) have observed,

> Findings across African contexts do indicate that many African clergy appear to address sexuality and/or HIV (albeit sometimes by euphemism) with regularity from the pulpit, although some have reported struggling with church members' resistance. (p. 272)

As a result, pastors regularly use words such as "rubber" to mean condoms and "sleeping together" to mean "having sex." Even diseases like HIV/AIDS

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acquire new terms, such as "slim" as pastors try make their message palatable for their audience.

It is, therefore, important to note and reemphasize the fact that pulpit language, English or otherwise, will reflect the existing social, cultural, political, and economic contexts. In the next section, we look closely at one Kenyan preacher, Rev. Lucy Natasha, through her sermon in order to exemplify and further illustrate our points above in an in-depth manner.

ZOOMING INTO BELL'S AUDIENCE DESIGN: REV. LUCY NATASHA'S "BREAKING THE SPIRIT OF POVERTY"

While in the earlier sections we have shared varied examples of how sermons in Kenya look like, we now turn to a single sermon and look at an in-depth. We chose one of Rev. Natasha's sermons as an example that fits into what Bell (2010) designates as "audience design" (p. 34). Audience design has its own "gist" whose elements Bell displays, and some of which we use to explain Rev. Natasha's sermon. Being a woman, Rev. Natasha is in a field that is still dominated by men. Fredrick (2009), writing on Joyce Meyer, a successful American female preacher, comments:

> Society expects women to behave in prescribed ways, so as a caregiver or mother, the speaker who employs a feminine style will nurture the audience through their own examples to reach the appropriate conclusions. Thus, the feminine speaker, or speaker employing a feminine style, uses inductive structure, welcoming audience participation, and thus creating identification with the audience. (p.15)

As a woman, therefore, Rev. Natasha may use certain elements of style that are uniquely hers as a member of the female gender. However, this may not be as overriding a factor as the relationships she seeks with her audience in order to get her message across.

In this section, we zoom into Rev. Natasha sermon entitled "Breaking the spirit of poverty" (Natasha, 2018). We look at how Rev. Natasha's style appeals to her audience in relation to what Bell (2010) proposes as the main points in audience design. While Bell summarizes 10 points, we chose to selectively deploy four of them here due to the scope and limitations of this chapter, and due to what largely applies closely to Rev. Natasha's sermon. The basic tenet of audience design is style-shifting, which is defined by Meyerhoff and Schleef (2010) as "variation in an individual's speech correlating with differences in addressee, social context, personal goals or

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externally imposed task" (p. 315). The pulpit is a place where multiple opportunities arise that call for style-shifting.

The first point is that "speakers design their style primarily for and in response to their audience" (Bell, 2010, p. 34). Rev. Lucy Natasha seeks to appeal to her urban audience that is mostly middle class. By the way she uses language, one can tell that she knows her audience of educated, younger people. She herself is single, and while her age is not clear, she appears to appeal to urban congregants with an education. Her pulpit English has clarity to it, and while she sometimes uses Kiswahili, she predominantly uses polished English with idioms and metaphors to drive her message home. An urban, middle class educated audience would be familiar with her phrases in this sermon. Examples include phrases like "financial prosperity equals purchasing power," "poverty will demote you; poverty will humiliate you," and "poverty is an error; that error must be corrected." For an educated audience with white-collar jobs, this language will connect them to the message, and they will respond positively to it.

The second point we discuss is that "audience design applies to all codes and levels of a language repertoire, monolingual and multilingual" (Bell, 2010, p. 35). In this case, Rev. Natasha appeals to her urban, mostly multilingual, audience by code-switching between English and Kiswahili in her sermon to emphasize her point and drive the point home. She tells her audience,

> "*mwangalie vizuri umwambie jirani* . . . I am not born again to suffer again." [Look at your neighbor well and tell him/her . . . I am not born again to suffer again]

The third point is that "style shifting according to topic or setting derives its meaning and direction of shift from the underlying association of topics or settings with typical audience members" (Bell, 2010, p. 36). In other words, Bell explains that "shifts according to topic echo shifts according to audience" (p. 36). The two (topic and audience) are intertwined. Rev. Natasha understands her audience, and the topic of poverty and prosperity in finances resonates well. To introduce the topic and capture audience attention, she tells them that "*somebody is about to lose the address of poverty*." This works well as a metaphor for her audience. First, losing the address of poverty would mean leaving or vacating the life of poverty. Secondly, it would also mean the actual losing of address by moving to a better home or better residential area. In Nairobi, Kenya, this sounds as an attractive promise, especially considering the variety of neighborhoods that exist in the city. Those in poor or low-income neighborhoods would want to claim that promise of losing the address of poverty and gaining a new address or wealth. Another example is where Rev. Natasha uses a familiar financial situation of her audience. In an urban setting, people expect

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their salaries or income from businesses. Sometimes while waiting for their pay close to the end of the month or the next payment, they may be "broke." She continues with that metaphor and offers hope by saying, "I declare that *money will know your name and address*." She further exhorts them to confess their sins in order to receive this miracle. Adding a sense of humor, she says, "You know in Miracle Monday we don't say we are broke . . . we say we are *temporarily inconvenienced*." This way, the audience can still maintain that their miracle is on the way, and they cannot give up waiting for it. All these expressions that Rev. Natasha uses in her sermon have found their way into Kenyan English. It is therefore not strange to hear Kenyans in the street reminding each other for instance that their *money will know their address* even if just for purposes of creating humor, or they may tell a friend that they are *temporarily inconvenienced* and could like to borrow some money.

