A SEMANTIC ANALYSIS OF SOME GIKUYU WORDS
THAT HAVE ACQUIRED NEW MEANINGS

BY

MAMBO M. TERESA
REG. NO. C50/I/III/04

A RESEARCH DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE
SCHOOL OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES
IN PARTIALFULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE AWARD OF DEGREE OF MASTERS OF
ART OF KENYATTA UNIVERSITY

KENYATTA UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

APRIL 2009
Declaration Page.

This dissertation is my original work and has not been presented for a degree or diploma in any other university.

Signature  

Date  9/1/09  
MAMBO M TERESA (Bed)

This proposal has been submitted with our approval as University supervisors.

1.  Dr. E.A. OGUTU  
Date  23/4/09  
Department of English and Linguistics. Kenyatta University

2.  MR. V. K. OMASAJA  
Date  20/4/09  
Department of English and Linguistics Kenyatta University
DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my husband, Bernard, who never ceased to remind me that I had a project to complete, my children, Diana, Michael and Abi for their patience and understanding during the long period of this study and my parents, Jackson and Lydia for their role in my life.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

My most sincere gratitude goes to my two supervisors, DR. E.A. Ogutu and V. Omasaja whose invaluable advice and guidance made this project a reality. I am also grateful to the lecturers and other support stuff in the English Department for their help in so many ways. Special thanks go to my colleagues Ann and Mary with whom I had a heated discussion which gave birth to this study. My husband, Bernard, children, Diana, Michael and Abi who had to put up with an absent mother during the long period of this study. I cannot forget to thank my parents Jackson and Lydia for their moral support, my brothers and sisters and especially Joe, who supported me in different ways. Special thanks go to all those who helped in gathering the data for this project, without whom this work would not have been possible.
ABSTRACT

This study aims to bring to the attention of Gikuyu speakers some of the semantic changes that are taking place in the language. It is a study of the words being used today to convey new and additional meanings other than what they previously used to convey. This has been done by identifying about thirty-five words in Gikuyu language that are currently being used to convey additional meanings to the conventionally accepted ones. These words have been classified according to their grammatical classes, that is, nouns, verbs and adjectives. The words have also been grouped according to the kinds of processes they have undergone to acquire the new meanings. Factors that have contributed to the acquisition of the new meanings were also discussed.

Using Judgmental sampling, the sample was selected from the population of Gikuyu speakers living in Nyahururu town who work in both the formal and the informal sector. Eighty (80) respondents were sampled for the study. A questionnaire helped to elicit information on the different meanings conveyed by the words from many people of different standing in the community. Additional data was also collected through the aid of audio-tape of spontaneous conversations and the contribution of the researcher as a native Gikuyu speaker.
DEFINITION OF TERMS

Connotation - This refers to the sense or designated meaning of a word in terms of its emotive and evaluative meanings and loadings.

Conventional meaning. - The meaning that a word is normally used to convey.

Denotation - The object that a linguistic symbol is linked to by virtue of its meaning.

Formal language - Language suitable for official situations.

Natural language - Spoken or written as the native languages of human languages.

Semiotics - meaning-making system, the study of signs (Halliday & Hassan 1989 3-4) Remodified and considered here as the Study of meaning in its most general sense.

Social semiotic - This is a means of interpreting language within a social cultural context in which the culture itself is interpreted in semiotic terms as an information system. In this study Gikuyu is studied in a social semiotic framework.

Word - A sound or a group of sounds that expresses a meaning and forms an independent unit of language.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DECLARATION</td>
<td>ii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEDICATION</td>
<td>iii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACKNOWLEDGEMENT</td>
<td>iv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABSTRACT</td>
<td>v</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEFINITION OF TERMS</td>
<td>vi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TABLE OF CONTENT</td>
<td>vii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIST OF FIGURES</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABBREVIATIONS</td>
<td>xi</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## CHAPTER ONE

1.1 INTRODUCTION---------------------------------------------1
1.2 Background to the study------------------------------------------1
1.3 Statement of the problem------------------------------------------8
1.4 Research questions-----------------------------------------------8
1.5 Objectives of the study------------------------------------------ 9
1.6 Research assumptions---------------------------------------------9
1.7 Rationale and significance of the study------------------------- 9
1.8 Scope and limitations-------------------------------------------11
1.9 Conclusion----------------------------------------------------------12

## CHAPTER TWO

**LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

2.1 Introduction-----------------------------------------------------13
2.1.1 Literature review on language change----------------------------13
2.1.2 Literature review on Semantic change---------------------------15
2.1.3 Literature review on Gikuyu----------------------------------17
2.1.4 Factors that contribute to Semantic change--------------------- 18
2.2 Theoretical framework------------------------------------------- 21
2.3 Conclusion--------------------------------------------------------- 26
CHAPTER FIVE
SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, IMPLICATION AND RECOMMENDATIONS
5.1 Introduction----------------------------------------------- 89
5.2 Summary --------------------------------------------------- 89
5.3 Conclusion------------------------------------------------- 92
5.4 Implication of the study------------------------------------ 93
5.5 Recommendation--------------------------------------------- 93

BIBLIOGRAPHY-----------------------------------------------95

APPENDIX 1 Questionnaire---------------------------------100

APPENDIX 2 Raw data sample-------------------------------101

APPENDIX 3 Grammatical classes--------------------------107

APPENDIX 4 Processes of semantic change-----------------108

APPENDIX 5 Factors of semantic change-------------------110

APPENDIX 6 Map of Nyahururu-----------------------------112
LIST OF FIGURES

Fig 1: Grammatical classes--------------------------55
Fig 2: Processes of semantic change---------------77
Fig 3: Factors to semantic change------------------87
ABBREVIATIONS

Aids : Acquired immune deficiency syndrome
Att : Attendant
Cus : Customer
CHAPTER ONE

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter one is an introduction of the entire research. It has several sections such as background to the study, statement of the problem, research questions, research objectives, and research assumptions, rationale of the study and scope and limitation of the study.

1.2 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

This study aims at a semantic analysis of some words in Gikuyu that have acquired new meanings. Lyons (1968) Semantic is the study of meanings. Meanings are said to be ideas or concepts which can be transferred from the mind of the speaker to the hearer’s mind by embodying them in forms of one language or another Lyons (1968)

According to Parker-Rhodes (1978) the study of meanings of human utterances is at one level as old as civilization itself. He adds that among the Greeks, this study was included in Rhetoric which was a combination of two disciplines; one concerned with what one should say and the other with how one should say it. With time, the study came to be divided into two parts; Grammar on one hand and Logic and Rhetoric on the other. But none of these was directly involved with the meaning of ordinary words. It can therefore be said that the ancient linguists never developed a semantic theory of any generality.
According to Lyons (1990) the study of meaning can be approached from a variety of ways. A distinction can be made between emotive and cognitive meanings, between significance and signification, descriptive and performative, sense and reference and denotation signs and symbols. However Kears (2000) states that the study of meanings is generally divided into semantics and pragmatics. She says that Semantics deals with the literal meanings of words and the way they are combined, which when taken together form the core of meanings or the starting point from which the whole meaning of utterance can construct. Basing our study on the meaning of semantics as stipulated by Kears, we analyzed the literal meanings of some Gikuyu words, both the meanings, that the words have been known to convey and the new meanings that they have acquired.

According to Kears (2000) there are two basic types of meanings, denotation and sense meanings. Denotation is the object or event that a linguistic expression is linked to by virtue of its meaning. That is, the part of reality that the expression is linked to, for example, the word cow, is linked to the animal cow. The sense relation attempts to match the expression to be defined with another expression having the same sense. An example of sense relation is the sense of synonymy, where different words are said to convey the same meaning. The words small and tiny, for example, have the same meaning of not large in size.

Sense relation is further explored by Lyons (1990) who says that the meanings of words depend on the network of the relation with other words. He identifies
several sense relations apart from synonymy. These are, hyponymy, the sense relation of inclusion whereby a superordinate term covers terms that are more specific, for example the term fuel is a superordinate term that includes such other terms like petrol, paraffin, firewood, and so on. Polysemy is sense relation where a word has several but related meanings. For instance, a word like mouth can refer to a source of a river, to the opening on the face used for eating, or an entrance to a cave. All these have the sense of an outlet or opening.

Antonyms have a sense relation of being opposite, for example, the states of being dead or alive are completely opposite, and so the two words can be said to be antonyms.

This study aims at identifying and analyzing words in Gikuyu that have acquired new meanings- the field of Semantic change. Semantic change according to Jeffers (1979) is a change in one of the meanings of the word. Every word has a variety of senses and connotation which can be added, removed or altered over time, often to the extent that words of one period of time convey quite different meanings from the same words spoken the previous period. An example of such a case would be the English word gay, which, as late as 1960s used to refer to being happy, or cheerful, but which has today acquired the meaning of defiant and proud homosexuals as opposed to heterosexuals. Crowley (1992). Another example but in Kiswahili is the word Mteja, which means client, or subscriber in the language of mobile phones, but it is today being used to mean that one is absent or not available. Another Kiswahili word is nyayo meaning footsteps but
today the word is commonly used to refer to the former President of Kenya, Mr. Daniel Moi.

The sense of polysemy was of particular interest to this study. According to Ulluman (1994) words are typically polysemic. Words are used in a wide variety of contexts by many different speakers who may vary the meaning they wish the words to convey. Words can lose or gain meanings quite easily due to this elasticity and they do not have to lose an earlier meaning in order to gain a new one. This assertion was worth noting in the evaluation of why words acquire new meanings, in order to ascertain whether their polysemic nature plays any part.

This study is based on The Social Semiotic Theory of language, as exemplified by Halliday (1989). The foundation of this theory is that language, in all its cultural and social forms, is about achieving cultural and social purposes, through the kinds of meaning making resources available in the culture. Across cultural groups and within these subgroups of those groups, there will be recognizable and specifiable ways in which meanings are made; there are identifiable patterns to peoples’ interactions because they have served people cultures historically. Semantic change is linked to culture, to understand a change in meaning one may require a good grasp of the social cultural background within a speech community.
Another aspect that was considered while looking at semantic change is context. Context has been defined as the situational environment within which utterances are made. This situational environment includes the knowledge and beliefs of the speaker and listener and the relation between them. Katz (1978). Knowledge of context is vital as it refers to actual environment of utterances in all their multiplicity of features. This is the selection of those features that have cultural and linguistic relevance to the production and interpretation of an utterance.

Sapir-Newmeyer (1988) argue that, what people are told and understand has a proportionate relation to the world they know. Anything removed from their known world may be misunderstood. People form mental pictures of what they are told from what they know but not from the speaker’s point of view. An example of meaning as related to context is the use of the English word chair which can be used both as a noun and a verb depending on the syntactic context. For example;

She gave him a ‘chair’ to sit on (Noun)

They requested her to ‘chair’ the meeting. (Verb)

Depending on the context in which it is used, the Gikuyu word *niakūyūria* (to fill up) can convey different meanings as shown in the following examples

*Niakūyūria ngūnia nyingī cia mbembe.* (He will fill many bags of maize)

*Niakūyūria aga gūkūona.* (He will be angry if he does not see you).

While the word, *niakūyūria* has the sense of fill up in both cases, the first one refers to the act of filling sacks whereas the second refers to anger.
Breal (1964) approached Semantic change by formulating purportedly universal laws which classified words according to the logical relations that connect successive meanings. These include change of meaning through extension, narrowing, pejoration and amelioration. Singleton (2000) identifies metaphor as one of major factors in this kind of change. He gives the word *seethe* as an example. *Seethe* used to mean, *to boil*, but now simply means *to be very angry* for most English speakers. A recent example is the word *mouse* (rodent) technologically, mouse has acquired the meaning of *a hand operated device which controls the cursor on computer screen*, which looks like a rodent and its cord can be seen as its long tail.

In this study, an attempt was made to establish whether these factors that contribute to semantic changes in world languages like English, French, German and others also contribute to the semantic changes that are taking place in Gikuyu.

Gikuyu is one of the major languages spoken in Kenya. It is the primary means of communication to most people in the central districts of Kenya which include Kiambu, Murang’a, Nyeri Nyandarua, Kirinyaga, and some parts of Laikipia and Nakuru in Rift Valley Province. Although there are slight differences in the Gikuyu spoken in each of these districts, there seems not to be a major problem in communication among the people
According to Crowley (1990) Languages can be grouped according to their morphological types. These different types are given as; isolating languages_ languages which tend to have only one morpheme per word, inflectional languages_ languages in which there are many morphemes included within a single word but the boundaries between one morpheme and another are not clear, agglutinating languages_ languages in which a word may contain many morphemes both free and bound. Hence boundaries between morphemes in an agglutinating language are clear and easy to recognize, it is as if the bits of language were simply glued together to make up large words. Each morpheme typically expresses a single meaning like person or number. Going by this distinction, Gikuyu can be said to be an agglutinating language and this is exemplified in a word like niarethamba. (He/She is bathing) This word contains several morphemes as shown below;

\[ nia \] (number, singular)
\[ are \] (tense present continuous)
\[ thamba \] (root)

It is worth noting the various morphs contained in the word because the root of a verb that has acquired new meaning might combine with different morphemes to express different things (number or tense). Such words might appear different morphologically but the convey the same meaning. For example, the word;

\[ Ndimbere \] (first person) I am ahead.
\[ Wimbere \] (second person) You are ahead.
\[ Embere \] (third person) he is ahead.
The words might appear like three different words though it is expressing the same idea. This is because there are different morphemes for number attached to the same root.

