LEXICAL AND MORPHOSYNTACTIC ATTRITION IN SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS WHO SPEAK GIKUYU AS L1

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C50/ 12923/ 05

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS OF KENYATTA UNIVERSITY

OCTOBER, 2011

Ndung’u, Joseph
Lexical and morphosyntactic
DECLARATION

This thesis is my own original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other University or any other award.

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This thesis is dedicated to my late mother, Margaret Wambui, who made great sacrifices to see me educated and who, no doubt, would have been very proud of this achievement.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

My sincere gratitude goes to my University supervisors, Dr. E. Nyamasyo and Mr. C.M Gecaga for their guidance, patience and the invaluable work they put in to make this work a success.

I am grateful to Dr. M.C Njoroge for having encouraged me to enroll for this degree and for his constant encouragement during the course and in the writing of this thesis.

I am greatly indebted to Dr. Caleb Shivachi for rousing my interest in contact linguistics.

Lecturers and staff of the English and linguistics Department of Kenyatta University deserve recognition for their invaluable assistance during the preparation of this thesis. In particular, I am grateful to Dr. Mwangi, Fracia, Kirui and Susan for their encouragement.

My heartfelt gratitude goes to wife, Nyambura, and to my sons, Ndung’u and Munga for their support and encouragement.

Last but not least, I acknowledge the help and advice I received from my friends and colleagues in my master’s class led by Daniel Gichuhi.
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ABSTRACT

The aim of this study was to investigate attrition in Gikuyu L1 speakers as a consequence of Gikuyu – English contact in school. The study was based on the premise that students were losing their competencies in indigenous languages especially at the level of schooling. The study had four objectives. First, it sought to determine whether lexical and morpho-syntactical attrition was occurring in secondary school Gikuyu L1 speakers. Secondly, the study sought to determine the nature of attrition. Thirdly, it sought to determine the effect of schooling and home backgrounds on attrition. The study adopted case study as its research design. Two schools in Nyandarua County were randomly selected to be the base of the study. A questionnaire on students’ schooling and Linguistic backgrounds was administered to 200 form three Gikuyu L1 speakers in the two schools. The data obtained was used to group respondents according to schooling and home backgrounds. Fifty percent of respondents from each group were selected through interval sampling to sit a translation and a free writing test structured to elicit data on respondents’ proficiency in specified language features. Data (errors) elicited through the test was analysed within Myers-Scotton’s 4 M and Abstract Level theoretical frameworks. It was established that school and home language practices were factors in respondents’ susceptibility to attrition. It was also found that some linguistic features in Gikuyu language were more prone to attrition than others.
CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the study.

An article appearing in the ‘Sunday Nation’ newspaper of August 19th 2007 by Olive Munyi headed “Is Mother Tongue Becoming Obsolete” motivated this study. The article reported that an increasing number of children in Kenya could not communicate in their mother tongue because parents and schools did not facilitate their mother tongue acquisition.

Kenya is a multi-lingual society in that each of its forty two ethnic groups has its language. In addition, Kiswahili and English are widely spoken as the national and official language respectively. The Kenyan child in the rural areas acquires the language of his/her ethnic group as his/her LI. In urban areas, the child may acquire the parents’ language(s) as well as Kiswahili and English simultaneously. On joining pre-school at the age of four to five years, the child receives education through the language of the school catchment area; that is, his ethnic language in rural areas and Kiswahili or English in urban areas. In both areas, English is taught as a subject from the very beginning but becomes the medium of instruction in upper primary school.

This scenario has serious implications for language development in these children in that English is introduced to children who may not have acquired fully their mother tongue. Writing on language acquisition by bilinguals, Fishman (1972) says the languages spoken by a bilingual exist in a state of competition for a finite amount of memory and
processing space in the mind of the speaker. He states that the languages of a bilingual develop patterns of dominance; usually in relation to the domains in which the languages are used.

Writing on the same issue, De Bot (1999) argues that:

Frequency of use (necessary including frequency of activation) is the main factor in the change in language skills. Related to frequency of use is the level of language input. (De Bot: 1999: 348) As the dominant language becomes more frequent in usage and a major source of language input for the bilingual, the dominated language begins to show signs of attrition.

Attrition refers to loss of competence in a first language (LI) of an individual in a contact situation with a second language. Attrition is thought of as something characterizing the speech of individuals. It also happens within an individual's lifetime. De Bot (1999) says attrition implies the first step towards loss of a language and its replacement by another, probably the one dominating. In Kenya's situation, as English becomes the dominant language of pupils in school; their L1 begins to show structural changes sometimes in the direction of English.

In any utterance, it has been argued that there is an underlying abstract morphosyntactic structure (Myers-Scotton 2000). For monolingual speech, the morphosyntactic frame is based on the speaker's language. In bilingual speech (when two languages come into contact), the morphosyntactic frame is provided by the two languages in contact. The two participating languages are in opposition as they interact to provide the bilingual with a composite morphosyntactic frame. The surface morphemes (language data) of an LI utterance from a bilingual may show that a composite morphosyntactic frame underlies it.
In such a situation, we can say that the language spoken by the child is undergoing attrition because his/her LI utterance’s abstract morphosyntactic frame shows modification under the influence of the L2. This state of affairs can lead to the loss of a child’s first language in the long run.

Available literature on attrition in language (for example, Seliger and Vago(1991), Maher(1991), De Bot, Gommans and Rossing(1991) and Shivachi(2004) ) reveals that such studies are based on Chomskyan linguistic models which take a descriptive approach to attrition phenomena. Using the concepts of markedness and simplicity, the models explain that forms of language that are susceptible to attrition are those that are marked (irregular language forms). Those forms in LI that are shared with L2 are most likely to show changes in the direction of the L2.

Myers-Scotton (2002) proposes two models that provide a different approach to understanding attrition phenomenon in languages in contact situations. The models postulate that surface morphemes in a speaker’s language data are a product of abstract language production and processing. To her models, ‘markedness’ is relatively unimportant; it is a factor of performance. The surface change in language forms observed in the attriter’s language data may be more a reflection of a restructuring of more abstract conceptual relations. Using Myers-Scotton’s models, it is possible to shift the focus of investigation of deviant forms in an attriter’s utterance from performance (morphological realizations) to competence (abstract structuring of language).
The two languages that are the focus of this study, Gikuyu and English, come from different language groups and cultures. Gikuyu is a Bantu language of the Benue-Congo family while English is Germanic. In syntactical frames, both are verb medial. Morphologically, Gikuyu is agglutinating while English is isolating. Both are inflecting. Determiners / adjectives are post nominal in Gikuyu while pronominal in English. Gikuyu marks Noun – Adjective concord morphologically whereas in English, an adjective morpheme may be used with either a singular or plural noun. However, it is in the tense and aspect system that the two languages differ radically. For example, while English marks morphologically only two tenses in the verb phrase, namely: present and past, Gikuyu verb phrase marks morphologically seven tenses, namely: simple present, extended present, near future, remote future, immediate past, near past and remote past. The English verb phrase marks morphologically only the progressive and perfective aspects whereas three aspects are marked morphologically in a Gikuyu verb phrase, namely; the completive, the progressive and the perfective aspects.

Given these differences in the morpho-syntactical structure of the two languages, what is the effect of English dominance in a young pupil’s mind on his/her LI – Gikuyu? Would the Gikuyu tense and aspect system show some changes in the direction of English tense and aspect system? Would Noun -Adjective concord marking be maintained in Gikuyu given that English does not always mark that concord morphologically? Given the differences in the cultures of native speakers of the two languages, would the conceptual structure (semantic bundles) of lexical items show any influence from English.
Other aspects of language forms that were of concern in this study included word order, specifically, Noun + Adjective order in the noun phrase, and verb modification (e.g. changes in thematic role assignment)

1.2 Statement of the problem

The ministry of Education in Kenya requires that the medium of instruction in early childhood education and lower primary school be the language of the catchment area (mother tongue in rural areas and Kiswahili in urban areas). However, this requirement is increasingly being flouted, especially by private schools. They are introducing English at very basic levels of schooling and overemphasizing its use at the expense of local languages.

Given this scenario, it is a fact that local languages are losing out to English in terms of increasing frequency of use and function, and the effects are evident in deviant language forms observed in secondary school pupils’ LI data. However there are hardly any studies that explain the presence of these ‘non-target’ language forms evident in the Gĩkũyũ language data of secondary school pupils who speak Gĩkũyũ as L1, the nature of these deviant forms, the motivation behind their occurrence and the bilingual history of the pupils affected.
1.3 Research objectives

The objectives of the study were to:

i. Identify attrition in the lexicon and mophosyntax of Gikuyu spoken by secondary school students who speak the language as their first language.

ii. Determine the language forms that are prone to attrition.

iii. Determine the effect of schools’ language practices on attrition.

iv. Determine the effect of home language practices on attrition.

1.4 Research questions

i. Does the language data of secondary school’s pupils who speak Gikuyu as L1 show evidence of lexical and morphosyntactical attrition?

ii. Which language features are most susceptible to attrition?

iii. What is the effect of schools language practices on attrition?

iv. What is the effect of home language practices on attrition?

1.5 Research assumptions

i. The language data of secondary school pupils who speak Gikuyu as L1 show evidence of attrition.

ii. Some language features in Gikuyu are more susceptible to attrition than others.

iii. Lack of opportunities to speak Gikuyu in school predisposes secondary school pupils who speak Gikuyu as L1 to attrition.

iv. Secondary school speakers of Gikuyu as L1 from urban homes are more susceptible to attrition than those who live in rural areas.
1.6 Significance of the study

This study aimed at shedding light on the effects of dominance of English as a second language in schools on indigenous languages. English is taught in Kenya as a second language; as the language of education and official communication. Indigenous languages, on the other hand, are expected to continue to be the languages of culture and communication in the family and in social domains.

Although language change is a natural process, the variations that are observable in the language of youthful speakers of indigenous languages today indicate loss of competence rather than dynamics of language. Gradual loss of competence in their first languages means that young Kenyans may be unable to pass on those languages, and the knowledge and culture they carry, to the next generation.