Finally, we discuss the fourth point that states that "the style shift itself initiates a change in the situation rather than resulting from such a change" (Bell, 2010, p. 36). In other words, what Rev. Natasha does with language and action during the sermon is the one that brings about a change. The responsive dimension is a part of this when Rev. Natasha makes participatory moves to involve the audience. One of the ways she does this is by employing repetition. In her case, the audience is asked to repeat certain phrases. She tells them, "Look at your neighbor and say . . . I'm not born *again* to suffer *again*." Here, style shift does not only involve repetition of a whole phrase but also of the key word "again" within the sentence. When the audience repeats words like the phrases they are told to repeat, or when they respond "Amen" to the preacher's "Hallelujah," then the change occurs. There is excitement and enhanced alertness in the audience, and the preacher feels the connection as well. She also uses humor to keep her audience interested in her message. By using a reflection conversation and providing an answer for her audience, she entertains them when she says, "Some of you are looking at me and saying, "but Rev. Natasha, all things are passing', hallelluya! Even if they are passing, let them pass through our hands!" When the audience laughs, she seizes the moment in order to involve them, saying, "Tell your neighbor, 'neighbor, let them pass through our hands!'" Indeed, with all the style-shifting she employs, she keeps to the message of "breaking the spirit of poverty," and keeps it relevant to a Kenyan urban setting of a community that speaks and understands English well.

CONCLUSION: TYING IT ALL TOGETHER

Pulpit English in Kenya is unique to the Kenyan situation and would be more familiar to Kenyan audiences more than any other, making transferability

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almost impossible. Examples given of words in the sociopolitical realm are used to connect to the Kenyan audience. We have discussed how a preacher's language and style must closely resonate to his/her audience. In the African context, in most cases, the audience is expected to respond and be an active part of the sermon. This reflects the African tradition of storytelling. In a society where more than one language is spoken, a preacher may also use other languages alongside the English language when they preach.

In this chapter, we have also used Bell's audience design to explain some of the language that occurs in the pulpit by looking in-depth into one preacher's sermon. Our illustration using Rev. Natasha shows a style-shifting technique that appeals to an urban, mostly educated middle class that speaks and understands English well. Her powerful and emphatic preaching, as well as language use as given in the examples, shows a way of preaching that is far from the abstract nature of preaching that characterized churches in the past. Howard (2016) unequivocally states,

> People today do not relate as well to propositional, logical, abstract preaching. They relate to, and therefore comprehend, visual language. People see more of what the preacher is saying through the visual language that the preacher is using; people will not only comprehend what the preacher is saying, listeners will also be able to recall that message when they need it. For the use of visual language speaks to more sensory inputs and thus embeds the truth deeper into one's mind. (p. 13)

Visual language, one that is metaphoric and appeals to the imagination, assumes its special place in preaching. We have observed this with earlier examples we gave from various preachers, and with Rev. Natasha in the individual sermon example. This kind of language and preaching vigor has been enhanced, in the Kenyan context, by the freedom of worship and the repeal of Section 2(a) of Kenya's constitution in 1992. We present here that these factors have contributed to the rise of pulpit English in Kenya since the early 1990s.

The contextual place of Kenyan pulpit English and its uniqueness cannot be overstated. It is important to note that since the society is reflected on the pulpit, contexts will be varied depending on audience and place. Preaching, therefore, will always be something that the speaker thinks through carefully in order to keep his/her flock invigorated. There is no better explanation of what a preacher must do than the one Pastor Shadreck Wame, the Chewa evangelist, offers (Wendland, 2000). To conclude this chapter, we offer his words that help show us how context matters by exemplifying it through the lens of African storytelling:

> A preacher [interpreter] must learn how to imitate a skilled hunter (mlenje), who thoroughly knows the individual characteristics of his weapons (zida zake), the

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various types of game (nyama) he will be hunting, where he must strike (kulasa) for the best results, and the [proper] method of stalking (kusakira) each one so as to outsmart it. [To accomplish this] one of the main things for the preacher to keep in mind is to "lower his [level of] knowledge" (kutsitsa nzeru) so that he does not preach over the heads [of his people/audience] and hence completely miss their hearts with his message. (p. 247)

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Chapter 10

The Shadow of English

Multilingual Parents and Language Choice in Urban Kenya

Leonora Anyango

English and Kiswahili languages seem to be in constant contest of sorts in Kenya. While English is the medium of instruction in schools, Kiswahili is the national language and a subject of study in both primary and secondary schools. Both Kiswahili and English are considered official languages in Kenya. Parents, on the other hand, continually have to consider what language they should use at home. At the center of this situation is what will fully benefit their children in school to have an edge in their education. Being a country where performance in national examinations in standard eight (8th grade) and form four (12th grade) either propels or diminishes hopes for future success in the educational and career ladder, the language question remains crucial and of central importance. This study looked at parental choices in urban Kenya, centering on elite multilingual parents with college degrees. The study was necessitated by the fact that more and more, the preference for English among elites in a dual language society is apparent. But what exactly do the parents want? Do they really prefer English, or is this necessitated by the pressures of the language of instruction?

The question of which language to use at home is almost always obvious in the rural areas. Vernacular is the language of choice, and depending on where the family is located, they use any of the 42 Kenyan languages at home. This choice has its own effects in English education, thus the general educational underperformance in rural public schools. Anyiendah (2017) found that students in the rural areas generally had a tendency of having a negative attitude toward the English language, thus leading to minimal learner participation "which eventually leads to significant levels of underperformance in the English language" (p.2). This negative attitude is further alluded to by

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Kamwangamalu (2016), who decries the situation in the Central region of Kenya by quoting a teacher who saw the students' negative attitude toward English as "a significant teaching challenge."

