LEXICAL CHANGE IN THE NAMING OF THE MONTHS OF THE YEAR IN EKEGUSII

BY

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June, 2016
DECLARATION
This project is my original work and has not been submitted for a degree in any other university.

Signature.......................... Date..............................

JACQUELINE NYABOE MORARA
REG.NO.C50/CE/26065/2011

This project has been submitted for examination with my approval as the University Supervisor.

Signature.......................... Date..............................

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DEDICATION

To my dear husband, Eric Morara Omundi, who accorded me full support.

To my three precious children, Elsie, Cyril, and Myles, who missed me while I was doing my studies.

To my parents, Peter Nyangau Simi and Marcella Moraa, whose unconditional love, guidance and mentorship have been my source of encouragement.

To my parents-in-law, Isaiah Omundi and Monica Moraa, who took care of my children while I was away.

To my siblings, Evans, Jared, Christopher, Gladys, Everline, Elijah and Lilian, who gave me unwavering support.
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My deep appreciation goes to my supervisor Dr. Maroko, Geoffrey. This work has come to an end because of your guidance and dedication. Your advice has finally borne fruit.

I also take this opportunity to thank Prof. Githiora, Chege who guided me in the early stages of my research. Your contribution to my work cannot go unappreciated.

I thank all my academic colleagues in the Department of English and Linguistics for your unwavering support.

I wish to register my gratitude, sincere acknowledgements and appreciation to all my informants who provided the raw data that formed the basis of this study. I in particular honour the memory of my late grandmother ‘baba’ Birintina Nyaboke Onsongo for the information she gave me on the months of the year in Ekegusii. This was timely for I did not know that she would not live to see the fruits of her contribution.

My greatest debt of gratitude is to my family. I could think of no greater family than mine, to have been honoured by God to be a part of. This includes my husband, children, parents, parents-in-law, sisters, brothers, brothers-in-law and sisters-in-law. God bless you all for supporting my education.

To everybody else whose support I have not acknowledged, I am full of gratitude for you were instrumental in helping me complete my work.

Finally, I am grateful to God for directing my path. Whenever things seemed difficult, I remembered that you have promised to accomplish all the good work that you have begun in me. This has come to pass. Receive all the glory and honour.
ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study was to identify and describe the change in the naming of the months of the year in Ekegusii. In doing so, the study examined the change in language in relation to cultural change in the Gusii community. The study purposed to document the meanings associated with the 'native' terms that are used to refer to the months of the year and describe language change by providing 'new' terms that are in use. The study made use of the Linguistic Relativity Theory formulated by Edward Sapir and his student Benjamin Lee Whorf, the Variationist Theory by William Labov and the Speech Accommodation Theory by Howard Giles to account for the change in language at the lexical level. The Linguistic Relativity Theory is concerned with the possibility that man's view of his environment may be conditioned by his language. The theory brings out two views: that the society has an effect on language and that the environment is reflected in language. This was used in the present study to explain the relationship between the 'native' terms used to refer to the months of the year in Ekegusii and the Gusii culture. The Speech Accommodation Theory was developed to account for ways in which speakers modified their language during interactions with addressees from other linguistic groups. The theory was used to find out motivations behind speakers choosing particular terms from available options to refer to the months of the year in Ekegusii. The Variationist Theory was used to investigate co-variation between linguistic and social variables. The study used questionnaires, an audio recorder and interview schedules to interview informants who provided information on the 'native' and 'new' terms used to refer to the months of the year in Ekegusii. The number of respondents targeted was thirty and were sampled using the snowball and purposive sampling techniques. The data collected was analyzed qualitatively by identifying the choice of terms (these are new terms borrowed from English and Kiswahili) used by those who were young whereas the quantitative design helped to generate information on the meanings of the months. The study findings revealed that there were lexical changes in reference to the months of the year in Ekegusii leading to two categories of names: 'native' terms and 'new' terms. It found out that there was a correlation between the lexical terms used to refer to the months of the year in Ekegusii with social variables of age and educational qualifications. The study also derived the causes of language change using the lexical terms. The study, therefore, concluded that the two categories of lexical terms should be documented together with their meanings. The information gathered from the study would be useful in enriching the already existing literature on the 'native' terms by providing meanings associated with the 'native' terms and document the 'new' terms with the view to accounting for language change. The study contributes to the field of historical (diachronic) linguistics and related studies may find the information it provides relevant for reference. The information could also enrich Ekegusii lexicon and contribute to review of the existing literature.
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CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction
This Chapter deals with the background of the study, the statement of the problem, research objectives, research questions and assumptions, rationale of the study and the scope and limitation of the study.

1.1 Background of the Study
Language has been changing since it first appeared on earth; it is changing now; it will surely continue to change for as long as human beings survive (Trask, 1994). It has been found that when languages come into contact, there is transfer of linguistic items from one language to another due to borrowing of words (Hock 1986; Kachru 1989). The expansion of vocabulary where new words enter a language is a natural consequence of language contact situations (Atchison, 1985; B. Kachru 1986; Bloomfield 1983; Hock 1976). However, purists observe that massive interference by another language is a sure sign of language decay but this is a reversible phenomenon because borrowing is a means of enrichment of language. According to Trask (1976), speakers of a language may ‘borrow’ (that is, copy) words from other languages which they have encountered. It may take place in order to obtain new words for genuinely new things, or merely for reasons of prestige.

Anderson (1973) states that every natural language provides its speakers with an entirely adequate system for making any kinds of observations that they need to make about the world. If such is the case, every natural language must be an extremely rich system, one that allows its users to overcome any predispositions that exist and to do this without difficulty. Ekegusii is not an exception since it has adequate vocabulary to refer to the months of the year but the Ekegusii speakers have adopted new words for reasons that have been examined in this study. This does not in any way make the language inferior since language change is part of language development (Lyons, 1984). Today, there are few societies in which the influence of other societies is not present. It results in cultural diffusion which is evident in language. For Cooper (1989), bilingualism, a state that prevails in the current society serves as an agent of language change.
These speakers introduce elements from one of their languages into another, influence monolingual speakers of the second language with whom they are in contact with. Language purists may rail at the latest importations but be unconscious of elements imported so long ago as to have become nativized, Cooper (1989).

Marshall (2004) in Northeast Scotland showed that the most revealing factor in determining how individuals changed their speech behavior was the group to which they oriented. Those with the most positive orientation to the local rural group resist change. He adds that those ‘who have a higher degree of mental urbanization, or an attitude of openness to supra-local norms, are at the forefront of change’. Trask (1994) reiterates that throughout history, older and more conservative speakers have objected to changes in the language whenever they have noticed them. This could be used to explain why most of the younger Gusii speakers did not use or were not even aware of the ‘native’ terms that were used to refer to the months of the year since they had ‘new’ terms.

Akama (2006) observes that the Gusii community does not share a boundary with a Bantu community. They are sandwiched between the Luo, Kipsigis and Maasai. Cammenga (2002) therefore, argues that studies in Ekegusii are urgent for purposes of documentation because the language is likely to undergo a transformation.

According to Trask (1974) every language is constantly changing in vocabulary, in pronunciation and in grammar. Cammenga (2002) has focused his study on the grammatical aspect, which is a continuation of Whiteley’s (1960) pioneer work on Ekegusii. There is therefore need for more studies in the area of vocabulary and pronunciation. Cammenga continues to state that there is need for a thorough analysis of the prosodological system, a comprehensive dictionary and a scholarly edition of local verbal art. He observes that though the language still has regional importance in Kenya, it is little known. Nash (2009) also observes that Ekegusii is an under described minority language with relatively few academic descriptions. A number of studies have been conducted with the aim of strengthening the language in terms of documentation that include dialects of Ekegusii (Bosire, 1993), phonology and morphology (Mecha, 2006), syntactic patterns of code-switching in Ekegusii-English (Bitutu, 1991), Polysemy and Homonymy (Aunga,
Bosire & Machogu (2009) have published the first Ekegusii dictionary which is a step in the right direction. Abai (2013) has published The History and Traditions of Abagusii People of Kenya, Mwanyagetinge.

The present study sought to account for the change in the lexical terms that are used to refer to the months of the year in Ekegusii. The study also examined the meanings associated with the ‘native’ terms used to refer to the months and found out that they had cultural implications.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The language of a speech community entails their culture and beliefs. Hamers & Blanc (1989) state that a majority of ethnic groups in the world stress language as the main carrier of their culture and expression of their identity. As time goes by, every language undergoes change in vocabulary, pronunciation and grammar. Most changes occur as a result of language contact which also presupposes some degree of cultural contact, however limited. Significant changes begin from the lexicon of a language which is the main carrier of a peoples' culture. Hock (1986) and Mwaniki (1998) point out that languages rarely borrow basic lexical items which define the core of human experience but rather adopt names for concepts acquired in the course of cultural diffusion. Core or basic vocabularies are words that are generally known to exhibit more resistance to change than other words in language. However, a section of these vocabularies, specifically names of months or seasons, seem to give in to change in Ekegusii due to influence from languages of wider communication such as English and Kiswahili. There is need for preservation of the Kenyan languages and this can be done through documentation to make them more visible in research.

This study, therefore, sought to investigate language change at the lexical level in the naming of the months of the year in Ekegusii. As a way of revitalizing Ekegusii, there is an urgent need to identify and describe the core vocabulary associated with naming the months of the year.
1.3 Research Objectives
1. To identify and describe the change in naming of the months of the year in Ekegusii.
2. To establish why and the extent to which speakers of Ekegusii accommodated to their listeners when referring to the months of the year in relation to age, gender and educational qualifications.
3. To find out how lexical terms referring to the months of the year in Ekegusii could be used to explain the causes of language change.

1.4 Research Questions
1. What are the lexical changes in reference to the months of the year in Ekegusii?
2. What is the correlation between the lexical terms used to refer to the months of the year in Ekegusii with social variables of age, gender and educational qualifications?
3. What are the causes of language change with reference to the lexical terms used to refer to the months of the year in Ekegusii?

1.5 Research Assumptions
1. There are lexical changes in reference to the months of the year in Ekegusii.
2. There is a correlation between the lexical terms and social variables of age and educational qualifications in reference to the months of the year in Ekegusii.
3. There are causes of language change identified using lexical terms referring to the months of the year in Ekegusii.

1.6 Rationale of the Study
A number of studies have been done in Ekegusii but not many have given attention to the lexicon of this language. Bosire & Machogu (2009) have come up with a dictionary where the 'native' terms used to refer to the months of the year in Ekegusii are documented. Abai (2013) has documented these names but his order is different from the one in the Ekegusii dictionary. The present study provides a cultural record of meanings associated with the names given to the months of the year and has used this information to harmonise the order of the names. The findings
of this study can be used to review the already existing literature. This is because words embody facts of history and record great social evolutions and feelings in speech communities. Crystal (2006:6) notes that languages that are not studied and preserved are likely to face the danger of incorporating elements from adoptives that may be difficult to identify synchronically, after a long period in history.

Based on the literature reviewed, this study has been used to record the most probable order of the months of the year in Ekegusii using the 'native' terms derived from their meanings. The 'new' terms have also been recorded since they are the ones that are currently in use. The study has generated literature that can be used by scholars who may wish to explore the area of language change.

1.7 Scope and Limitations
All languages change constantly and the changes may be phonological, grammatical, or lexical in nature. Cheshire (1991) argues that it would be unrealistic to attempt analyzing all these aspects at once. This study limited itself to lexical change and in particular focused on the changes that have taken place in the terms that are used to refer to the months of the year in Ekegusii. The other areas of language change are left out.

Ekegusii is spoken in Kisii and Nyamira counties but the study was limited to Kisii County. It drew data from both Rogoro (Northern) and Maate (Southern) dialects of Ekegusii (Bosire, 1993) which are found in this county. The term 'dialect' in sociolinguistics is used to describe the speech characteristic of a region. The 'Maate' dialect in Ekegusii seems to feature more in the southern parts of the county in districts such as Nyamarambe and Tabaka. The 'Rogoro' dialect is common in the rest of the districts e.g. Marani and Suneka. This study limited itself to two districts: Marani representing the 'Rogoro' dialect and 'Nyamarambe' for 'Maate' dialect.

Due to the nature of the lexical items in the study (native terms used to refer to the months of the year in Ekegusii), the researcher gathered data from twelve 'old' speakers (sixty years and above) who were likely to have the required knowledge. Information on onomastics was employed i.e. the
study of names. We narrowed our study to toponomastics which is a branch of onomastics that studies names, their meaning and origin. Eighteen ‘modern’ type of speakers (fifteen years and above) were used to collect data for the ‘new’ terms that are currently in use. Four research assistants were used to collect and verify data from the field. Since, linguistic behavior is said to be relatively homogeneous, large samples are not necessary for linguistic surveys (Milroy & Gordon, 2003).

The speech of various speakers varies according to social factors like age, educational status, religion, gender, ethnicity and occupation. Only age, gender, and educational qualifications were considered because data on ethnicity and occupation was not necessary in the present study. Trask (1994) observes that throughout history, older and more conservative speakers have objected to changes in the language whenever they have noticed them. This study sought to find out whether there was a correlation between the names used to refer to the months of the year in Ekegusii and age. Kebeya (2008) states that age is revered among the Gusii people and there is great pressure to respect those older than one and develop close relationships with those of one’s peer group. In many sociolinguistic studies, older speakers have been observed to be conservative in their use of language unlike the younger speakers who tend to be innovative.

There was also need to establish how gender determined the choice of the lexical items used to refer to the months of the year in Ekegusii. Trudgill (1983); Russel (1986) observe that linguistic research has shown that in many societies, the speech of men and women differs. Marshall (2004) indicates that the most revealing factor in determining how individuals changed their speech behavior was the group to which they oriented. ‘Those with the most positive orientation to the local rural group resist change”. He adds that those ‘who have a higher degree of mental urbanization, or an attitude of openness to supra-local norms, are at the forefront of change’.