The findings of this study could form a basis for a re-evaluation of the government policy on language and education as articulated in Education Commission Report of 1964 (and which is still in operation to date) that recommended the teaching of English in lower primary school to the detriment of indigenous languages.

1.7 Scope and limitations

This study should have been ideally large scale in order to investigate attrition across the whole population of high school students who speak English as well as other indigenous languages.
However, due to constraints of time and financial resources, only respondents from two schools namely: Nyandarua High School and Nyahururu Highway Senior School took part in the study. Form three students (aged 16 to 18 years) in the two schools formed the study population.

This cohort (late teenagers) is expected to have achieved near competence in their first language (De Bot, Gommans and Rossing: 1991:88) and the presence, if any, of deviant forms of language in their language data should be attributed to reasons other than language acquisition factors.
CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Literature review

A study of attrition in high school Gikūyū L1 speakers implies a study of languages in contact; in this case, contact between Gikūyū, Kiswahili and English. Language contact inevitably leads to bilingualism in society as well as in individual speakers of the entailing languages. Although bilingualism implies ability to speak two languages, linguists conventionally use the term bilingual to apply to speakers of two or more languages (Appel and Muysken:1987:1). Language contact situations vary. Appel and Muysken (1987:5) identify five situations namely:

(i) Related languages each with few speakers in an ecosphere. For example, the Australian deserts where many aboriginal people live in tribal groups. Here, bilingualism is characterized by widespread diffusion of words and elements of grammar.

(ii) Large language families sharing a common border. For example, the border between French and German in Switzerland where French is spoken in the south and German in the north. In the example, the two languages do not seem to influence each other significantly possibly because of sharing equal status in the eyes of the bilinguals.

(iii) Colonial language export. Europe exported its languages to its colonies which presently co-exist with indigenous languages as prestige languages of the formally colonized people. Examples include: English in East Africa which co-exist with Kiswahili (as lingua franca) and other indigenous languages; French in central and North Africa and Portuguese in Central and South America.

(iv) Pockets of speakers of minority languages cut off by surrounding national languages. Examples include, Welsh and Gaelic in Great Britain, Frisian in Netherlands and Basque in France and Spain.

(v) Migration from third world to industrial world. People from Africa, Asia and the Caribbean have migrated to Europe, Asia and North America carrying with them their languages. (Appel and Muysken:1987:6)
Kenya’s language situation, in which the proposed study is based, fits in the third contact situation: colonial language export. British explorers such as Captain Fredrick Luggard and Joseph Thomson facilitated the initial entry of English in Kenya through communication with their guides and porters as they explored the country. Colonization and missionary activities that followed the exploration facilitated the establishment and spread of English as a foreign language to the indigenous communities (Bogonko 1992). By the time of independence in 1963, English had clinched its premier position as the ‘high’ language in a negative digglosic relationship with the indigenous languages in Kenya. The continued domination of English in Kenya’s language arena, especially in education system, has not been without some undesirable contact outcomes.

Myers-Scotton (2002) suggests possible language contact outcomes as lexical borrowing, code switching, convergence, attrition and formation of mixed (split) languages and Creoles.

The proposed study focuses on attrition in high school Gikuyu LI speakers as an outcome of Gikuyu-English contact within the school system in Kenya. Attrition refers to loss of competence in a language by a native speaker in a contact situation with a second language. It is manifested in language data by occurrence of ‘non-target’ forms at the lexical and mophosyntactic level. It is thought of as something characterizing the speech of individuals in which in their language use, such individuals fail to mark, for example, tense and aspect appropriately.
Attrition phenomena develop in bilingual individuals as well as in bilingual societies in both indigenous and immigrant communities. In the long run, it may lead to language shift and, at its extreme; attrition may lead to language death (Seliger and Vago: 1991:3). Crystal (2000) says that a language is considered dead when it has no fluent speakers and no members of the younger generation interested in learning and using it (Crystal: 2000:11).

Gikuyu is spoken by about 6.6 million (source: Kenya population census, 2009) people in central and other parts of Kenya. Although the number of its speakers is large compared to the number of speakers of other ethnic languages in Kenya, this does not shield it from the processes of language loss in long run. Crystal (2000) says the number of speakers of an indigenous language does not necessarily insulate it from the process of language shift and eventually language death.

When we consider the cause of language death, it is evident that the factors involved are so massive in their effects that even languages with millions of speakers may not be safe (Crystal:2000:13)

Wurm’s five level classifications (Crystal 2000) of endangered languages would place Gikuyu as well as other indigenous languages in Kenya in the class of potentially endangered languages. According to this classification, such languages are:

Socially and economically disadvantaged, under heavy pressure from a large language and are beginning to lose child speakers. (Crystal: 2000: 21)

Based on this classification, we can say English potentially endangers Gikuyu in that Gikuyu LI speakers in school have few opportunities to communicate with their peers in their LI especially in their formative years.
Although the Kenya government recognizes that pupils must have the opportunity to acquire and speak their LI in nursery school and in the first three years of primary school, this is not the case on the ground. School authorities operating on the belief that early mastery of English portends academic success, have over the years encouraged the introduction of English at very basic levels of schooling and demanding its exclusive use during the school day. Some parents have preferred their children learning and using English instead of their first language.

According to Myers-scotton (2002), factors that promote attrition and then shift are both social and psychological:

Typically a loss in the domains in which language X is spoken is the catalyst for individual attrition and then group shift. That is, a language that is spoken in many domains (work, school, public discourse e.t.c) becomes used only at home. (Myers-Scotton: 2002:180)

Although a child speaking Gikuyu as a first language will have attained communicative competence in this language by the time he/she joins school (at age 4-5 years)(Nyamasyo 1985), English interferes with further acquisition and begins to modify the child’s LI to its direction. Crystal (2000), states that the threatened language shows structural changes.

“Grammatical features may be affected such as an increase in the use of inflections and function words from the dominant language. Knowledge of vocabulary declines with younger people familiar with only a proportion of traditional vocabulary known by older people.” (Crystal: 2000:22)

Vago and Seliger (1991) say that as a bilingual becomes fluent in the second language, he/she intermingles the grammars of the first and second language. As a result, the second language begins to encroach on the linguistic domains of the first.
The bilingual’s first language begins to be restructured according to the grammatical principles of the dominant language. This marks the beginning of attrition. The attriter’s language data show morphemes marking such grammatical functions as tense and aspect are inappropriately used or are used according to the grammatical rules of the dominating language. For example, attriters in Gikūyū, which marks seven tenses morphologically, might only mark the two tenses marked morphologically in the English verb; the simple present and the simple past.

Whereas attrition is the first step in the process of language shift in individual speakers and hence, group shift, linguists do not seem to have paid much attention to the phenomenon. There are few studies on attrition process and in particular on motivation for the presence of ‘invariants’ forms in an attriter’s language data. De Bot and Weltens (1991) say:

Research into consequences of mother tongue language shift for the structure of the language system of individual speakers is not very frequent (De Bot and Weltens: 1991:42)

Harkansson (1995) writing on the same topic adds:

There are very few empirical studies that attempt to describe in details the grammatical features of the language used by persons involved in attrition. (Quoted in Myers-Scotton: 2002:168)

The little research that is available in literature has been carried out under Chomskyan models that are built on concepts of markedness and parameter-settings. The theories claim that structures that are marked (not shared by the languages involved) are more easily lost than others.
That is, if a particular structure is similar across the waning language and the more widely used language, this may make it even more likely that there will be a change in the direction of the more dominant language (Seliger and Vago: 1991:12). For example, Gĩkũyũ speakers undergoing attrition in an environment where English is the dominating language might only mark the two aspects marked in both English and Gĩkũyũ, the progressive and perfective, but might fail to mark the completive aspect which is marked in Gĩkũyũ and not in English. The studies that follow illustrate different manifestations of attrition phenomenon.

Maher (1991) analyzed language contact studies based on diverse enclave speech communities (communities where speakers of language A are surrounded and/or dominated by speakers of language B) ranging from America to India and found out that despite their diversity, those languages reveal a restructuring of morphological and syntactic structures. These structures are characterized by reduction in the number of allomorphs, replacement of synthetic forms by analytic ones, progressive reduction in inflectional morphology and preference for coordinating rather than embedded constructions. For example, an attriter in Gĩkũyũ might use the analytical syntactical construction

\[ \text{Nǐndĩrahoi} \text{re rūt} \text{ha r} \text{wake.} \text{ (I asked for his permission)} \]

Instead of the synthetic construction,

\[ \text{Nĩndĩramũhi} \text{re rūtha.} \text{ (I asked for permission from him)} \]

Dressler (1991), study of attrition in Breton phonology, reports that Breton is changing in the direction of French.
In a sociolinguistic study of Breton speakers of different age groups in western France, Dressler found that Breton phonemes that were structurally far removed from French phonemes were lost in semi-speakers.

Semi-speakers adopted the French final stress instead of Breton pre-final stress. The study also found that, where there are similar and diverse allophones, allophones which are similar to French ones are maintained while those which are diverse are lost.

Schmidt (1991) studied attrition in Dyirbal, an Aboriginal language in Australia previously spoken in ten dialects in large areas of North Queensland. Dyirbal is a dying language limited to isolated pockets of Jambian Aboriginal community. It is currently being replaced by a variety of English and as a result of this contact, radical changes are occurring in its grammar. Linguistic changes are evident in every aspect of the language. They are affecting phonology, morphology, syntax, lexicon and sociolinguistic styles. At the phonological level, interference from English is evident by the intrusion of English phonemes in Dyirbal phonology. At the level of morphology, many changes are observed. They include: allomorphic reduction, reduced suffixation in marking peripheral case in favour of English preposition and tendency to drop verbal inflection affixes. Widespread changes also occur at the syntactical level. These include: breakdown in agreement rules operating in the noun phrase and verb complex, rigidifying of the exceptionally free Dyirbal word order on an S-V-O pattern as in English, and diminishing of clause subordination. Lexically, there is reduction in vocabulary.
De Bot, Gommans and Rossing (1991) investigated the effect of period of contact between two languages on attrition. Their subjects were Dutch nationals who had immigrated to France. Their study focused on the impact of contact time that the Dutch nationals had with their language and time elapsed since emigration on attrition in their first language. The study found that subjects who had little contact with fellow Dutchmen showed susceptibility to attrition as did those who had emigrated many years back. However, time of residence in France became only a factor when there was little contact. De Bot, Gommans and Rossing (1991) study is significant to the proposed study because this study postulates that the dominance in English in school and consequent lack of adequate contact with their first language lead to attrition in high school Gikuyu L1 speakers.