> The community here typically speaks Kikuyu, like in the marketplace. So English is not used outside of school at all. The parents don't care about English and pupils are not interested in learning English. They would only use English when you force them to. And they won't read unless you force them to read. (p. 207)

In Kenyan urban communities, however, the story is different. With communities packed with people coming from different ethnic groups and students interacting in various communities and schools, the language picture is very different. The home language, then, becomes a serious issue for parents to ponder depending on what they want their children to achieve. While parents may desire to speak one language at home, the home arena itself may become a dual language hot pot, or a single language home, depending on the combination of the community, school, and home dynamics. One of the factors that may influence home language choice is intermarriage between cultures and therefore different languages. In these cases, for the most part, vernaculars take a back seat while either English or Kiswahili takes the center stage inside the home. In the urban setting, while monolingualism is present in some neighborhoods, multilingualism has its stronghold because urban areas are melting pots of multiple cultures and languages.

THE KENYAN MULTILINGUAL STORY AND THE PLACE OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE

My interest in this work emanates from my own story of growing up trilingual, and later becoming multilingual just like Clandinin and Connelly (2000), who report the following in regard to their work: "In our work, we keep in the foreground of our writing a narrative view of experience, with the participants' and researchers' narratives of experience situated and lived out on storied landscapes as our theoretical methodological frame" (p. 128). It is due to this lived multilingual experience that I sought to understand multilingual parents in Kenya.

I grew up multilingual in different rural towns in Kenya, owing to my father's job that had him frequently transferred to these towns. While I learned Dholuo, my mother tongue, mainly from Mama, Papa taught me English at home from the tender age of three. I sharpened my speaking skills in my mother tongue. Kiswahili, being the national language of Kenya, is

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spoken by most Kenyans, especially in the cities. People of different ethnic groups and languages find a common thread in speaking the language, and it is regarded as the language of national unity. I acquired Kiswahili through interacting with other families and children who did not belong to my ethnic group. As a result of my father's frequent transfers from town to town, I acquired two other Kenyan ethnic languages, Kikuyu and Luhya, through my interaction with other children in and out of school.

I formally studied English and Kiswahili during my high school years, and I particularly liked reading books and writing in both languages. I later taught English and Kiswahili in high school after graduating from college. During my graduate school years, I started learning Japanese as a result of a challenge from a friend to learn a foreign language because it would, in the long run, pay off in terms of future employment, more than the local languages I spoke. I later resolved to learn Kikamba. Living and working in the United States for many years, and being a Swahili teacher, I still made sure that I taught and talked to all my three children Kiswahili. As a parent, I had to make this choice.

My story is the story of multilingualism in Kenya, a story that most of its citizens are proud of. English was made into the official language immediately after independence and remains the official language in schools. As Evans (2003, p. 9) states, it is "among the leading languages of wider communication . . . and certainly anyone proficient in the use of the language commands a certain respect not experienced with other 'minority' languages." The Kenyan tribal languages may be purported to be minority languages only because they are spoken by different groups in different locations, but not nationally. This brings about the multilingual diversity that is the strength of Kenya linguistically. Meierkord (2009) captures a scenario that extrapolates this diversity within one person.

> An urban Kenyan boy will wake up on a Sunday morning and use his mother tongue (maybe Kikuyu, Dholuo, Suba, Maasai, or Tugen) with his family, go out to buy bread from a nearby shop and use Kiswahili to negotiate the purchase with the vendor. On his way home from the kiosk, he meets a friend with whom he might speak Sheng, or a mixture of Sheng, Kiswahili, and English. After breakfast, he goes to church, where the service may be in English or Kiswahili, depending on the socio-economic status of the family and the surrounding community. At school the next day, he speaks English in all his lessons except for the Kiswahili lesson. On the playground, depending on the type of school he attends, he uses Kiswahili and English. (p. 4)

Three or more languages may be at play here. This becomes an asset for someone speaking these multiple languages, as they can robustly operate in

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community using these language strengths. The versatility of multilingualism cannot be denied, as it brings with it its own flexibilities in language use. This phenomenon, however, is becoming less the norm in the more affluent urban societies in Kenya. Due to English being the language of instruction, there is a common trend of parents teaching their children only English at home. Kioko et al. (2014) see this as happening because parents "fear that the introduction of 'too many' languages in the school system will negatively affect the learning process" (p. 4). These authors further capture the parents' mindset concerning the language of education:

> Another common misconception is that the use of the home language in school hampers learning because mother tongues are not capable of communicating the complex meanings that are part of formal education. This is the fear that these languages are not equipped for use in the modern economic, technological and educational processes, but this fear is linguistically unfounded. (Kioko et al., 2014, p. 4)

The situation here emanates from the fact that parents are heavily invested in their children's education. They would rather start off their children with English in the hope that they will have an edge in their school performance. This all hinges on the policies on the language of instruction a country selects. As Knauer et al. (2019) posit, the reactions concerning the language of instruction "can have significant implications for children's development in ways that interact with poverty, parental literacy, ethnicity, and other risk factors faced by vulnerable children as they move through the formal education system" (p. 2).

In the Kenyan language arena, therefore, English remains privileged due to its place as a language of instruction and an official language in the place of work. It becomes paramount for parents to give it superior consideration if they want their children to perform well in school.

METHODOLOGY

This study is about parental language attitudes and choices. I wanted to know what influenced parental choice for the language(s) their child(ren) speak(s). I chose parents who were bi-/multilingual themselves and had earned a college degree or undergone postsecondary training. All parents in this study were also included if they worked in a certain capacity pertinent to their training or had retired from that capacity. I also chose parents with children younger than 13 years. I designed this as a narrative study for parents to share their stories in depth for me to capture the nuances of what influenced their language choices.