Educational qualifications were also considered in this study to investigate how language varied from people with no formal educational qualifications to those of high educational qualifications. People with high educational qualifications were likely to have come into contact with other languages other than their first language and were therefore likely to be in the forefront in adopting
'new' words. The present study sought to find out how educational qualifications influenced the choice of lexical items used to refer to the months of the year in Ekegusii.

The research focused on spoken and written data. The researcher employed interviews which were audio recorded and questionnaires to collect data. For respondents who could not write, the researcher used audio recordings and the information was later transferred to the questionnaires.

1.8 Chapter Summary
This chapter has discussed the background against which the names of the months of the year in Ekegusii have been derived from. It discussed the background of the problem, statement of the problem, research objectives, research questions, research assumptions, rationale of the study, scope and limitations. From these areas, the study brings to the picture other languages i.e. English and Kiswahili whose names used to refer to the months of the year have undergone transformation similar to what has happened to Ekegusii. The study therefore sought to account for the change in the lexical terms. In the next chapter, literature reviewed and theoretical framework that guided this study is discussed.
CHAPTER TWO
LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.0 Introduction

This Chapter covers the review of related studies as well as the theoretical framework that guided this study. The literature includes: onomastics and selected literature on naming and language change, the general overview of language change, the traditional view of language change, borrowing, causes of language change, and attitudes towards language change. The theoretical framework focuses on three theories: The Speech Accommodation Theory, The Variationist Theory and the Linguistic Relativity Theory.

2.1 Onomastics and Selected Literature on Naming and Language Change

Onomastics or onomatology is the study of names-names of all kinds: names of people, names of places, names of landscape features, names of buildings, names of animals, names of ethnic and social groups, names of events, names of vehicles, names of months of the year etc. Lyons (1977) posits that the basic semantic function of words has been seen as that of naming. He asserts that people or adults name things by means of words which denote them.

Lupenga (2006) also notes that among many African cultures, a name tells a lot about the individual that it signifies the language from which it is drawn, and the society that ascribes to it. A name may indicate the collective history and life experiences of the people surrounding the individual. Geetaerts (1994) argues that deciding how to name something is a matter of choice. There are various alternatives but the options do not have the same value. The choice of a word may be influenced by consideration of formality and linguistic appropriateness. The choice is made between words that are semantically equivalent but that are invested with different stylistic values. The stylistic distinction that exists is a general contextual type of variation, involving the fact that a specific lexical phenomenon (such a preference for expressing a particular meaning by means of one item rather than another) may be subject to the influence of contextual factors like a
speech situation asking for a particular style or geographical distinctions among groups of speakers.

Onomastics is divided into two large categories: toponomastics and anthroponomastics. Toponomastics is a branch of onomastics that studies the typonomies, or in other words the names of places, geographical terms, their meaning and origin while anthroponomastics studies the meaning and origin of personal names.

An example of a study of personal names has been done in Araf or Ari-af, one of the Omotic languages in Ethiopia. Gibre (2010) points out that the Aari people, who speak Araf, came into contact with Amharic-speaking migrants from central and northern Ethiopia during the southward expansion of Emperor Menelik in the late nineteenth century. Traditionally, the Aari people used names to express their collective history, shared life experiences, major events and their environment. The incorporation of Aariland into the Ethiopian empire led to economic, political, and cultural domination as well as resistance on the part of the Aari. Personal names that characterize the period of struggle against the dominant migrants became common until the 1974 revolution that ended the Gama hegemony. Afterwards, however, the naming tradition suffered a setback as evidenced in the decline of Aari personal names in favour of Amhara names and the alteration of spelling and pronunciation of Aari names. The new changes in naming practices compromised the role of the Aari language as an expression of culture and a marker of identity. Though the present study was not based on personal names, it benefitted from this study on cultural contact and change in naming practices among the Aari of southwest Ethiopia since it sought to determine the effect of language and cultural contact on Ekegusii.

In typonomastics, the research is done via analysis of the different names of one particular item. The names are a direct consequence of the different people, languages and cultures that exists in that particular area. The study of names depends on collaboration between academics and the wider public. This is because everyone uses names so each person has individual insights into how names are used within their own community. Local knowledge is therefore essential to confirm whether or not a particular interpretation is appropriate and explain how the name might have arisen and why. The present study focused on the naming of months of the year in Ekegusii. The
history of months of the year has been done in other languages but the present study limited itself to English, Kiswahili and Ekegusii.

In the history of the months of the year, the original Roman year had ten named months as shown in table 2.1.

Table 1: 2.1 Original Roman Names of the Months of the Year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Roman Name</th>
<th>English Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Martius</td>
<td>March</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aprilis</td>
<td>April</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maius</td>
<td>May</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junuis</td>
<td>June</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quintilis</td>
<td>July</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sextilis</td>
<td>August</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September</td>
<td>September</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October</td>
<td>October</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td>November</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December</td>
<td>December</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Moris, 1976 & O'Neil, 1975)

There were two unnamed months in the dead of winter when not much happened in agriculture. The year began in Martius “March”. Numa Pompilius, the second king of Rome circa 700 BC, added the two months Januarius: “January” and Februarius “February”. He also moved the beginning of the year from Marius to Januarius and changed the number of days in several months to be odd, a lucky number. After Februarius, there was occasionally an additional month of Intercalarius “Intercalendar”. This is the origin of the leap-year day being in February. In 46 BC, Julius Caesar reformed the Roman calendar (hence the Julian calendar) changing the number of days in many months and removing Intercalarius. When he reorganized the calendar and made it start in January, he kept the old names, apart from one month, which he called after himself. Augustus came after Julius Caesar and changed the name of another month-August. Table 2.2 is a summary of the names of the months of the year in English: name, origin and why.
### Table 2: English Names of the Months of the Year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Comes from</th>
<th>Who or what</th>
<th>Why</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January</td>
<td>Janus</td>
<td>God of doors</td>
<td>This month opens the year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February</td>
<td>Februuo</td>
<td>Purify</td>
<td>This was the Roman month of sacrifices and purification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March</td>
<td>Mars</td>
<td>God of war</td>
<td>Start of year for soldiers (on fighting during winter)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>Aperire</td>
<td>Open</td>
<td>This is the month when trees open their leaves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>Maia</td>
<td>Goddess of growth</td>
<td>This is the month when the plants really start to grow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>Juno</td>
<td>Queen of the gods</td>
<td>Named after the chief Roman goddess</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July</td>
<td>Julius Caesar</td>
<td>Ruler of Rome</td>
<td>He reorganized the calendar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August</td>
<td>Augustus</td>
<td>Ruler of Rome</td>
<td>He thought he was at least as important as Julius Caesar!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September</td>
<td>Septem</td>
<td>Seven</td>
<td>Seventh month (counting from March)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October</td>
<td>Octo</td>
<td>Eight</td>
<td>Eight month (counting from March)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td>Novem</td>
<td>Nine</td>
<td>Ninth month (counting from March)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December</td>
<td>Decem</td>
<td>Ten</td>
<td>Tenth month (counting from March)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(O’Neil, 1975)

From the history of the names of the months of the year in English, the observation made is that naming is based on a community’s culture. These names originate from their religion (months named after gods) their rulers and their agricultural practices. There is also evidence in the changes in the names with the passage of time. The current study sought to determine how Ekegusii used to name the months of the year and also explain the changes that had taken place.
Kiswahili has two categories of names used to refer to the months of the year: those that use the numerical order and the borrowed names from English as shown in table 2.3.

Table 2.3: Kiswahili Names of the Months of the Year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name using numerical order</th>
<th>Borrowed name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mwezi wa kwanza</td>
<td>Januari</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mwezi wa pili</td>
<td>Februari</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mwezi wa tatu</td>
<td>Machi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mwezi wa nne</td>
<td>Aprili</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mwezi wa tano</td>
<td>Mei</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mwezi wa sita</td>
<td>Juni</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mwezi wa saba</td>
<td>Julai</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mwezi wa nane</td>
<td>Agosti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mwezi wa tisa</td>
<td>Septemba</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mwezi wa kumi</td>
<td>Oktoba</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mwezi wa kumi na moja</td>
<td>Novembra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mwezi wa kumi na mbili</td>
<td>Desemba</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Kamusi ya Karne ya 21, 2011)

Stigand (1977) observes that a language so little written as Swahili is unstable in character and as changes occur, old words and forms rapidly pass out of use. This could be as a result of language contact since the language is commonly used for trade where different speech communities are involved.

Bitutu (1991) studied the syntactic patterns of code-switching in Ekegusii-English. The research was carried out to identify the syntactic patterns of code-switching in Ekegusii. English had seven constraints in common with Spanish-English, three with Russian-French, one with Yoruba-English and five out of the seven claimed to be universal with a few exceptions in some of the constraints. Bitutu grouped her findings into two: code switch patterns and code switch constraints. The
present study benefitted from Bitutu’s work in terms of methodology in that the data collected in
the present study was obtained from respondents answering questions that would generate the
names of the months of the year.

Bosire & Machogu (2009) have published the first Ekegusii dictionary. This study benefitted the
present study in that the ‘native’ terms used to refer to the months of the year are documented.
Abai (2013) has also documented these terms and their meanings but the order seems different
from the one provided in the dictionary as shown in Table 2.4. The study therefore sought to
improve on the existing literature by systematically providing the most probable names of the
‘native’ terms and document the ‘new’ terms that had replaced them. The study also examined
how the interaction of Ekegusii with the two languages (English and Kiswahili) had contributed to
the changes in the naming of the months of the year in Ekegusii.

2.2 A General Overview of Language Change

The study of language change falls under historical linguistics also called diachronic linguistics. It
has five main concerns:-

1. To describe and account for observed changes in particular languages.
2. To reconstruct the pre-history of languages and determine their relatedness, grouping them into
language families (comparative linguistics).
3. To develop general theories about how and why language changes.
4. To describe the history of speech communities.
5. To study the history of words, i.e. etymology (Kortmann, 1999).

According to Anderson (1973), historical linguistics is not limited to the study of the history of one
or several related languages, but, rather, it inquires into the nature of change itself. In so doing, a
model is sought that will represent and explain language modification universally, both in
accordance with language as a natural phenomenon and as a cultural entity. The processes by
which changes occur and a determination of motivating forces behind them form the abstract basis
of historical linguistics.
Language change is variation over time in a language’s phonetic, morphological, semantic, syntactic and other features. Bynon (1977) argues that although language change has now been studied systematically for a period of one hundred years and somewhat less systematically for a good deal longer than that, there is still a considerable amount of disagreement about its nature and motivation. Historical linguists, the primary students of language change, simply relied on the examination of data from different points in history to infer that linguistic changes had occurred and to describe the outcomes of those changes. This is a diachronic approach. The historical data provided little insight into how the changes had taken place or into what might have motivated them, (except of course, in the case of language contact).

Saussure (1959) states that time changes all things and that there is no reason why language should escape this universal law. Saussure (1959) and Bloomfield (1933) posit that most linguists have maintained that change itself cannot be observed; all that one can possibly hope to observe are the consequences of change. The important consequences are those that make some kind of difference to the structure of a language. In any particular time, it certainly may be possible for linguists to observe variation in language, but that variation is of little importance. Such variation must be ascribed either to dialect mixture, that is, to a situation in which two or more systems have a degree of overlap, or to free variation, that is, to unprincipled or random variation. The following are examples of free variation in Ekegusii:-

*Ching’eni*  -  *chinyeni*  vegetables
*Amaroba*  -  *amaraba*  soil

Variation may be of little importance to linguists because it does not change the meaning of the words. They have therefore attached little or no importance to variation. Only in recent years have some of them seen in it a possible key to understanding not only how languages are distributed in society, but also how that distribution may help us to understand how change occurs in language.

Wardhaugh (1986) argues that if we believe that languages are changing all the time, and all linguists do hold that belief, we should also be able to see change in progress if we can recognize it. If we can interpret the variation we see, or some of it at least, as a wave of change going through a language, and if we can see changes apparently diffusing through sets of similar linguistic items,
we may also want to recast or even abandon the traditional Saussurean and Bloomfieldian view of language. To do so, however, we will have to be sure that what we are observing is change and not just random fluctuation.

Coates (1992) proposes that linguistic change can be said to have taken place when a new linguistic form, used by some sub-group within a speech community is adopted by other members of that community and accepted as the norm. This change can be as a result of social or political pressures such as invasion, colonization and immigration. Language also changes whenever speakers come into contact with each other. As such, when two groups come into contact with each other, there is a likelihood of one group being influenced by the other or even both groups influencing each other which can ultimately lead to language change (Hudson, 1980). Labov (2001) points out that language change can be readily observed today: in spite of the expansion and homogenization of the mass media, linguistic change is proceeding at a rapid rate so that the dialects of Boston, New York, Chicago, Birmingham, and Los Angeles are more different from each other than they were a century ago.

Wardaugh (2010) states that the problem therefore is one of identifying changes that are occurring and then of trying to account for them: what sets them in motion; how they spread; and how they are maintained. The Gusii community has been interacting with other communities as a result of colonization, immigration and language contact. The study of language change in this community can easily be observed especially when looking at its vocabulary as done by the present study.

2.3 The Traditional View of Language Change

In the traditional view of language change, the only changes that are important in a language are those that can be demonstrated to have structural consequences (Wardhaugh, 2010). Consequently, over a period of time a distinction between two sounds may be lost in a language, as occurred historically in most varieties of English in the vowels of *meet* and *meat* or *horse* and *hoarse*. Alternatively, a distinction may be gained where there was none before, as in *house* with an [s] but *to house* with a [z]. In this case a single phonological unit became two: there was a structural split.
According to this view of change, it is structural considerations alone that are all important (i.e., do units A & B contrast or do they not?).