The studies cited in the preceding paragraphs were mostly carried out under Chomskyan linguistic models. They describe the performance data within the dichotomies of markedness and unmarkedness, and universal grammar versus language specific grammar. The studies attribute the presence of ‘non-target’ forms in attriters’ language data to leveling and simplicity. While it might suffice to explain the loss of irregular language forms in terms of markedness, Chomskyan models cannot explain the presence of ‘non-target’ forms of language in the waning language data that seem to be structured on the rules of the dominating language. The intrusion of the dominant language rules might be occurring at the level of abstract structuring of language. A mechanism for probing this level of language process seems necessary.
Myers-Scotton's models, Abstract level model and 4 M model (Myers-Scotton 2002), appear more theoretically grounded to explain attrition phenomenon. They claim that the presence of 'non-target' forms in an attriter's language data can be traced to abstract structuring of language. During abstract language structuring, a bilingual's two languages are active. The dominant language (L2) system may influence abstract lexical and morphosyntactical structuring resulting in split lexical items and L2 morphosyntactic rules in L1 language data.

For example, a Gikuyu noun 'nyũmba', which marks plural with a 'zero' morpheme, is pluralized as 'manyũmba' and given an inappropriate morpheme ma because the equivalent noun in English 'house', has a plural morpheme. The basic tenet of the models is that 'non-target' language forms observed in an L1 attriter's language data are a product of interactions of the two language systems at an abstract level. While AL model seeks to account for the presence of "invariant" language forms at the levels of lexical - conceptual and predicate - argument structure, the 4M model focuses on morphological level.

Several studies on attrition have been carried out using Myers-Scotton's models. For example, Schmitt (2000, 2001) studied the Russian spoken by five Russian boys who lived in the United States and for whom English was becoming the dominant language. They spoke some Russian at home with parents and grandparents but English was their primary language. The boys were recorded in natural conversations in home environments but were asked to speak Russian.
Going by Myers-Scotton’s models, it is evident in Schmitt’s data that lexical conceptual structure is the level most affected when attrition sets in. In one set of the data, 26% (227/878) of the CPs (complementizer phrases – morphosyntactic structure) show convergence at the level of lexical conceptual structure. Convergence is the influence of one language on the structure of another. For example, in Schmitt’s data, the semantic field of the concept of ‘things’ in Russian was changing in the direction of English for those boys who had gradually shifted over to English as their dominant language. In Russian, there are two nouns that correspond to English ‘things’. One stands for concrete objects (shtuki) and the other (veschchi) refers to abstract elements. In contexts, that required ‘veshchi’ the speakers used ‘shtuki’. The indication is that they had neutralized the distinction that Russian makes.

The modification in the lexical-conceptual structure of Russian words was not restricted to nouns. Verbs also showed similar changes. Verbs with the meaning of motion are a separate class in Russian. Depending on the prefix and the verb root, a verb may express different types of motions as well as the beginning, progression and the end of the motion. For example, the English verb ‘go’ may be translated into Russian by at least four different verbs. For example, ‘idti’ means ‘to be in the process of going while ‘khodit’ means ‘to move regularly’ In a number of cases, subjects in Schmitt study used the verb ‘idti’ as if it had the same features as ‘go’ That is, they generalize this verb to cover various types of going.
In a study of six Hungarian-English bilingual children living in United States, Bolonyai (1999) also noted in her data a case of splitting and recombining at the level of predicate-argument structure. Her respondents were all born into households with Hungarian as the dominant language and all spoke some Hungarian even though English was the dominant language. In this case, the convergence of English to Hungarian concerns the abstract structure of English verb ‘wake up’ and its consequences for argument structure.

In English, ‘wake up’ can be mapped onto either a transitive or intransitive structure with the presence or not of an object complement as the only indication of which structure is intended. Causitivity is also part of the entry for the transitive verb in this case although causitivity is not marked by an overt morpheme in the English verb phrase. In Hungarian on the other hand; a morpheme (suffix) is attached to the verb when it carries the causative meaning. In Hungarian, the equivalent of the English verb ‘wake up’, kel forms the causative by taking the derivational suffix-‘t’. The causative verb ‘kel-t’ subcategorizes for a direct object while ‘kel’ does not. In the data cited, the Hungarian child uses ‘kel’ with a causative meaning but without the Hungarian derivational suffix that is required. This as a result alters the specifications for mapping in the predicate–argument structure.

Fuller (1997, 2000) finds a number of examples of the influence of English on German structures at the level of morphological realization patterns. Her study is based on English–German contact in a South Carolina community in the United States.
She finds in her corpus of German, non-target forms motivated by English. English origin noun ‘sale’ appearing in German data select the preposition ‘uuf far’ (up for) instead of the standard German ‘zu’ (to). The noun behaves as if it is in English data.

Raith (1988) study analyses data in terms of 4M Model. His study is based on data collected from Pennsylvania German community in Kent County, Delaware, USA. He focused on lexical attrition in these Germans who now speak English as the dominant language. He found that 14% of their lexicon consisted of borrowing from American English. Of these lexical importations, nouns represent 70%. The findings support the main tenet of the 4M model namely: content morphemes are most susceptible to attrition. Hlavac (2000) reports similar findings in his study of young adult Croatian speakers in Australia who have a near native competence in English.

Turning to system morphemes, studies indicate that early system morphemes are more susceptible to loss than late system morphemes. Fuller 2000 (already cited) reports that while German plural-making patterns are still operating in her Pennsylvania German corpus, the patterns do not generally apply to English origin nouns. That is, the German plural suffix is replaced by the English plural -s on English-origin loan nouns (e.g. friend-s). However, what is noticeable here is that the speakers have not extended this pattern of replacement to Pennsylvania German nouns. This variety of German has different plural markers; one of these is -s but it remains a minor allomorph in Fuller’s Corpus (6/457).
Only a few Germans nouns in her corpus (6/457) that historically takes other markers occur with -s instead. The general finding is that plural marking morphemes, early system morphemes, are maintained, not lost in these Pennyslvania German attriters.

Dorian study (1978) of East Sutherland Gaelic (spoken in remote coastal fishing village in Scotland) shows morphology to be resilient in the attrition process. Her subjects, 4 older fluent speakers, 4 younger fluent speakers and 5 semi-speakers were given sentences to translate. In this study, she tested for loss or retention of morphological marking in the plural of nouns. Plural marking is an early system morpheme.

In East Sutherland Gaelic (E.S.G), there are ten ways of marking plural namely: suffixation, final mutation, suppletion, quantity change (length), vowel alternation, syncope and combinations of some of these. Fluent speakers used most of the ten markers appropriately. However, semi-speakers used suffixation predominantly. A particular plural suffix was also used far more frequently than any other. Semi-speakers also frequently fail to mark plural in any way; zero plurals are unknown to older fluent speakers and occur in 0.5% percent of cases for younger fluent speakers, but account for 9% of semi-speakers’ plurals.

Part of the motivation for these developments may come from English. Semi-speakers do not tend to use phonemes which have no English equivalent, and are therefore losing plural marking that requires ESG phonemes that have no English equivalent. Semi-speakers also fail to mark plural through vowel length distinction because the variety of English they speak, Scotts English, lacks contrastive vowel length.
Semi-speakers tendency to use a single suffix to mark plural, may be influenced by the almost uniform way of marking plural in English; by single suffix –s. In short, Dorian subjects did not show actual loss of the morphological inflection but speakers resulted to analogical leveling and simple suffixation. In most cases, their mophosyntactic frame remained intact.

Regarding system morphemes and attrition, Gross (2000 a) study shows that late system morphemes will be the last morpheme type to show effects from L2. The findings are anchored on case marking data from German determiners and adjectives. His subjects were six German immigrants who had been living in the United States for at least forty years when they were interviewed in informal conversation conducted in the participants’ native German dialect. English was the main language they had used for these forty years. In German, predicate adjectives are not inflected for case and gender. However, pronominal adjectives are. In Gross’ data, out of all contexts for pronominal adjectives, almost 90% of all contexts show target case marking. Inaccurate forms occurred only 5.1% of the time (18/354) and there were fifteen cases where there was no case marking at all in the slot for an adjectival suffix. Thus, a total of 9.3% of slots for an adjectival case marker show non-target-like realizations.

Gross’s results for determiners show even more strongly that late system morphemes are not easily susceptible to loss or even change. Only 2.8% of determiners were inaccurate.
Further, when taken together, inaccurate forms for determiners and adjectives amount to only 3.2%. Gross notes that this number contrasts sharply with the results that he reports for content morphemes in his corpus which showed 29.7% inaccuracies.

In summary, what the studies under Myers-Scotton models show is that attrition is best seen in terms of the extent to which the abstract morphosyntactic frame of the attriting language is maintained. The occurrences of 'non-target' forms are traced to cross-linguistic difference in how grammatical information is encoded and then accessed in language production. While the studies do concur with those under Chomskyan linguistic models on what linguistic units are prone to attrition, they go further to provide explanations and quantitative data. Findings and generalizations made are therefore more scientifically tenable.

Attrition studies in the local scene are hardly available in literature; more so those under Myers-Scotton models. Brenzinger (1992) explores attrition-related phenomenon of language death under a sociolinguistic approach. He describes motivation and characteristics of dying languages in East Africa. Obondo (1996) looks at bilingualism and language shift and makes the pertinent observation that the dominance of English in education in Kenya is leading to language shift. Myers-Scotton (1988) study investigates code-switching, a contact language outcome, under Matrix Language Frame model (MLF model); a model which became the foundation of the AL and 4M models.