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I employed qualitative research techniques in this study where I aimed for "rigorous description of the qualities of a phenomenon, rather than enumeration" (Whittaker, 1996, p. 311). Through narrative research, which is qualitative in nature, the aim was "to produce rich, detailed accounts that leave the participants' perspective intact" (Whittaker, 1996, p. 311). It was further important to include only those who met the criteria that could capture the language choices of parents who are multilingual, thus the need for purposive sampling. Campbell (2020, p. 3) states that purposive sampling is important because "specific kinds of people may hold different and important views about the ideas and issues at question and therefore need to be included in the sample."

A narrative guide was provided to the parents for them to write their own language stories and their parenting language stories. Open-ended questions that would guide parents in writing their multilingual stories and their parenting language stories were formulated. The parents were given the choice of opting out of any questions that they did not want to answer. All parents, however, answered all questions. Questions were divided into two sections. The first section dealt with parents' language background, their parents' educational and career background, and how that parental background influenced their language acquisition and knowledge, and how language choices changed for them as they rose in their educational and career ladder. The second set of questions dealt with the choices these parents were making for their own children and if their own language stories influenced their parenting language stories. All the parents received their narrative guides via email.

I had a follow-up interview with one parent over the phone. There was no special criteria except that this parent had requested to speak about her situation as she did not like writing her answers in an in-depth manner, citing the fact that as a mathematician and a banker by career, she was not accustomed to writing stories. The follow-up interview was a nonstandardized one where, according to Tracy (2019), "the interviewer in the course of the conversation decides what the sequence of questions asked will be. Their sequence is very often the result of the context of the conversation" (p.78). Being that the conversation shaped the interview questions, it also as Tracy (2019) further says, "Provided opportunities for mutual discovery, understanding, reflection, and explanation via a path that is organic, adaptive, and oftentimes energizing" (p.156). More clarification that was not available in the written document was obtained from the interview.

I analyzed the data by categorizing them into emerging themes. I grouped similar themes together to narrate them under one theme. Being a narrative study where parents told their stories, tropes of similarities and differences between the stories were analyzed and plans were made to present them in their corresponding themes.

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Introducing the Participants

There were four participants in the study. All of them were college graduates or graduates of a career-specific school. I chose parents with children below 13 years because they still made choices for their children that they thought best for their education. All the parents were multilingual. In the next section, I will introduce each one of them.

AD

AD is in the age group 51–55. He was born in Nairobi but spent most of his early childhood in Jinja, Uganda. He started his schooling there and picked up the Luganda language. He then relocated to Nairobi, Kenya, to complete his primary education. AD therefore started off with an African language not spoken in Kenya, and so he ended up never learning his native Dholuo well to date. AD is a college graduate. In addition, he holds a postgraduate diploma in journalism. He is a science writer and consultant. By the time of this study, his son was nine years old and in 4th grade.

AN

AN is in the age group of 51–55. She was born and brought up in Bondo, Siaya, Kenya. She grew up speaking mainly her mother tongue (Dholuo) and a bit of English and Kiswahili. The first language she learned was her mother tongue (Dholuo). Her father served the colonialists before independence and could speak some limited English. Generally, the main language that the parents used was Dholuo. AN is a college graduate and is a retired banker. She has a daughter who, at the time of this study, was eight years old and in 2nd grade.

RK

RK is in the age group of 51–55. He grew up in a village in Vihiga County located in the western part of Kenya. He grew up speaking Luhya at home, although they were also exposed to Kiswahili early because of his father's job as a bus driver and siblings who played in music bands. He also learned minimal English at home from his brothers and sisters who went to school before him. RK is a college graduate with a master's degree in Communications and Journalism. He is a music expert/artist and an entrepreneur. He is also pursuing his doctoral degree. He has older daughters but also a son who, at the time of this study, was 10 years old and in 5th grade.

PS

PS is in the age range of 36–40. He was born and bred in Nairobi. His parents predominantly spoke to each other in Kamba. His parents completed

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secondary education and worked in the public and private sectors. PS learned both Kiswahili and Kikamba simultaneously. He later learned English in school but lost most of his Kikamba due to limited use. PS is a college graduate and an economist by profession. He is currently pursuing his doctoral degree. He has three children. At the time of this study, the first born was seven and the twins were five years old.

PARENTS AND THEIR MULTILINGUAL STORIES

In this study, I wanted to establish if parents' own multilingual background influenced the language choices they made for their children. In this section, I bring stories of their own learning, the place of English in their educational and career life, and the ultimate goals and aspirations they have for their children's future.

Multilingualism and Early Education

Parents explained in detail how their educational trajectory was, and the place of English in their educational journey. Each one of them had stories of how they grew up with at least two languages in the communities they lived in. In their stories, AN and RK revealed that they mostly lived in rural areas during their early schooling. AN lived at home as she went to elementary school. She states that:

> the school made it compulsory to speak in English and whoever broke the rule would be punished by being given "a Disk" (a token that would earn a punishment to the last person found with it by the end of the day). English was the main language, but Kiswahili was also allowed, but not native language. The native language was easier but in order to flow with the education standards, I preferred and yearned to know more of English.

In AN's elementary school, therefore, not speaking English was punishable.