Changes are categorized into two: internal and external. Internal change in a language is observed through its consequences. Such change is not restricted to phonology. The morphology and syntax of a language may change in the same way. It is possible, therefore, to write internal histories of languages showing the structural changes that have occurred over periods of time through the use of this principle of ‘contrast vs. lack of contrast’. External change on the other hand is brought about through borrowing. Changes that occur through borrowing from other dialects or languages are often quite clearly distinguishable, for a while at least, from changes that come about internally. They may be somewhat idiosyncratic in their characteristics or distributional and appear, for a while at least, to be quite ‘marked’ in this way (Wardhaugh, 1986).

This study concentrated on the external changes that have affected the lexicon of Ekegusii. This is mainly through language contact. Bynon (1977) states that the notion of ‘contact’ can be interpreted in a very wide sense, so as to include not only close geographical proximity but also trade relations and other types of cultural encounters of varying degrees of sophistication. The superficial kind of language contact is probably that which exists between producers or conveyors of some commodity and their clients in other language areas, and it is a well-documented fact of recent language history that the names of such objects of international trade as tea, coffee, or tobacco readily travel with them and become part of the consumers’ language.

On the other end of the scale, the most intensive kind of contact may be said to exist in multilingual communities, and here not merely lexical items but even phonological and grammatical rules may come to be shared by the languages in question. The Gusii community is multilingual because of its geographical location. It is surrounded by Nilotic speaking communities and in addition, their speakers come into contact with English and Kiswahili in school. There is therefore need for them to learn a neutral language for them to use during business transactions.
Language contact suggests that there is some degree of cultural contact between the speech communities involved. Of all the sectors of language, the lexicon reflects the culture of the speakers most closely. This study sought to explain the change in the use of terms used to refer to the months of the year in Ekegusii with the meanings of ‘native’ terms taken into consideration. It sought to answer the question, ‘Has cultural change led to language change?’

2.4 Borrowing

According to Hock (1986:380) the term ‘borrowing’ refers to the adoption of individual words or even larger sets of vocabulary items from another language or dialect. When speakers of different languages interact closely, it is typical for their languages to influence each other. Trask (1994) observes that speakers of a language may borrow (that is, copy) words from other languages which they have encountered. English, for example, has borrowed many thousands of words from other languages, and is still doing so today. It used to borrow words from languages of their colonizers, particularly from French. The large-scale importation of words from Latin, French and other languages into English in the 16th and 17th centuries was more significant. Some languages have borrowed so much that they have become scarcely recognizable (Waterman, 1976).

Bright (1960) examined the Brahmin and non-Brahmin caste dialects, which originate from the same historical source, old Kannada. His examination revealed that the Brahmin dialect seems to have undergone conscious change, in the form of deliberate borrowing from Sanskrit.

Borrowing can take place at phonetic, morphological, semantic, syntactic and other levels but this study only focused on lexical borrowing. It particularly focused on the lexical items borrowed by Ekegusii to refer to the months of the year.

According to Kachru (1994), there are essentially two hypotheses about motivations for lexical borrowing in languages. One is ‘the deficit hypothesis’ and the other is ‘the dominance hypothesis’. The deficit hypothesis presupposes that borrowing entails linguistic gaps in a language and the prime motivation for borrowing is to remedy the linguistic deficit, especially in the lexical resources of a language. This type of borrowing is referred to as cultural borrowing.
These words are borrowed from other languages because there are no equivalents in the borrowing language. For example, English has borrowed musical terms from Italian such as soprano and tempo. The Czech language has borrowed a lot of English sport terms such as 'football', 'tennis' and 'hockey' (Vachek, 1986).

Ekegusii has borrowed a number of words for this reason. Here are a few examples:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gloss</th>
<th>Ekegusii</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Computer</td>
<td>ekompiuta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Television</td>
<td>eterebisoni</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td>esukuru</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fromkin & Rodman (1988) add that words can also be borrowed for new concepts or ideas for which there are no local equivalents. For example, some mathematical concepts such as algebra and algorithm were introduced by the Arabs and borrowed by many world languages. If one is to teach the same concepts in Ekegusii, the words in Arabic will be the most appropriate to use since there are no local equivalents.

Crowley & Bowern (2010) note that when a language copies a lexical item, it takes the form of a word in one language and generally reshapes that word to fit its own phonological structure. This means that non occurring phonemes may be replaced with phonemes that are present in the system of the language that is taking in the new word, and words may be made to fit the phonological pattern of a language by eliminating sounds that occur in unfamiliar positions or inserting sounds to make words fit its patterns. For instance, in the present study, the Ekegusii names used to refer to the months of the year are borrowed from English and from observation, the phonological structure changes e.g. 'chanuari'=/t fanuaril instead of January- /dʒənjuəri/, 'Tisemba'=/tisemba/ instead of December -/dizemba/. This is because of the absence of sounds /d/ and /dʒ/ in Ekegusii.

'The dominance hypothesis' presupposes that when two cultures come into contact, the direction of culture learning and subsequent word-borrowing is not mutual, but from the dominant to the subordinate (Hinga, 1979). The borrowing is not necessarily done to fill lexical gaps. These words are borrowed and used even though there are native equivalents because they seem to have
prestige. This is what is called core borrowing. Having such words as part of a language’s lexicon is a means of identifying with the donor-language culture. Core borrowing may have a negative impact on the borrowing language because the ‘new’ terms may totally take the place of the ‘native’ terms just like what has taken place in Ekegusii as far as the ‘native’ terms used to refer to the months of the year are concerned. Ekegusii has borrowed words to refer to the months of the year from English and a pattern of naming the same months from Kiswahili not because the language lacks ‘native’ terms. At present, since the English speaking countries have become advanced, and the English language is one of the most influential languages of the world, English lends words to other languages more than it borrows. This contact between a language and English is termed ‘Englishization’ (Kachru, 1994).

Mohideen (2006:25) stipulates that there is a cultural and historical importance of providing an exhaustive record of the appearance of each loan word in a language because words embody facts of history and record great social evolutions and feelings in nations. This study therefore purposed to record the ‘native’ terms used to refer to the months of the year in Ekegusii and their meanings while giving reasons for the appearance of the ‘new’ terms in the language.

Trask (1994) states that as ‘new’ words constantly come into use, old words, and old forms gradually drop out of use. This could be used to justify the change that has taken place in Ekegusii as shown in table 2.4.1.
Table 4: Ekegusii Names of the Months of the Year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>‘Old’ or ‘Native’ words</th>
<th>‘New’ or ‘Borrowed’ words</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Bosire &amp; Machogu, 2009)</td>
<td>(Abai, 2013)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monugunobarema</td>
<td>Monuguno o’barema</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egetamo</td>
<td>Egetamo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rigwata</td>
<td>Rigwata</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eng’atiato</td>
<td>Amaumuntia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amaumuntia</td>
<td>Ebwagi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ebwagi</td>
<td>Enkoromomi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enkoromomi</td>
<td>Riete</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Riete</td>
<td>Eng’atiato</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tureti ya kebaki</td>
<td>Bureti a’ kebaki</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egesunte kia masaba</td>
<td>Esagati</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egesunte gia kabere</td>
<td>Egesunte gia chache or Egesunte egetwoni</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Esagati</td>
<td>Egesunte kia masaba or Egesunte egekungu</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The ‘native’ terms in table 2.4.1 above do not seem to tally in the twelve months and that is why the study sought to look for the most probable terms using data collected from twelve ‘older’ speakers from the two dialects of Ekegusii-’Rogoro’ and ‘Maate’. This study also sought to find out what determines the choice of ‘new’ terms used by the speakers during conversations since each month has more than one name as indicated in the table. It also captured the phonological aspect in that a speaker may pronounce the name of the month of the year with correct English pronunciation or use the assimilated version.
2.5 Causes of Language Change

Aitchison (2001) proposes that there are two broad categories of language change: external sociolinguistic factors (social factors outside the language system) and internal psycholinguistic factors (linguistic and psychological factors which reside in the structure of the language and the minds of the speakers). The important thing to remember about change is that, as long as people are using a language, that language will undergo some change (Ottenheimer, 2009). Every language that people use changes constantly and there are many causes that trigger these changes. They include ‘the principle of least effort’, analogy, language contact, cultural environment and migration.

Wardhaugh (1977) records that the principle of least effort is associated with Curtis, Whitney, and Zipf (2013). They observed that speakers tend to make things easy to pronounce in order to economize time and effort in the work of expression. Patton (2007) adds that speakers especially use economy in their articulation, which tends to result in phonetic reduction of speech forms. This can be done through vowel reduction, cluster reduction, lenition and elision. After some time a change may become widely accepted (it becomes a regular sound change) and may end up treated as a standard. According to this principle, language changes because speakers are ‘sloppy’ and simplify their speech in various ways. This principle is an adequate explanation for many isolated changes, such as the reduction of God be with you to good-bye, and it probably plays an important role in most systemic changes, such as the loss of inflections in English (Milward, 1986). This principle applies in the present study because it focuses on the lexical change that takes place in the reference to the months of the year in Ekegusii with the introduction of new lexical terms which may be considered easier to use because of the changing socio-cultural context. It would be easier to use one word to name a month instead of many words for example, ‘Ogutoba’ instead of ‘Egesunte gia Chache’ or Omotienyi o’ikomi, ‘Sebutemba’ instead of ‘Tureti ya kebaki’ or Omotienyi o’kianda.

Analogy is the reducing of word forms by likening different forms of the word to the root. This did not apply in the present study.

Language contact is one of the major causes of language change. Inevitably, speakers of some languages come into contact with speakers of other languages. Such contact can have important
consequences, particularly when one language is perceived by its speakers as being less prestigious than a neighboring language. One language may borrow large numbers of words from its neighbor (Trask, 1994). The present study sought to explain the effect the contact of Ekegusii speakers with speakers of other languages particularly those that speak English and Kiswahili has had on Ekegusii. The use of ‘new’ terms borrowed from Kiswahili could be a sign of prestige associated with this language because there is evidence of existing ‘native’ terms. The same applies to terms that have been borrowed from English.

The last cause of language change is cultural environment and migration. Groups of speakers reflect new places, situations, and objects in their language, whether they encounter different people there or not (Patton, 2007). Language contact, therefore, always presupposes some degree of cultural contact, however limited. Geertz (1973) views culture as shared ways of life, with sharing on both the concrete level (e.g., artifacts) and the cognitive level (e.g., language symbols). The interaction of the Gusii people with other communities in the spheres of trade, urbanization and education has contributed a lot to the change of their cultural environment and language. The ‘native’ terms used to refer to the months of the year bring out aspects of the Gusii culture which have been modified by the interaction with other cultures. For example, the speakers are not only governed by agricultural practices and weather conditions to name the months of the year but also by their economic activities which have been diversified as a result of cultural contact. This study used the meanings associated with the ‘native’ terms that are used to name the months of the year to determine how the cultural environment influences naming.

2.6 Attitudes Towards Language Change
Ottenheimer (2009) observes that there are many factors influencing the rate at which language changes, including the attitudes of the speakers toward borrowing and change. When most members of a speech community value novelty, for example, their language will change quickly. When most members of a speech community value stability, their language will change more slowly. When a particular pronunciation or word or grammatical form or turn of phrase is regarded as more desirable, or marks its users as more important or powerful, then it will be adopted and imitated more rapidly than otherwise.

22
Generally, people have attitudes toward language which are especially salient and influential in interactions. This means that various linguistic features trigger in message recipients beliefs (‘Her way of talking leads me to think she is a professor’) and evaluations (‘she is intelligent’) regarding message senders, and that these beliefs and evaluations are most likely to affect recipients’ behaviors towards senders in contexts of low mutual familiarity (Giles & Peter Robinson, 1990). These attitudes are based on the speaker’s choice of words, syntactic structures, pronunciation and even voice. For example, Margaret Thatcher was told that her voice did not match her position as British Prime Minister: she sounded too ‘shrill’. She was advised to lower the pitch of her voice, diminish its range, and speak more slowly, and thereby adopt an authoritative, almost monotonous delivery to make herself heard. She was successful to the extent that her new speaking style became a kind of trademark, one either well-liked by her admirers or detested by her opponents (Wardhaugh, 2010).

Language change has consequences and speakers may react differently when they notice it. Trask (1974) observes that throughout history, older and more conservative speakers have objected to changes in the language whenever they have noticed them. These attitudes are still there today, but they rarely have much effect on the development of the language. Older speakers frequently object vigorously to recent changes in the language. Sooner or later the older speakers die taking their objections with them, and their place is taken by a younger generation which has grown up with the new forms and regards them as normal. In Ekegusii, the months of the year are referred to using the ‘new’ terms and they are considered the norm. The ‘native’ terms are rarely used, not even by the older speakers because majority of the Gusii speakers do not know them. This study sought to find out whether the Ekegusii speakers know the ‘native’ terms and if they did not know them, determine their attitudes towards them. This data was used to provide the causes of language change.

Marshall (2004) in Northeast Scotland also showed that the most revealing factor in determining how individuals changed their speech behavior was the group to which they oriented: those with the most positive orientation to the local rural group resist change. He adds that those who have a
higher degree of mental urbanization, or an attitude of openness to supra-local norms, are at the forefront of change. In the present study, the respondents who were likely to provide data of the ‘native’ terms used to refer to the months of the year were categorized as those who had a positive orientation to the local rural group. Most of them were old and if young, they had an attachment with the old generation.

Whether speakers have a positive or a negative attitude towards language change, they should be made aware that change is natural and inevitable, and it should not be grounds for alarm or condemnation. That is why documentation of the meanings of Ekegusii ‘native’ terms used to refer to the months of the year would be used to benefit those who are resisting change and allow those who would like to use the ‘new’ terms to use them without any guilt. Crowly & Bowern (2010) conclude that language change is natural, and it is unstoppable, but that doesn’t stop people from attaching social judgements to various ways of talking. They continue to state that new markers come in, old ones go out, and items get adopted or rejected by different sectors of a society.