One local study that is related to the present study is Shivachi (2004). The study looks at the language contact phenomenon of convergence.
In the study, Songa, a Bantu language, is converging in the direction of the dominant Luo, a Nilotic language. The ‘Luonised’ Songa shows massive lexical borrowing but grammatical morphemes remain resilient in ‘Luonised’ Songa data and the morphosyntactic frame appears intact. If a language like Songa can undergo such drastic changes in linguistic form in contact with a dominant but structurally unrelated language, what is the effect of institutionalized dominance of English on the indigenous languages spoken by school children? Specifically, what is the effect of early dominance of English on the first language of young Gikuyu bilingual? Which language features would be most susceptible to changes? The study sought to answer these questions.

2.2 Theoretical framework.

Attrition studies available in literature have been carried out generally under three theoretical frameworks. These are:

1. Sociolinguistic models that focus on such areas as, language loss across generations, lexical retrieval difficulties and dialect leveling.

2. Linguistic models that are guided by the concepts of markedness and parameter setting.

3. Abstract level models that trace attrition to abstract structuring of language.

This study focused on the presence of invariant language forms in LI data as the starting point of inquiry. Consequently, the focus was on the structure of the two languages in contact and how they influence each other.
A review of literature indicates that most of the studies in attrition have been guided by Chomskyan linguistic models. Within the Chomskyan model, a language grammar comprises two parts: a core, which consists of rules a particular language has selected from universal grammar (UG) and a periphery, which consists of rules specific to that particular language and not to others. Since the core rules specific to that particular language are subset of UG, these rules are shared with other languages which may contain parts of the subsets within their own core.

The rules contained in the periphery part of the grammar are not shared since they are not part of the UG. From the perspective of core/periphery distinction, one Chomskyan linguistic model, the theory of markedness, claims that rules from the core are considered unmarked while those in the periphery are marked (Seliger and Vago: 1991:12). In attrition process, the model predicts the marked language forms are more susceptible to attrition than unmarked forms. For example, in English, verbs such as ‘give’, ‘send’ and ‘make’ allow either the preposition phrase construction or the direct object/indirect object construction to express dative relationships. In contrast, verbs such as ‘donate’ ‘explain’ and ‘construct’ allow only prepositional phrase datives. Since of the two variant dative expressions only the prepositional phrase construction is found universally, verbs such as ‘give, ‘make’ and ‘send’ are marked in periphery grammar of English for allowing language specific other options (Seliger: 1991:232). The marked verbs will be prone to attrition process in situations of English contact with a dominating L2 which expresses the dative relationship exclusively in prepositional phrase construction.
Another Chomskyan linguistic model that features in attrition studies is the parameter setting model (Smith and Van Buren: 1991:17). Chomsky (1981) states that language abilities follow innate UG principles which are then modified to suit the data which the language learner, first or second, is exposed to. Based on these modifications or parameters setting, a grammar for a specific language develops. This means that some languages’ rules are universal while others are language specific. This model predicts that in attrition processes resulting from language contact, a language specific rule in L1 is likely to be excluded in LI language data in favour of an L2 universal rule. Taking the dative formation example given in the preceding paragraph, L1 (English) attrition will be predicted if L1 but not L2, contained rules for dative alternation. The universal rule (preposition phrase dative formation) would be preferred since the tendency in language production is towards simplification.

The focus of Chomskyan language models is on surface level data. They seem adequate to explain surface level configurations showing reduced lexicon, reduction in number of allomorphs, increased paradigmatic regularity, discarding of some morphemes and replacements of synthetic forms by analytic ones. However, there are some invariant language forms found in an attriters’ L1 data that cannot be accounted for through the models. These includes: split lexical items (a lexical item in L1 that carries the semantic bundles of a related word in L2), modified verbs (verbs that have lost transitivity or causitivity), changes in word order (in a phrase) and the presence of an L2 language rule in L1 data. A need therefore, arises for a model that can explain the presence of these non-target forms in L1 language data.
Myers Scotton’s Abstract Level Model and 4 M model can facilitate the understanding of these ‘non target’ language forms because the models trace performance data to speaker’s intentions. Chomskyian studies have shown that language (monolingual speech) is best understood when inquiry goes beyond surface configurations. Similarly, bilingual speech (and the resultant contact outcomes) is best understood when the focus is on what underlies the surface structure.

Myers-Scotton’s models focus on the role of mental lexicon as connecting a theory of grammar with language production and processing (Myers-Scotton 2002). Using these models, it is possible to show that attrition phenomena depend on differences in abstract nature of language in general and in some cases, the participating languages in particular. The basic tenet of the models is that although all surface morphemes in an attriter’s data come from one language, the abstract lexical and morphosyntactic structure no longer come from one language but include some abstract structure from another language. The result is composite morphosyntactic frame.

In the present study, the invariant forms of Gĩkũyũ observed in respondents’ Gĩkũyũ data, both lexical and morphosyntactical, are analysed in terms of the models. They are traced to abstract structuring in the course of the language production and processing in the environment of two language systems; Gĩkũyũ and English.

The abstract level model claims that there are three levels of abstract grammatical structure in any lexical item. These are:
(i) The level of lexical–conceptual structure (semantic/pragmatic features) critical in semantic/pragmatic feature bundles that is matched at conceptual level with an intention that the speaker wishes to convey.

(ii) The level of predicate–argument structure (relations between thematic role assigner-verbs and some prepositions—and arguments they map on to the phrase structure units) and,

(iii) The level of morphological realizations patterns (elements and constituents orders required by well formedness constraints for surface level realization)

The abstract level asserts that preverbal intentions in the conceptualizer activate language specific semantic–pragmatic feature bundles and these are mapped onto lemma (abstract entry in mental lexicon that can and does trigger language specific morphosyntactic procedures) in the mental lexical and conceptual structure. Language specific linking rules based on language universals are the source of predicate argument structure and morphological realization patterns. Lemmas underlie surface morphemes and contain information of a lexical entry. The abstract level model states the following hypotheses about attrition

(i) Of the three levels of abstract lexical structure, the level of lexical–conceptual structure in content morphemes is most susceptible to attrition.

(ii) The level of morphological realization patterns is more likely to show modification in attrition process than the level of predicate argument structure.
Going by the model, the study predicted that atritter's Gikuyu data will have invariant forms' originating at the conceptual level. Similarly, order of elements within the phrases was likely to show changes in the direction of English.

The 4M model classifies morphemes into four types based on when they are activated during abstract language production namely: content morphemes, early system morphemes, bridge late system morphemes and outsider late system morphemes. Content morphemes are directly linked to the speaker's intention. Speaker's intention activates language specific semantic/pragmatic features bundle that underlie the conceptual information that content morphemes will convey. Early system morphemes are indirectly elected by content morphemes. They are elected to realize further the conceptual content of the semantic/pragmatic bundles. For example, in English the determiner 'the' adds 'definiteness' to its head noun 'book' in the sentence "Where is the book you borrowed yesterday?" The noun 'book' is a content morpheme and the determiner 'the' is an early system morpheme. The same semantic and pragmatic feature bundle activates both 'book' and 'the'. The other two morpheme types are called late system morphemes because they are only activated at the level of making bigger structures like CPs (complementizer phrases).

Bridge late system morphemes integrate elements in a constituent when the well-formedness conditions for those constituents call for them i.e. their presence is determined by the maximal projection in which they occur. An example of a bridge system morpheme is 'of' in the English construction 'ball of Lena'.
The fourth morphemes type, 'outsiders, late system morphemes, are also activated later in the structuring of the CPs to meet the conditions of well-formedness. But unlike the 'bridges' morphemes, information about their form is outside their immediate maximal projection. For example, the subject-verb agreement in many languages is an outsider late system morpheme as in English sentence 'The dog like-s bones' Vs 'The dog like bones'. The '-s' is not the part of the VP (like bones), that is, it is co-indexed with an element outside its immediate maximal projection (the VP).

The 4 M model asserts the following hypotheses:

(i) Content morpheme are not only 'first in' in language acquisition and contact situation promoting borrowing, but they are also 'first out' in language attrition.

(ii) Early system morphemes are less susceptible to replacement or loss in attrition than content morphemes, but more so late system morphemes. Substitution is more likely than loss.

(iii) Of all morphemes types, late system morphemes are least susceptible to absolute omission.

In the context of the 4M model, this study predicted that the attriter's Gĩkũyũ data would show that most of the invariant forms would be content morphemes. Early system morphemes like those marking Noun-Adjective concord would be maintained.
The research studied ‘non target’ forms occurring in the language data of secondary school Gikuyu LI speakers under Myers-Scotton’s Abstract level and 4M models. The study focused on maintenance, substitution or loss of Gikuyu tense and aspect marking morphemes (early system morphemes). The maintenance, substitution or loss of prefixes marking Noun-Adjective concord (also early system morphemes) was also studied. Other areas of focus included splitting and recombinining of lexical items and word order (an early system morpheme in abstract sense).
CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research design

The study adopted case study as its research design. This design was chosen because the study population had the capacity to provide both quantitative and qualitative data on the nature and patterns of attrition. The study population also accommodated the various variables in the study.

3.2 Site of the study

The study was carried out in two schools in Nyandarua County, central region of Kenya. The first school, Nyandarua High school is a public co-educational provincial school. The other school, Nyahururu Highway Senior school, is a private co-educational school that admits pupils from all over the country. It has a large population of Gikuyu LI speakers especially from urban areas. The two schools were purposively selected because their populations accommodate the main variables in the study namely: different primary school and home backgrounds.

3.3 Study population

The study purposively targeted Form three students in the two schools who were in the 16-18 years age bracket. Language acquisition scholars say that by this age, L1 acquirers should have achieved native competence.
De Bot, Gommans and Rossing (1991) says:

At this age, the acquisition of the first language has been completed both through formal and informal input (De Bot, Gommans and Rossing: 1991:88)

This age group, under pressure to conform to peers' language and demands of the job market they are preparing to enter, will show the effects of domain shift in their LI and the influence, if any, of the dominating L2 on their L1 form.