1.3 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

To achieve success in life, people must communicate effectively with each other. They must be able to pass and receive information. To do this they must have a proper understanding of the language being used, whether verbal or non-verbal. But language, like everything else around us keeps on changing. Gikuyu like other languages, has also undergone some changes. This study is therefore an attempt to show that there are some changes that are taking place in the language, and more specifically, semantic change. It was done by identifying some of the words that have acquired new meanings, which were then described in terms of their semantic properties. The kinds of process that the word has undergone to acquire the new meanings has been identified. Factors that may contribute to the change in meaning are discussed and an analysis of these semantic changes has also been carried out.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS.

The following questions were the guideline in this research.

1. Are there words that have acquired new meanings in Gikuyu?

2. From what grammatical categories are the words that have acquired new meanings?
3. What are the factors that have contributed to the acquisition of the new meanings?

1.5 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES
The following were the objectives the study set out to achieve.
1. To identify some of the words that have acquired new meanings in Gikuyu
2. To classify the words identified according to their grammatical classes and semantic properties.
3. To account for the acquisition of the new meanings and the factors that may contribute to their occurrence.

1.6 RESEARCH ASSUMPTION
This study was carried out under the assumptions that
1. There are words in Gikuyu language that have acquired new meanings.
2. These words belong to certain grammatical categories and they have semantic properties.
3. The meaning changes that have taken place can systematically be accounted for.

1.7 RATIONALE AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY.
As McMahon (1994) noted, there is less resistance to change in semantics than in other areas of the grammar such as syntax, phonology or morphology. Meanings of words in any language change relatively quickly. By drawing the attention of the users to the semantic changes that have taken place in Gikuyu,
this study attests that Gikuyu like all other languages is dynamic. Though there have been various Linguistic studies done on Gikuyu language. like Gikuyu phonology, Kavow (1997), Njoroge (1975) Dialects of Mt Kenya , Mutahi (1917), social semantic of the Lexical of the Gikuyu language , Wango (1978) just to mention a few, this study hopes to explore the area of semantic change which so far has not been widely explored.

Ngugi Wa Thion’o (1993) and (1986) expresses the great need for Africans to develop their own languages. He argues that this can be achieved by writing and publishing in these languages or by conducting theory –governed studies to analyze aspects of language change. The present study explored some of the Semantic changes that have taken place in Gikuyu and bring them to the attention of the users. This will add to linguistic research done on Gikuyu language.

Many factors have been put forward as contributing to the semantic change in European languages such as English, French, German and others. This study set out to determine whether these factors also account for the semantic changes in Gikuyu as well. By identifying and analyzing some of the words in Gikuyu that have taken on new meanings , the study hoped to create an awareness among the users of the Language of some of the Semantic changes that are taking place as this is one way of developing the language.
1.8 SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS

Any study of language can adopt either the diachronic approach—that is the study of language development through time, or a synchronic approach—the study of language at a particular point in time. This study adopted the synchronic approach since the changes being studied are taking place at present. In this study, words in Gikuyu that have acquired new meanings were identified and analyzed in terms of the meaning they are generally perceived to convey and the new meaning they have acquired. Words that have borrowed from other languages and are now in use as Gikuyu words were not considered in this study. The lexis of any language is categorized into various grammatical classes namely nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, pronouns, conjunctions, interjections (Leech and Startvik 1987). In this study only three of these classes, that is, nouns, verbs, and adjectives were used for semantic analysis. Nouns, verbs, and adjectives belong to the open class words. Leech and Startvik (1987). These are also the word classes that appear most frequently during speech in Gikuyu, hence the ones that are most likely to undergo semantic changes.

This study was mainly carried out in Nyahururu town where Gikuyu is widely spoken though the changes are widely spread among Gikuyu speakers in all the other districts mentioned before, focusing on only one area limited the size of the sample and consequently the data collected. It has been argued that linguistic usage is homogeneous and that small samples yield better analytical returns than big samples. (Labov 1968). Also as noted by Akmajian, Demers, Farmer, Harnish (1984) that if a change begins in one area, it is sometimes possible to follow its
progress through time and space as it moves wavelike through a community of speakers and that, although some areas may be more active than others in innovating change, change often spread in an overlapping fashion. This study was thus based on this notion that the semantic changes taking place in one place (Nyahururu) are taking place in all the other places where Gikuyu language is spoken.

1.9 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, the background of the study has been outlined. The study was based on Semantics and its main objective was to explore the semantic changes that have taken in Gikuyu. The area of study and the significance are dealt with in this chapter. The study is based on social semiotic theory which has its bases in semantics. The words that have acquired new meanings are analyzed using the universal rules of semantic change as put forward by Breal (1964). The significance of the study is also outlined in this chapter.
CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK.

2.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter a review of related literature is presented under different headings. Several sub-topics and their relevance to the current study are highlighted. These include: literature review on language change, semantic change, Gikuyu and factors that contribute to these changes. The theoretical framework on which the study is based is also outlined in this chapter.

2.1.2 LITERATURE REVIEW ON LANGUAGE CHANGE

According to Atchison (1991) everything in the world is in a state of change and language like everything joins this flux. Troilus & Criseyde (1385) note that, over the centuries the forms of language are marked by change to the extent that, words of long ago seem strange to current users of the same languages. According to Lyons (1989), although languages change in the course of time, there is no generally accepted answer as to why they change. Several theories of language change have been put forward but none of them covers all the facts of language change.

Other linguists like Harnish et al (1984), argue that Linguists currently have little understanding of the exact causes of language change, but that language change can be divided into two areas: Individual and community change. Individual change refers to a spontaneous change in a language on the part of an
individual speaker. Community change is defined as the transmission and ultimate sharing of changes among speakers in a linguistic community.

This study mainly focused on language change at the community level. This was based on the assumption that though a change might start with an individual, in one area, it is possible for it to progress through time and space until it has been embraced by a whole community of speakers. Garnish (1989). This study was interested in finding out whether the new meanings acquired by the words are readily understood by many people among the Gikuyu speakers or the identified words are only being used by a few people. Hamish al et (1984) say that though in the past, language change has been viewed variously as decay and as progress by different linguistics, at present; neither of these views seems appropriate or true since language seems to maintain a balance in its expressiveness and grammatical complexity over time. If a particular grammatical feature is lost (say, because of phonological change), some features may be added in another portion of the grammar

Yule (1985) says that people should not view any variety of language change as debased but instead they should view the constant evolution of the terms as a reassuring sign of vitality and creativeness in the way a language is shaped by its users. According to Lyons (1981), there are two types of changes that occur in language, grammatical and lexical change. Words in any language can be grouped into two categories; lexical words and grammatical words. Lexical words are those which have definable meanings of their own when they appear
independently of any linguistic context. Examples of such a words in English include elephant, house or cow. Gikuyu words are nyũmba (house) ngima (ugali). Grammatical words, are those words that only have meaning when they occur in the company of other words, and they relate to those other words together to form grammatical sentence. English examples are the, these, on, my, and. This study mainly focused on semantic change that is taking place in lexical words with reference to some words in Gikuyu.

2.1.2 LITERATURE REVIEW ON SEMANTIC CHANGE

According to Ullmann (1957) the existence of regularities in semantic change is difficult to demonstrate. By citing Attila (1972) he says that one of the obstacles to the analysis of semantic change is the inextricable link of meaning with culture. This means that, to understand a change in meaning one may also require a good grasp of the socio-cultural situation within a speech community. He gives the example of the early Latin word proclivis cited by Attila (1972) which used to mean, downhill, but later came to mean easy and also difficult. Only the first change seems comprehensible, (since it might be considered easier to move something downhill than uphill) Attila (1972) suggests that the ‘difficulty’ interpretation arises because goods in Rome were transported in large cumbersome ox-carts without adequate breaks which would have been rather difficult to drive downhill. So while it was easy to move goods downhill it was also difficulty. In the analysis of the factors that have contributed to the
changes in meaning, this study attempted to find out whether there are any cultural links between the conventional meanings and the acquired meaning.

According to McMahon (1996) there are at least three identifiable aspects of language in general and meaning in particular which allow semantic change to occur. First, words are typically polysemic. Each word has various meanings or covers a whole range of shades of meanings. This flexibility is necessary since the words are used to cover a wide range of meanings when used in a variety of contexts by many different speakers who may vary in the meaning they wish to convey. Words can lose or gain meaning due to this elasticity,

and they do not have to lose an earlier sense in order to gain a new one. Broomfield (1935) suggests that each word will naturally have one central meaning and various occasional ones. This may happen because new forms encroach on the central meaning, for example, the spread of the word slowness ousted the earlier sloth. Sloth was related to slow just as truth is to true, though slow has now been retained in its previous meaning, that is taking a long time. This study was interested in whether there are words that have lost their former meanings after gaining new ones.

The second reason for semantic change is the fact that language is transmitted discontinuously. For example children do not receive a fully formed grammar from their parents but create one for themselves on the basis of the incoming
data. Children may therefore learn imperfectly or make deductive inferences which alter language.

The third condition for semantic change is based on De Saussure’s doctrine of the arbitrariness of the linguistic sign. Sign is bipartite; it is made up of a signifier and a signified. These two components are arbitrarily linked. The mental image in a speaker’s mind and the physical form used to transfer this image are completely arbitrarily. That is why there are completely different words for different things in different languages. If there were any type of natural connection between the word and its meaning, then the same word for particular thing would be used in all languages. There is no reason, for example, why the word *table* should refer to object *table* and not anything else. Arbitrariness allows for the signifier and signified to be regarded as essentially independent; either may therefore change with time. In the an attempt was made to check whether arbitrariness of language has contributed to the acquisition of the new meanings. In the relatively rare cases of onomatopoeia, where a non-arbitrary link exists between signified and signifier there tends to be greater stability, but then, onomatopoeic forms tend to resist both sound change and semantic change.

2.1.3 LITERATURE REVIEW ON GIKUYU

A lot of Linguistic studies have been carried out on Gikuyu Language. Wango (1998) ‘Language and Gender’ is a case study in Social Semiotic of the Lexicon
of the Gikuyu language. He studied the place and role of language in a social semiotic framework to determine the extent to which language is sexist. Since sexism is implied in meaning of words based on the culture of a people, this study is relevant to our study in determining the cultural link between the new meanings the words have acquired, and their conventional meanings.

Mashett (1994) notes other neutral terms of etymology that have gendered in language use such as elder ‘muthuri’ in Gikuyu which refers to the elderly male. Initially the word was said to be neutral but over time it has acquired a male character to the extent that it is associated with men and their power. The process of acquisition of the male character will be relevant to our study on how words acquire new meanings.

2.1.4 FACTORS THAT CONTRIBUTE TO SEMANTIC CHANGE.

Several factors are cited by different linguists as contributing to semantic changes. The most commonly cited were formulated by Meillet (1912), who proposed three factors namely: Linguistic, Historical and Social factors. To these Ullmann (1962) adds psychological factors. Linguistic factors are language – internal and have nothing to do with external contextual factors like material culture. The best example of linguistically conditioned semantic change is grammatical element. Millet (1912) e.g. the case of the French ‘pas’ from Latin passus (step) which remains
a noun with this meaning in modern French but has also become an adverb marking the negative.

Historical change involves a change in the material culture, referents frequently change usually due to technological innovation but the name remains the same. For example the Eskimo 'umaiq' originally meant *eighteen foot sealskin boat* but now refers to any boat or ship. A recent example in English would be the word *mouse*, which refers to a rodent but, which today is being used to refer to the hand operated device which controls the cursor on a computer screen. The was interested in whether there are words that have gained new meanings as a result of historical factor or technological development.

Social causes of change in a word meaning come about when a word tends to acquire new meanings due to its use by a particular social group or when a word used in a specific sense by some social group comes into common use with an extended meaning. For example *lure* comes from falconry where it originally referred to *the bundle of feathers* with which the falconer attempted to attract his hawk, today the word has come to mean *to attract*, the job done by the feathers, Crowley (1993). Hughes (1988) outlines the main social developments of English speaking society over the last millennium and the resultant trends in meaning change, for example, he notes that the religious terminology has tended to secularize as the influence of the church has waned. He gives the example of the word *cell* which used to mean *a monk's living space*, but is now used in
scientific domain, as in *body cells or cell phones*, or even used to refer to the rooms in Police stations where

suspected criminals are held. Another word is *office* which used to mean a *church service* but is now used to refer to *the working space in commercial domains*. Due to the scope of this study social factors were not considered during the analysis of the data.

Ullmann (1962) suggests the addition of a forth-psychological category of why words acquire new meanings. The psychological factors feature largely in words that are taboo and euphemistic. Euphemism is a term that is used to avoid some other term which has some kind of unpleasant associations about it. For example, dangerous animals and acts or objects which are thought of as unpleasant or distasteful are considered taboo, their names cannot be used and therefore euphemisms are used. This causes semantic change in the euphemistic expression. For example, the use of *weasel* words to refer to *wolves* and *bears* which are frequently tabooed in Indo-European languages. Another example is the English *bear* originally meant *brown* as its Lithuanian cognate *beras* still does.

Frequently the devil is not referred to directly in most communities, hence the Scots have the euphemisms *Auld Nick* and *Clootieto*, to refer to the devil. The Gikuyu refer to the devil as *Mucukani, the betrayer, Kimunya the one who unroots*... God is often referred to by euphemisms, meaning *Master* as in
English or *Lord and le segher* in French. According to Hughes (1988) war and violence provide fertile ground for euphemism. In English *Liquidation* means ‘*murder* ’ *military operation* means *war*, *collateral damage* has come to mean *dead* or *injured civilians* during the 1990-1991 Gulf war. The euphemisms used in place of the tabooed expressions acquire new meanings leading to semantic change.