2.7 Theoretical Framework
This section discusses the three theories that guided the study: the Linguistic Relativity Theory, the Speech Accommodation Theory (SAT) and the Variationist Theory.

2.7.1 The Linguistic Relativity Theory
The Linguistic Relativity Theory is also known as the ‘Sapir-Whorf’ hypothesis. Sapir studied the ways in which language and culture influence each other, and he was interested in the relation between linguistic differences, and differences in cultural world views. This part of his thinking was developed by his student Benjamin Lee Whorf into the principle of linguistic relativity or the ‘Sapir-Whorf’ hypothesis. Before Sapir, it was generally considered impossible to apply the methods of historical linguistics to languages of indigenous peoples because they were believed to be more primitive than the Indo-European languages. Sapir was the first to prove that the methods of comparative linguistics were equally valid when applied to indigenous languages (Hymes, D.1964).
According to Trudgill (1974), the hypothesis is approximately that a speaker's native language sets up a series of categories which act as a kind of grid through which he perceives the world, and which constrain the way in which he categorizes and conceptualizes different phenomena. He continues to state that a language can affect a society by influencing or even controlling the worldview of its speakers. Most languages of European origin are very similar in this respect, presumably because of their common genetic relationship and the long cultural contact between them; the world-views of their speakers and their societies are perhaps for that reason not at all dissimilar.

The principle is often defined as having two versions: the 'strong version' and the 'weak version'. The strong version states that language determines thought and that linguistic categories limit and determine cognitive categories. It is also sometimes described as linguistic determinism. On the other hand, the weak version states that linguistic category and usage influence thought and certain kinds of non-linguistic behavior (Wardhaugh, 2010). The notion of 'weak' and 'strong versions' of Whorf's principle of linguistic relativity is a misunderstanding of Whorf promulgated by Stuart Chase, whom Sapir considered "utterly" incompetent by training and background to handle such a subject. Neither Sapir nor Whorf ever suggested a distinction between 'weak' or 'strong versions' of their views. The hypothesis of linguistic determinism is now generally agreed to be false, but weaker forms of correlation are still being studied by many researchers, often producing empirical evidence for a correlation (Ahearn, 2012).

According to Wardhaugh (1986), there is a relationship between language and society. Linguistic structure and or behavior may either influence or determine social structure. This is the view that is behind the Whorfian hypothesis. Sociolinguistics, therefore, will be concerned with investigating the relationship between language and society with the goal of a better understanding of the structure of language and of how languages function in communication. There are many examples of the physical environment in which a society's way of life is reflected in its language. This is normally visible in the lexicon of a language, for instance, the way in which distinctions are made by means of single words. Among Whorf's best known examples of linguistic relativity are instances where an indigenous language has several terms for a concept that is only described with one word in English and other European languages. One of the examples is the large number of
words for ‘snow’ among the Eskimos. The reason for the many words is obvious: it is essential for these people to be able to distinguish efficiently between different types of snow. English is quite able to make the same distinctions: fine snow, dry snow etc but in Eskimo, this sort of distinction is lexicalized- made by means of individual words (Trudgill ,1974).This example was used to show that indigenous languages sometimes made more fine grained semantic distinctions than European languages.

The Sapir-Whorf hypothesis is concerned with the possibility that man’s view of his environment may be conditioned by his language. The theory brings out two views: that the society has an effect on language and that the environment is reflected in language. This is the main reason why the present study was based on this theory to explain the relationship that there is between the ‘native’ terms that are used to refer to the months of the year in Ekegusii and the Gusii culture. The same theory was used to explain the effect societal change has on language. For example, it was used to determine how formal education has influenced the naming of the months of the year since most school going children are exposed to both English and Kiswahili at school.

Trudgill (1974) notes that the social environment can be reflected in language, and can often have an effect on the structure of vocabulary. For example, a society’s kinship system is generally reflected in its kinship vocabulary and this is one reason why anthropologists tend to be interested in this particular aspect of language. We can assume, for example, that the important kin relationships in English-speaking societies are those that are signaled by single vocabulary items; son, daughter, grandson etc. There are kinship systems that acknowledge more kinship terms than others. This could be as a result of the importance they attach to the relationship in that culture. For example, in Ekegusii, there is a name for parents whose children have been joined in marriage (these children call them ‘parents-in-law’).These parents refer to each other as ‘Korera’. There is no English equivalent, so an assumption can be made that the relationship is not very important in that culture. The ‘native’ terms used to refer to the months of the year in Ekegusii which are the focus in the present study have meanings derived from the environment and the society. The shift to the ‘new’ terms was used to explain the changes that have taken place in society.
2.7.2 The Speech Accommodation Theory
The Speech Accommodation Theory (SAT) will be used to analyze the lexical choices made by Ekegusii speakers in reference to the months of the year. The SAT is appropriate in studies on code switching as it explains the phenomenon in terms of interlocutors’ motives, attitudes, perceptions and group identities. The theory was developed to account for ways in which speakers modified their language during interactions with addressees from other linguistic groups. The theory was originally articulated and primarily developed by Giles (1973). It has been discussed at length by other scholars over the years: Giles & Powesland (1975), Giles & St. Clair (1979), Hamers & Blanc (1989), Gibbons (1987), and Giles & Robinson (1990).

The SAT posits that individuals subtly and indirectly communicate approval or disapproval of one another by altering their speech to be more similar to or different from the other (Giles et.al. 1980:185). Theorists in this field suggest that speakers have socio-psychological reasons for adopting their speech patterns towards their addressees or away from their addressees. This leads to two types of speech accommodation: speech convergence and divergence (Giles et. al., 1980; Russell, 1982; Trudgill, 1986). The present study limited its focus to the ‘new’ terms that are used to refer to the months of the year in Ekegusii. It sought to find out the motivations behind speakers choosing between the loanwords (e.g. January, February etc) and the numerically arranged terms (e.g. Omotienyi o ’motang’ani, Omotienyi o ’kabere etc). This brought into play the social variables: age, gender and educational qualifications. For example, which terms were preferred by the highly educated speakers when talking among themselves; did they change the terms when conversing with speakers of lower educational qualifications? etc.

The SAT is an integration of four principles or socio psychological theories: similarity-attraction, social exchange, causal attribution and social identity theory.

The similarity attraction theory suggests that speakers may induce addressees to evaluate them more favorably by reducing linguistic dissimilarities between them. Kebeya (1997) in a study aimed at investigating, analyzing and explaining linguistic accommodation between speakers from two Luyia dialects during contact posits that when interlocutors become more similar in the codes they use, there is likely to be a greater liking between them than if they became more dissimilar. Speakers will therefore, converge when they desire social integration and approval. It has further
been proposed that speech convergence is not a one way strategy, rather it is a two-way strategy and is affected by both the speaker and addressee, sometimes by each of them to the same extent. Thus, when a speaker converges towards his addressee, there is a need for the addressee to reciprocate this convergence (Giles et al. 1980). The similarity-attraction theory was used by the present study to analyze convergence by speakers of Ekegusii in reference to the months of the year among different age groups, gender and educational qualifications.

The second tenet of the SAT views speech convergence as a social exchange during which speakers incur certain costs in terms of identity, loss and expended linguistic effort in order to obtain rewards (material or otherwise). Speakers will converge when the perceived costs of acting are lower than the anticipated rewards (Giles & Robinson, 1990). Coupland (1984), in a study in Cardiff, observes that an assistant in a travel agency linguistically converged towards his clients. Using the social exchange theory of the SAT, he explains convergence to clients’ language in business transactions as the assistant’s desire to get on well with his interlocutors so as to maximize potential monetary gains from sales. Attempts were made to establish the rewards speakers expect when they converge, and the costs they incur. In the present study, the social exchange theory was used especially when collecting data of the ‘native’ terms used to refer to the months of the year from old informants (e.g. those with no formal educational qualifications). The decision by the interviewer to use the loan words which are borrowed from English or the numerically arranged terms which are in Ekegusii (save for the pattern that is borrowed from Kiswahili) in order to get the equivalent ‘native’ term from an old informant determined whether she or he would get useful information or not.

The theory of social identity is used to analyze divergence. It states that speakers use a speech style that differs from that of their interlocutor because of a desire to disassociate themselves from their interlocutors. This may be because they personally dislike their interlocutor or because they wish to assert their group identity (Giles et al., 1980:336). On the basis of social identity theory, speech divergence is perceived as an important strategy for making oneself psychologically and favorably distinct from out-group members (Giles & St. Clair 1979:52). Speakers will therefore diverge when they wish to signal their age group, educational qualifications or express disapproval. Tajfel (1979) proposed that the groups (e.g. social class, family, football team etc) which people
belonged to were an important source of pride and self esteem. Groups give us a sense of social identity; a sense of belonging to the social world. Therefore the world is divided into "them" and "us" through a process of social categorization. This is known as in-group (us) and out-group (them). He states that the in-group will discriminate against the out-group to enhance their self image. The central hypothesis of social identity theory is that group members of an in-group will seek to find negative aspects of an out-group, thus enhancing their self-image (McLeod, 2008). Kebeya (2008) used the social identity theory in analyzing instances of divergence during Luo or Luyia contact and Luo or Gusii contact. For example, when a Luo speaker used Luo on a Gusii addressee, this was treated as divergence. This tenet was used in the present study to determine whether there were times when speakers of Ekegusii chose to use particular lexical items in referring to the months of the year to express disapproval or assert positive ethno-linguistic identities when with out-group members.

The last principle of the Speech Accommodation Theory is the causal attribution theory which posits that listeners interpret speakers’ linguistic convergence and divergence in terms of the motives they attribute as the cause of speakers’ behavior. Thus accommodation by a speaker may be perceived favorably on some occasions whereas on other occasions the perception may be unfavorable (Kebeya, 2008).

The first three principles namely similarity-attraction, social exchange, and social identity theory were used in this study to explain why speakers accommodate to their addressees when referring to the months of the year in Ekegusii. The SAT can explain how and why people modify their language behavior when interacting with others. It was appropriate in that it linked lexical choice with socio-psychological factors such as age, gender and educational qualification.

2.7.3 The Variationist Theory
The proponent of the variationist theory is William Labov. The theory is based on the premise that languages vary at all levels: phonological, morphological, syntactic or pragmatic. This variation can be in an individual speaker (intra-speaker variation) or across a group of speakers (inter-speaker variation) (Chambers, 2004). The theory also states that in different contexts, an individual will speak in different ways (Coates, 1992). The variationist theory therefore comprises stylistic and social variations. Stylistic variation focuses on language use depending on factors such as age,
gender, ethnicity and social class among others (Chambers, 2003). These two variation types are what sociolinguists are interested in.

The basic methods in variationist studies are first, identifying linguistic features that vary in a community; second, gathering data from the community by selecting a suitable sample of people; third, conducting an interview involving informal continuous speech as well as more formal dimensions of language use like reading out a passage aloud; four, analyzing the data noting the frequency of each relevant linguistic feature; five, selecting relevant social units like age groups, gender, social class and finally, ascertaining significant correlations between the social groups and particular speech choices (Labov, 1963, 1966).

The Labovian theory views variation in language as being systematically patterned. By correlating linguistic factors with extra-linguistic ones (age, gender, and social status), Labov and his supporters are able to systematically account for variation in the use of language (Trudgil 1974, Milroy 1980, Russell 1982, Coupland 1984, Kebeya 1997).

This theory helped in the analysis of linguistic behavior of the various social groups that were represented in the present study (e.g. female or male, older or younger, educated or had no formal education). It sought to find out what determined code choice i.e. switching from using numerical terms to the English terms to refer to the months of the year. One speaker could also use the same term using different pronunciations e.g. /tra:nwa:ri/ and /dænju:əri/. Chambers & Trudgill (1998) posit that a speaker or different types of speakers will use more or less of a specific linguistic variant in a particular context. At the inter-speaker level, the social differences of people will be reflected in the choice of variants that they use. Variationists are thus concerned with correlating the patterns of variable usage within language with stratification in the society under study.

Using the variationist theory, the present study investigated co-variation between linguistic (terms used to refer to months of the year in Ekegusii) and social variables (age, gender and educational qualifications) in Marani and Nyamarambe divisions of Kisii county.
2.8 Chapter Summary
This chapter presented a survey of literature reviewed and theoretical framework on which this study was based. The chapter argues that a name tells a lot about the collective history and life experiences of the people using it. In addition, the choice of a word may be influenced by consideration of formality and linguistic appropriateness. It also indicates that language change is mainly a product of a community interacting with other communities as a result of colonization, immigration and language contact. In the next chapter, the methodology that guided this study is discussed.
CHAPTER THREE
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction
This Chapter is organized under the following subsections: the research design, location of the
study, the target population, sampling techniques and sample size, research instruments, data
collection methods, data analysis procedures and ethical considerations.

3.1 Research Design
This study used the qualitative and quantitative research designs to collect and analyse data.

Mugenda & Mugenda (2012) define descriptive or quantitative research design as a framework
that generates explanatory information or characteristics about specific population or phenomenon.
The design provides factual, accurate and systematic data. Qualitative analyses are essentially
discursive and have the advantage of revealing exactly who speaks what language to whom and
when(Fishman, 1965). The qualitative approach was useful in organizing the selected data of the
alternative references to the months of the year into columns comparing age, gender and
educational qualification vs. the choice of lexical item. The data was collected using questionnaires
and interview schedules and analysis was done whereby the number of respondents that used a
particular category of terms was computed.

The study used these designs because they were helpful in providing explanatory information on
the ‘native’ terms used to refer to the months of the year in Ekegusii and the existence of the ‘new’
terms. They were used to relate the meanings associated with the months of the year and the
culture of the Gusii community.