3.4 Sample size and sampling procedure

The targeted schools, Nyandarua High and Nyahururu Highway, have a combined population of about 300 Form 3 students. From this population, random sampling was used to set a sample of 200 Gikuyu L1 speakers: 120 from Nyandarua High and 80 from Nyahururu Highway. One characteristic of pupils in the two schools was their varied background in Gikuyu-English contact. For example, some pupils had attended nursery and primary schools where English is used exclusively. Others had only begun to use English as a medium of instruction at a later stage in their school life. Still, some pupils came from homes where English was the preferred language in family interactions. As a result, the pupils were expected to display different sociolinguistic profiles as far as their bilingualism was concerned.

Tables 3.1 and 3.2 below give the distribution of respondents by school and home backgrounds respectively.
Table 3.1: Distribution in percentages of respondents by primary school background

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category of respondents</th>
<th>PR</th>
<th>PUPR</th>
<th>PU</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SCHOOL A</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCHOOL B</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOTH SCHOOLS</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.2: Distribution in percentages of respondents by home background

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category of respondents</th>
<th>UR</th>
<th>RU</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SCHOOL A</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCHOOL B</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOTH SCHOOLS</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The 200 respondents completed a questionnaire structured to capture sociolinguistic and bio data. The respondents were then categorized in groups of 5-7 formed on the basis of the study variables namely: schooling and home backgrounds. Five categories were formed. The first three categories were based on schooling background while the other two were based on home background.
The categories are:

i. PR (Private) - Pupils who attended private schools for their pre-school and primary education).

ii. PUPR (Public-private) - Pupils who attended public schools for their pre-school and lower primary education).

iii. PU (Public) - Pupils who attended public schools for their pre-school and primary education).

iv. UR (Urban) Respondents who grew up in an urban setting.

v. RU (Rural)- Respondents who grew up in non-urban setting i.e. rural parts of the country).

According to the data obtained through the questionnaire, each of these categories of respondents showed a distinct sociolinguistic profile.

The sociolinguistic profile was built around six parameters namely:

i. Languages spoken at home

ii. Languages spoken in school

iii. Languages used with peers

iv. First encounter with English as a medium of instruction

v. Proficiency in English

vi. Fluency in Gĩkũyũ.

Tables 3.3 and 3.4 below give profiles of each of the five categories of respondents.
Table 3.3: Sociolinguistic profile of the school background categories of respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parameter</th>
<th>Category of school background</th>
<th>% of respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>who use Gikuyu at home</td>
<td>PR</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PUPR</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PU</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>who use Gikuyu with peers</td>
<td>PR</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PUPR</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PU</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>who speak Gikuyu at school</td>
<td>PR</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PUPR</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PU</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>who are not fluent in Gikuyu</td>
<td>PR</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PUPR</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PU</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>who were taught in English in Preschool</td>
<td>PR</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PUPR</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PU</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>who were taught in English in Std 4</td>
<td>PR</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PUPR</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PU</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proficiency of the respondents in</td>
<td>PR</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English expressed in% * Based on</td>
<td>PUPR</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K.C.P.E exams.</td>
<td>PU</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table 3.4: Sociolinguistic profile of home background categories of respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parameter</th>
<th>Category of home background</th>
<th>% of respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>UR</td>
<td>RU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>who use Gĩkũyũ at home</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>98%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>who use Gĩkũyũ with peers</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>who use Gĩkũyũ at school</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>who are not fluent in Gĩkũyũ</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>who were taught English in preschool</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>who were taught for the first time in English in std 4</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proficiency of the respondents in English expressed in % * Based on K.C.P.E average percentage scores</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>77%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
After establishing the sociolinguistic profile of each category of respondents, 50% of the respondents from each of the categories were picked through interval sampling to sit English – Gikuyu translation test.

3.5 Data collection

The research, focusing on each school at a time, was carried out in two phases. First, respondents completed a questionnaire structured to capture their bio-data and information on languages used in school and at home. Armed with this information, the researcher then categorized the respondents into five categories namely:

1. Private primary school background respondents
2. Private-public primary school background respondents
3. Public primary school background respondents
4. Urban respondents
5. Rural respondents

A Gikuyu - English translation test structured to target tense and aspect marking, Noun-Adjective concord marking, Noun+ Adjective order in the noun phrase and lexical attrition was then administered to 50% of respondents selected through interval sampling. ‘Non-target’ forms observed in the respondents’ data were identified, categorised and then quantified.
3.6 Data analysis

Data elicited from the translation tests was analyzed within Myers-Scotton’s Abstract level model and 4M model. Non-target language forms were categorized as follows: tense, aspect, Noun-Adjective concord, word order and lexicon. The categorized non-target forms were then linked to the respondents’ category/categories in order to form patterns of attrition. The patterns observed formed the basis of making conclusions and generalizations.

3.7 Ethical consideration

The researcher obtained authorization from the District Education Office in Nyandarua before going to the field. The participants were briefed on the nature of the research and were then requested to participate. The research findings were handled with utmost ethical considerations to avoid embarrassing subjects who showed attrition.
CHAPTER FOUR

Data presentation, Analysis and Discussion

4.1 Introduction

While section 3.5 in chapter three provided the sociolinguistic milieu of each category of respondents, this chapter presents analyses and discusses the data on the marking of specific linguistic features. The chapter focuses on five linguistic features in an attempt to establish manifestations of attrition in the language data of attriters and the sociolinguistic environments that predisposes one to attrition. The five Gikuyu language features are: tense marking, aspect marking, Noun-Adjective concord marking, word order and lexicon. The language features are dealt with through the Myers – Scotton’s theoretical frameworks namely; the Abstract level model and 4 M Model.

This chapter is divided into two sections. While section 4.1 introduces the chapter, section 4.2 deals with the presentation, analysis and discussion of data on each of the five language features specified in 4.1. Section 4.3 provides a summary of the chapter.

4.2.1 Marking of tenses

Greenbaum (1996) defines tense and distinguishes it from aspect as follows:

Tense is a grammatical category referring to the location of a situation in time. Distinction in tense is signaled by inflection of the verb. Aspect, on the other hand refers primarily to the way the time of a situation is regarded rather than its location in time in absolute terms. Aspect is marked by inflection in the verb phrase and is always combined with tense. (Greenbaum: 1996:253)
In English language, only two of the three basic tenses are marked morphologically in the verb phrase, namely: the present and past tense. The third tense, the future tense is marked syntactically through the introduction of an auxiliary verb in the verb phrase or use of adverbials.

In Gĩkũyũ, on the other hand, the location of a situation in time is primary seen from two perspectives: the imminent action perspective and the manifest action perspective (Jones 1999). From the imminent action perspective the situation is expected but it is yet to occur or its occurrence is not fully manifested. From the manifest action perspective, the situation has occurred relative to the time of speaking. Each of the sub-paradigms has four tenses and all but one are marked morphologically in the verb phrase. Tables 4.1 and 4.2 that follow illustrate the Gĩkũyũ language concept of tenses.
Table 4.1: Tense marking in Gikuyu: The imminent action sub-paradigm

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspect</th>
<th>Simple present -a-</th>
<th>Extended present -kū-</th>
<th>Near future -rī</th>
<th>Remote future -ka-</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Completive</td>
<td>--------------------</td>
<td></td>
<td>akūhanyūka</td>
<td>akahanyūka</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>he runs (today)</td>
<td>he will run</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(soon)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(tomorrow or later)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Progressive</td>
<td>arahanyūka</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>he is running</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(right now)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perfective</td>
<td>aahanyūka</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>he has just run</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*The verb - *run (hanyūka)* is used to interpolate the morphological marking of the four tenses in different aspects.

The imminent action is expressed in four different senses morphologically. The morpheme {a} marks the simple present tense for actions that are occurring or have just occurred.

For example,

13. *Ahanyūka* -He has run.

The morpheme {kū} marks the extended present tense for an action that is expected to occur very soon. For example,
14. *Ekūhanyūka* - He will run.

An action that is expected to occur in the not too distant future is marked by the near future tense morpheme {rī}. For example,

15. *Arīhanyūka hwaini*-He will run in the evening.

The remote future tense morpheme {ka} marks an action that will occur in the distant future. For example,

16. *Akahanyūka rūciū*-He will run tomorrow.

As is evident the table 4.1, with the exception of the simple tense, the imminent action tenses can only be marked morphologically in the completive aspect. On the other hand, it is not possible to express the simple tense in the completive aspect.
Table 4.2: Tense marking in Gikuyu: The manifest action sub-paradigm

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspect</th>
<th>Zero tense present</th>
<th>Immediate past</th>
<th>Near past</th>
<th>Remote past</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tense</td>
<td></td>
<td>-kū-</td>
<td>-ra-</td>
<td>-a-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compleitive</td>
<td>ahanyükire</td>
<td>a-rahünükire</td>
<td>a-a-hünükire</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>he ran (earlier</td>
<td>he run</td>
<td>he ran (before</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>today)</td>
<td>(yesterday)</td>
<td>yesterday)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Progressive</td>
<td>a-hanyükaga</td>
<td>a-rahanyükaga</td>
<td>a-a-hanyükaga</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>He is habitually</td>
<td>he was running</td>
<td>he was running</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>running</td>
<td>(some moments</td>
<td>(before yesterday )</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>ago)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perfect</td>
<td>a-hanyük-ít-c</td>
<td>a-ra-hanyük-ít</td>
<td>a-a-hanyí-ít-c</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>he has run</td>
<td>He had run</td>
<td>He had run</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(some time ago)</td>
<td>(earlier today)</td>
<td>(before yesterday)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown in table 4.2, the four tenses in the manifest action sub-paradigm are all marked morphologically in all tenses except the immediate past tense in completive aspect.