According to Ullmann (1957, 1962) meaning change may result from a similarity in the sense of two words leading to metaphor. A metaphor is an expression in which something is referred to by some other term because of similarity between the two things. An imagined link is established between two concepts, allowing the transfer of a label from one word to the other. For example if one said that John is a pig, it does not mean that John is a pig, but that there is some similarity between his behaviour and his appearance with that of a pig. Metaphors often shift in meaning from concrete to abstract, thus a word like *grasp* means to take hold of something mentally as well physically, while to cast light on something may mean to make something clear by way of an explanation or by shining a light on it.

### 2.2 THEORITICAL FRAMEWORK

This study will be based on the Social Semiotic Theory, as exemplified and advanced by Halliday (1978). This theory was first developed by Malinowski (1923) and later by Firth (1935, 1950) and Hymes (1967) Social semiotic theory looks at language as one among a number of systems of meaning (such as art
forms and other modes of cultural behaviour that taken all together constitute human culture. The theory brings out the relationship between meaning and social structures. The foundation of the theory is that language, in all its cultural and social forms, is about achieving cultural and social purposes, through the kinds of meaning making resources available in the culture. Across cultural groups and within subgroups of those groups there will be recognizable and specifiable ways in which meanings are made. There are identifiable patterns to people’s interactions because they have served their culture historically.

A social semiotic theory attempts to relate language to the social aspect of human experience, knowledge is transmitted in social context, though relationships like those of parent and child, or teacher and pupil, which are defined in the value systems and ideology of the culture. The words that are exchanged in these contexts get their meanings from the activities in which they are embedded, which again are social agencies and goals. Halliday and Hassan(1989) According to this theory, the way to understanding language lies in the study of texts. A text, according to this theory is defined as what is functional as opposed to words or sentences, it is a semantic unit. Halliday and Hassan, (1989; 10) refers to it as;

A text is what is ‘meant’ selected from the total set of options that constitute what can be meant. In other words a text can be defined as actualized through meaning potential.
The nature of a text is such that, it is really made of meaning expressed or coded in words and structure; hence a text is a semantic entity and a social exchange of meaning. Text and co-text are intimately related, neither can be enunciated without the other (Halliday and Hassan, 1989; 52)

The co-text or ‘with the text’ in the social semiotic theory are other non-verbal goings-on – the total environment in which a text unfolds. The nature of a text, however is such that it is really made of meanings expressed, or coded in words and structures hence a text is a semantic entity and a social exchange of meanings. In this study both words and their use in social context were studied.

Text is both a product and a process. It is a product in the sense that it is an output with a certain construction represented in a systematic way, and a process in the sense of a continuous process of semantic choice made in a network of further potential choices, in an interactive event, it is both an object and an instance. A text according is Halliday & Hassan, (1989; 11-12) a product of its environment, a product of a continuous process of choices in meaning. If we treat both text and context as semiotic phenomena, as modes of meaning we can get from one to the other, in a revealing way.

In this study words were studied as text and in context because words and their connotations are a product of the environment. The speaker is continuously making a choice between one word and the other. In the social semiotic theory, this is done using the features of the context of the situation that is; the
field what is happening; the tenor who are taking part, and the mode how is happening. (Halliday & Hassan; 12) This was the basis of analyzing words in context in this study.

Social semiotic theory is relevant to the study since its basis is semantic not syntactic. It seeks to consider and identify the roles of the various linguistics items, in any text and their function in building meaning. Our study was aimed at the meaning of words as text conveys and the possible additional meanings these words have acquired. Second, the theory is interested in both written and spoken texts; this study will focus on the spoken text.

In order to classify and account for the factors that have contributed to the meaning changes, this study relied on the universal laws on Semantic change formulated by Breal (1964). He approached meaning changes by setting up classes according to the logical relation that connect the successive meanings. These classes include meaning changes through extension and restriction (narrowing) and those that occur as a result of pejoration and amelioration.

Extension is the widening of a word’s range of meaning often by analogy or by simplification. Most semantic change is the effect of extending the scope of a word denotation to a phenomenon literally or metaphorically similar to a former meaning, for example the English noun *cook* derives from the Latin masculine noun *cocus* and was applied to only men up until the 16th century when it was extended to women. Another example given is the meaning of the word *ship,*
which has been extended to accommodate *steam-ship air-ship space* and *star-ship*, thus expanding from ‘vehicle for sea travel’ to vehicle for air travel.

Restriction or narrowing is the reduction in a word’s range of meanings, often limiting a generic word to a specialized or a technical use. Restriction of meaning paradoxically also involves an increase in information conveyed since the restricted form is applicable to fewer situations but tells more on each of the situation. For example, voyage in earlier English meant a *journey* as does a French voyage, but is now restricted to only journey by sea. *Hound* once meant *dog* but now refer specifically to dogs of a particular breed used in fox hunting.

Pejoration refers to the downward move in evaluative attitude of speakers and hearers to particular words. The attitude of speakers and hearers of particular words may change as the value assigned to the referents of words alters. This is usually due to a social prejudice. For example, *notorious* initially meant *widely known* but has gone through the process of extension to now mean widely and unfavorably known. A much famous example is the word *gay* which can mean *happy* or *colorful* and was used commonly until it came to refer to homosexuals.

Amelioration involves an improvement in assigned value of word. A word loses negative connotations or gains positive ones, for example the English word, *sophisticated* which initially meant being artificial now means *worldly – wise, intellectually appealing* or *cultured*. Some times amelioration involves weakening of an original strong negative meaning to acquire positive meanings,
for example the words *terribly* and *awfully* have weakened to become alternative for very.

In the semantic analysis of Gikuyu words that have acquired new meanings, the study attempted to determine whether the meanings the words have acquired can be attributed to the processes mentioned above.

2.3 CONCLUSION

In this chapter literature related to this study is reviewed. Types of semantic changes and the factors that contribute to these changes are discussed. Also identified here is the theoretical framework adopted for the study.
CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This section highlights the methods that were adopted in this study. First there is an outline of the research, closely followed by population and the study area. The sampling procedures that were followed in the selection of the sample and the sample size are also discussed in this chapter.

3.2. RESEARCH DESIGN

The study adopted both qualitative and quantitative research designs. Qualitative design helped to analyze and describe patterns that emerged on the data collected. The data for this study was descriptive since the findings were the evidence to support that there is some semantic change taking place in Gikuyu. Salinger & Shohamy (1990) advance that, descriptive research is used to establish the existence of a naturally occurring phenomenon connected with the development and process it by explicitly describing the data collected. Through the description of the data, the study was able to show that there are instances of semantic changes taking place in Gikuyu and also accounted for the factors that have contributed to these changes. Quantitative research design was also used for the purpose of quantification of the data.

3.3 SITE OF THE STUDY

Although the study’s population target was all Gikuyu speakers, it was specifically carried out in Nyahururu town. Nyahururu is a small town which
lies in both Nyandarua and Laikipia Districts. It serves as the headquarters of Nyandarua district. The people who live in this town have migrated there from most parts of Central Province and from Laikipia district which though it is in Rift Valley province it is largely occupied by Kikuyu. This means that most people who live in this town are Kikuyu. It was therefore an appropriate place to carry out a research on any semantic changes which might be taking place in Gikuyu.

3.4 STUDY POPULATION
The target population for this study was all Gikuyu speakers living in Nyahururu town. The accessible population was comprised those in formal employment and those in business especially those working in the salons and open markets. These two groups were found to be appropriate for study since, due to the nature of their work they interact with a lot of people from all walks of life and are the most likely to be aware of any kind of language change and more so semantic change.

3.5 SAMPLING PROCEDURE AND SAMPLE SIZE
Two sampling procedures were used to collect data for the study. Judgment and simple random sampling. In judgment sampling, the researcher uses his prior knowledge and judgment to choose subjects who would best serve the purpose of the study. It involves choosing a sample that specifically excludes certain types of people because their presence might confuse the research findings. Judgment sampling in this study was therefore used to
select an area where Gikuyu is widely spoken, to select the sixty (60) speakers who are fluent Gikuyu speakers, working in various places to be given the questionnaires, and also the salons and the markets where Gikuyu was widely spoken. Two markets were selected, one where second hand clothes are sold, and the other where foodstuff are sold. Four salons were also selected.

To choose particular respondents from both salons and the markets, simple random sampling was used. This sampling procedure was found to be appropriate because all the individuals in the defined populations had an equal chance of being selected as members of the sample. Random sample yields research data that can be generalized to a larger population with margins of error that can be determined statistically. All the salons which had only Gikuyu employees and which had been picked through judgment sampling were given numbers and then four numbers were randomly picked to determine the salons which would be used in the study. Using this method to select respondents enabled the researcher to elicit data that can be generalized to show how widespread the use of Gikuyu words that have acquired new meanings is.

According to Milroy (1981:21) socially sensitive studies of language variation depend on good data which entails the provision of sufficient types of and qualities of language. She further observes that large samples tend not to be necessary for linguistic surveys as other surveys because they tend to be redundant, bringing increasingly data handling problems with diminishing analytic returns. It is in this light therefore that this study sampled sixty (60)
respondents to respond to the words in the questionnaire and also to contribute any other words they felt had acquired new meaning. Then through judgment sampling twenty

(20) respondents from both the market and salons were sampled. This way the researcher collected forty words for the purpose of analysis. The study targeted respondents, both men and women, in the age bracket 20-50 years.

3.6 RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS.

The data for this study was drawn through various methods which included: participants and non-participant observation, a questionnaire of structured and unstructured questions, audio recording and group discussion.

In participant observation, the researcher took part in conversation with the sellers in the markets by posing as a buyer (client in salons) or as a friend. Participation observation ensured that the researcher built trust with the respondents so that the respondents become used to the researcher’s presence and no longer viewed her as an outsider. In effect, this helped reduce the observer’s paradox. Observer’s paradox refers to a situation where the interviewee is well aware of the presence of the outside observer and the responses are thus monitored and controlled to match the observer’s expectations (Milroy and Gordon, 2003:43).
In non-participant observation, the researcher was an outsider who passively observed and made notes or recorded the conversations that were taking place.

The unstructured questions gave the respondents the freedom to respond on the use of the words with new meanings and how wide spread they think the use of such words is. It also prompted them to mention any other words that have acquired new meanings and may not have been used in the list. Tape recording helped in recording and storing the information from conversations and answers given to the question for further analysis.

3.7 DATA COLLECTION.

According to Cruse (1986) data on semantics can be collected in two ways, one by observing the way in which words are strung together by competent practitioners of a language. The other principal source of primary data is by intuitive semantic judgments by native speakers of linguistic materials of one kind or another and to elicit the data in tightly controlled situational context, for example by showing the informants a series of drawings, models or other stimuli and asking them to respond. To collect data for this study the researcher, relied on the intuitive semantic judgment, being a native Gikuyu speaker a list of about thirty words which according to the researcher had acquired new meaning was made. This list accompanied by a questionnaire was given to sixty(60) respondents who were expected to complete the questionnaire by stating the
meanings of the words as they are used conventionally and also indicating any new meanings that the words are used to convey. The respondents were also requested to add any other word they knew that had acquired new meaning. To gather more data to add to the words on the list the researcher visited each of the selected salons twice a week for a minimum of two hours a day. This was repeated for three weeks. The researcher also visited each of the market six times over a period of three weeks, with each visit taking about two hours. During each visit the researcher tried to gather information by posing either as buyer in the market or as a client in the salons. During each visit the researcher requested to be allowed to use an audio-tape to record the conversations. This recorded data was later written down and translated for further analysis. By using these methods, the researcher was able to collect forty (40) words to use in the study.

3.8 DATA ANALYSIS.

Data analysis involves sifting organizing, summarizing and synthesizing the data collected to arrive at the result. Patton (1990) writes that for any study to be meaningful the data collected needs to be organized into significant patterns to reveal its essence. Mugenda & Mugenda (1999) adds that the data obtained from the field in raw form is difficult to interpret. It must be systematically organized in a manner that facilitates analysis before the researcher is able to make sense of any data.

Content method was used in the analysis of the data. This involves systematically describing the data collected. The identified words are classified
into nouns, verbs and adjectives, which are grammatical classes the study aimed to study. The conventional meanings the words are used to convey are compared with the new meanings that the words have acquired in order to determine the factors that may have contributed to the acquisition of the meaning. The frequency with which each of the words appears was noted in order to determine how widespread the use of the words with new meanings is.

The words have then been systematically arranged according to the processes the word shave undergone in order to acquire the new meaning. There are factors that may contribute to the meaning change and this study tried to group the words accordingly. In this study an attempt has been made to determine which grammatical class has more words which have acquired new meaning among he data collected, which process of semantic change is more productive and which factors contribute to more words acquiring new meaning.