3.2 Location of the Study
The present study was carried out in Kenya, a country in East Africa. It is divided into forty-seven
counties and the study was limited to Kisii County. This was because the county harbors a
concentration of speakers of the two dialects of Ekegusii: Rogoro (Northern) and Maate
(Southern)(Bosire,1993). The county covers an area of approximately 1317.9 square kilometers
with a population of approximately 1,613221 million according to 1999 population and housing
census. (CBS 1999). The figures must have changed by the time the study was carried out because

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of the difference between the time when the census was conducted and the time of this study. The county is divided into thirteen administrative divisions: six in the former Kisii Central District and seven in the former Kisii South District. Two divisions were selected from the thirteen divisions: Marani (Rogoro dialect) and Nyamarambe (Maate dialect).

The local inhabitants speak Ekegusii as their first language but because the county is cosmopolitan in nature, there is need for them to learn Kiswahili, English and languages of their neighboring communities: the Luo, Maasai and Kipsigis. Education too has made English and Kiswahili compulsory languages alongside their first language. The study therefore sought to find out how the interaction of languages had influenced the change of Ekegusii especially in the naming of the months of the year.

3.3 The Target Population
These are people, objects or units to which a researcher can reasonably generalize his or her research findings (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2012). The target population in the present study was Ekegusii speakers ranging from fifteen years and above. Since this was going to be a large group to deal with due to inadequate time and resources, the study was limited to a total of thirty respondents. Milroy (1987:84) suggests that an in depth investigation is best carried out using a small number of speakers.

3.4 Sampling Techniques and Sample Size
Since there are two categories of names used to refer to the months of the year in Ekegusii: the ‘native’ terms and the ‘new’ terms borrowed from English and Kiswahili, the present study used the snowball purposeful sampling technique in which identified informants using the ‘friend of a friend approach’ (Labov, 1982) were introduced to the researcher by means of their social network groups before the actual interviews and recording. This was because informants with reliable information entailing the ‘native’ terms and what they were associated with were few in the community. A total of four contact people were used: two for each division. In this study, twelve old speakers (sixty years and above) were identified: six from each division. The six also took care of gender and educational qualifications.
The sample used to provide information on the ‘new’ terms was obtained through judgmental procedures. According to Milroy (1987), the respondents in such a sample are ‘picked’ depending on their ability to fit in the specified categories (e.g. female or male, younger or older, educated or had no formal education). A total of eighteen respondents were ‘picked’. Age, gender and educational qualifications were important categories for the sample in this study. Nine respondents were picked from ages fifteen to twenty-nine and nine from ages thirty to fifty-nine. From each category of nine, the researcher was careful to balance gender and educational qualifications from the two divisions (Marani and Nyamarambe).

3.4.1 Respondents in the Study
A total of thirty individuals from Kisii County participated in the study. Of these, twelve were sixty years and above, and eighteen were between fifteen to fifty-nine years. This study treated all individuals aged sixty years and above as ‘older’ speakers and those aged below sixty as ‘younger’ speakers. In view of this, twelve of the respondents in Kisii County were categorized as ‘older’ speakers while eighteen were considered ‘younger’ speakers. The youngest speaker was fifteen years old and the oldest was about one hundred years old. The two age cohorts are captured in Table 3.4.1.a.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Cohorts</th>
<th>Number of respondents</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>‘Older’ &gt;60 years</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Younger’ &lt;60 years</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From Table 3.4.1 a, 40% of the respondents represented males and females of ages sixty and above, while 60% represented males and females of between ages fifteen to fifty-nine. Six of them were from ‘Rogoro’ dialect selected from Marani division whereas the other six were from ‘Maate’ dialect selected from Nyamarambe division.

The twelve respondents were categorized into gender groups as displayed in Table 3.4.1 b below.
Table 6: 3.4.1.b) Gender Groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Number of respondents</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From Table 3.4.1.b, 67% of respondents represented males categorized as 'older' speakers while 33% represented females of the same age cohort.

The twelve respondents were further categorized using educational qualifications as shown in Table 3.4.1.c.

Table 7: 3.4.1.c) Educational Qualifications

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Formal educational qualifications</th>
<th>Number of respondents</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary level</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary level</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College or university level</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No formal education</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In Table 3.4.1. C, 33% of the respondents represented 'older' respondents with primary level of education, 9% had secondary level of education, 25% had college or university education and 33% had no formal educational qualifications.

The eighteen individuals aged between fifteen and fifty-nine were further grouped into two: fifteen to twenty-nine years and thirty to fifty-nine years; each group having equal representation i.e. 50%. The gender representation was also equal: nine males and nine females.
In order to examine contrastively the language behavior of the same speaker in different contexts, Milroy (1987:37) suggests that the researcher needs to subdivide recordings of conversation systematically into careful (also formal) and casual (also informal) style. This aided the researcher in getting data that was used to apply the Speech Accommodation Theory and the Variationist Theory in the present study.

3.5 Research Instruments
Three research instruments were employed to collect data in this study: interviews, audio recording and questionnaires.

3.5.1 Interview Schedules
An interview is an oral administration of a questionnaire or an interview schedule. In the present study, there was need for face-to-face encounters to get data on the ‘native’ terms used to refer to the months of the year in Ekegusii and their meanings. This method was adequate for the study since it was able to provide in-depth data which would have been difficult to get using a questionnaire. Another advantage of this method that enriched this study is that the interviewer was able to get more information especially on the meanings of the ‘native’ terms by using probing questions. This made it possible for the researcher to obtain data required to meet specific objectives of the study-to identify and describe the change in naming of the months of the year in Ekegusii from the ‘native’ terms to the ‘new’ terms. The method was however expensive because the researcher had to travel to meet the respondents.

Both semi-structured and unstructured interview schedules were used. The semi-structured interview schedule (Appendix 1A) which is also called an interview guide was used to gather data on the ‘new’ terms used by the ‘younger’ speakers. Straraus, A. & Gorbin, J.M. (1990) emphasize that the interview guide can be revised on an ongoing basis to elicit more focused responses from participants. Using this instrument, the researcher was able to ask questions that required the respondents to state the months of the year in their responses. This data was used to meet the objective of establishing why and the extent to which speakers of Ekegusii accommodate to their listeners by either converging or diverging when referring to the months of the year.
3.5.2 Audio Recorder
In this method of recording, the interviewer’s questions and the respondent’s answers are recorded either using a audio recorder or a video tape. In this case, a mobile phone voice recorder was used to record information on the ‘native’ terms and their meanings and the information was later transcribed on the instrument on Appendix 1A. This instrument was used during the interview sessions.

3.5.3 Questionnaires
According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2012), questionnaires are commonly used to obtain important information about the population. In this study, the questionnaires in Appendix 1 C were administered to the ‘younger’ speakers of Ekegusii to find out whether they had knowledge of the ‘native’ terms and explain the notion of language change. The questionnaire in Appendix 1B was used to collect data on the ‘new’ terms. The two questionnaires were used to collect data necessary to obtain the objective addressing lexical changes in the naming of the months of the year in Ekegusii.

3.6. Piloting
Piloting was done on a small representative sample that was not included in the study to ascertain the reliability of the research instruments used in this study. It was conducted in two divisions: Suneka to represent ‘Rogoro’ dialect and Tabaka to represent ‘Maate’ dialect. Six ‘older’ respondents were selected to provide data for the ‘native’ terms and eight ‘younger’ respondents for the ‘new’ terms.

The research instruments were piloted from samples from these two divisions to find out if the instruments would yield required data and detect any potential misunderstanding or biasing effects of different questions. This procedure was helpful in that the researcher was able to improve on the questionnaire in appendix 1A i.e. some questions that were ambiguous were modified. It was at this point that it was realized that there was need for the researcher to include tape recording as one of the instruments in the study in order to capture data more accurately since taking notes proved to be a bit cumbersome. Since some of the respondents appeared uncomfortable with tape recording, they were talked to on the purpose of this gadget prior to the recording to make them be
at ease and the tape was played for them later for consent that the information could be used as it was.

The semi-structured interview schedule in Appendix 1A which was to be used on the ‘younger’ respondents was also modified. It was realized that the respondents were only providing one ‘new’ term yet they had more than one. There was therefore need to specify that they could supply more than one name in reference to a month.

3.7 Validity and Reliability
Before the instruments could be used for actual data collection, it was necessary for them to be validated and their reliability ascertained.

3.7.1 Validity
Orodho (2009) defines validity as the accuracy and meaningfulness of inferences, which are based on the research results. It is the degree to which the results obtained from the analysis of the data actually represent the phenomenon under study. After carrying out the pilot study, it was discovered that the results obtained from the measuring instruments collectively represented what they were supposed to measure i.e. there was evidence that there was change in the naming of the months of the year in Ekegusii. This was similar to what had happened to the naming of the months of the year in English and Kiswahili. There was also correlation between the lexical terms used to refer to the months of the year with social variables (age and educational qualifications). It was confirmed that gender did not determine the choice of term when referring to the months of the year.

The causes of language change could be deduced from the changes noted in the naming. These are prestige, climate change, language contact, migration and globalization.

3.7.2 Reliability
Reliability is a measure of the degree to which a research instrument yields consistent results or data after repeated trials (Orodho, 2009). To assess reliability of data collected in this study, the split-half technique was used. It was preferred to the other three (test-retest, equivalent-form and internal consistency) because it requires only one testing session which was time saving and
The method was used to calculate the Cronbach alpha reliability coefficient using SPSS. An alpha coefficient of 0.73 was obtained which confirms the reliability of the instruments used in this study.

3.8 Data Collection Methods
Before carrying out the study, an approval was sought from the Kenyatta University graduate school (See appendix 2). A research permit was obtained from the National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (See appendix 3).

The general objective of the present study was to identify and describe the change in the naming of the months of the year in Ekegusii from ‘native’ to ‘new’ terms. This objective was achieved using data collection procedures based on sociolinguistic techniques. Informants were visited at their homes to be requested to participate in the study and allowed the researcher to interview and audio record their conversations. They provided the meanings of the ‘native’ terms used to name the months of the year in Ekegusii. The researcher and research assistants used Ekegusii to encourage speakers to speak naturally in order for the data to capture the use of loan words during Ekegusii speakers’ interaction.

The semi-structured interview guide enabled the researcher to get information on the respondents’ age, gender and educational qualifications (see appendix 1A) while the unstructured interview guides were used to gather information on speakers’ choice of lexical item to refer to the months of the year in Ekegusii during spontaneous speech using selected topics (see appendix 1C). Conversations from the respondents were recorded to observe how the different social variables influenced their choice of vocabulary in reference to the months. These social factors are known to influence language use in many societies (Trudgill, 1974, Abdulaziz, 1982, Milroy, 1987, Chambers, 1995).

The questionnaire (see appendix 1C) was used to collect information on the changes that had taken place in the naming of the months of the year in Ekegusii. The questionnaire sought to find out the terms that were favoured in conversations and why. The respondents’ knowledge of the ‘native’ terms and their attitude towards language change was also determined.
After selecting the eighteen respondents on the criteria of age (fifteen to twenty-nine and thirty to fifty-nine), gender and educational qualifications, the researcher interviewed one respondent at a time using the unstructured interview schedule (see appendix 1B). The respondents were encouraged to talk as guided by the topics in the schedule. The purpose of this method was to gather information on the choice of ‘new’ terms favoured by the respondents to refer to the months of the year in Ekegusii.

3.9 Data Analysis Procedures

Mugenda & Mugenda (2012) describe data analysis as the process of clearing and summarizing data so that it becomes information that can be easily interpreted and conclusions made to support decision making. Both the quantitative and the qualitative approaches were used in the analysis of data in this study. The data obtained from tape recording the twelve informants aged sixty and above stating the ‘native’ terms used to refer to the months of the year in Ekegusii and their meanings were transcribed.

The focused group discussion was used to check on the weakness of snowballing. The researcher observed the respondents conversing among themselves on different topics that required them to use the months of the year. The focus was on choice of ‘new’ terms in relation to age, gender and educational qualifications. Did the respondents use the same terms consistently; if not, why? In the case of the ‘new’ terms borrowed from English, the researcher was keen on the phonological aspect i.e. did the respondents use the ‘nativised’ pronunciation or that of the source language-English pronunciation? The data obtained was used to verify the accommodation process and variationist theory.

The researcher administered questionnaires to the eighteen respondents as shown in appendix 1D to obtain additional data on the notion of language change. Information on the knowledge of the ‘new’ terms and ‘native’ terms elicited data on the causes of language change.

3.10 Ethical Considerations

The researcher informed the respondents of the purpose of the research i.e. that it was meant for academic purposes only. The respondents in the research made their decision to participate in the
study based on adequate knowledge of the study (Oso & Onen 2009). To get information on the 'native' terms used to refer to the months of the year, the researcher was identified as a friend of the contact person to ensure 'a high degree of informality' (Mikwa, 2008:54). The respondents were informed about the use of the audio recorder and its importance in the study. The audio recorder was played after the interview for the respondents to confirm that the information they had provided was the right one.

3.11 Chapter Summary
In this chapter, the methodology that guided this study is discussed. It comprises research design, location of the study, the target population, sampling techniques and sample size, research instruments, piloting, validity and reliability, data collection methods, data analysis procedures and ethical considerations. The chapter argues that different age groups, people with different levels of education and gender have to be studied to draw a conclusion on language change in the naming of the months of the year. This chapter connects the study to chapter four that deals with the analysis of data collected, presentation and its interpretation.
CHAPTER FOUR
DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

4.0. Introduction
This chapter contains an analysis of the data obtained during the fieldwork. It provides a detailed presentation of the names used to refer to the months of the year in Ekegusii and brings out the lexical changes that have taken place. Through qualitative and quantitative analyses carried out in this chapter, the study sought to correlate between the lexical terms used to refer to the months of the year in Ekegusii with social variables of age, gender and educational qualifications. The discussion of findings is based on the tenets of three theories: the Linguistic Relativity Theory, the Speech Accommodation Theory and the Variationist Theory. The data analysed in this chapter was derived from three sources: interviews, recordings and questionnaires. The data obtained from these instruments was used in constructing all tables in this chapter.