This was the same case with RK's school. RK left home for a boarding school where he interacted with people who spoke different ethnic languages, and he ended up acquired some of those languages. However, the official policy of the school was that students speak in English:

> If you spoke any other language than English on the days allocated for its promotion, usually Fridays and Mondays, you were punished by the prefect who always looked out for the language "lawbreakers" so that they can pass what was called the "Disk" to them. If you had the disk, you had to literally hunt for

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> someone to pass it to and, at times, that involved tricking them into speaking something other than English. If you had the disk by end of Friday, you cleaned the class the next morning.

In RK's school, therefore, there seemed to be an unwritten but enforced law about speaking English on certain days, and a punishment was looming if this did not happen.

AD has a different and interesting story. After relocating from Uganda during his elementary school years, he continued his education in an urban area. He explains:

> I never knew Kiswahili until I relocated back to Kenya. I only spoke English, a bit of Luo and Luganda. I had to learn Kiswahili when I came back to Kenya then the little Luo and Luganda I knew started taking a back seat as we now had to converse in Kiswahili because that is the language everybody was talking. My preference became Kiswahili and of course English because that was the language of instruction in school. I remember I had a lot of support from my teachers because I could only speak English and so other students were told to help me learn Kiswahili and never laugh at me.

While AN and RK's teachers punished them for not speaking English, AD's teachers supported his effort to learn Kiswahili. The teachers were aware of how important it was for AD to acquire Kiswahili if he was to adapt to his new environment and survive in an urban public school where students relied on Kiswahili for most of their interactions.

PS stated that although his primary school demanded only English as the medium of communication, he had not yet formed any language preference at this time. In secondary school, he started having an interest in not only being better in English but also learning French. AD, on the other hand, continued being a seasoned multilingual. When he joined secondary school "in Central Province where a lot of Kikuyu language was being used outside class, I got interested and learnt Kikuyu language." AN states that during her secondary school years, she sought to speak more English herself because "this seemed fashionable and acceptable in all aspects as it was stylish."

RK was exposed to a more robust English education in secondary school due to the kind of school he attended. Being one of its own kind in Eastern and Central Africa, he shed light on his secondary education by explaining it thus:

> High school was a different story. Everything was a lot more formal. Although Kiswahili was spoken, it was mostly during out-of-class hours and weekends. In any case, the environment was more studious. High school also comprised

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> a competitive crop of students who had done well in primary school and so they tended to compete even in how English was spoken. Our high school was more diverse in representation and even had a Canadian for a principal. From very early we were exposed to European and American English music and poems.

RK's was an enviable situation. Many high school students would have wanted to be in his situation in order to engage in such in-depth English education.

Multilingualism, College Education, and Career

As they moved higher up in the educational ladder, the parents in this study had clearer language aspirations. From his time in secondary school, PS developed a desire to expand his multilingual repertoire because he was preparing for a career. English was not enough. He explains,

> At this point I had a strong preference for English and French, mainly because these were perceived at the time as critical for admission into the job market after finishing school. My perception was that there was a positive correlation between the language one mastered and their career aspirations especially if one aspired to be in white collar employment.

PS further fortified his preference for English in college as he found himself speaking more of English because:

> At this point, the notion that Swahili and Kamba were not good enough had been cemented and therefore I generally spoke in English in and out of college, with a little Swahili when talking to my grandparents and a little slang when conversing with peers and other relatives.

English became cemented as a language of choice for PS, and now he finds himself using it 99% of the time in and outside work.

AD's use of language in college depended on whether he was in class or talking to his friends. When he was in class, the medium of instruction was English. When he was talking to his friends, he consistently used Kiswahili. If they spoke English, he responded in Kiswahili. In his career as a journalist, he explains how crucial English is to his work:

> My career has changed my use of language because I no longer use it just to help me pass exams but as a medium of communication in my career as a journalist. My use of language is dictated by where and who am talking to. When writing

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> my articles, am more conscious on proper use of language because I want to communicate well and send a message.

AD, therefore, takes his use of English language very seriously because his work is on display and is being judged by many.

AN observes that college was a place where she had to use English in entirety. Here, she realized that “deficiency in good Kiswahili speaking became evident.” On the other hand, this was a place where she continued to speak Kiswahili because, as she states, “broken Kiswahili in Kenya is not as offensive as speaking broken English, hence the little I knew was enough to get me by.” However, even with the importance of English, AN believes that if she knew Kiswahili better than the broken one that she uses to get through, she would have “explored other opportunities” after her retirement as a banker.

RK found the university to be a place of knowledge expansion, which all happened in English. There were people from many countries, and there was always a need to impress. Students wanted to be like their professors who were “sophisticated and so students tried to walk that direction.” Students strived to express themselves more clearly in English in order to follow in the footsteps of their professors, in a bid to excel. In his career, RK finds that having been in the humanities, he has used English in his discourses more. He further explains that he had to use “English more in official spaces and naturally switch to Kiswahili to socialize.”

Multilingualism and Parental Language Choice

Parenting has been a different case altogether for the multilingual parents in this study. While their wish is for their children to be multilingual like them, the trajectory is different now. While they acquired most of their multiple African languages in their communities and their wishes for their children are the same, their children may be exploring other horizons as far as multiple languages are concerned. These children are also following the same multilingual path as their parents, although their preferred languages may be different from those of their parents.

PS states that he started off his children with English due to an unlikely reason:

> The first born had challenges learning to speak initially. At age three his language development was lagging. A therapist advised that we only teach one language first and then he would catch on with other languages later. The choice of English was by default since he had started attending a crèche run by an international school at age 2. The language of interaction was English, therefore we had to reinforce English at home.