3.9 CONCLUSION

This chapter dealt with the methodology the researcher used in order to come up with the findings. Two research methodologies were adopted for this study, that is qualitative, and to some extent, quantitative research design. The target population was adult Gikuyu speakers in Nyahururu town. Judgments and simple random sampling methods were used in identifying the area of study and the respondents who were used in the study. All in all eighty (80) respondents were used in the study.
A list of words was provided to the respondents and through a questionnaire, the respondents were expected to state the meanings of the words in the list, indicate how often they used such words during conversations and where and when they felt such words would be used. Additional information on the use of such words was collected by audio-taping spontaneous speech and group discussion with people working in selected salons and open air markets.
CHAPTER FOUR
WORDS WITH NEW MEANINGS, PROCESSES AND FACTORS
CONTRIBUTING TO SEMANTIC CHANGE

4.0 INTRODUCTION
In this chapter words that were found to have acquired new meanings were identified and analyzed through content method which involves detailed description of the data collected... These words were classified into their various grammatical classes, namely nouns, verbs and adjectives as per objective number 2 (two). It was the objective of the study to systematically explain how the words have acquired the new meanings. This was done by grouping the words according to the process they have undergone according to Brille’s laws of semantic change; these include narrowing, extension perjoration and amelioration. An attempt was also made to group the words according to the factors that may have influenced the acquisition of the new meanings. According to Ullumann (1962) these are Linguistic, Historical, Social and Psychological.

4.1 WORDS WITH NEW MEANINGS
As already mentioned before, there are words in Gikuyu that have acquired new meanings. The expressions of the new meanings are common and can be deduced from utterances of people as they interact in their day to day activities. Below is a list of words and utterances in which they are used to express both the original meanings and the acquired one.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Context of occurrence</th>
<th>Acquired meaning</th>
<th>Context of occurrence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Mai (water)            | *Hee andu aria mai makunyu*
Give those people **water** to drink.                                                 | **Alcoholic drink**             | *Mai marari maingi taki, maranyuire marariyo biri.*
Beer was so much that people got very drank.                                           | (part of a conversation between an attendant and a customer)                             |
| Ngima (Ugali)          | *Turuge ngima umuthi*
Let’s cook ugali today.                                                                 | **Wealth/money**                | *Cus, Umuthi ndirenda sitaoro njega muno.*
Today I want a very good hair style                                                  |                                                                                         |
| Githaa (big clock)     | *Araheirwo githaa kiegqa muno*
He was given a very good clock                                                           | **It is time**                  | *Att. Ikiri wibu ino niyo iratiga.*
Put on this weave, it is the best.                                                    |                                                                                         |
| Muguthi (one who hits) | *Muirre akiguhire ndegwa yaku ni muguthi*
Tell him to hit your ox as he is one of them                                              | **violent robber**               | *Cus. Ni ya mbeca cigana?* 
How much is it?                                                                 |                                                                                         |
|                        |                                                                                        |                                 | *Att. Ngima winayo, tiga kumaka.*
You have the money, don’t you worry.                                                   |                                                                                         |
|                        |                                                                                        |                                 | *Arutani mena ngima nyeningi biri.*
Teachers have a lot of money now.                                                       |                                                                                         |
|                        |                                                                                        |                                 | as in this part of a conversation                                                        |
|                        |                                                                                        |                                 | *A; Cokaniriria indo tuinuke* 
Gather the things so that we can go home                                                 |                                                                                         |
|                        |                                                                                        |                                 | *B; Eka atia?* 
Yes it is time, it is time                                                            |
|                        |                                                                                        |                                 | *A; Aroraigurwo taimi ni borihi* 
He was shot dead in town by police.                                                    |                                                                                         |
|                        |                                                                                        |                                 | *B. Eka atia?* 
What did he do?                                                                 |
|                        |                                                                                        |                                 | *Ndulii? Atukire muguthi tene.*
You don’t know? He became a violent robber.                                              |                                                                                         |
| **Gacungwa**  
| (small orange) | **Wahe gacungwa karía kanini.**  
|  | You have given me the small orange  
| **kamuti**  
| (A small stick/tree) | **Rehe kamuti tweherie giko giki**  
|  | Bring a small stick to remove this rubbish  
| **kümbi**  
| (store) | **Tūgaikia mbembe ikúmbi rúcio.**  
|  | We shall put the maize in the store tomorrow  
| **Kigútha**  
| (Catapult/sling) | **Nengerá kííhí kigútha**  
|  | Give the boy a sling to kill birds.  
| **Kamunguriu**  
| (small mongoose) | **Mbembe niraríruo ni kamúnguriu**  
|  | Maize has been eaten by a mongoose  
| **An old man’s young mistress** | **A; Ena nduka nene tauni.**  
|  | She has a very big shop in town.  
| **B; Ndúi ni gacungwa ga gitonga**  
|  | You know she is a rich man’s mistress  
| **Witchcraft/love portion** | **A; Múhuri wake niaragukire.**  
|  | Her husband has gone mad.  
| **B; Iini amuheire kamúti niguo amwende.**  
|  | Yes, she gave him a love portion so as to love her  
| **Bank (financial institution)** | **A; Kai urenda guthii kuu?**  
|  | Where do you want to go?  
| **B; Nd irenda guthii ikúmbi gwetha runi.**  
|  | I want to go the bank to look for a loan.  
| **Aids** | **A; Kuina semina kanitha- ini umuthi**  
|  | There is a seminar at the church today.  
| **B Ya kíí?**  
|  | What is it about?  
| **A; Ya guthomithania uhoro wa kigútha.**  
|  | To teach about Aids.  
| **B; Ií kigútha ni gikunina andu.**  
|  | I agree Aids is going to wipe out everyone.  
| **Mobile phone** | **A; Thiku ici ní raithi gukinyia ndumiriri**  
|  | Today it is easier to pass a message  
| **B; Ií no kamúnguriu ukuhuthira**  
|  | Yes you just need to use a mobile phone  


| Kagunyu | A small weevil | Eheria *kagunyu* gaka haha. remove the weevil from there. | Aids. | A: *Turari mathiko ma John ira.*  
We had gone for John’s funeral yesterday.  
B: *Ni kii arekire.*  
What happened to him?  
A: *Andu marauga araririito ni kagunyu.*  
People say he died of Aids. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Mugithi | A train | Mathire Githumo na *mugithi* They went to Kisumu by train | A procession of entertainers | A procession of *Mugithi* na Coro FM  
Don’t miss the entertainers from Coro FM |
| Muti | Tree | *Ndugateme muti* ucio Don’t ferry down the tree | a thousand shilling | Don’t ferry down the tree  
Did you get a house to stay in?  
B: *Ndirona oya muti na matano na ndina muti.*  
I only got one for thousand and five hundred, but I have only one thousand. |
| Gukanyakanya | To peck | *Tiga Gukanyakanya ibuku* Stop pecking at the book. | Pressing the keys on mobile phone handset | A: *Nuironire nyumba ya gukara?*  
Did you get a house to stay in?  
B: *Ndirona oya muti na matano na ndina muti.*  
I only got one for thousand and five hundred, but I have only one thousand. |
| Kuiyuria | To fill up | *Niu kuiyuria mutungi ma* Fill up the jar with water | get angry to quarrel one | A: *Niuramuitirie mbeca cia matunda*  
Did you ask her for the money for the fruits?  
B: *Ndamuitia no kuiyuria akuiyuria tuhu.*  
If I ask, she will just get annoyed over nothing. |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action (to plant)</th>
<th>Example (Kukhanda mboco)</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
<th>Action (to plant)</th>
<th>Example (Kukhanda mboco)</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gūtironia</strong> (Not able to see clearly)</td>
<td>Umūthi gūtironia nī mbura</td>
<td>Today one cannot see clearly</td>
<td><strong>Careful planning</strong></td>
<td>A; Niuheiruo runi ni bengi</td>
<td>Were you given a loan by the bank</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>B; Gūtironia marenda ngaranita mena mbeca nyigi.</td>
<td>There is no hope there; they want guarantors who have a lot of money.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gūcora</strong> (to draw)</td>
<td>Aroria kana nītī gūcora nyūmba?</td>
<td>He is asking whether you can draw a house</td>
<td><strong>Run away</strong></td>
<td>A; Riu ukuruta mbeca kuu?</td>
<td>Now where will you get money?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>B; Nguria Kamau uria agūcora kuria tukuruta.</td>
<td>I’ll ask Kamau to figure out, where to get it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Kumiria</strong> (bring to an end)</td>
<td>Ndirenda kumiria ng’ombe ici.</td>
<td>I want to bring these cows home</td>
<td><strong>To lose temper</strong></td>
<td>A; Kai Charity arahingire saruni nikīl</td>
<td>Why did Charity close up the salon?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>B; Arenda kumiria atigne na muthuri</td>
<td>She wants to run away and leave her husband.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Kūhaicia</strong> (to raise something)</td>
<td>Nī kūhaicia bendera arahaicia</td>
<td>He is raising the flag</td>
<td><strong>Endete kūhanda mīndu ona kaunu kanini</strong></td>
<td>A; Ona umūthi no tūthinīrio maі</td>
<td>Even today our water was disconnected.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>B; Nawe mūnene a kūhaicia akora gūtarihitima tondū niarihite.</td>
<td>The boss will be very annoyed to find water disconnected since he has paid the bills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gwaka (to build)</td>
<td>Niu gwaka nyumba cia gukomborithia.</td>
<td>encourage</td>
<td>Maundu macio araria ni ma gwaka mündū. What he has said is very encouraging.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kūikira (to dress oneself)</td>
<td>Ndarī arahota kūikira ngūo</td>
<td>eat gluttonously</td>
<td>A; Kai watiga aria angi ku? Where have left the others? B; No Kūikira mareikira mūkawa- inf They are eating gluttonously.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kūhanya (tear with finger nails)</td>
<td>Ni ūkūhanya mwana ndīara</td>
<td>to prostitute</td>
<td>A; Mūrītu ūria ungi mwarī nake haha athire kuu Where did other lady you were with go? B; Athire Nairobi. Njiguaga atuikire wa kūhanya She went to Nairobi. I hear she became a prostitute.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gūcina (to burn)</td>
<td>Arenda gūcina giko giki</td>
<td>doing well</td>
<td>Macini ino ni gūcina biū This machine is doing very well</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kuinamiria (Bend a thing for someone)</td>
<td>Niu Kuinamirīa ngunia</td>
<td>regard highly</td>
<td>A; Kasitoma waku ama hahano niathii Your customer was here but she left. B; Athii niki na niguo akuinamirie? Ndungitakimuikira wibu? Why did she go and she regards you highly. You should have fixed her weave.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kuoha (Tie up)</td>
<td>Ni ūkuoha ngunia ici ciayūra</td>
<td>eat non-stop</td>
<td>A Gūtiri kuinamiria kwi hau She does not regard me highly at all No kuoha marooha ūhiki-ini to tie They just are eating at the wedding.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Mucori (one who draws pictures) | Ni mucori wa mbica | A shrewd person | A; Ukúhenio ni Kamau okahinda kani  
You will be deceived by Kamau within a short time  
B; Ji Kamau ni mucori mūno.  
I agree, Kamau is very shrewd |
|-------------------------------|-------------------|-----------------|------------------------------------------|
| Nikihia (It is cooked) | Gikwa nikihia | It is time | Nikiahia ni tūmuke.  
It is time, let's go home |
| Ngūthi (something to hit with) | Rehe ngūthi ninge mbia ino | very good | A; Niaragurire matatu ingi.  
He has bought another matatu.  
B; Nake ethaga ndereba ngūthi  
mamuthukumagira biu.  
He looks for very good drivers, who earn him a lot of money. |
| Niūratigia | Ndagúkwa indo ciothe, niūratigia | Better than others | A; Kai īracenjirie bengi  
Have you changed banks  
B; Ii ndiragugire thiī Equity nikoo kūratigia  
Yes, I decided join Equity, it is better than the others |
| Wimbere (You are ahead.) | Wimbere yakwa raini –ini | You are doing well | A; Niarahingurire salon ingi esitiī-ini  
She opened another Salon in the estate.  
B; Riu wee wimbere, uriumaga nyumba ugitii  
Wira  
You are doing very well. You'll be operating from the house |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gute mbau</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(lose timber)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kai ugute mbaĩ ciagwaka?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you lost my building timber?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Run mad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ugiite mbau ururage bara bara</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You’ll run mad and just loiter around</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kwa huko</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(under ) the ground</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arahithire mbeca kwa huko</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He hid the money under the ground</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burial/grave</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A; Ndũnoka wira ira urari kuu?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Why didn’t you report for work yesterday?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B; Tirari gucokia nyina wa Kanyi kwa huko.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>had gone to Mama Kanyi’s funeral</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kūoya kūoya</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(pick up )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ndirenda kūoya Nguo icio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I want to pick up those clothes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make easy profit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A; Thiku ici gütiiri na wira, notwetereire Dithemba</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>These days there isn’t much to do, let’s wait for December</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B; Disember múthukumaga biũ ni kūoya kūoya.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In December you make a lot of money.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ndaigua nave</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(I am hearing it from you)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A; Niwũgiire uhoro wa mwaki.?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you heard about the fire?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ati mwaki? Ndaigua nave</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fire! I am hearing it from you</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I don’t agree with you</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A; Mweri. uyu andu mari na mbeca</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People have a lot of money this month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B; Uhoro wa mbeca ndaigua na wee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I don’t agree with you about money</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ukaririra kioro</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(You will cry in the toilet)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Umuthi ukuririra kioro</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Today, you’ll cry in the toilet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There are hard times ahead</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A; Ndihotaga kwuiga mbia ciakwa Nyonaga Thirire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am unable to save my money, I just find it gone.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B Ungiaga kuthanga viria wimunini.ukaririra kioro.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If you don’t get organized while young, you suffer hard times</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mukwa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(A rope)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
From the examples of the contexts use cited above, it can be seen clearly that the words have acquired other meanings. This is so especially because most of the acquired meanings refer to phenomenon that was none-existent in the traditional society. A good example is the word, *Ikumbi* (a store for cereals), this meaning has been extended to include the modern bank where people deposit things like money.