It is not possible morphologically to make a distinction between the zero tense and the immediate past tense. Only an adverbial can make this distinction. For example,

17. Niakühanyükíte kíroko (He had run in the morning)

The adverbial, kíroko (in the morning) is required to bring out the meaning denoted by the immediate past tense.
The marking of tenses (part of syntax) is generally not a difficult area in language acquisition. Nyamasyo (1985) study of children language acquisition report that by the age of 5, a child has acquired the basic syntactical rules of the language(s) he/she is exposed to. Ndungu (1991), specifically researching on acquisition of Gĩkũyũ syntactical rules by children, also reports similar findings. Going by the two studies cited above and others in literature, respondents in the study whose average age was 17 years were expected to record few non-target forms in the marking of tenses as they should have mastered this skill in their childhood. However, data in the present study indicate that some respondents did not achieve the target language forms. The table 4.3 below shows the percentages of non-target forms of tense morphemes recorded by the five categories of respondents.
Table 4.3: Percentages of non-target forms of various tense morphemes in the school background categories of respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tenses</th>
<th>Target morpheme</th>
<th>PR</th>
<th>PUPR</th>
<th>PU</th>
<th>AVE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>SCH A</td>
<td>SCH B</td>
<td>SCH A</td>
<td>SCH B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Simple present</td>
<td>-a-</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extended present</td>
<td>-ku-</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Near future</td>
<td>-ni-</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remote future</td>
<td>-ka-</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>12.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zero tense</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immediate past</td>
<td>-ku-</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Near past</td>
<td>-ra-</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remote past</td>
<td>-a-</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AVE</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.3 above and other tables in this section show a record of non-target forms recorded in the translation test. The figures shown reflect the sum of all non-target CPs translated by a category of respondents out of all CPs translated by that category in each of the specified linguistic feature expressed in percentage.

According to table 4.3, the PR category of respondents recorded the most non-target forms compared to the other two categories.
In school A, 24% of their CPs were off target in the marking of tenses. The same category of respondents in school B recorded a higher figure of 31% in the same linguistic feature. The PUPR category of respondents had 16% and 26% of their CPs being off target in school A and school B respectively. PU category of respondents record an almost similar percentage of non-target language forms with school A and B respondents recording 19% and 23% respectively. The comparatively higher percentage of non-target language forms recorded by the PR category of respondent’s visa-avis the other two categories can be accounted for by their sociolinguistic background. As is evident in table 3.3 (cf table 3.3), they lead the other two categories in all parameters undermining Gikuyû language maintenance and development. For example, none of the respondents from this category was taught in Gikuyû in school. Similarly, a whooping 47% of the respondents in this category report that they are not fluent in the language. 32% of the respondents do not speak their language at home while only 14% speak the language in school.

In comparison, the PUPR category of respondents who record comparatively fewer non-target forms come from a comparatively favourable sociolinguistic background. For example, 39% of the respondents were taught in Gikuyû in the first 4-5 years of their schooling. 88% of the respondents speak the language at home while 50% speak Gikuyû with their peers. Only 18% of the respondents report that they are not fluent. The PUPR category of the respondents’ sociolinguistic background appear to provide a better environment for Gikuyû maintenance as the category’s percentages of non-target forms seems to match those of PU category.
While the PUPR category of respondents record 16% and 26% in school A and B respectively, the PU category has 19% and 23% in school A and B respectively. This data seems to suggest that level in which English is introduced as a medium of instruction in school is a critical variable that could determine the maintenance and development of a child’s first language. The same variable could explain other factors such as the comparatively limited use of Gikuyu at home, in school and with peers (cf table 3.3) that undermine the language maintenance and development in the PR category of respondents.

When the percentages of non-target language forms in tense marking is considered in relation to the types of tense marking morphemes, table 4.3 shows significant variation. Two morpheme types however, stand out: the extended present and the near future tense morpheme. All categories of respondents record 100% and 0% non-target forms in marking of extended present and the near future tenses respectively. In CPs requiring the near future morpheme \{ri\}, all respondents used the extended present morpheme \{ku\}. It is clear that the respondents did not make any distinction in the two tenses but all leveled to \{ku\} even in CPs demanding \{ri\}.

For example, the CPs;

18. Kamau will run now and
19. Kamau will run in the evening

were both translated as:
Kamau agūtengera riū

and

Kamau agūteng'ra hwaĩnĩ (ff appendix)

The later was a non-target translation because the morpheme -gū- was inappropriate. The target translation is:

Kamau aritengera hwaĩnĩ

This variation is a glaring error to a native Gĩkũyũ speaker.

Another area of tense that had a high percentage of non-target forms across all the school background categories was the remote past tense. Table 4.3 show that 38% of PR category of respondents’ CPs were off target in both school A and school B. The other two categories of respondents also recorded higher percentages in this category of tenses. It appears as if the respondents whose CPs were off target were not aware of the existence of the remote past tense morpheme {-a-}. For example, the translation of the English CP:

20. Njeri cut the tree last year,

which required the remote past morpheme yielded such malformed Gĩkũyũ CPs as:

Njeri aratemire mūtĩ mwaka ūcio ūngĩ.

Looking at percentages of non-target forms in the seven morphemes marking tenses, it is apparent the simple present, the near future and the immediate past tenses were the least problematic to the respondents.
It is noteworthy that the three tenses are the equivalents of the basic tenses – simple present, simple future and simple past- that occur in the respondents other languages; Kiswahili and English. The notion of the extended past or present, and remote past and future, is absent in the two languages.

Table 4.4: Percentages of non-target forms of various tense morphemes in the home background categories of respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tense</th>
<th>UR</th>
<th>RU</th>
<th>AVE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>% of non-target forms</td>
<td>SCH A</td>
<td>SCH B</td>
<td>SCH A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Simple present</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extended present</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Near future</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remote future</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zero tense</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>4.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immediate past</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Near past</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remote past</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AVE</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When the percentages of non-target tense morphemes are considered in relation to respondents from home background categories, it is evident from table 4.4 that there is a significant difference between the categories as far as their competence in Gĩkũyũ is concerned.
While 27% of CPs from UR category of respondents in school A are not on target, only 18% of CPs from RU category of respondents miss the target. Similarly, 28% of CPs from the former category and 19% from the later are not on target. It is also evident that some type of tense morphemes, such as the remote future {ka}, near past {ra} and remote past {a} were more problematic to the UR category of respondents than others. For example, the translation of a CP requiring remote future morpheme {ka} such as:

21. *Kamau will run next week*

yielded such malformed CPs as:

*Kamau agütengera kiũmi kiroko*

The morpheme *gu* is an extended present tense morpheme and is therefore non-target. It is also notable that RU category of respondents in school B record comparatively higher percentages then their school A counterparts. This can be explained by their different socio-economic family backgrounds bearing in mind the fact that school B is a private boarding school while school A is a public school that admits most of its students from its locality.

On the whole, taking into account that tense marking in Gikũũũũ is a basic morphological form whose acquisition should not be problematic going by Nyamasyo (1985) and Ndungu (1991) studies, it appears that the respondents in this study had regressed in this feature of language; more so, in those respondents growing in environments with limited opportunities for speaking Gikũũũũ. This assumption seems to be supported by Myers-Scotton’s 4M Model on attrition phenomenon which postulates that early system morphemes are highly prone in the attrition process.
Tense morphemes are, in this study, assumed to be early system morphemes in that they expand the conceptual content (semantic/pragmatic bundles) of content morphemes (verbs).

4.2.2 Marking of aspect

According to Jones (1999), Gikūyū regards the duration of a situation in three aspects namely: completive, progressive and perfective. In the completive aspect, the situation has either occurred or its occurrence is definite. For example,

22. John niariire. (John ate).

The perfective aspect regards the situation’s occurrence as complete. For example,

23. John niarite. (John has eaten.)

It is therefore not possible in Gikūyū to speak of future perfective. For example, it is not possible to translate the English sentence: ‘Tom will have eaten his orange by the time the teacher comes to class” at the word level because there is no morpheme for future perfective. The only recourse would be to use a phrase constituent.

The third aspect, progressive aspect regards the situation as in progress. For example,

24. John niararia. ‘John is eating.’
The completive aspect is closely related to the perfective aspect in that it regards a situation's occurrence as complete but in the past at the time of speaking or in case of the imminent action sub-paradigm, the occurrence of the situation will be complete after the time of speaking. For example, CP number 22 and number 23 cited above differ semantically in that in CP no. 22, John had completed eating relative to the time of speaking while in CP no. 23, the action of eating while complete, occurred in unspecified time in the past. Tables 4.5 and 4.6 that follow below show the different morphemes that mark each of the three aspects in different tenses using the verb “hanyūka” (run).

Table 4.5  Aspect in Gĩkũyũ: Imminent action sub-paradigm

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspect</th>
<th>Simple tense</th>
<th>Extended present</th>
<th>Near future</th>
<th>Remote future</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Completive</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ir</td>
<td></td>
<td>c-ku-hanyūka</td>
<td>a-ri-hanyūka</td>
<td>a-kahanyūka</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>He runs (today)</td>
<td>He will run</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>soon</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Progressive</td>
<td>-a-ra-hanyūka</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-ag-</td>
<td></td>
<td>He is running</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(right now)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perfect</td>
<td>-a-a-hanyūka</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-it</td>
<td></td>
<td>He has just run</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.5 shows that the completive aspect in the imminent action paradigm is marked by (zero) morpheme in the extended present tense, near future tense and remote future tense.
It is not possible to have the completive aspect in the simple present tense because the completive aspect regards a situation as either having occurred or its occurrence is imminent. Similarly, the progressive and the perfective aspects are only marked in the simple tense but with a zero morpheme.