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Luckily, after acquiring English, PS is grateful that his children are now learning Swahili, Mandarin, and French in school. Because PS and his wife do not speak the same ethnic language, and do not have proper mastery of these languages, they could not teach their children their mother tongues. As an urban multilingual, PS feels that his background has helped him to take "a liberal stance and would not prescribe any strict preference for language."

AD always wanted his son to learn Kiswahili. He knew that English would be acquired in school, but Kiswahili required parental effort. Since his son was born and lived out of the country at the time of the interview, AD, was very particular about teaching him Kiswahili for him "not to have difficulty communicating in Kiswahili when he comes back home." AD did not teach his son Dholuo because he himself did not master it well after living out of the country during his childhood. At school, his son speaks only English but he "would have preferred if they would also be allowed to speak Kiswahili." While mother tongue may not be in his son's future, AD "would like him to learn one more international language such as French or Spanish to open up his career prospects."

AN does not want her child's upbringing to be of a "narrow" perspective like her own. Having grown up in the rural area, she did not get an early exposure to multiple languages. Now her child has a wider world ahead. She explains:

> During my childhood, the world seemed to revolve around English and that seemed like an end in itself. I have now realized that there are many job opportunities with other languages including Kiswahili. My opportunities were narrowed for lack of extra languages. I therefore wish for my child not to be limited by language. With the world having become a global village, my child might find herself in a foreign land. Kiswahili would not only give her an identity but also an enhanced job opportunity and an edge in the job market.

Therefore, like AD, AN is pushing for Kiswahili for her child for the sake of a brighter future.

RK knows and understands multiple Kenyan languages. He is a typical representation of multilingualism in Kenya. Since he was in an intercultural marriage, his children learned English and Kiswahili because, like PS, his spouse did not and still does not know enough of their mother tongue to pass it to the children. He states that he is trying to teach the children Luhya, his ethnic language, but without much success. RK still hopes that his young son can learn and love African languages. RK also hopes that someday there will be a change in the language of instruction policy. He would like things to be turned around in favor of Kiswahili, and that Kiswahili becomes a language of instruction. He further states, "It is my wish that all schools insist

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that every child should at least speak Kiswahili, English and a vernacular language to graduate."

DISCUSSIONS: IDENTITY, LANGUAGE CHOICE, AND LANGUAGE ATTITUDE IN KENYA

The benefits of being multilingual cannot be overstated. Looking at the stories in this study, the common goal for parents is for their children to eventually become multilingual. In this lens, it is safe to state that multilingual parents know the benefits of multilingualism, and they would like the same for their children. Anyango-Kivuva (2015), having grown up in Kenya as a multilingual speaker, closely analyzes the benefits of the languages she speaks:

> With English and Kiswahili, I feel connected to a larger array of people; neighbors, classmates, workmates, and community members who do not share my ethnic language. They are the languages of unity and education, and they are my two academic languages. They have also been the languages with an economic impact in my life since my knowledge of these two languages has been instrumental in securing jobs in both teaching and translation. Japanese has been the language of cultural expansion. Knowing Japanese has expanded my horizon into a new world that was completely unknown to me growing up and has also been helpful in my work experience. (p. 15-16)

Economic benefits of languages were discussed at length by the participants of this study. As a retiree from the bank, AN stated that if she were fluent in Kiswahili, she could have expanded her horizons even after retirement. AD and PS both stated that in addition to Kiswahili and English, they wanted their children to learn foreign languages.

Being multilingual creates an identity that influences language choice and attitude. Knowledge and use of good English is considered to enhance one's self-image and identity. PS referenced the "heavy accents" that growing up speaking mother tongue places on someone. PS also observed that people with these thick accents may be looked down upon at work as not being polished enough. RK recalls that when they were at the university, language use was more of a form of display and constant competition, and "if you were at the university, you wanted people to know that you understand and speak good English." This sentiment is shared by AN who states that at college "whoever spoke it [English] fluently was considered better learned and classic." Good English is therefore a mark of a higher social class.

The class differentiation created by communicating in good English in Kenya propagates the view of a higher class among the elite while those who

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do not see this impact will not feel similar satisfaction with the language, and their attitude will be totally different. Michieka (2005) summarizes it thus:

> Attitudes towards the English language are bound to vary widely depending on what English has done to the individual. Since English is a language of the elite, those who have succeeded in life and are enjoying the fruits of knowing English are likely to view English as their language while those who have been marginalized due to their lack of English are likely to feel a lot of resentment towards this language. (p. 184)

It is no wonder that RK observed a certain aura of class among the English teachers who taught him as "more respected than others. They seemed to be in a class of their own and moved around the school with some kind of pomp/pride. One or two looked down on others."

While other parents felt that English was an international language that gave their children an edge in the global economic platform, RK brought up the idea of the English language being a barrier to the knowledge of African languages. Since it is used as a language of instruction, RK sees the English language as robbing the country of an opportunity to develop its own languages. Wasike (2016) agrees with RK's sentiments and sees this issue as a question of identity. By Kenya choosing the English language as a medium of instruction, the message that goes out to the students, as Wasike concludes, is that their African languages are "deficient, underdeveloped and not worth being proud of, and that education is only possible in English" (p. 77). This fact strips the African languages and their users of any prestige or power.

RECOMMENDATIONS/SUGGESTIONS FOR FAMILIES AND EDUCATORS

In view of what might be considered as multiple perspectives in a multilingual society, there is need to have ideas about language learning that will continue to build multilingualism. Parents in this study have unequivocally shown that multilingualism cannot only be achieved but also maintained and sustained. For this reason, they are also aspiring that their children be multilingual, in fact, stretching beyond the Kenyan ethnic languages to international languages. It is, therefore, recommended here that ways to strengthen multilingualism should be enhanced in communities and schools.