4.1.1 GRAMMATICAL CATEGORIES OF THE WORDS THAT HAVE ACQUIRED NEW MEANINGS

The lexis of language is categorized into various grammatical classes namely, nouns, verbs, adverbs, adjectives, pronouns, preposition, conjunctions and interjections (Leech and Starvik 1987). In this study only three (3) grammatical classes are used as the basis for lexical analysis. These were nouns, verbs and adjectives. This is because they are the grammatical classes observed to be the most commonly used, and could therefore yield enough data for analysis. Several words that were seen to have acquired new meanings were identified. These words were then arranged into the three grammatical classes. Examples of the expressions in which the words are used have been cited in the examples that are presented here below.

4.1.2 NOUNS

A noun is a word that names a person, a place or thing. Byabamazima, (2002). In a sentence a noun is either a subject or an object. This study used the above definition to
identify the words that were being used to convey new meanings and can be classified as nouns. Following are these nouns and the different utterances in which they are used to express both their original and acquired meaning.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Noun</th>
<th>Context of use</th>
<th>Acquired meaning</th>
<th>Context of use</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mai</td>
<td><em>Hee maï makûnyua</em></td>
<td>alcoholic drink</td>
<td><em>Aratûgûrië</em> <em>maï biu hwaï</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Water)</td>
<td>Give me some drinking water</td>
<td></td>
<td>He bought us a lot of beer last evening</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mûcori</td>
<td><em>Ni mucori wa nyumba</em></td>
<td>a shrewd person</td>
<td><em>Ni mûcori, ni akûirûta</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(one who draws pictures)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>He is very shrewd, he’ll get out of it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mûgûthi</td>
<td><em>Ni mûgûthi, niaria magûthaga</em></td>
<td>a violent robber</td>
<td><em>Atûkîre mûgûthi nikio arathîru</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(one who hits)</td>
<td>He is one of those who hits oxes</td>
<td></td>
<td>He became a robber, that’s why he was killed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ngima</td>
<td><em>Tûrûge ngima ritu</em></td>
<td>money</td>
<td><em>Ni ngîma akîgûra nyamûba.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Ugali)</td>
<td>Let’s cook ugali now</td>
<td></td>
<td>He got money and bought a house.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gîthaâa</td>
<td><em>Ni gîthaâa kînene mûnî</em></td>
<td>it is time</td>
<td><em>Ni gîthaâa gia kuînuka</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(big clock)</td>
<td>It is a big clock</td>
<td></td>
<td><em>It is time to go home.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gacungwâa</td>
<td><em>Rehe gacungwâ karîa kanîni</em></td>
<td>an elderly man’s mistress</td>
<td><em>Niarehîre gacungwâ kuri mûtûmîa</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(small orange)</td>
<td>Bring that small orange</td>
<td></td>
<td>He brought his mistress home.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kamûtî</td>
<td><em>Hee kamûtî kau</em></td>
<td>a love portion</td>
<td><em>Araheîre múthûri wake kamûtî</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(small stick)</td>
<td>Give me the small stick.</td>
<td></td>
<td>She bewitched her husband.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ikumbi</td>
<td><em>Ikia mbembe ikûmbî</em></td>
<td>bank (financial institution)</td>
<td><em>Ndathîi ikûmbî kuîgûa mbêca ici.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(store)</td>
<td>Put the maize in the granary</td>
<td></td>
<td>I’m to the bank to bank this money.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Mūgithi  
(A train) | Mathire Mombasa na mūgithi  
They went to Mombasa by train | procession of entertainers | Umira wone mūgithi wa Coro FM.  
Come and watch the procession from Coro FM. |
|-------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Mūkwa  
(rope) | Rehe mūkwa tuohe ngu  
Tie it up with a rope | Information/news | Ndiuma na mūkwa ati niakuire.  
I did not know he is dead. |
| Mūtti  
(tree) | Ni tugutema muti uria  
We are going to cut down that tree | one thousand shillings | Hee muti ngure thaa.  
Give me a thousand for a watch. |
| Kagunyū  
(A small weevil) | Eheria Kagunyū gaka  
Get rid of this weevil | Aids. | Aroragiruo ni kagūnyu.  
He died of Aids |
| Kigūtha  
(catapult/sling) | Akoragūo na kigūtha ta Goliath  
He’ll be killed by sling like Goliath. | Aids | Andū memenyerere kigūtha, matanathira.  
People should be of Aids before they are wiped Out |
| Kamūnguriū  
(mongoose) | Mbembe ni irarīyo ni kamūnguriū  
A mongoose is eating the maize. | mobile phone handset | Muhurire thimū na kamūnguriū  
Call him on your mobile phone. |
All the words identified are nouns since they are names of things. From the examples of the utterances it is clear that the same word is used to express two different meanings, the original meaning and the meaning that it has acquired.

4.1.3 VERBS

A verb is the part of a sentence that denotes the action (doing words). The following examples presents the verbs and the utterances in which they are used.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Context of use</th>
<th>Acquired meaning</th>
<th>Context of use</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kúiyúria</td>
<td><em>Niu kúiyúria</em> <em>mutungi mai</em></td>
<td>getting angry</td>
<td><em>Nia kúiyúria</em> <em>aga</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(make full )</td>
<td>Fill the cvan with water</td>
<td></td>
<td>He’ll be angry if he does not see you</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kúhanda</td>
<td><em>Ni múthenya wa kúhanda</em> <em>mboco</em></td>
<td>to quarrel</td>
<td><em>Ndíenda múndo wa kúhanda</em> <em>tuhu.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(to plant)</td>
<td>It’s a day for planting beans.</td>
<td></td>
<td>I don’t want to be quarreled over nothing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gútironia</td>
<td><em>Umúthi gútironia</em> <em>ni mbura</em></td>
<td>there is no hope</td>
<td><em>Mwaka úyú gútironia</em> <em>magetha mega.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(not easy to see)</td>
<td>Today one can’t see because of rainy clouds</td>
<td></td>
<td>This year there is no hope of a good harvest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gúcora</td>
<td><em>Niói gúcora nyúmba</em></td>
<td>plan cunningly</td>
<td><em>Ni gúcora íria</em> <em>tukumuhenia</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(to draw a picture)</td>
<td>He knows how to draw a house.</td>
<td></td>
<td>We are planning how to lie to him.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Nie kúhaicia</em> <em>waga kúmúne mbeça</em> ciaka*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kúhaicia</td>
<td><em>Niu kúhaicia</em> <em>murigo iguru</em></td>
<td>lose one’s temper</td>
<td><em>Nikuhaicia</em> <em>waga kúmúne</em> <em>mbeça</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(to raise)</td>
<td>You raise this load up</td>
<td></td>
<td>He’ll lose his temper if you don’t give him his money</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Wee no kúkíra</em> <em>íreikíra</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>You are still over indulging.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kúkíra</td>
<td><em>Níarahota kúkíra</em> <em>nguo</em></td>
<td>to eat gluttonously</td>
<td><em>Arenda</em> <em>gwaka</em> <em>múkawa</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(dress oneself )</td>
<td>She is able to dress herself.</td>
<td></td>
<td>He wants to build a hotel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Kasitoma</em> <em>ucio</em> <em>a kúinamíria</em> <em>muno</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gwaka</td>
<td><em>Uhoro ucio ni wa gwaka múndú.</em></td>
<td>to encourage</td>
<td>That customer holds you in high esteem.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(to build something)</td>
<td>That’s encouraging news.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kúinamíria</td>
<td><em>Niu kúinamíria</em> <em>John muti ateme</em></td>
<td>Regard highly</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(bend a thing for one )</td>
<td><em>Bend the tree so that John can cut it.</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kumiria</td>
<td>No kumiria amuririe nikuhurú ni Muthuriwe. She ran away after being beaten by the husband.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(bring to an end)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kuoya kuoya</td>
<td>No kuoya kuoya mbúeca uke You just pick the money and come.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(pick up)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gúcina</td>
<td>Ndírenda gúcina giko giki I want to burn this rubbish.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(to burn)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gúkanyakanya</td>
<td>Ngúku níi gúkanyakanya mugate the hen is pecking on the loaf of bread.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(To peck)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kuhanya</td>
<td>Níu kuhanya mwana You’ll hurt the baby.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Tear with fingers)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>go away</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No Kumiria makes lots of profit</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>doíng very well</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>press the keys on a mobile phone handset</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To prostitute</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Athire Nairobi kuhanya She went to Nairobi and engaged in prostitution</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
From the examples of the utterances given above, it is clear that the same verb is being used to express different meanings. The new meaning is related to the original meaning in some ways as it is discussed later (cf 4.2)

4.1.4 ADJECTIVES

The other grammatical class that the study set out to identify was class of adjectives. Following is a list of adjectives and the utterances in which they are used to bring out the original meanings and the acquired ones.
### 4.1.4 ADJECTIVES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adjective</th>
<th>Context of use</th>
<th>Acquired meaning</th>
<th>Context of use</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Wimbere</em> (being ahead of others)</td>
<td><em>Wimbere ya andů aya</em> You are ahead of these people.</td>
<td>doing well</td>
<td><em>Wimbere, nindona wiina ngari njero.</em> You are doing very well, I see you have a new car.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Ekuo mũno</em> (being present)</td>
<td><em>Ekuo mũno mücarie wega</em> He is present look for thoroughly</td>
<td>very impressive</td>
<td><em>Ekuo mũno ena ngari njero.</em> He is very impressive, he has a new car.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Nikiahia</em> (cooked/it’s ready)</td>
<td><em>Githeri ni klahia, hee andu</em> The food is ready, serve the people</td>
<td>it is time</td>
<td><em>Nilahia, nituniqwe.</em> It’s time, let’s go home.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Kwa huko</em> (belongs to moles)</td>
<td><em>Ahithire mbeca kwa huko</em> He hid the money under ground</td>
<td>burial/grave</td>
<td><em>Aniakuire nogithii kwa huko.</em> He died of Aids and we buried him</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Kahũwa ni keru</em> (Coffee is ripe)</td>
<td><em>Kahũwa ni keru riu nogatu</em> The coffee is ripe it can be picked</td>
<td>business is profitable</td>
<td><em>Riu kasitoma niangi kahuwa gaitu ni keru</em> Customers are very many now, business is good.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Objective no two (2) of this study was to classify the identified words into different grammatical classes. This was to determine whether the words that have acquired new meanings belong to the same class or to different ones. From the above analysis, there are words that were found to be nouns, verbs and adjectives. This shows that the words that are gaining new meaning may belong to different grammatical classes, not a particular class. This information is presented below in form of bar graph. This has been done by counting the words in each class, divided by the number of all the words collected and then multiplied by a hundred in order to get the percentage. That is;

\[
\frac{n}{N} \times 100
\]

Where \( n \) is the number of words in each class and \( N \) is the total number of words collected for the study.
From Fig: 1, it is can be observed that the number of nouns and verbs that have acquired new meaning is almost the same. Maybe because these two classes are the most commonly used words, and therefore the ones more likely to gain new meanings.

4.2 PROCESSES OF ACQUISITION OF NEW MEANINGS.

According to Breal (1964) words that have undergone semantic change do so through four different processes. These are; extension, narrowing, amelioration
and perjoration. To understand the kind of change the words have undergone required the comparison of the conventional meanings with the new meanings that the words have acquired. One also requires being quite conversant with the culture of the people, in this case Kikuyu. This is in line with the social semiotic theory which defines language as one of the systems of meaning that taken all together constitute human culture. The Social Semiotic theory attempts to relate language to aspect of human experience since knowledge is transmitted in social contexts that are defined in the value systems and ideology of the culture. The words that are exchanged in these contexts get their meanings from activities in which they are entrenched, which are social activities and goals. It can be therefore assumed that the words acquire the new meanings from the way of life of the users. The context in which the words are used is also important since the meanings conveyed by a particular word may differ depending on the context. It is in the cultural context therefore that this study tried to group the words according to the process the word has undergone to acquire the new meaning.

4.2.1 EXTENSION

Extension is the process through a word acquires new meaning as a result of that word acquiring additional meanings to those that it originally had while still retaining those original meanings. Breal (1964) During the course of this study a number of words from the four classes were found to have acquired other meanings in addition to the meanings that are said to express. These words include;
The words identified above can be said to have extended their range of meanings as exemplified in the following instances of usage.

*Mai* generally refers to water as shown in the following example:

*Umūthi mūberethi nzuma mai.*

(Today, there was no water in the tap.)

But the study found that the word is being used to refer to an alcoholic drink as in the following example

*Aratūgūrīiire mai maingī tūrariyō biu.*

(He bought us drinks until we were completely drunk)

Water and alcoholic drink belong to the same super ordinate group since they are both liquids. The meaning of water seems to have been extended to include the alcoholic drink

*Ngima* refers to the meal made of the mixture of maize meal and water, commonly known as Ugali.

For example;

*Tūkūria ngima umūthi.*

(We’ll eat Ugali today.

This study found that the word is also being used to refer money/property. This is an extension of the range of meaning since if one has money it means that they can buy ugali (food). This can be seen in the following example;
Arutaini nimarongereiruo ngina ni thirikari.

(The government has given teachers more money.)