4.1 Lexical Changes in Reference to the Months of the Year in Ekegusii
Data arising from the participants revealed that there were two categories of terms used to refer to the months of the year in Ekegusii: ‘native’ and ‘new’ terms. Data collected from the twelve respondents was analysed to come up with the ‘native’ terms and their meanings. In the study of the meanings of the ‘native’ terms, the knowledge on onomastics was applied. Gibre (2009) states that names are a direct consequence of the different people, languages and cultures that existed in that particular area. It was also noted that the respondents provided different names to refer to the same month. This was an indication that the names were not commonly used by the speakers and this had made them to forget or confuse their order. This therefore required the researcher to find the name with the highest frequency and select it as the most probable to refer to a particular month. On the other hand, data arising from the eighteen ‘younger’ respondents was evidence that ‘new’ terms were in existence in reference to the months of the year in Ekegusii. More than one name was used to refer to a month i.e. one derived from numerical order borrowed from Kiswahili, ‘nativized’ term and month name as it is in English. Each month is discussed below indicating what the month was referred to i.e. the ‘native’ term, its meaning and the ‘new’ term (s). The selected names were based on frequency (one with highest frequency was chosen) and the meaning given by the respondents.
i. January

A total of three ‘native’ terms were supplied by the twelve respondents. Nine of them called this month *Monuguno obarema*, two, *Engatiato* or *Eng’atiato* and one referred to it as *Egetamo*. The name *Monuguno obarema* was selected as the most probable term to refer to the month of January because of the activities that were carried out during this time of the year. This was the first month of the year when farmers got busy with land preparation. ‘*Monuguno*’ refers to the many activities that go with land preparation i.e. clearing bushes and digging. ‘*Obarema*’ was derived from the word ‘rema’ which means ‘to dig’. The name of the month used to refer to January in Ekegusii i.e. *Monuguno obarema* therefore means ‘activities of those who dig’. It was also known to be a dry month. There was a change in the naming of this month since the ‘younger’ respondents in the study referred to it using three different names i.e. *Omotienyi o’motang’ani, Chanuari* or January.

ii. February

Nine out of the twelve respondents called this month *Egetamo*, two named it *Monuguno obarema* and one, *Esagati*. The name *Egetamo* was selected as the ‘native’ term for the month of February because *Egetamo* means ‘extremely hot’. It was the second month of the year which was said to be the hottest season when the farmers were expected to continue with further land preparation i.e. harrowing which is known as ‘*okobosa*’ in Ekegusii. This was necessary because the community was known to grow sorghum and millet which required well prepared seed beds. Since it was hot, they could burn the bushes cleared during *Monuguno obarema* (January) which were now dry because of the hot weather. This month was referred to as *Omotienyi o’kabere, Fepiruari* or February by the ‘younger’ respondents.

iii. March

Eight respondents referred to this month as *Rigwata*, two, called it *Engatiato* and two, *Egetamo*. *Rigwata* was selected to refer to March because of the meaning that was attributed to the name. There was no rain in the first two months. The first rains began in the third month which was named *Rigwata*. This marked the beginning of the planting season and the main activity was sowing which is referred to as ‘*Ribusura*’ in Ekegusii. The seeds were expected to sprout after a few days. The name of this month was derived from what happens during germination i.e.
‘chimbusuro chigwata’ (sprouting of grains) hence the name Rigwata. This month was referred to as Omotienyi o’gatato, Machi or March by the ‘younger’ respondents.

iv. April

Nine respondents referred to this month as Amaumuntia and three called it Rigwata. The selected name for April was Amaumuntia because during Amaumuntia which is the fourth month, there was a lot of rain and people were expected to weed their crops. The community seemed to have specialized in growing millet and sorghum so the weeding process was referred to as ‘Okwaga’. Women who were the only ones expected to weed noted that the rain during that season used to interfere with their work so they had to persevere. Lazy people were likely to remain indoors because of the rains. People could even seek shelter in homes where they were not expected to ‘enter’ according to the Abagusii customs e.g. homes of in-laws; hence the following saying was derived: ‘Embura enyinge ekero abanto bakoumuntia nyomba chia nsoni’ meaning ‘A lot of rain which made people to shelter in houses they were not permitted to ‘enter’ according to their custom.’ ‘Koumuntia’ therefore means ‘staying indoors’ so the name Amaumuntia was given to the month of April. The ‘new’ terms for this month were Omotienyi o’kane, Epiri or April as stated by the ‘younger’ respondents.

v. May

Eight respondents called this month Ebwagi, three, Amaumuntia and one named it Rigwata. The name Ebwagi was selected to refer to the month of May because the explanation given by the respondents indicated that the rains subsided in Ebwagi, the fifth month. It was in fact windy and the name Ebwagi was used to describe the movement of the wind. This was the month when crops used to flower and hunger was setting in. The month is referred to as Omotienyi o’gatano, Mei or May by the ‘younger’ respondents.

vi. June

Seven respondents referred to this month as Engoromomi or Enkoromomi or Eng’oromomi, four called it Ebwagi and one, Engatiato or Eng’atiato. The term Enkoromomi was selected as the most
probable name for the month of June because this month marked a season that was characterized by a severe lack of food. It was during Ebwagi and Engoronomi or Eng’oromomi or Enkoromomi that a saying was derived, ‘Tangori eng’ombe yaito ebiare Ebwagi na Nkoromomi ka’banchi baregana’ [I wish our cow calves during the month of May and June when even friends do not want to see each other]. This time of the year was bad for this community that relied so much on crop farming for their food. At this point, we learned that they had another economic activity which was animal keeping. This was implied in the already cited proverb that suggested that milk would be a treasured substitute for food crops that were not available during Ebwagi and Enkoromomi or Engoronomi or Eng’oromomi. The ‘new’ names given to this month are Omotienyi o’gatano na rimo, Omotienyi o’sita (derived from Kiswahili), Chuni or June as stated by the ‘younger respondents’. The data collected displayed three possible pronunciations of the name given for this month. Saussure (1959) and Bloomfield (1933) note that it is possible for linguists to observe variation in language, but it is of little importance since it does not change the meaning of the words. The study used data from areas representing the ‘Rogoro’ and ‘Maate’ dialects in Ekegusii. Such variation identified in the present study could be ascribed to dialect mixture or to free variation which is as a result of interaction of people from the two dialects or even neighbouring communities like the Maasai and the Luo.

vii. July

Eight respondents called this month Riete and four, Enkoromomi or Eng’oromomi or Engoronomi. Riete was selected for the month of July because in the month of July-Riete, the weather was favourable for the maturing of crops. The rains subsided and it was reasonably dry. The maturing crops (millet and sorghum) took a bent shape hence the origin of the name of the month, ‘Riete’ which means ‘bent’. In their discussions, the farmers would observe that the grains of the crop in season were all in place i.e Ogokung’unta. They could at this point even predict the type of harvest they expected. The ‘new’ names for July were Omotienyi o’gatano na kabere, Omotienyi O’saba (derived from Kiswahili), Churae or July.
viii. August

Two respondents called this month *Esagati*, six, *Engatiato* or *Eng’atiato* and four *Riete*. The selected name for the month was *Engatiato* or *Eng’atiato* because it was the name with the highest frequency. It is during this month that the people could pluck the ready grains and eat i.e. ‘baatia’ hence the name *Engatiato* or *Eng’atiato*. Since the preceding months were characterized by hunger, some of the crop could be consumed prematurely. The ‘new’ name for this month was *Omotienyi o’gatano na gatato*, *Omotienyi o’nane* (derived from Kiswahili), *Agasti* or August. This month has two possible pronunciations: *Engatiato* or *Eng’atiato*.

ix. September

Data arising from the twelve respondents revealed that all of them had the same name for this month i.e *Tureti ya kebaki* or *Bureti a’kekaki*. September too displays free variation in that there are two possible pronunciations: *Tureti ya kebaki* or *Bureti a’ kebaki*. This was the only season or month that all the respondents seemed to agree on the naming save for the pronunciation of the initial consonant t/b and the middle preposition ‘ya’ or ‘a’. It was a season when food was ready for harvesting. The first harvest was prepared and people celebrated and they called this ‘ogotongora’. During this time birds known as ‘Ebibaki’ (hawks) would come back from where they had migrated to during the seasons when there was lack of food and they were seen flying in the sky in groups known as *Tureti* or *Bureti*. During the feasts to celebrate the harvest, the birds could snatch away food from the people. This month was referred to as *Omotienyi o’kianda*, *Sebutemba* or September in the category of the ‘new’ terms.

x. October

Four respondents called this month *Egesunte egetang’ani*, four, *Egesunte gia Chache*, one, *Esagati* and three, *Egesunte kia Masaba*. Since there was a tie in the first two names, both were selected i.e *Egesunte gia Chache* and *Egesunte egetang’ani*. This month was characterized by plenty of food. The first region or area to harvest was called ‘*Chache*’. The people of ‘*Chache*’ used to harvest crops earlier than the ones of ‘*Masaba*’ due to the weather conditions. ‘*Chache*’ was considered to have a warm climate hence crops matured faster whereas ‘*Masaba*’ was colder so crops matured later. This was the reason behind the name ‘*egetang’ani*’, which means ‘*first*’. The word *Egesunte*
means ‘darkness’. It was symbolically used to refer to hunger so the name of the month, *Egesunte egetang’ani* or *Egesunte gia Chache* suggested that there was going to be no more hunger in *Chache* because food was ready. The ‘new’ names for October were *Omotienyi o’ikomi, Ogutoba* or October.

**xi. November**

Six respondents called this month *Egesunte gia kabere*, four, *Egesunte kia Masaba* and two, *Egesunte gia Chache*. The name *Egesunte gia Chache* was left because it had been used earlier to name the month of October. The terms *Egesunte gia kabere* and *Egesunte kia Masaba* were selected to refer to October because food was ready in a region called *Masaba* at that time of the year. It was therefore second in the order of harvesting food hence the name *Egesunte gia kabere* or *Egesunte kia Masaba* which meant that there was no more hunger in *Masaba*. The ‘younger’ respondents called this month *Omotienyi o’ikomi na rimo, Nobemba* or November.

**xii. December**

Seven respondents called this month *Esagati* or *Esagate*, two, *Egesunte gia Chache*, two, *Engatiato* or *Eng’atiato* and one, *Monuguno obarema*. The selected term for this month was *Esagate* or *Esagati* because this is the last season of the year. It was the month of rest from agricultural activities. The season was hot and dry. Some called it ‘*Esagati nyamaagonga*’. Birds known as ‘*Amaagonga*’ flew past the sky from a place known as *Oyugis* on their way to a region called *Bogirango maate* and this marked the end of a season and beginning of another (preparation of land for the planting season). This month was referred to as *Omotienyi o’ikomi na kabere, Tisemba* or December by the ‘younger’ respondents.

The above explanation is evidence that the Abagusii speech community practiced agriculture: they grew crops and kept animals. This is clearly reflected in the lexical terms that were used to refer to the months of the year in Ekegusii that were derived from their way of life as depicted from the meanings of the ‘native’ terms. This has been confirmed from local knowledge gathered from the meanings of the ‘native’ terms derived from the ‘older’ respondents as suggested in the reviewed literature (Lyons 1977).
Using the Linguistic Relativity Theory which is concerned with the possibility that man’s view of his environment may be conditioned by his language, the names of the months of the year in Ekegusii and meanings associated with them are a reflection of the Gusii culture and environment. The months of the year in this community were described in terms of seasons. In the naming of these seasons, the weather seemed to be given a lot of attention together with the activities that were carried out. The study revealed that there was change in the naming of the months of the year in Ekegusii from the ‘native’ to ‘new’ terms. The ‘native’ terms were not used in day to day conversations as found out by the researcher. Some of the respondents had recorded them in notebooks which they kept on referring to during the interviews. Others could recall the names after some given period but the order of the months was a common challenge. There was evidence that ‘new’ terms in reference to the months of the year were in use as found out from the eighteen ‘younger speakers’ used in the study. All the respondents had knowledge that there were three possible ways of naming the months of the year in Ekegusii i.e. the numerical order, the ‘nativized’ terms and English pronunciation using the questionnaire in appendix 1 B.

From the data collected, it was evident that all the respondents used choices from the ‘new’ terms to refer to the months of the year in Ekegusii. None of them made use of the ‘native’ terms. It was also noted that the respondents were aware of more than one name which they could use to refer to a month. This confirmed that language change was inevitable and Ekegusii was changing just like any other language.

It is therefore important to note that the ‘new’ terms had been adopted by the ‘older’ and ‘younger’ speakers. For purposes of documentation, therefore, it is necessary to include both the ‘native’ and ‘new’ terms to refer to the months of the year. It was necessary to have both categories of names but indicate that the ‘native’ terms could be referred to as ‘old Ekegusii’ or archaic since they were not used in conversations. The changing in the naming of the months could be traced back to the introduction of Kiswahili and English into the Ekegusii speech community. Kiswahili came in as a language of business and most of the elderly respondents interviewed attributed the shift from the ‘native’ terms to the Kiswahili numerical order of the months to the introduction of Kiswahili.

What happened to Ekegusii is called core borrowing since the words borrowed have ‘native’ equivalents. It had borrowed to identify with the donor language culture (in this case, it had
Since language contact suggests that there is some degree of cultural contact between the speech communities involved, the present study confirmed that cultural change had led to language change. All the respondents stated that they interacted with speakers from other communities hence had knowledge of another language other than Ekegusii.

The ‘younger’ speakers seemed to have adopted the Kiswahili numerical order and the Kiswahili names to refer to three months as shown in examples 1-3 as indicated below:

1. June - *Omotienyi o’sita (Mwezi wa sita)*
2. July - *Omotienyi o’saba (Mwezi wa saba)*
3. August - *Omotienyi o’nane (Mwezi wa nane)*

The principle of least effort associated with Curtis, Whitney and Zipf (Wardhauf, 1977) can be used to explain why the ‘younger’ speakers opted to borrow the Kiswahili words to refer to these months. It is easier to say *‘Omotienyi o’nane’* as stated in example 3 to refer to August instead of *‘Omotienyi o’gatano na gatato’*. The proponents of this principle observed that speakers tend to make things easy to pronounce in order to economize time and effort in the work of expression.