Parents in this study went to school where English was a medium of instruction. They succeeded in learning English and other languages. Some were able to sustain the knowledge of their mother tongues, and others gained multilingualism through the study of other languages. This is a good signal

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for schools to listen to and emphasize both English and Kiswahili as well as use of ethnic languages, instead of punishing Kiswahili or vernacular users as has been the practice. Schools that insist on use of English only within the school premises and punish use of other languages should reconsider this practice and allow use of other languages. The view that multiple languages would not work in a school environment is not based on any grounded theory.

Policies that might help Kenya may be borrowed from highly multilingual societies that have succeeded to protect their languages. Meyerhoff (2011) references the Republic of Vanuatu, located in the southwest Pacific. Vanuatu is linguistically diverse, and it has three official languages: two colonial languages, English and French, and Bislama, an English-based Creole. The Vanuatu constitution considers these three widely spoken languages by giving them roles in the country. Bislama is both an official and national language that is widely spoken in the country, and then the principal languages of education are English and French. Further, the constitution cleverly adds protection to local languages, stating that one of them may become the national language (p. 112).

Vanuatu is an ideal example that Kenya can borrow from by making both English and Kiswahili the languages of education. Instead of Kiswahili being a subject in class, it can be used in the social setting of the school just as much as English. The schools could also enforce use of the standard variety of Kiswahili. This way, Kiswahili as a language of Kenyan identity can have its high place and enhance the multilingual status of the nation. If such a step is taken, the nation will not have to worry about a possibility of language being slowly phased out or getting lost. Parents like AN would not fear that

> the Identity of the nation has been eroded. The little Swahili spoken is so corrupted that it has lost meaning. People don't give much thought to it as they do English. I see the next generation losing it completely in Kiswahili.

Instead, the country would celebrate its versatility in multilingualism.

CONCLUSION: CHARTING THE WAY FORWARD

While parents in this study are highly in favor of their children being multilingual, there is no denying that English is "the big tree with deep roots and strong branches." Its leaves are like a canopy that covers the other languages and places them under its shadow. Being overshadowed, however, implies that there is still some level of existence giving hope for some ethnolinguistic vitality. According to Meyerhoff (2011), ethnolinguistic vitality is where a language's use hinges on a people's identity and also reflects the number of

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people using the language. Some of the factors that contribute to and support ethnolinguistic vitality are status, demography, and institutional support.

Kiswahili and ethnic languages play the role of cultural and ethnic identity in Kenya. English, being the language of instruction, needs better instructional strategies in rural areas for equity to be achieved. Otherwise, its status as the official and instructional language of choice makes it enjoy vitality already. The use of English as an international language also gives it an advantage that other languages may not have. Kenya's way forward is to find means to maintain or achieve ethnolinguistic vitality with its indigenous languages while enhancing and protecting the vitality that Kiswahili and English already enjoy. The glory of the indigenous languages can be restored by the way they are used and the attitude held toward them. The story of Vanuatu as an example to emulate is a good place to start.

We have seen parents in this study working toward multilingualism for their children. In the same way, looking at what contributes to ethnolinguistic vitality, we acknowledge that parents cannot do this alone. They will need the support of institutions and the government. The government especially will need to increase its efforts in the restoration of the status of Kenyan ethnic languages. This will in turn boost the use of Kiswahili and ethnic languages and restore them to the glory that is inherently theirs. That way, they can come out of the shadows of English and grow together, as it is possible for Kenya to be a well-rounded multilingual nation.

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Index

acoustic analysis, 7, 9, 27
acoustic measurements, 28
acoustic vowel space, 12, 18, 23, 28, 30
acrolectal, 7, 8, 10, 25, 28
African Education Report, 62
African Independent Schools, the, 63
African schools, 100
All Saints Cathedral, 153
Anglophone countries, 25, 80
apartheid, 134

back vowels, 12, 15–16, 19, 27
Bantu Languages, 9, 49, 81
Basic Education Curriculum Framework (BECF), 65
basic education level of education, 65, 78, 91
Beecher Report, 62
Black Indigenous Kenyan English (BIKE), 26, 28
boarding school, 105, 171
Bongo flava, 121
Borana, 9
British settlers, the, 62

Cammenga, 9, 23
catchment area, 60, 66, 78–79, 81, 92, 117
central vowels, 16, 19, 30, 35
Chichewa, 158
Christian Missionary Society (CMC), 99
Christ Is the Answer Ministries (CITAM), 154
churches, 2, 144, 153, 156, 158, 162
Citizen FM, 118
Citizen TV, 118
Classic FM, 118
code mixing, 4, 67, 118, 124, 129
comprehensibility, 41
consonants, 26, 34, 37
Constitution of Kenya, 60, 139, 152
Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL), 79
Coro FM, 118
curriculum reforms, 61, 65
Cushites, 7, 12

Daily post, 118
decentralization, 133–34
devolution, 4, 133–47
Dholuo, 144, 146, 166–67, 170, 175
digraphs, 36
diphthongs, 3, 26–27, 30, 32–33, 37
disk, 171–72

East Africa, 9
East African Englishes (EAfrE), 30

EBSCOhost - printed on 2/10/2023 8:14 AM via . All use subject to https://www.ebsco.com/terms-of-use

education commission, 60, 63, 78–79, 90
Ekegusii, 9, 17, 81, 84, 86, 89, 104
electronic pulpits, 153
E-marked KenE, 8, 9, 12, 21–23
English as a Second Language, 41–42, 87, 92, 104, 152
English as an additional language, 61
English/Language Across the Curriculum, 79
English proficiency, 87–88, 101
ethnically marked regional varieties, 8
ethnic languages, 114, 136, 171, 177–79
ethnic variations, 7, 9

formant center frequencies, 8
formant value, 9, 12, 28, 29
fortis plosives, 37
fossilization, 44–45, 52
front high vowels, 18
functional domains, 41