Githaa- This normally means big clock, as in the following,

Areheiruo githaa kiega muno ta kttheyo

(She was given big clock as a present.)

but is now being used to mean that, it is time for some event or another to take place. The meaning has been extended from the word clock, since it is used to read time. This can been seen in the following example;

Tiiinuke githaa nigiaikinya.

(Let’s go home; it’s time to go home)

Ikumbi refers to place where food, especially cereals are stored. For example

Mbembe nikigoo ikumbi

(Maize will be stored in the store/barn.)

This meaning has been extended to include bank (where money is kept). This is a metaphorical extension since we store food in the barn and keep money in the bank for use later on. Money is meant for sustenance just like food. The following is example of the usage;

Nyuma ikumbi ngietha mbeca ciakiriha bithi

(I had gone to the bank to look for fees.)

Kamunguriu refers to a mongoose as used in the following sentence

Aranyitire Kamunguriu gakiria mbembe ciake

(He caught a mongoose destroying his maize crop),
It is a small animal with a very long tail. Its appearance is just like that of a mobile phone with its long code and there were no mobile phones and therefore no names existed for them in Gikuyu language, the meaning of the word Kamūngurio has been extended to refer to a mobile phone handset. The different meaning can be seen in the following sentences.

Ngumuhurira thimu hwa-ini niaragurire Kamunguriu.

(I’ll call him in the evening, he bought a mobile phone)

Mutī refers to a tree. As in the following example,

Ndīrī na mbeca ingi ndiona mutī

(I don’t have any more money, I only have a thousand.)

but the meaning of the word has been extended to mean a thousand shilling, so to say.

This extension of meaning may have come about through metaphorical extension from the way a thousand shillings is written, 1000, without the zeros ,it is just like a stick

According to Crowley (1964) the metaphorical use the word can cause the original use of the word to change in some way thus gaining some additional meaning.

Mūgithi the word refers to a train. As in the following sentence

Mugithi wa Githumo niugucerero

(The train for Kisumu will be late.)
According to the Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary (1995) a train is a railway engine
with several carriages or trucks linked and pulled by it. This meaning has been extended to refer to long procession of entertainers, traveling in different types of vehicles. The procession of the entertainers with the many vehicles they travel in, is compared to the carriages pulled by the railway engine.

*Mugithi* wa Coro FM ukahitura Thika na Murang’a uorete Ruring’u stadiu Nyeri tauni.

Coro FM procession will pass through Thika and Murang’ a on their way to Ruring’ u stadium in Nyeri town.

*Gacungwa* simply means a small orange, as in,

*Hee mwana gacungwa karia* .

(Give the baby that small orange.)

but the word ‘s meaning has also been extended to refer to a young woman who becomes a mistress to a married man noticeably older than her. The extension comes as a result of the expectations that the mistress is sweet and will be used and discarded just like an orange. This new meaning is expressed in a sentence the following

*Mütumia uri urahurire gacungwa ka muthurīwe nia aranyirwe*.  

(The woman who beat up her husband’s young mistress was arrested)
Kamuti refers to a young small tree or a piece of stick. As in

Rehe Kamuti tweeherie kimbu giki

(Provide a piece of stick to remove this chameleon.)

According to this study the meaning of the word has been extended to also refer to witchcraft or love potion. As in the following example;

Niaraheire muthuri wake Kamuti

(He gave her husband love potion.)

Kigūha refers to a catapult or a sling. A sling is used to hit hard and instill pain or kill. As shown in the following example

Thondekera mwanake Kigutha akahite nyoni

(Make a sling for the boy for hunting birds.)

The word’s meaning has been extended to refer to AIDS or AIDS related illnesses. When one is infected it is believed that they will eventually die, just like a catapult kills the victim so does AIDS.

Andū magîrîrirũo kuîmenyerera múno matanathira ni kigutha

(People ought to be careful before they are wiped out by AIDS.)

Kagunyu is a word that refers to a small weevil, as in the following example

Eheria Kagunyu kau hau

(Remove that weevil from there)

In this study it was found that the meaning of the word has been extended to refer to AIDS. This may be, because both AIDS and the weevil destroy or kill gradually. This extended meaning is brought out in the following example;

Atûraga thibitari niahotiruo ni kagunyũ.
(He has been in hospital for a long time, he is suffering from Aids.)

*Mukwa*, refers to a rope as in the following example

*Oha ngu i ci na Mukwa uyu.*

(Tie up the firewood with this rope.)

This study found that the word (Mukwa) is also being used to refer to any piece of new information or even a video tape. This may be due to similarity in appearance between the rope and tape

*Ndirarari na mukwa niarahingurire saloon*

(I didn’t have the information she opened a salon.)

**VERBS**

Included in this category are the following; *gukanyakanya, kumiria, kuhaicia, gutironia, gucora, kuiyuria, gwaka gucora, kuhuria, therera, kuikira, kuoya kuoya.*

G*ukanyakanya* refers to the pecking of a hen as in the following example;

*Nguku ni gukanyakanya mwana maitho.*

(The hen pecks the child’s eyes.)

This word is also being used to refer to the pressing of the keys on a mobile phone. The two actions, pressing the keys and pecking are seen to be comparable. For example

*Ririkana gukanyakanya namba ino ukienda kuingira gicindano-ini giki.*
(Remember to press these numbers if you want to enter this competition.)

*Kumiri* means bring something to its end or in the open.

*Arenda* *kumiri* *indo icio haha bara*

(He wishes to bring those things here along the road).

It has acquired the meaning of one going away or running away and especially from problems; by going away something is brought to an end.

*Arenda* *kumiri* *atigane na wira wa thoko*

(She wants to go away and stop working in the market.)

*Kuhaici* means to raise something

*Marenda* *kuhaici* *thogora wa mbembe.*

(They want to raise the price of maize.)

The meaning of the word has been extended to mean losing one’s temper. May be this extension can be understood better in a social cultural context where so many people are suffering from high blood pressure due to the today’s lifestyle.

The famous Kavirondo study by British missionaries early in the last century found no traces of hypertension among the Luo. Today about one in three young adults is suffering from hypertension. (Sunday Nation, July, 8 2007) If the Luo community is taken to represent other African communities living in Kenya, then it is evident that most Kenyans suffer from hypertension, which can be triggered by anger or problems. Losing one temper therefore might trigger one’s blood pressure going up.
Tiga gutinda mugicokaniria nake nia kuhaicia.

(Don’t keep on arguing with him he’ll lose his temper)

Gūtironia can be paraphrased to mean that there is no light

Umuthi gūtironia, ona mundu noagwe 0

(It is difficult to see today, one might even fall.)

This meaning of the word has been extended imply that there is no hope. This maybe because if it is dark, one can’t see clearly and there might be no hope of reaching where one is going.

Umuthi gūtironia gutiri na andu akwenderia.

(That, today there is no hope, there are no people to sell to).

Gūcora means to draw something as in

Akwenda gūcora nyumba iyo oriu

(He wants to draw that right now.)

But the word has acquired the extended meaning of being cunning by weighing pros and cons of a situation in order to know what action to take. One has to take time to examine a situation just as one takes time to draw a picture.

No muhaka tugūcora uria tuguthii na mbere means

(We must plan how to move forward.)

Kūiyuira normally means to fill something up, as in,

Ndakuriha ni ukiyūria mutungi yu yu mai

(I pay you to fill this jar with water.)
The meaning of the word been extended to mean to get angry. Maybe, because when one is angry, one can be said to be full of anger. This meaning might occur in a structure like the following

*Mwacokaniria ringi nia kūiyūria,*

(If you argue any more, he’ll get angry.)

*Gwaka* means to built, as in the following sentence

*Endaga gwaka nyumba cia guombokorithia,*

(He likes building rental houses.)

The word was found to have acquired the meaning of encouraging one positively.

For example,

*Mūthikīrīrie miartiyo yake ni gugwaka muno l*

(*Listen to him, his words will encourage you greatly.*)

*Kūoya,* *kuoya* means to pick up. For example, this word was found to have extended its meaning to include making a lot of profit. For example,

*Umūthi aguri nīangī, ni kūoya kūoya*

(*Today buyers are very many, it is easy to make a lot of profit.*)

*Therera* means to flow away, as in

*Rora kana mai ni magutherara*

(*See if the water will flow away.*)

but this study found that the word is also being used to mean *go away* as in the example,
Ehera haha, therera.

(Move away from here.)

*Kūıkira* can be loosely translated to mean to dress oneself. An instance where it is used

_Murie kana nia kūıkira nguо_

(Ask him whether he can dress himself.)

However, it was found through the study that the word is also being used to refer to the act of over indulgence, either going on a drinking or eating spree. As in the following example;

_Arata aku matinaiuka no kūıkira maraeikiraga njohi uhiki-ini._

(Your friends didn’t go home; they went on a drinking spree after the wedding.)

**ADJECTIVES**

These include; *Nikīhiahia, kwa huko,ekuo muno,niaratigia,wimbere, nguthi muguthi, mucori*

_Nikīhiahia_ means that something has burnt to ashes, or well cooked,

_Gikwa nikīhiahia oya urie._

(Take the yam is cooked, take it and eat it.)

but has been extended to include the meaning that it is time for something to take place. An example using the extended meaning of the word can be;
Nikiahia ukira tuthii

(It’s time, let’s go).

*Kwa huko:* The literal meaning is belongs to the moles. In the study the word was found to be used to refer to the grave, so by saying that, means

*Nituracokirie Kamau Kwa huko,*

(We had gone to Kamau’s funeral.)

*Ekuo muno* Loosely means that someone is present as in

*Umūthi ndathiite ekuo muno*

(Today he has not gone he is in.)

But according to the study the word was also found to extend its meaning to the fact that one was quite impressive and therefore could not escape notice.

*Niaratigia,* means that one is not going to take everything of what is offered, as in the following example;

*Ndagukua mbembe ciothe niaratigia imwe.*

(He will not carry all the maize, he’ll leave some.)

During the study this word was found to have acquired the meaning of being attractive beyond expectation. May be from the implication that something is beyond expectation, or standing out from the rest. This can illustrated in the following example
Muhiki niaratigia umuthi

(The bride is attractive beyond expectations today.)

Mucori, the refers to one who draws as in the following,

*Mwanake wake ni múcori wa nyumba*

(His son draws houses.)

But this study found that the word is also being used describe people who are perceived to be very calculating in their dealings. This may be so due to the fact that one has to be very perceptive in both undertakings. The acquired is brought in the following example

*Kamau niaracorire uria akugura Nissan ingi ni múcori muno*

(Kamau has devised how to buy a new Nissan, he is very calculating.)

Mūgūthi as a descriptive word refers to the person who hits something probably using another item.

*Ni mūgūthi ndahitagia.*

(He does not miss the target.)

During the study, this word was found to have acquired another meaning; that of a violent robber. This meaning may be due to the fact that to hit and to rob involves some element of violence. The following is an example of how the word is being used;

*Arathiruo tauni utuku niaatuikire múgūthi.*

(He was shot in town at night, he became a robber.)
As can be seen from the above discussion, though the words belong to different grammatical classes that is nouns, verbs and adjectives, they were found to have extended their range of meanings. Hence they can be said to have done so through the process of extension.

4.2.2 PEJORATION

During the study there were words that were found to have acquired new meaning though these meanings have negative connotation. This is the process of acquiring new meaning through pejoration. According to Breal (1992) pejoration refers to the downward move in evaluative attitude of the speakers and hearers to particular word. The attitude of speakers and hearers of a particular word may change negatively with the regard they associate the word with. The particular words were divided into the three grammatical classes; nouns, verbs and adjectives.

NOUNS

Like, Kigutha, kamuti, gacungwa, muguthi

Kīgūtha normally refers to sling or catapult. It can occur in a structure like,

\[ Ningera mwanake Kīgūtha agatege nyoni. \]

( Give the boy sling to go and hunt birds.)

It was found that the word is being used to refer to Aids. The word can therefore be said to have gained negative connotation since the disease is dreaded in the
community and many people would not want to be associated with it. It is viewed negatively and a statement like

\textit{Andu makwenduo memenyre Kigūtha.}

People should beware of Aids.)

Is a warning since no one wishes to be associated with Aids

\textit{Kamūtī} simply means a small piece of stick or a small tree, and can occur in the following structure

\textit{Weruo uteme Kamūtī gaka}

(You were told to cut this small tree.)

But it was found to have acquired the meaning of a love portion or witchcraft. Since love portions and witchcraft are regarded suspiciously in the community, the word can be seen to have gained a negative connotation. As shown in this context of use.

\textit{Endaga kuhe muthuri wake Kamūtī akiingatuo mucii.}

(She wanted to bewitch her husband, so she was chased away from home.)

\textit{Gacungwa} refers to a small orange, and can occur in a structure like the following,

\textit{Hee mwana gacungwa karia kanini}

(Give the baby the small orange.)
Through this study this word was found to have acquired another meaning such that it can now be used to refer to an elderly man’s young mistress. The practice of keeping mistresses is frowned upon in the community and the word is used in derogatory manner to refer to the young woman. As in the following example

\[Ndakahi\kata\ niatuikire\ gacungwa\ ka\ muthuri,\]

(She will never get married since she became an old man’s mistress.)

**VERBS**

These words like; Kuhanda, kuikira, kuhuria, kuoha.

*Kūhanda* normally means to plant but can be said to have acquired negative connotation since it also is being used to mean to quarrel someone. For example,

\[Waga\ kurikia\ wîra\ nîa\ gukūhanda,\]

(If you don’t finish the job, you will be quarreled.)