However, some of the ‘younger’ speakers especially those that lived in the rural areas and spoke Ekegusii most of the times were comfortable with the names with the Ekegusii numerical order. One of the respondents, who worked for an Ekegusii vernacular radio station, used the numerical order in Ekegusii comfortably because he was used to referring to those months that way i.e he would call example 1, June *Omotienyi O’gatano na rimo*, example 2, July *Omotienyi o’gatano na kabere* which would be cumbersome to say for one who was not a regular speaker. This implied that the more one spoke Ekegusii, the more fluent one became.

The collection of both the ‘native’ and ‘new’ terms used to refer to the months of the year in Ekegusii was confirmation that there were changes in the naming of the months as purposed by this study.

4.2 Correlation between the Lexical Terms with Social Variables

To ascertain whether there was a correlation between the lexical terms used to refer to the months of the year with social variables of age, gender and educational qualifications, a questionnaire was
administered to respondents aged between fifteen and fifty-nine using the instrument in appendix IC.

4.2.1 Age, Educational Qualifications and Gender

The Speech Accommodation Theory, SAT, accounts for the ways in which interlocutors modify language during interactions by either increasing similarities or dissimilarities in language use. The present study limited its focus to the 'new' terms that are used to refer to the months of the year in Ekegusii. Data collected from the 'younger' speakers of Ekegusii is summarized in table 4.2.1 a) (communicating among themselves). The data was collected using a questionnaire (see Appendix 1 C) that required the respondents to indicate the terms they preferred to use when interacting with peers. 'Frequency' here refers to the number of respondents who cited that term, 'numerical order' is a term based on numerals in Ekegusii e.g. 'Omotienyi o'motang'ani' for January, 'nativised term' refers to a term borrowed from English but given Ekegusii pronunciation and the last category i.e. 'English pronunciation' refers to terms borrowed from English and pronounced correctly.

Table 8: 4.2.1 a) Terms used by 'Younger' Speakers Among Themselves

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Numerical order</th>
<th>Nativised term</th>
<th>English pronunciation</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From table 4.2.1a), 6% of the respondents preferred to use the numerical order to refer to the months of the year. The analysed data indicated that 33% of the respondents were in favour of the 'Nativised' terms and 61% preferred to use the names with the English pronunciation to the other terms. The reason behind most of the 'younger' people using the English pronunciation could be their exposure to English as a subject offered in the school system. There was a likelihood that the 33% of the respondents who used 'Nativised' terms had the influence of another language i.e. English. The 6% of the respondents who used the numerical order could be a representative of the conservative speakers of Ekegusii which is a very small percentage. These figures can be explained by the nature of respondents selected for this study in that 78% of them had college education suggesting that most of them preferred to use English to communicate as compared to
their mother tongue. Among this category of speakers, the use of English identifies them as people who are 'educated' vis-a-vis those who refer to the months using the numerical order who are likely to be categorized among those who are 'less educated' or have no formal education. Here the similarity attraction theory comes to play in that speakers induce addressees to evaluate them more favourably by reducing linguistic dissimilarities between them. When interlocutors become more similar in codes they use, there is likely to be a greater liking between them than if they became more dissimilar (Kebeya, 1997).

The 'younger' speakers tend to use a different category of terms to refer to the months of the year when communicating with 'older' speakers especially those with no formal education. The questionnaire in appendix 1C was used to collect data on the 'younger' respondents’ choice of terms when interacting with ‘older’ respondents with no formal educational qualifications. Table 4.2.1 b) has a summary of the findings.

Table 9 : 4.2.1b) Terms ‘Younger’ Speakers used with ‘Older’ Speakers with no Formal Education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Numerical order</th>
<th>Nativised term</th>
<th>English pronunciation</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the present study, the respondents converged in their choice of terms in order to reach the elderly with no formal educational qualifications. The data analysed indicated that 89% of them used the numerical order to refer to the months when conversing with elderly members with no formal educational qualifications. It was found out that 11% of them used ‘nativised’ terms while no respondent used the English pronunciation. The fact that none of the respondents used the English pronunciation to refer to the months of the year when speaking to the elderly people with no formal educational qualifications confirmed that the ‘younger’ speakers of Ekegusii respect the elderly and therefore converged in their choice of terms in order to be similar to terms likely to be understood by the elderly with no formal educational qualifications. This is in line with Kebeya (2008) who states that age is revered among the Gusii people and there was great pressure to respect those older than one. It could also be true that if they wanted to diverge, they would opt for
the English pronunciation in pursuit of developing a close relationship with those of one’s peer group.

The third social variable considered in this study was gender. Trudgill (1983); Russel (1986) observe that linguistic research has shown that in many societies, the speech of men and women differs. In this study, a questionnaire as shown in appendix 1 C was used to collect data on gender and choice of terms. Findings indicated that all the respondents’ choice of term would not change when communicating with people of the other gender. In this case, if the respondent used English pronunciation to refer to a month of the year with a female friend who is educated, the same term would be used when interacting with an educated male friend. This would apply to all the other categories i.e. peers and elderly persons with no formal educational qualifications. This therefore suggested that gender did not determine the choice of term when referring to the months of the year in Ekegusii.

Apart from age, educational qualifications and gender, the researcher went ahead to find out whether different situations determined the choice of term used to refer to the months of the year. Data collected using the unstructured interview schedule (see appendix 1 B), shows that the respondents tend to choose the month names using the numerical order when interviewed by the researcher i.e. a person not familiar to the group members as indicated in example 4.

4. Researcher: *Motienyi ki kwaiboretwe?* [In which month were you born?]
   Respondent: *Omotienyi o’kabere.* [February]
   Researcher: *Indi chisukuru chikoigorwa?* [When do schools open?]
   Respondent: *Omotienyi o’motang’ani.* [January]
   Researcher: *Indi okwaroka gokoba ase ekenyoro kiaino?* [When does circumcision take place in your village?]
   Respondent: *Omotienyi o’ikomi na kabere.* [December]

The choice of a term could have been influenced by the fact that the respondents were trying to sound formal because prior to the interview, the informants were informed that they were expected to use Ekegusii. Their responses were ‘careful’ or formal. On the contrary, data collected from the focused group discussion indicated that the respondents used several choices when referring to the
months of the year i.e., numerical order, ‘nativised’ terms and English pronunciation. At this time the researcher used a research assistant who happened to be a ‘friend’ to interact with the respondents using an unstructured interview schedule in Appendix 1 C. The terms used to refer to the months were at times used interchangeably when referring to the same month when the respondent was asked different questions as indicated in example 5 from a conversation recorded during the group discussion.

5. Speaker A: Motienyi ki kwaiboretwe? [In which month were you born?]
   Speaker B: July [English pronunciation]
   Speaker A: Motienyi ki chikorechi chikoigorwa? [When do colleges open?]
   Speaker B: Mono nomotienyi o’kianda. [Mostly in September – Ekegusii numerical order]
   Speaker A: Motienyi ki toragende gokwania abasani baito? [Which month can we visit our friends?]
   Speaker B: Tisemba. [Nativised term for December]

This conversation could be used to represent the ‘casual’ or informal style according to Milroy, 1987. The findings confirm that the three categories used to refer to the months of the year in Ekegusii (English terms with correct pronunciation, Nativised term and numerical order) have been integrated into the lexicon of this language to an extent that they could be used as synonyms. The choice of term in the above conversation represented alternative ways of speaking arising from recurring situations. According to the variationist approach, a speaker’s language may vary when saying the same thing but in different situations. This is called intra- speaker variation. Inter-speaker variation which is variation across a group of speakers was also observed when speakers were freely discussing issues that involved using month names in Ekegusii. Whenever respondents used different names depending on the age and educational qualifications, this brought in the aspect of stylistic variation (Chambers, 2003).

In conclusion, the research findings revealed that the speakers of Ekegusii accommodated to their listeners by converging or diverging when referring to the months of the year in relation to age and educational qualifications. Gender in this case did not determine the choice of terms.
4.3 Causes of Language Change

In the investigation, the researcher sought to find out whether the respondents had knowledge of the 'native' terms used to refer to the months of the year in Ekegusii. In case they did not know them, they were asked to give reasons for their lack of knowledge. The questionnaire on language change (see Appendix 1 C) was used to collect data from the eighteen 'younger' respondents. The analysed data indicated that fifteen out of the eighteen respondents did not know the 'native' terms. Some had a vague idea of their existence but they could not commit themselves to provide the names. This was evidence that the 'new' terms had completely replaced the 'native' terms. This phenomenon could be explained by the nature of respondents selected for this study. All of them had been exposed to formal education and were exposed to the other factors that can lead to language change such as urbanization. The speakers had been exposed to other cultures that had interfered with their use of language.

Out of the eighteen respondents, there were only three who had knowledge of the 'native' terms. They were all male and this communicated a point raised by Marshall (2004) who posits that speakers with the most positive orientation to the local rural group resist change. These males confirmed this during the interviews that they had learnt the terms from old people in the community. They were eager to know the names but the problem was that they could not put them to use in their day to day conversations. This lack of use made them to struggle with the order of the names during the interviews. Marshall adds that those who have a higher degree of mental urbanization, or an attitude of openness to supra-local norms, are at the forefront of change. This explained why the females in the study did not know the 'native' terms at all. The respondents who did not know the 'native' terms confirmed that they had no interest in learning them even when they knew that they existed. However, some had no idea that the terms existed since they had not come across anyone who knew them.

Otten-heimer (2009) observes that there are many factors influencing the rate at which language changes, including the attitudes of the speakers toward borrowing and change. The respondents' knowledge of the 'native' terms displayed the attitude they had towards language change. Since all the respondents (including the 'younger' and 'older') had changed from using the 'native' terms to the 'new' terms when referring to the months of the year, then the Abagusii speech community had embraced a positive attitude towards language change. This suggested that most members of this
community valued novelty and this would result in a quick change in their language. There was need for the areas of language threatened by these changes such as vocabulary used to refer to the months of the year to be documented so that they do not ‘die’ in a short while.

At this point, there is need to explain the causes that had led to language change especially in the lexicon used to refer to the months of the year in Ekegusii. These causes discussed below were derived from data arising from the questionnaire in appendix 1C and others from literature reviewed for purposes of this study.

4.3.1 Prestige
The data analysed revealed that Ekegusii had ‘native’ terms used to refer to the months of the year since this was not a new concept that could necessitate borrowing. The borrowed terms from English and Kiswahili were not borrowed by Ekegusii to fill a lexical gap but for purposes of prestige (Hinga, 1979). This is evident from the data collected during the study. It was noted that respondents, both ‘young’ and ‘old’ had an idea of the existence of the ‘native’ terms used to refer to the months of the year in Ekegusii. It was however noted that they preferred the ‘new’ terms to the ‘native’ terms because of prestige. These ‘new’ terms originate from English and Kiswahili. The two languages seem to enjoy more prestige than Ekegusii. Among the ‘new’ terms, the closer one made the ‘new’ term sound more like English or Kiswahili, the better it was considered. In this case, the aspect of prestige had affected the females more than the males since no female had knowledge of the ‘native’ terms referring to the months among the ‘younger’ respondents involved in this study.

4.3.2 Language Contact
From the above analysis, the study revealed that one of the major causes of language change especially in relation to the lexicon used to refer to the months of the year in Ekegusii was language contact. The respondents, both ‘young’ and ‘old’, indicated that they interacted with people from other communities. This interaction compelled them to speak Kiswahili and (or) English. These two languages are also taught in school. This has made most of its speakers to perceive their mother tongue to be less prestigious than English and Kiswahili. In this study, the respondents stated that they lacked interest in learning the ‘native’ terms. With this attitude, there is likelihood that change will take place. The effects of the contact of Ekegusii speakers with
speakers of other languages particularly those that speak English and Kiswahili were visible in the changes that had taken place in the lexicon referring to months in Ekegusii.

4.3.3 Cultural Environment and Migration
Another cause of language change is cultural environment and migration. In the data collected on the reasons the respondents gave for not having the knowledge of the 'native' terms, one respondent said that he grew up in an urban area and therefore was not able to learn the 'native' terms. This was confirmation that migration from ones rural area to an urban setting could contribute to language change.

From the analysis of the 'native' terms whereby the names and meanings are indicated, the researcher indicated that the meanings of the months had a reflection of the cultural environment of the Abagusii speech community. They were mainly crop and animal farmers. These were their main activities and the respondents: 'the older' speakers explained that they used the activities a lot when referring to the months of the year. For example, when discussing the time when one was born, they would make reference to the activities that were carried out at the time of birth as shown in examples 6 and 7 below:

6. If one was born in January, 'Monuguno obarema', for instance, it would be said that he or she was born during 'the digging' season, 'rirema'.

7. One born in April, 'Amaumuntia', would be said to have been born during 'the weeding' season, 'okwaga'.

These activities were no longer the main preoccupation of the Abagusii community. There were other professions that people engaged themselves in like teaching, engineering etc. Even if people were farmers, they did not use the 'native' terms because of other factors like education and contact with other languages which had provided other names for the months which were given first priority over the 'native' ones. This could explain why 'native' terms were not a popular choice when referring to the months in Ekegusii.

4.3.4 Climate Change
Another cause of language change in the naming of the months of the year in Ekegusii could be attributed to climate change. The consistent weather patterns contributed a lot in determining the
agricultural activities carried out by the Abagusii community. In the current setting, the climatic conditions had changed leading to unpredictable weather patterns. A respondent who supplied data on the 'native' terms explained that there were significant changes in the weather patterns as indicated in example 8.