Gachathi Report, 64, 90
globalization, 65, 80, 87
global language, 25, 80
Good News Bible, 153

Halliday, 45–46
hang, 49
Homeboyz FM, 118
home dialects, 70
home language, 166, 168
hustler, 158
hyponyms, 48

ideational metafunction, 45
indigenous languages, 3, 4, 63–64, 80, 99–100, 103, 115, 135, 137, 145, 155, 179
innovation permit, 82
interlanguage (IL) theory, 41
intermarriage, 166
interpersonal metafunction, 45
interpretability, 41
inter-regional language, 114
intrusive r, 26, 34–35, 37

Kameme, 118
Kenya Broadcasting Corporation (KBC), 136, 156
Kenya Certificate of Primary Education (KCPE), 87–88
Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE), 88, 103
Kenya Constitution, 60, 139, 152
Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development, 110
Kenya Institute of Education (KIE), 101
KenyaMoja, 118
Kenya multiparty politics, 135
Kenya National Examinations Council, 44, 87
Kenyan language policy, 129
Kenyan Mass Media, 114, 121
Kenyan Media council, 117, 137
Kenya pulpit English, 158, 162
Kikamba, 167, 171
Kikuyu, 114, 117–18, 145, 166–67, 172
Kimeru, 47, 49, 56
Kisii County, 81–82, 104–5
Kiswahili-based media, 4, 116, 121

Lancaster Constitution, 134
Language for Understanding Across the Curriculum, 79
lateral liquid, 34
lenis plosives, 37
lexical identity, 11
lingua franca, 9, 44, 61–62, 80, 97, 114
linking r, 26, 34–35, 37
lip rounding, 12, 27, 28
Lobanov’s technique, 14
local Englishes, 42
lower primary, 60, 62, 65–66, 77, 98
Luganda, 170, 172
Luhya, 114, 118, 145, 167, 170, 175

Maisha Asubuhi, 122–23
Markedness Model, 4, 119, 120
Media Council of Kenya, the, 137–38
media houses, 115, 117–18, 136, 146, 156

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Ministry of Education (MoE), 90, 103, 110
missionaries, 25, 62, 99, 136
monophthongs, 9, 12–13, 22–30, 33, 37
morphemes, 48, 56
morphosyntactic, 56
Mulembe, 118
multicultural society, 152
multilingual context, 77, 80
multilingualism, 117, 166–68, 171, 174–79
Myers-Scotton, 118–20, 127–28

Nairobian, The, 137
narrative research, 4, 169
National Council for Science Technology and Innovation, 82
National Council of Churches of Kenya (NCCK), 156
national language policy, 60, 127–28
National Rainbow Coalition (NARC), 158
Nation Media Group, the, 135–36, 138, 143
nativeness, 41
New Englishes, 44, 48
Nilotes, 7, 12
non-dominant languages, 61
non-ethnically marked Black Kenyan English, 8

obstruents, 26, 34–36
Ocampo’s envelope, 158
Ominde Commission, 78–79, 101
Ominde Report, 63
Organization of African Unity, 63
Outer Circle, 42

parental literacy, 168
Pastor Shadreck Wame, 162
Pentecostal preachers, 154
phonemic consonants, 26
Popular Kenyan English (PKE), 43
post-liberalization pulpit, 152
Praat, 2, 7, 12, 31, 36
pre-liberalization, 152, 156–57
pre-primary, 60, 65–66
primary English, 60, 69
primary school education, 60, 77, 81, 90
primary schools, 68, 92, 93, 98, 103, 115
print media, 134, 135, 137–38, 146
print media church, 157
pulpit language, 152, 154, 157–58
purposive sampling, 10, 104, 142, 151

Radio Maisha, 118–21, 126–28
Received Pronunciation English, 7, 31
regime, 134, 140
Rehema FM, 118
Reverend Natasha, 151
Royal Media Services, 136

schwa, 19, 30–31, 33, 37
semi-vowels, 34
Sheng, 67, 98, 102, 167
Siaya, 170
slogan, 122
Somali, 9, 11
sonorants, 34
source-filter theory, 8
spectrograms, 11, 31
stakeholders, 68, 78, 93, 122, 145
Standard English, 22, 42–44, 46–47, 51, 53, 56–57, 73, 87
Standard Group, 121, 136, 137
super languages, 80
synecdochy, 47
Systemic Functional Grammar, 45

Taifa Leo, 118, 120–21, 125–26, 128, 135, 137–38
Tanzania, 114, 124, 136, 145
Taveta Chronicle, 137
teaching literacy, 70
tongue height, 12, 15, 27
tongue protrusion, 27
triphthongs, 3, 26, 33–34
typological analysis, 106

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ugali, 158
Uganda, 114, 136, 145, 170, 172
UNESCO, 60, 93, 103
UNICEF, 60–61
United Missionary Conference, 100

Vanuatu, 178–79
velarized allophone, 34
vernacular, 64, 100, 118, 137, 145–46, 153, 155, 165–66, 176, 178
Vihiga County, 170
vowel length, 9, 17, 37
vowel normalization, 28

waveforms, 11, 36
white settlers' English, 8
whooping, 51
Wilk's Lambda canonical discriminant function, 21
World Englishes, 3, 7, 25, 41–43, 45
writing prompt, 105

YouTube bloggers, 127, 129

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