*Kuikira*, the literal meaning of the word is to dress one self can occur in,

\[Niakuhota\ kuikira\ nguo\]

(She will be able to dress herself.)

During the study it was found that the word is being used to mean that one is overindulgent or, to eat gluttonously, both of which are considered as vices in the society. For example;

\[No\ kuikira\ mareikira\ kuria\ uhiki-ini.\]
(They are eating gluttonously at the wedding.)

*Kuhuria* means to scoop for instance one can say

**Kūhuria tiri irimaini.**

(ToRemove soil out of a hole.)

This study found that the word is also being used to refer to the act selfishly keeping the good things for oneself. This is negative in the sense that greed is viewed as a vice.

This usage is seen in the following context;

*Marutiruo komiti-ini tondu no kūhuria mahuragia indo citu.*

(They were removed from the committee because they were just.)

**ADJECTIVES**

Words like; *gute mbau, kwa huko*

The expression *gūte mbau* literally refers to the action of throwing away timber used in workshops for making furniture. This expression is also being used to mean that one is not doing as per expectation or in extreme cases that one has gone mad.

*Kwa huko* literally means the place where there are a lot of moles. This can occur in a structure like the following
Kuri huko nyingi muno kuo, maguitaga kwa huko
(There are very many moles there they refer to it as belonging to moles.)

Since moles stay underground this expression was found to have acquired the meaning that, one has died and has been buried or funeral. Therefore, to say,

Niarathi kwa huko
He is dead and buried.

4.2.3 AMELIORATION.

The other process of semantic change that was considered in this study is amelioration. Amelioration is when a word acquires a meaning which is an improvement on its assigned value. That is, a word loses negative connotations or gain positive ones. Breal (1992)

NOUNS.

These are; Kamũngũriũ, muti

Kamũngũriũ is the Gikũyũ name for a mongoose( an example of use has been given before) A mongoose is seen as destructive animal since it feeds on food crops, but during the study the name was found to be used to refer to a cell phone. Since a cell phone is something useful then the study grouped the word in the class of words that gained positive connotation in their new meaning.

Mutũ refers to a tree for example and can be used as in the following example,
Mutu ĭyũ nĩ mũnene mũno

(This tree is quite huge.)

but the study found that the word is also being used to refer to a thousand shillings and therefore the word can be said to have gained positive connotation. An example of use is

Nyũmba ĭrarihio mutu na matano

(The house rent is a thousand and five hundred)

Gücina means to burn, (an example of use given before) but according to e study the word is also being used to mean that something is doing very well or one is doing very well. Since this is a compliment the word can be said to belong to the amelioration class.

VERBS

These are; Gucina, gwaka, Kuinamiri

Gwaka means to build or put up a structure, from the study the study the word was found to have acquired of encouragement, such that if one said,

Ciugo ciake nćiagwaka mũndũ

(His words are very encouraging.)

Kuinamiri can be paraphrased to mean,(an example of use given before) to bend something for somebody; the meaning of this word was found to include the idea of holding one in high esteem, probably extended from the idea leave
the hut in order to show respect or admiration. In this respect the word can be said to have acquired positive connotation.

ADJECTIVES

These include;  

_Nguthi, wimbere, niaratiga ekuo munu_

_Ngūthi_ literally means something for hitting with, but it has been extended to include the meaning of something quite impressive. It can therefore be said to have acquired positive connotation. For example

_Aragūrire ngari ngūthi biu_

(He bought a very good vehicle.)

_Wimbere_ means that one is ahead of the others.

_Wimbere_ yakwa haha raini-ini

(You are ahead of me, here on the line)

The expression has acquired the meaning of one doing very well such that he is ahead of the others, a kind of commendation, so the word can be seen to have acquired positive connotation and can therefore be placed in the amelioration class.

_Ekuo mūno, niaratigia_. Both mean that one’s presence is greatly felt and have also acquired the meaning that one is very impressive, maybe because of their looks or because what they are doing.
The words discussed above have not only acquired additional meanings, these meanings have positive connotation. The new meaning is an elevation of the words' earlier meanings. These words can therefore be said to have undergone through the process of amelioration to gain their additional meanings.

4.2.4 SEMANTIC NARROWING:

Semantic narrowing according to Breal (1992), takes place when a word comes to refer to only part of the original meaning. Among the words sampled during the study no word was found to have acquired new meaning that can be seen to have undergone this process, since all the words were found to have extended their range of meanings.

After grouping the words according to the process through which they have acquired new meanings, that is, extension, narrowing, pejoration and amelioration, the words in each group were counted, and percentages sought, dividing the number of words in each class by the number of all the words collected during the study and then multiplying by a hundred, that is

$$\frac{n}{N} \times 100$$

Where n is the total number of words in each group and N is the total number of words collected. This was in an attempt to determine which process contributed more to semantic change and which contributed the least. Then this information was presented in form of bar graphs.
From Fig 2, it observed that all the words that have new meanings have done so by extending their range of meaning.

The number of words that have acquired new meanings through Amelioration and Pejoration is almost the same (27% and 26% respectively). No word among the grammatical categories studied was found to have gained new meaning by losing the original one (narrowing). This might for the reason that the new
meanings have not been used for such a long time so as to lose the earlier meanings.

4.3 FACTORS THAT CONTRIBUTE TO ACQUISITION OF NEW MEANINGS

According to Millet (1912), there are factors that contribute to words acquiring or gaining new meanings, these are named as historical, linguistic psychological factors and use of a word as metaphor. In this study, the researcher using the intuitive knowledge of a native Gikuyu speaker tried to group the words according to the factors that may have contributed the acquisition of the new meanings. The new meanings that the words have acquired were interpreted in their social context. That is, what in the culture of the people has contributed to the new meaning? This is in line with the Social Semiotic theory in which language is understood and related to social structures since knowledge is transmitted in social contexts. The words that are exchanged in these contexts get their meanings from social activities in which they are embedded.

4.3.1. HISTORICAL FACTORS

Historical factors involve a change in the material culture where referents frequently change, usually due to technological innovation, but the names remain the same. The word mouse is a good example of such change. A mouse is a rodent with a long tail but today the word is being used to refer to the hand
operated device which controls the cursor of a computer. From the data analyzed in this study, it is evident that some words can be said to have acquired their additional meanings due to historical factors. These were both nouns and verbs. No adjectives from the data collected for this study was found to belong to this category.

NOUNS

The following nouns belong to this class; Kamunguriu, Kigunga, mugithi

Kamunguriu, (cf sub-section 4.1.2). The existence of mobile phones is recent development and so there was no word for it among the kikuyu. The resemblance between the mobile phone hand set and a mongoose may have lead to the extension of the meaning of the word to include a mobile phone.

Kigunga (cf sub-section 4.1.2) Aids is a relatively new phenomenon which was not found in the traditional society and therefore there was no name for it. Kigunga (sling) is one of the many names that are used to refer to it.

Mugithi (cf sub-section 4.1.2) Long processions of entertainers moving in conveys of vehicles such as the ones formed by FM radio stations when they travel up country in a processions of tens of vehicles to market themselves and entertain their fans. Since the procession looks like a train engine pulling the many carriages, it is adeptly referred to as mugithi (train.)
VERBS
The following verbs belong to this category: *Gukanyakanya, kuhaicia,*

*Gukanyakanya,* (cf sub-section 4.1.3) Before the advent of mobile the word was used to refer to the pecking of hens, but it has now gained the extended meaning of pressing of the keys on the hand set of a mobile phone. This has come about as a result of technological development since the use of mobile phones is relatively new.

*Kuhaicia,* (cf sub-section 4.1.3) The acquired meaning can be interpreted as historical since it is related to the rising of blood pressure which has become so common these days with the changing life styles. Since such problems were not common several years back there was no name for it.

The words cited above have acquired new meanings that refer to things that were not in existence in the traditional society. Instead of coining new words to refer to new phenomenon, meanings of existing words have been extended to include such. Hence these words can be said to have extended their range of meaning through technological development or through historical factors.

4.3.2 PSYCHOLOGICAL FACTORS
Psychological factor features greatly in taboo and euphemism. Often religious concepts, dangerous animals and acts or objects that are thought of as unpleasant or distasteful becomes taboo and their names cannot be used and
euphemisms are used in their place causing semantic change in the euphemistic expression.

Words in Gikuyu that were found to have acquired new meanings through psychological factors include;

**NOUNS**

The nouns in this class are; Kamuti, Kigutha.

*Kamūti*, (cf. sub-section 4.1.2) Witchcraft is abhorred in the community. It is not openly talked about. And is mostly talked about through euphemism, hence the use of the word *kamuti*. The word which normally means a small stick or a small tree has acquired additional meaning due to its euphemistic usage.

*Kīgūtha*, (cf sub section 4.1.2) Aids. Aids is dreaded, in the community, it is associated with sex outside marriage and therefore immorality and may lead to death. It is therefore not talked about openly. Several euphemistic words are being used to refer to the disease one of which is *kīgūtha*.

**VERBS**

The verbs in this class are; kuaicia, kuhanya.

*Kūhaicia*, though the words means to raise something, it is also being used as a euphemism for losing ones temper. Losing ones temper can cause destruction; it is something to be avoided
Kuhanya (cf sub section 4.1.3) is euphemistic reference to prostitution which is condemned in the community.

ADJECTIVES

Only one adjective can be said to belong to this category; 

Kwa huko (cf sub-section 4.1.4)  It is being used as a euphemism for death and burial in an attempt not to refer to death openly since death is dreaded among the kikuyu just like in any other African communities.

All the words cited in this section are euphemisms for things not openly talked about in the society. The meaning of an existing word is extended to refer to something unpleasant since it sounds better. Thus giving rise to a new meaning.

4.3.3. METAPHORICAL FACTORS

The other factor that was found to have contributed greatly to semantic change is metaphor. A metaphor is an expression in which something is referred to by some other term because of similarity between the two things. Meaning change may result from this usage. An imagined link is established between two concepts, for example, water and an alcoholic drink both are liquids. This imagined link may allow for the transfer of a label from one word to the other.
During the study, it was found that some words that have acquired new meaning could be said to have done so through metaphorical extension of the original meanings.

The nouns in this category include *Mucori, mai, muguthi, ngima, gachungwa, Ikumbi, mugithi*

*Mai* (cf sub-section 4.1.2) Both water and alcoholic drinks are liquids and to some extent are drunk to quench thirst.

*Mūchori* (cf sub-section 4.1.4) is being used to mean a shrewd person, to draw a good picture and being shrewd requires careful planning.

*Mūgūthi* (cf sub-section 4.1.4). Both meanings (original and acquired) convey an element of violence and can therefore be said to be similar.

*Ngima* (cf sub-section 4.1.2) The word is being used to refer to money or wealth maybe because if one has money one has food or at least one cannot go hungry.

*Githaa* (cf sec-section 4.1.2) A clock is used to tell time, the new meaning of, it is time for an event to take place, is therefore a metaphorical extension of the original meaning.
Gacungwa, (cf sub- section 4.1.2). An orange is sweet and meant for consumption and the meaning is metaphorically extended to refer to young girl in the sense she will only be needed to quench the old man’s thirst and then be discarded. Just as one sucks the juice from an orange and then discards it.

Ikumbi (cf sub –section 4.1.2) usually refers to a store but it is also being used to refer to a bank (financial institution). Both meanings have the sense of storage, a place where something is kept safely for future use.

Kigūtha, (cf sub section 4.1.2) a sling or a catapult but now also to refer to Aids. Both meanings have a sense of death. A sling is used to hit and kill and when one gets Aids they will eventually die.

Mūgitih (cf sub section 4.1.2) refers to a train (a group of railway vehicles that are connected and pulled by an engine). This meaning has been extended to refer to a long procession of entertainers. Both meanings have the sense of something very long being forward from the head.

VERBS
Verbs in this category include; Gukanyakanya, kuyuria, gutironia, gucora, kuhaicia

Gikanyakanya, (cf sub –section 4.1.3) means to peck but is being used to refer to pressing of the keys on the set of a mobile phone. Both actions are seen to be
similar in the sense that when a bird pecks, it will pick particular items just as one press on particular digits but not all.

*Kiiyuria,* (cf sub sec-section 4.1.3) means to fill up with something but is also being used to mean to get angry. When one is angry, one can be said to be full of anger. So both the meanings have the sense of something that is full.

*Gütirotina,* (cf sub-section 4.1.3) means that it is not possible to see for lack of light and has been extended to mean that there is no hope for something. This is based on the belief that where there is light, there is hope and where there is no light there is no hope. (A Gikuyu proverb)

*Gúcora* (cf sub- section 4.1.3) meaning to draw a picture and has been metaphorically extended to mean dealing with issues in a shrewd manner. Both the meanings require careful execution of the plan.

**ADJECTIVES**

The following adjectives belong to this category;

*Kuoya kuoya,* (cf sub- section 4.1.4) means to pick up something; the meaning has been extended to include the idea of making a lot of profit on sales within a very short time and easily. Just as easy as picking something from the ground.

*Wimbere* (cf sub- section 4.1.4) means one is ahead but it has been metaphorically extended to mean that one is doing well better than the others. *üte mbaũ,* (cf sub-section 4.1.4) can be literally interpreted to mean that one has
thrown away his building materials (timber) but also has acquired the meaning that one has lost his senses, gone mad. In both instances there is the sense of loss.

*Kahuva ni keru* (cf sub-section 4.1.4) When coffee is ripe, it is picked and taken to the factory after which one is paid. This expression has acquired the meaning that things are looking up (business is doing well) Therefore becoming a metaphor for doing well.