8. The month of April which they called Amaumuntia used to be extremely wet. This was not necessarily the case in the current setting.

This then means that at some point, the 'native' terms may not apply if the weather did not portray what the 'native' term used to imply.

4.3.5 Globalization
The fact that different cultures and economic systems around the world were becoming connected and similar to each other because of the influence of large multinational companies and of improved communication, Ekegusii was also changing to be at par with the rest of the world. English and Kiswahili being languages of wider communication had affected the vocabulary used to refer to the months of the year in Ekegusii. This was evident in the data collected from the 'younger' respondents. When interacting with peers, most of them preferred the English terms to the 'native' terms or even terms derived from Kiswahili. The speakers only changed the phonological structure in order to make the words sound more like Ekegusii as shown in example 9.

9. Researcher: Motienyi ki kwaiboretwe? [In which month were you born?]
   Respondent: Chanuari [January]

In conclusion, Ekegusii like every other language that people use was expected to change and that there were many causes (external sociolinguistic factors and internal psycholinguistic factors) that triggered these changes.
4.4 Chapter Summary
This chapter presents data analysis and discussion. It reveals that there are two categories of names used in Ekegusii by both 'young' and 'old' speakers of this language. It also indicates that social variables of age and educational qualifications play an important role in the choice of terms. The next chapter gives a summary of findings, conclusions and recommendations.
CHAPTER FIVE
SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction
This Chapter presents a summary of the findings in chapter four and then discusses the conclusions drawn from the findings. It also presents the recommendations made out of the study followed by the implications of the study for material developers and finally suggests areas deserving further research.

5.1 Summary of Findings
The study sought to identify and describe the change in naming of the months of the year in Ekegusii from ‘native’ terms to ‘new’ terms, to establish why and the extent to which speakers of Ekegusii accommodate to their listeners by converging or diverging when referring to the months of the year and finally, to find out whether the lexical terms used to refer to the months could be used to explain the causes of language change.

The results of our investigation revealed that there were lexical changes in reference to the months of the year in Ekegusii (see section 4.1). There was evidence that Ekegusii had twelve ‘native’ terms that were used to refer to the months of the year. From the meanings of the terms given by the respondents, it was discovered that the names were derived from agricultural practices of the Abagusii community. They were predominantly crop farmers and closely observed the weather patterns to determine activities to undertake at particular times in the year. Over time, this community had changed in various ways leading to changes in the practices of the people. They were involved in business which introduced them to Kiswahili (language of trade) and this had also made them to interact with people from other communities hence the need to learn other languages like Kiswahili and English. There were also other fields like formal employment where people engaged themselves in activities that did not necessarily depend on weather patterns. Exposure to formal education had also greatly influenced the lexical changes in that data analysed from the ‘younger’ respondents indicated that most of them preferred to use nativised terms or the names of the months as they are pronounced in English.
The second finding was that there was correlation between the ‘new’ lexical terms used to refer to the months of the year in Ekegusii with social variables of age and educational qualifications. The data collected indicated that all the ‘younger’ respondents were aware that there was more than one name used to refer to the months of the year in Ekegusii i.e. name according to numerical order borrowed from Kiswahili, nativised term borrowed from English or the month name as it is pronounced in English. The task at this point was to find out the criteria used by the respondents to choose which name to use and why. It was discovered that majority of the ‘younger’ respondents preferred to use the nativised terms or the names as they are pronounced in English as compared to the numerical order. In situations where they were interacting among themselves (peers with educational qualifications that is those had attained primary, secondary and secondary level certificates), the ‘younger’ respondents were likely to use the English names without changing the pronunciation. This was in agreement with the Speech Accommodation Theory that is used to explain how and why people modify their language behavior when interacting with others. In this case, the ‘younger’ respondents converged when speaking to peers that were educated and they diverged when interacting with elderly people they suspected may have no educational qualifications. It was discovered that gender did not influence the choice of term i.e. what mattered most was age and educational qualifications.

Data analysed proved that there were several causes of language change derived from the lexical changes in the months of the year in Ekegusii. The respondents in the study confirmed that they interacted with speakers from other communities. This required them to use more neutral languages to communicate with them. These languages were also offered in school and with time, the Ekegusii speakers borrowed the month names as a result of language contact. These terms were not borrowed because Ekegusii had no names for the months i.e. to fill a lexical gap but because Kiswahili and English terms were considered more prestigious than the ‘native’ terms. The speakers would like to identify with the donor-language culture. The other causes of language change include cultural environment and migration, globalization and climate change.

5.2 Conclusions

The findings from this study indicate that there is no language that should be expected to remain stable since change and variation are inevitable.
The data analysed provided two categories of lexical items used to refer to the months of the year in Ekegusii i.e. the ‘native’ terms and ‘new’ terms. It is important to note that the ‘native’ terms were not currently in use by either the ‘older’ or ‘younger’ respondents. This means that the ‘native’ terms have been replaced by the ‘new’ terms. This confirmed that language change had taken place at the lexical level in the terms used to refer to the months of the year in Ekegusii.

Considering that there was more than one term used to refer to a month in the category of the ‘new’ terms, the study revealed that there was a correlation between the lexical terms with social variables of age and educational qualifications. It was confirmed that gender was not a factor to determine the choice of term used to refer to the months. To some extent however, the respondents seemed to use more than one name to refer to the same month e.g. numerical order in one instance and the nativised term or name using English pronunciation in another. Names of months using the numerical order were commonly used by speakers when interacting with ‘older’ speakers especially those with no formal educational qualifications.

The causes of language change noted in this study were factors that affected all societies. The fact that the Abagusii community was accommodating new ways of life e.g. participating in trade, embracing formal education, migration and globalization, their language too has been affected in one way or the other. The implication is that the core vocabulary used to name the months of the year in Ekegusii are seriously threatened with death unless deliberate efforts are made to revitalize them.

5.3 Recommendations
The lexical changes noted in reference to the months of the year in Ekegusii was an indication that Ekegusii was accommodating changes in its basic vocabulary due to the influence of the modern way of life. Since these changes cannot be stopped, there is need for the ‘native’ terms to be properly documented as a way of preserving them for posterity. There are materials in print with these names but their order is different. The names realized from this study could be used to review existing documents. The ‘new’ terms should also be documented to capture the changes that have taken place in the language. There should be deliberate measures to popularize the use of the ‘old’ and ‘new’ names interchangeably to keep them afloat. Ekegusii FM radio stations could design and air such advocacy programmes as a starting point.
Secondly, because there was a correlation between the ‘new’ terms and the social variables of age and educational qualifications, speakers who intend to learn the language need to know which terms are best used with different categories of speakers. But at the same time, the youth who seem to prefer the ‘new’ terms could also be exposed to ‘old’ terms in their discourses with members from other age groups. This would serve as additional information to be included in materials used to teach the language especially the dictionary.

Lastly, causes given for the changes that have taken place in the naming of the months of the year include prestige. This implies that the speakers of Ekegusii tend to use borrowed terms at the expense of their ‘native’ terms with the notion that theirs are inferior. To change this attitude, the researcher recommends the documentation of the ‘native’ terms used to refer to the months of the year in Ekegusii in materials used to teach mother tongue in the education system. Other measures to improve the social standing of Ekegusii should include improving its functional potential in the society. This will include enforcing the language policy requirement to the effect that mother tongue should be the language of instruction from class one to three; and making Ekegusii one of the official languages in Kisii and Nyamira Counties.

5.4 Areas for Further Research

Findings of this study suggest that core vocabulary of Kenyan languages could be dying due to the effect of languages of wider communication like English and Kiswahili. To understand the magnitude of this effect, similar studies could be carried out on other Kenyan languages to establish how similar or different the naming of the months of the year is and whether there are any detectable changes in the current setting.

Since this study drew its data from Ekegusii speakers, a study could also be conducted to find out how the months of the year are referred to in literature published in Ekegusii such as the bible and the dictionary.

There is need for studies to be conducted in other areas of language that could possibly have been affected by language change in Ekegusii. One interesting area of focus could be the lexicon used for counting. A study could be conducted to find out how comfortable the Ekegusii speakers are when using figures in Ekegusii in their conversations and the role of culture in all this.
REFERENCES


APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

A. Semi-Structured Interview Schedule

1. Division (Tick the appropriate category)
   - Marani
   - Nyamarambe

2. Age group
   - 60 Years and above

3. Gender (Tick the appropriate category)
   - Male
   - Female

4. Educational Qualifications (Tick the appropriate category)
   - Primary School Certificate
   - Secondary School Certificate
   - College/University Level
   - No education certificate
5. State the native terms used to refer to the months of the year in Ekegusii and what they mean in the table below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ENGLISH TERM</th>
<th>NATIVE TERM (Adopted from Ekegusii Dictionary)</th>
<th>RESPONDENT’S NATIVE TERM</th>
<th>MEANING</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January</td>
<td>Monugu nobarema</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February</td>
<td>Egetamo</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March</td>
<td>Rigwata</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>Eng’atiato</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>Amaumuntia</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>Ebwagi</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July</td>
<td>Enkoromomi</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August</td>
<td>Rite</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September</td>
<td>Tureti ya kebaki</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October</td>
<td>Egesunte kia masaba</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td>Egesunte gia kabere</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December</td>
<td>Esagati</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6. Indicate the respondent’s choice of term used to refer to month of the year in Ekegusii.

Age (indicate age bracket): [15-29] [30-59]

Gender: male □ female □

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month name</th>
<th>Name of month in Ekegusii (can give more than one name)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April</td>
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<td>September</td>
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<tr>
<td>October</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
B. **Unstructured Interview Schedule**

Speakers will be encouraged to talk as guided by the topics suggested below:-(State the months in Ekegusii).

1. State the month in which you were born .................................................................
2. State the times when most schools and colleges open .................................................
3. When do people plant crops in your region? .................................................................
4. Are there rituals that are performed in your community? .............................................
   If ‘Yes’, state them and name the months when they usually take place? ..........................
                                                                                         .................................................................
                                                                                         .................................................................
                                                                                         .................................................................
5. In which month would you prefer to go on a journey? ..................................................
6. Which month of the year do you like? .................................................................

C. **Questionnaire on language change**

(This questionnaire will be orally administered in Ekegusii to the illiterate respondents)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Gender: Male</th>
<th></th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2. Have you gone to school? Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If ‘Yes’, up to what level?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary school certificate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary school certificate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College/ University level</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No education certificate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. Do you know the native terms that are used to refer to the months of the year in Ekegusii?
   Yes [ ] No [ ]
   If 'No', why?

4. Do you interact with people from other speech communities? Yes [ ] No [ ]
   If 'Yes', how often? Frequently, [ ] Rarely, [ ] Not at all [ ]

5. Which terms referring to the months of the year do you prefer when interacting with peers?
   Numerical order e.g. "Omotienyi omotang’ani" [ ] "Nativised term [ ] or English pronunciation [ ]

6. Which terms referring to the month of the year do you prefer when interacting with elderly uneducated members of your community?
   Numerical order e.g. "Omotienyi omotang’ani" [ ] "Nativised term [ ] or English pronunciation [ ]

7. When you are with educated friends, which terms do you prefer to use in reference to the months of the year? Numerical order e.g. "Omotienyi omotang’ani" [ ] "Nativised term [ ] or English pronunciation [ ]

8. Which terms (in reference to the months of the year) do you prefer to use when communicating to people of your gender? Numerical order e.g. "Omotienyi omotang’ani" [ ] "Nativised term [ ] or English pronunciation [ ]

9. Does your choice change when communicating with people of the other gender? .......
   If 'Yes’, explain why? ........................................................................................................................................

THANK YOU

73
Our Ref: C50/CE/26065/11  Date: 12th August, 2015

Director General,
National Commission for Science, Technology & Innovation
P.O. Box 30623-00100,
NAIROBI

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION
MS. JACQUELINE NYABOE MORARA - REG. NO. C50/CE/26065/11

I write to introduce Ms. Jacqueline Nyaboe Morara who is a Postgraduate Student of this University. She is registered for a M.A. degree programme in the Department of English & Linguistics in the School of Humanities & Social Sciences.

Ms. Morara intends to conduct research for a thesis entitled, “Language Change as Observed in the Names Used to Refer to the Months of the Year in Ekegusii.”

Any assistance given will be highly appreciated.
APPENDIX 3: RESEARCH PERMIT

CONDITIONS

1. You must report to the County Commissioner and the County Education Officer of the area before embarking on your research. Failure to do so may lead to the cancellation of your permit.
2. Government Officers will not be interviewed without prior appointment.
3. No questionnaire will be used unless it has been approved.
4. Excavation, filming and collection of biological specimens are subject to further permission from the relevant Government Ministries.
5. You are required to submit at least two (2) hard copies and one (1) soft copy of your final report.
6. The Government of Kenya reserves the right to modify the conditions of this permit including its cancellation without notice.

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT:
MS. JACQUELINE NYABOE MORARA
of KENYATTA UNIVERSITY, 1877-40200 Kisi, has been permitted to conduct research in Kisi County

on the topic: LANGUAGE CHANGE AS OBSERVED IN THE NAMES USED TO REFER TO THE MONTHS OF THE YEAR IN EKEGUSII

for the period ending:
13th November, 2016

Applicant’s Signature

Director General
National Commission for Science, Technology & Innovation

Permit No: NACOSTI/P/15/43149/8170
Date of Issue: 13th November, 2015
Fee Recieved: Ksh 1,000
STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Jacqueline Nyaboe Morara
Kenyatta University
P.O. box 43844 – 00100
NAIROBI.

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION.

Following your research Authorization vide your letter Ref. NACOSTI/.
P/15/43149/8170, to carry out research in Kisii County, this letter refers.

I am pleased to inform you that you can carry out your research in the County on "Language change as observed in the names used to refer to the months of the year in Ehegusii" for a period ending 13th November, 2016.

Wish you a successful research.