Figure 4.6: Aspect in Gikuyū: The Manifest action paradigm

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspect</th>
<th>Zero tense</th>
<th>Immediate past</th>
<th>Near past</th>
<th>Remote</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ø</td>
<td>-ku-</td>
<td>-ra-</td>
<td>-a-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compleitive</td>
<td>a-hanyük-ir-c</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>arahanyük-ir-c</td>
<td>a-ahanyük-ir-c</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-ir-</td>
<td>He ran (earlier)</td>
<td>He run (yesterday)</td>
<td>He ran (before yesterday)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a-hanyük-ag-a</td>
<td>a-rahanyük-ag-a</td>
<td>a-ahanyük-ag-a</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Progressive</td>
<td>He is habitually running</td>
<td>He was running (yesterday)</td>
<td>He ran (before yesterday)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-ag-</td>
<td>e-kuhanyük-ag-a</td>
<td>a-rahanyük-ag-a</td>
<td>a-ahanyük-ag-a</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>He was running (some moment ago)</td>
<td>He was running (yesterday)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perfect</td>
<td>a-hanyük-it-c</td>
<td>a-rahanyük-it-c</td>
<td>a-ahanyük-it-c</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-it-</td>
<td>He has run (just now)</td>
<td>He had run (yesterday)</td>
<td>He had run (before yesterday)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As can be seen in table 4.6 above, the completive aspect is marked by the morpheme {ri} in the zero tense, near past tense and remote past tense. It is not possible to speak of completive aspect in the immediate past tense since in this aspect, a situation is regarded as either having occurred or its occurrence is imminent. An adverbial combined with the root verb is required to express the completive aspect in the immediate past tense. The progressive aspect is marked by the morpheme {ag} across the four tenses in the sub-paradigm. The morpheme {it} marks the perfect aspect in all tenses in the manifest action sub-paradigm.

Aspect morphemes in Gikuyu are always intertwined with tense morphemes in the verb phrase. They are basic elements in the verb-phrase structure. In language acquisition, they are acquired simultaneously with tense morphemes as it is impossible to acquire/learn the former independent of the latter. Like tense marking, aspect marking is acquired early -by the age of five (Ndung'u (1991)). The respondents in this study, aged on average seventeen years, should have mastered this aspect of Gikuyu grammar. However, their language data on the marking of this feature indicate that some of the respondents CPs were off target.
Table 4.7: Percentages of non-target forms of aspect marking morphemes in school background categories of respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspect</th>
<th>PR % per category</th>
<th>PUPR % per category</th>
<th>PU % per category</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SCH A</td>
<td>SCH B</td>
<td>SCH A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completive</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Progressive</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perfective</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>5.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.7 shows significant variation in the percentages of non-target language forms in aspect marking in the three schooling background categories. The variation is particularly clear among school A respondents where the PR category of respondents records the highest percentage of non-target forms at 8% compared with 5% for PUPR and 3% for PU categories of respondents.

However, school B respondents do not replicate this pattern due to distortion brought about by the big number of respondents from the PU category from urban homes. The high figure of 18% non-target forms recorded by the PU category of respondents in school B was brought about by this variable that was not controlled in the study.
As noted in 4.2.1, the comparatively higher percentages of non-target aspect morphemes in PR category of respondents visa-avis other categories can be explained by their sociolinguistic background. As is evident in table 3.3 (cf table 3.3), the PR category leads in parameters that do not favour Gĩkũyũ maintenance and development.

Looking at the percentages of non-target forms in the three types of aspect morphemes, it is clear from table 4.7 that the perfective aspect morphemes attract more non-target morphemes compared to the other two categories. 10.6% of the perfective aspect morphemes are not on target compared to 6.4% and 1.25% of progressive and completive morphemes respectively. The comparatively high percentage of non-target perfective morphemes appear to have been motivated by the respondents’ tendency to use the completive morpheme \{ir\} exclusively in all slots that required the choice of either the completive aspect morpheme or the perfective aspect morpheme.

This data yielded malformed CPs such as:

25. *Kamau niaratengerire ira.* *(Kamau had run yesterday)*

   *(Kamau had run the marathon before he was eighteen.)*

(cf appendix 3)

The two CPs required the perfective aspect morpheme \{it\}. Indeed, in a few of the respondents CPs, the slot for the aspect morpheme was not filled at all resulting in such extremely malformed CPs as:

27. *Kamaii niaratengera ira.*
While the distinction between the completive aspect and perfective aspect is clear and mandatory to a Gikũyũ native speaker, some of the respondents in this data appear to be unaware of this distinction.

Table 4.8: Percentages of non-target forms of aspect marking morphemes in home background categories of respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspect</th>
<th>UR</th>
<th>RU</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SCHA</td>
<td>SCHB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compleative</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Progressive</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>12.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perfective</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Turning to the home background categories of respondents, table 4.8 show that urban home background category of respondents record higher percentages of non-target forms in both progressive and perfective aspects but surprisingly record lower percentages in the marking of the completive aspect. For example, in school A, UR category of respondents record 2% and 8% non-target forms in the marking of completive and progressive aspects respectively compared to RU’s 1% and 5% in the same aspect morphemes. A similar pattern obtains in school B. However, the marking of the perfective aspect, brings a different picture.
The percentages of non-target morphemes in the marking of this aspect are more than twice the percentages in the other two types of aspect marking morphemes.

It is possible the test items targeting the perfective aspect marking invited difficult choices in picking the target morpheme for the more competent Gikuyu speakers, that is, the RU category of respondents.

Looking at the percentages of non-target forms in the marking of aspect as a whole, the marking of this language feature seem to be less problematic to respondents than the marking of its counterpart in the verb phrase; tense. For example, while PR category of respondents in school A had an average of 8% non target forms in aspect marking (cf table 4.7), the same respondents had 24% in tense marking (cf table 4.5). According to Myers-Scotton’s 4 M Model, tense and aspect marking morphemes fit in the category of morphemes referred to as early system morphemes in that they function to expand the conceptual content of content morphemes; in this case, semantic/ pragmatic bundles carried by the verb. According to the 4 M Model, early system morphemes, while susceptible to replacement, are not as easily lost as content morphemes. This data recorded only one case of omission of aspect morpheme in verb phrase. Non-target forms occur as a result of substitution of one type of morpheme with another.

4.2.3 Marking of Noun –Adjective concord

In Gikuyu, Noun-Adjective concord markers are essential in the constitution of a noun phrase. Without the markers, important semantic load in the noun phrase such as plurality and size is lost.
When the morphemes marking agreement in one class of nouns are substituted with others from a different class, the resultant noun phrase is not only malformed but can also lose meaning.

In Gikuyu, the adjective that qualifies a noun must agree with the noun by taking a prefix that is determined by the class of the noun (Barlow 1960). For examples, the noun mündū (person) qualified by the adjective mükūhi (short) must take the prefix mū in its singular form and a in its plural form.

The mū-a concord prefixes are exclusively used by the class of nouns which the noun mündū (person) belongs. Barlow (1960) identifies ten noun classes based on the nature of the nouns and how they form their plurals.

1. **M-a class** (nouns referring solely to human beings e.g. mūiritū (girl) – airitū (girls))

2. **M-_mi class** (nouns beginning with m but which do not refer to human beings e.g. muti (tree) – miti (trees)).

3. **Ki_-ci class** (In this class of noun, e.g. kiondo (basket) – ciondo (baskets), nouns which have a consonant sound following ki do not take ci prefix when forming plural. Instead, they take i e.g. kibaba (tin) – ibaba (tins).

4. Nouns whose singulars and plurals are the same. e.g. nyũmba (house) – nyũmba (houses) ng’ombe (cow) – ng’ombe (cows)
5. **R-N** (nouns which in singular begin with r but their plural take the prefix N e.g. 

- rūa *(skin)* – njūa *(skins)*
- rūi *(river)* – njūi *(rivers)*

However, not all nouns that begin with R- take the N when pluralized. Some drops the singular prefix e.g. rūhi – *(palm)* – hii *(palms)*.

6. **I (R) – M** class (nouns which in the singular begin either with I or R- but in plural take the prefix ma) e.g. ihiga *(stone)* – mahiga *(stones)*

- ritwa *(name)* – maritwa *(names)*

7. **Ū – (W) – Ma** nouns – (most of them are abstract nouns of which the singular begins with ū-or-w- and take the plural prefix ma.

- e.g. ūgwatiu *(danger)* – mogwati *(dangers)*

- Wira *(work)* – mawira *(works)*

8. **Ka – tū** class nouns – in this class are diminutives e.g. kahii *(boy)* – túhi – *(boys)*,

- kaana *(child)* – twana *(children)*.

9. **Ha – kū** (this is a one word class for the noun; handū *(place)* – kündū *(places)*.

10. This class is for the infinitives of verbs used as a substantives (equivalent of the English gerund) e.g. gūkūa *(dying)*, gūchera *(visiting)*.

   As in the English gerund, this class of nouns does not have a plural form. (Source: Barlow: 1960: Studies in Kikuyu Grammar and Idioms.)
In Gĩkũyũ, Noun – Adjective concord marking is a basic language skill. Errors in this language feature clearly indicate that the speaker is not a native speaker of the language. It is noteworthy that English, like other isolating languages, has no Noun-Adjective concordial requirements. For example, the adjective ‘good’ in the phrase ‘good cars’ will not change its form when the noun becomes singular e.g. ‘a good car’. The same case applies to the adjective ‘their’ in ‘their cow’ or ‘their cows’.

On the other hand, the respondents’ other language Kiswahili, like Gĩkũyũ, a Bantu language, marks this relationship morphologically.

Figure 4.1: Percentage of non-target forms in Noun-Adjective concord marking morphemes - school background categories of respondents
Figure 4.1 above shows that the category of respondents who speak Giküyü least, the PR, has highest percentage of non-target forms in Noun – Adjective concord. Specifically, 18% of their CPs were not on target. 12% of PUPR category of respondents’ CPs were off target while all CPs from PU category were on target. The difference in percentages of non-target forms in the categories is a reflection of their different socio-linguistic milieu (cf table 3.3). Indeed, the link between the period of exposure to Giküyü and competence in the language is clear in this particular data (on the marking of Noun-Adjective concord).

Figure 4.2: Percentages of non-targets forms in Noun-adjective concord marking morphemes- home background categories of respondents
Figure 4.2 shows a big difference in percentages of non-target forms between the UR and RU category of respondents. 29% of UR category’s CPs are off target compared to 8% for RU category. This difference mirrors the differences in their sociolinguistic background as is evident in table 3.3 (cf table 3.3). For example, while 55% respondents from UR category of respondents reported that they were not fluent in Gĩkũyũ, only 13% of respondents from RU category reported the same. Similarly, while only 19% of respondents from RU category were taught in English at the beginning of their schooling, i.e. from pre-school, 82% of respondents from UR category were taught in the language.