From the analysis of the words that have gained new meanings through metaphor, it can be seen that, the original meaning and the acquired meaning are metaphorically linked.
Fig: 3

From Fig 3 it is observed that more words acquire their new meanings through the use of metaphor. This may be so because of the similarity between references this might make it easier to transfer meaning. Historical (technological) factor is the least productive, may be because the users just vernacularise names for new inventions, coin new words or there already exists a name for them
4.4 CONCLUSION

In this chapter words that acquired new meanings have been identified and classified into three grammatical classes; which are nouns, verbs and adjectives. An attempt has been made to group the words into the four groups according to the process each word has undergone in order to acquire the new meaning as identified by Breal (1964). The factors that may have contributed to the changes have also been discussed and the words grouped accordingly. This information has also been presented in bar graphs for clarity.
CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, IMPLICATION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents a summary of the findings observed in the study, conclusions, implications of the study and recommendations for further research.

5.2 Summary

The first objective of this study to investigate whether there are words in Gikuyu that are being used to express new meanings in addition to the original meanings. To do this, a number of words were sampled and the meanings they express in different contexts studied. To this end, it was found that they are words in Gikuyu that have acquired new meanings. These words were listed down and examples of how they are used given. The other objective of the study was to determine whether these words belong to a particular grammatical class or different ones. From the example of utterances in which the words are used, it is clear that the words belong to different grammatical classes. Hence these words can be classified according to the grammatical classes of the most common ones were, nouns, verbs and adjectives. The study also sought to determine whether the semantic changes that the words have undergone can be accounted for systematically according to the universal rules of Semantic change (Breal 1964). It was found that these words have acquired new meanings
by undergoing through different processes of semantic change such as extension, narrowing, amelioration and pejoration. It was also found that these words could be grouped according to the different factors that have influence the acquisition of the new meanings. These include psychological, historical and metaphorical factors.

It was also noted that all the words that have acquired new meanings, can be seen to have extended their range of meaning and can be grouped into the extension category. This means that a word can belong to different categories, depending on the processes it undergoes, to acquire the new meaning, for example, a word can gain new meaning through extension, and for example, the meaning of the word *muti* (tree) has been extended to also *one thousand shillings*. This word can therefore be said to belong to the extension class. The meaning gained by the word has positive connotation, and so the word can be said to belong to pejoration category and so the word belongs to extension class and pejoration categories.

While very many words collected for this study were found to have gained new meanings through extension, there were on words that were seen to have undergone narrowing. This maybe attributed to the fact that the words have not been in use long enough so as to lose their earlier meanings.
The new meanings acquired by the words, whether it is through extension, perjoration, amelioration or narrowing can be understood against the social-cultural background of the community. This is in line with the social semiotic theory which states that knowledge is transmitted in social context through relationships that are defined in the value systems and ideology of the culture. The words that exchanged in these contexts get their meanings from activities in which they are embedded. For example in order to understand why gacungwa is a derogatory term for an older man’s young mistress, one has to understand that the word refers to a fruit (orange) from which one is only interested in juice after which the rest of the fruit is discarded. By using the word to refer to the young woman, the society is registering its distaste for such practices.

Among the factors that are said to contribute to semantic changes, that is, historical, social, psychological and linguistic, psychological factors were seen to be the most productive, that is, contributed most to the acquisition of meaning while linguistic factor was the least productive. No word was found to have acquired new meaning due to linguistic factor. It was also found that a word can acquire new meaning due to a combination of factors. For example a word can gain new meaning due to psychological factor, that is, use of euphemism in order to avoid a word considered taboo. This euphemism might be metaphorically linked to the original meaning. An example of this is the word Kigutha (sling) which is a euphemism for Aids but metaphorically represents the devastating effects of Aids.
Many words were found to have acquired new meaning through extension of their range of meaning through metaphorical use of the word. Hence metaphor was found to be a very important factor that contributes to semantic change.

5.3 Conclusion

In conclusion it can be said that there are words in Gikuyu that have acquired new meanings and that most of the words that have acquired new meanings have done so through the extension of their range of meanings. That in order to accure the new meanings the words have one or two processes of semantic change that is; extension, narrowing, pejoration and amelioration, though very few words have acquired new meanings by narrowing their range of meanings. So Gikuyu words that have undergone semantic change can be said to have undergone the same processes of semantic change advocated by Breal (1964).

The major factors that contribute to semantic change in Gikuyu were found to be metaphorical and psychological ones. Use of metaphor in euphemistic expressions contribute to semantic change. Linguistic factors were not found to have featured at all with the words in the data collected.

It was also noted that, like everywhere else in the world, people view language change of any kind negatively, maintaining that the earlier forms are better than the new ones.
It can therefore be concluded that there is semantic change taking place in Gikuyu and that these changes can be studied using the same basic rules that are used to study other languages that have been extensively studied.

5.4 Implication of the study.

This study has implications for language researchers who wish to study the changes taking place in the language since it has been found that there are semantic changes taking place in the language. It is important to be aware of these changes so that research could be carried out on their contribution to language development. It is also important to language users, and especially those in position to influence language use like, Vernacular FM radio stations, and language planners to understand the changes that are taking place in the language as this will in effect help in effective communication.

As the study found out there is semantic change taking place in Gikuyu, this is important to anyone wishing to write and publish Gikuyu dictionary today. There are words that have acquired new meanings and which should be included as they are widely used.

5.5 Recommendation.

Language changes at all four levels: phonological, syntactic, morphological and semantic. This study dealt with changes at the semantic level, other studies can
be done about the changes that have taken place at any of the other levels. During the cause of the study it was found that there are very many new idiomatic expressions which are widely used but which were not an object of this study. This should offer an interesting area for study to determine how the occurrence of such items affects the language development. The aim of this study was to identify only Gikuyu words that have new meanings but not words that have been borrowed from other languages into Gikuyu; these would also offer an interesting area for study in determining how far the words have contributed in development of Gikuyu.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


Atilla Raimo (1972) *An Introduction to Historical and Comparative Linguistics* Macmillan, New York


Edinburgh William Blackwood


Ullmann (1962) **Semantics. An Introduction to the Science of Meaning.**
Blackwell, Oxford.

Quirk, R. (1989) **Language Varieties and Standard Language.** London:
Longman.

APPENDIX 1

QUESTONNAIRE

Introduction

The purpose of this questionnaire is to get your views on language among the Kikuyu. Please read each statement carefully and complete each part as instructed.

The information you give will be treated with confidence and will be not used for any other purpose other than for success of this research. The usefulness of the information will however depend on your cooperation and honesty. Thank you.

Answer the following questions

Below is a list of Gikuyu words which might be used to express new meanings in addition to what might be taking as their conventional meanings. Please indicate in the spaces provided what you they mean ordinarily and also any other meaning they might have.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Words</th>
<th>meaning</th>
<th>new meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Maï</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mücori</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Múguthi</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ngima</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gacungwa</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kamutí</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Kigutha
Kindu
Kühanda
Therera
Gütironia
Gücora
Nikiahía
Kumiria
Kúhaicia
Güte mbau
Mucori
Kúlkira
Kúñaria
Gükanyakanya
Kúoya kúoya

Please add any other word that you feel has acquired new meaning just like the words listed above. Stating the normal and the new meaning that the word has acquired.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>meaning</th>
<th>new meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2. How often do you come across the words you have identified above being used in conversation?

3. Do you have any problem in understanding what is being said when the words are used to convey the new meanings?

4. Do you use such words to imply the new meanings, and how often?

5. How do you feel about the use of such words, especially when being used to convey the new meanings?

4. Would you use the words to communicate the new meanings on all occasions? If not why and when would you not use the words?
APPENDIX 2

Conversation 1

This conversation takes place between two saloon attendants. One of them has just come in.

Att.: 1 *Watinda kuu muthenya wothe?*  
You have been where the whole day?

Att.: 2 *Nikii ndireka haha nagutiri na wira?*  
What am I doing here and there is no work?

Att.: 1 *Customa waku auma haha no niathii.*  
Customer yours was here but left.

Att.: 2 *Akwendaga atia nawaga kumuthondeka njuiri nikii?*  
She wanted what and why didn’t make her hair.

Att.: 1 *A kwendaga wifu naniui uria anegenaga*  
She wanted a weave and know how how she complains.

Att.: 1 *Ii wifu niyo iratigia riu*  
Yes weave is the in thing now.

Conversation 2

This conversation is between a seller and a customer in an open air market.

Att.: *Umuwega customa. Ukwenda ngwuenderie kii.*  
How are you customer? What would like to buy?

Cus.: *Ngwenda kilo ya nyanya. Irama atia?*  
I want a kilo of Tomatoes. How much is it?

Att.: Kilo irauma ciringi mirongo itatu.  
A kilo is costing shillings thirty.

Cus.: *Hii kai irauma goro atia?*  
What! It is costing very expensive.

Att.: *Wee ona nwwagiriruo kwaria .Arimu riu no maratigia .mwina ngima riu.*  
You, you should not complain. Teachers are the in thing now you have ugali now.

Cus.: *Ona wira wa thoko utigagia muno. Hee kilo igiri*  
Even selling in the market has its gains. Give me two kilos.
Conversation 3

The conversation takes place in an open air market between two sellers.

Att :1 *Ikwanyu nimuraniriiruo mugathii semina igakoruo kanitha _ini njuma?*  
In your place were you told about a seminar to be there on Saturday?

Att.: 2 *Aca , ndaigua nawee uhoro wa seminar. Niyakii*  
No , I am hearing from you about the seminar. What is it about ?

Att :1 *Niyaguthomithia andu uhoro wa Kigutha.*  
It is about educating people about Aids.

Att.:2 *Andu mekwendo mathomithio uhoro wa Kigutha . Nimaguthira.*  
People need to be educated about Aids. They will be finished.

Att : :1 *Uriya uguthiira niuria utakaimenyerera.*  
Who will get finished will not be careful.

Att.: 2 *Gutiri kuimenyera Kigutha nogigokore o nyumba riu.*  
Nothing being careful, Aids can get you even in your hours.

Conversation 4

This conversation takes place in a soloon, between a salon attendant and a client. They are discussing a promotion going on over Inooro radio station.

Att. *Niwiituite uhoro wa gicindano kira kiri inoro?*  
Have you had about the cometation going on over Inooro radio station?

Cus. *Aca ndiguite. Nigicindano giakii?*  
No I haven’t heard. What is it about?

You can win ten thousand every day or even a million per month.

Cus. *Riu niwitikite noucinde?*  
Now do you believe you can win.?

I have faith, I be sending it every day. I might win a million.

Cus: *Ni mbeca ciuku urate tuhu.*  
You are wasting you moey.

Conversation 5

This conversation takes place between two sellers in a market, a young man and an elderly lady. The young man is preparing to close shop for the day.

Woman: *Kai wahinga wira tene atia umuhl?*  
Why have you closed so early today?

Man: *Titene , nigithaa giakuinuka.*  
It is not early , it is time to go home.

Woman : *Githaa giakii? Thaa ikumi ninginyu?*
Time for what? Is it yet 4.00 o’clock?

Man: *Nithaa ikumi. Na ndathii kuhariria. Nduramenya Mugithi wa Coro urara kirurumo umuthi*
It is 4.00. Let’s get prepared. Don’t you know that the procession from Coro F.M. is at the falls tonight?

Will you keep on taking all your money to the Falls? You should get married now. There is the danger of Aids.

Man: *Kigutha kiguthaga uria wina mutino*
Aids hits those who are unlucky.

Woman: *Niguo mugaga. Ugicoka guthikiriria mundu ari okwa huko.*
That is what you say. Next you hear that one is dead and buried.

---

Conversation 6
This conversation takes place between a saloon attendant and a client. There are no other clients.

Cus: *Thiku ici mutiri na wira muangi.*
These days you don’t have a lot of work.

Att: *Liriu tutiri ni wira muangi, twetereire Dithemba.*
Yes now we don’t have a lot of work we, are waiting for December.

Cus: *Dithemba mauundo makoraguo mari mega hari ahuri ambiacara.*
December is a good month for business peole.

Att.: *Dithemba nitigagia ni kuoya kuoya, Onagutika januari kwaarraga tukena kumiria.*
December is a good month, we make a lot profit. But January is so dry we feel like running away.

---

Conversation 7
This conversation takes place in a saloon between two saloon attendants.

Att.: 1: *Njokete kuhurika hwa-ini ndarikia wira ngathii toro tene.*
I get so tired in the evening, I go to sleep early

Att.: 2: *Nikii naniguo raiburari iyo yah au hanyu iri na mikwa miega?*
Why! The library there yours has got very good tapes.

Att: Acio makoragwo mikwa ya Nigeria na ndiendaga iyo. Ikora urogi .muno.
Those have Nigeria and I don’t like them, they have a lot of Witchcraft

Att. Tiyothe! Nituthire guitu nguhe mukwa wa Pastor Ken wone Nduri Kamuti.
Not all! Lets pass ours, I give a tape of Pastor Ken, you will see it has no love portion.
APPENDIX 3

GRAMMATICAL CATEGORIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CATEGORIES</th>
<th>WORDS</th>
<th>PERCENTAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NOUNS</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VERBS</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADDJECTIVES</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX 4

PROCESSES OF NEW MEANINGS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROCESS</th>
<th>WORDS</th>
<th>PERCENTAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EXTENSION</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PERJORATION</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>28.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AMELIORATION</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>26.71</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>