A PSYCHO–SOCIAL ANALYSIS OF COMMON KIMBEERE
SWEARWORDS IN THE LANGUAGE OF TRADERS AT KİRİTİİRİ
MIRAA MARKET, EMBU COUNTY.

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A RESEARCH PROPOSAL SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF
HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF ARTS IN ENGLISH AND LINGUISTICS OF KENYATTA
UNIVERSITY.

AUGUST, 2013
DECLARATION

I declare that this proposal is my original work and has not been previously presented for the award of a degree or a diploma in any university.

Signature: ........................................ Date: 2/5/2014

MUKUNI DANIEL MUTURI.

SUPERVISORS' DECLARATION

We confirm that the work reported in this proposal was carried out by the candidate under our supervision.

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ABSTRACT

This study will focus on the domains and functions of common swearwords among native Kimbeere speakers in a miraa (Khat) market. The study sets to identify the common Kimbeere swearwords; describe the domains from which they are sourced; account for the influence of age, gender and education in their usage; and define their function in communication. Jay’s Neuro – Psycho – Social Theory of speech (NPS) and Hymes’ Ethnography of Communication Approach (EOC) will be used. NPS will explain the psychological and social reasons of using swearwords in speech while Hymes’ approach will guide us in describing the speech situations involved in the use of swearwords as well as identifying the domains from which the swearwords are sourced, thus defining the link between swear language and culture. This study will be a descriptive survey of language use incorporating qualitative research aspects. Data will be collected by observation of verbal and non verbal behaviour, recording naturally occurring speech transactions, as well as by use of an interview schedule. Respondents will be sampled using the ‘friend’ of a friend approach. Two informants, one male and the other female, and who will be native Kimbeere speakers will be involved. The swearwords collected will be analyzed in terms of commonality, described and categorized in terms of domain (e.g. sex, religion) and explained with regard to their function in communication (i.e. psychological, social or linguistic function).