Forms of language (morphemes) that were deemed to be off target in the data occurred not from the omission of the agreement marking morphemes, but as a result of filling the slot for the agreement morpheme with a prefix from different noun class. For example, the noun phrase: *Rotten fruit* was translated off target as:

\[
\text{itiinda ribithi}\]

• Instead of the target,

\[
\text{Itiinda ibithi}\]

The prefix \(\{\text{ri}\}\) occur in adjectives which begins with vowels sounds. For example:

\[
\text{iria riiru (sour milk)}
\]

\[
\text{Itimuu rieru (new spear)}
\]

Although this particular NP yielded data that show attrition is possible in this language feature, most of the noun phrases in other CPs were translated on target. In any case, only 12% of the respondents’ translations in this particular NP were off target.
According to Myers Scotton's 4 M Model, Noun-Adjective concord marking morphemes fall into the category of morphemes called bridge late system morphemes. Bridge late system Morphemes’ function is to integrate elements into a constituent when the well-formedness conditions for those constituents call for them. That is, their presence is determined by the maximal projection in which they occur (Myers- Scotton 2002).

For example, in the Gikuyu noun phrase ‘mündū műūrū’ (bad person), {műūrū}, a bridge late system morpheme has the function of integrating the adjective ‘űūrū’ (bad) to the noun ‘mündū’ (person). It is co-indexed with the constituent ‘mündū’ in the phrase ‘mündū műūrū’ maximal projection.

The 4M model hypothesizes that in attrition phenomenon, late system morphemes (including bridge late system morphemes) are least susceptible to replacement or loss. With only 12% of CPs targeting the marking of Noun-Adjective concord being off target compared to 16% of those targeting tense marking, this data appear to support this hypothesis. It is therefore evident that in attrition process, the attriters are more prone to loss of competence in tense marking than in the marking of Noun - Adjective concord

4.2.4 • Attrition in word order

While section 4.2.3 looked at Noun – Adjective concord marking, this section looks at possible changes in Noun + Adjective order in the Gikuyu noun phrase from the influence of English Language (L2).
In Gikuyu, as in all Bantu languages, the noun precedes the adjective in the noun phrase. In English on the other hand, the adjective precedes the noun.

The two languages are S.V.O. Clausal order. Therefore, the study did not need to focus beyond the phrases. The study sought to find out whether the respondents’ language data would show changes in the Gikuyu, Noun + Adjective order, in the direction of English, Adjective + Noun order. Data on the translation of CPs targeting word order showed that respondents from all categories of the study were 100% on target in this language feature. However the prose writing part of the test yielded noun phrases that deviated from the normal word order in Gikuyu.

For example, one respondent wrote,

28. ‘úcio mūthenya ndikariganirwo’ (I will never forget that day).

The NP ‘úcio mūthenya’ was ill formed because the adjective ‘úcio’ (that) preceded noun mūthenya (day) whereas Gikuyu syntactical rules demand that adjectives succeed nouns. It is not clear however whether the respondent in the above cited NP was clearly off target or was using linguistic inversion for emphasis. However, the general finding is that even respondents showing severe handicap in other language features are able to maintain the Gikuyu Noun + Adjective order.

Myers Scotton (2006) argues that word order can be considered an early system morpheme if one bears in mind that the 4 M model looks at the morpheme at two levels; the abstract level and the surface level.
At the abstract level, word order can have the characteristics of an early system morpheme. That is, it can depend on the features of a lexical head (content morpheme) for the form it takes. For example, in English, a syntactical string headed by an adjective (adjective phrase) requires that a noun follows the adjective(s) and not the other way round. In this scenario, word order is in abstract sense, an early system morpheme because it is directly elected by the head of the maximal projection (the adjective) to realize further its conceptual content (semantic load).

If we take word order as an early system morpheme, the 4 M model prediction that in attrition process, early system morphemes are only second to content morphemes in their susceptibility to attrition is hardly supported by any evidence in this data. Respondents who show high degrees of attrition in other linguistic features exhibit 100% maintenance of word order in the noun phrase:

4.2.5 Manifestation of attrition in the lexicon

Attrition in the lexicon of a speaker of an L1 in an L2 environment can occur in various fronts namely: lexical retrieval difficulties, use of contextually inappropriate lexical items, use of borrowed lexical items from L2 and changes in semantic field of L1 lexical items. Among the four fronts, this study, limited by its scope, focuses on changes in the semantic field of lexical items as an indicator of lexical attrition.

According to the Abstract Level Model, one of the theoretical frameworks used in this study, abstract lexical-conceptual structure (semantic and pragmatic information) underlie each lexical item.
Further, the model states that the abstract lexical-conceptual structure (semantic and pragmatic features bundle) may be split and recombined with parts of feature bundle from a similar lexical item coming from another language (L2). For example, the Gikuyu noun ‘mama’ (mother’s brother) may be used to refer to both mother’s brother and father’s brother by a Gikuyu-English bilingual who is undergoing attrition. In English language, the equivalent noun (uncle) refers to both father’s and mother’s male sibling. In such a situation, the semantic concept of Gikuyu lexical item in ‘mama’ has changed in the direction of the English lexical item ‘uncle’.

As can seen in table 4.9 and 4.10 (ff table 4.9and 4.10), this study yielded data that supports Myers–Scotton’s Abstract Level Model. For example, in this data, the English lexical item ‘old woman’ was translated incorrectly as ‘cúcú’ (grandmother). This was semantically off target because the word(s) - old woman - does not have a kinship feature in its semantic bundles. In the translation of this lexical item, the translator had expanded the semantic field of the item ‘cúcú’ beyond ‘old female relative’ to refer to any old female.

The translation of kinship terms like: ‘my elder sister’ ‘my father’s brother’ ‘my mother’s brother’ ‘my mother’s young sister’ yielded non-target forms originating at the level of abstract lexical-conceptual structure. While Gikuyu has distinct terms for parents’ sibling of each gender, a number of respondents did not display these distinctions.
Female parents’ siblings are all identified with the name ‘tata’ (father’s female sibling) while all parents’ siblings who are male are referred to as ‘mama’ (mother’s male sibling). These respondents did not seem to be aware of terms that distinguished parents’ sibling of different gender such as: ‘maitū mūnini’ (my mother younger sister) ‘maitū mūkūrū’ (my mother elder sister) and ‘baba mūkūrū’ (my father’s elder brother). It appears that, at the level of abstract lexical-conceptual structure, these respondents had extended the semantic features bundles of the Gikuyu words tata (mother’s sister) and mama (father’s brother) to refer to parents’ female siblings and parents’ male siblings respectively.

Given the sociolinguistic environment in which these respondents are living in, which is dominated by English language in school, it is not far fetched to suggest that English could have interfered with these Gikuyu kinship concepts at the abstract lexical-conceptual level.

The translation of the lexical item ‘mother’ also yielded data that illustrate changes in the semantic bundles of a lexical item; this time in the reduction of the semantic load. The lexical item mother was translated off target as ‘nyūkwa’ instead of ‘maitū’.

‘Nyūkwa’ means ‘your mother’. Respondents who translated the term ‘mother’ as ‘nyūkwa’ reduced the semantic bundles of the item at the abstract conceptual level by limiting the semantic field of the item ‘mother’ to ‘your mother’.
Non-target lexical items also occurred at the level of argument-predicate structure. A lexical item, for example, a verb carries, apart from its semantic bundle, grammatical information on what type of a noun it takes as an object in terms of thematic roles (Myers-Scotton :2000). The verb may assign the object any of the following thematic roles: patient, beneficiary, instrument or goal. In this data, some respondents translated some verbs in a manner that changed the thematic roles of their objects. For example, the CP

29. *Njeri cut the tree yesterday*

was translated off target as:

30. *Njeri niaratemeire múti’ira* (*Njeri cut for tree yesterday*)

In the CP, the noun múti ‘tree’, the object of the verb temeire ‘cut’, has been assigned the theme of a beneficiary. The target translation of the verb-temeire- assigns the noun the thematic role of the patient. The non-target form of the verb-temeire- has therefore altered the thematic role of its object.

Other examples of verbs translated in this manner includes: ‘niatinūrie’ (*he cuts*) and ‘niateng’ereire’ (*he runs*) where the thematic roles of the objects were changed from that of patient to beneficiary.

The non-target translation of the verb ‘rūa’ (*fight*) is another example of non-target language forms that originate at the level of predicate-argument conceptual structure. In the CP,

31. *My father’s elder brother fought my mother’s brother*, the verb ‘fought’ was translated off target as ‘ararūire baba’ instead of ‘ararūire na baba’
When percentages of non-target lexical items are compared with percentages for other language features, it is evident from tables 8(a) and 8(b) that they are conspicuously higher across all categories in both school A and school B.

Table 4.9: Lexical Attrition in school background categories

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category of respondents</th>
<th>% of Non-target forms</th>
<th>PR</th>
<th>PUPR</th>
<th>PU</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PR</td>
<td>37</td>
<td></td>
<td>30</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PUPR</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PU</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School B</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PR</td>
<td>37</td>
<td></td>
<td>40</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PUPR</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PU</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.9 above shows that in school A, the PR category of respondents whose sociolinguistic milieu does not favour Gikuyu maintenance and development (cf table 3.3) record comparatively higher percentages of non-target forms compared to the PUPR and PU categories of respondents. Indeed, it is notable that the latter categories had almost the same percentages of non-target forms. The implication is that the PUPR category of respondents’ sociolinguistic milieu was conducive to the L1 acquisition, development and maintenance.
However, in school B, although the PR and PU categories of respondents record percentages similar to those recorded by the same categories in school A, the PUPR category of respondents record a considerably higher percentage of 40%, beating the PR category. Lack of replication of percentages obtained in school A in school B can be attributed to socio-economic background of respondents which appears to be an intervening variable in this study.

Table 4.10: Lexical attrition data for home background categories of respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category of respondents</th>
<th>% of Non-target forms</th>
<th>UR</th>
<th>RU</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School A</td>
<td></td>
<td>36</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School B</td>
<td></td>
<td>33</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.10 shows that in school A, UR category of home background respondents record a higher percentage of non-target forms compared to RU category. However, in school B, the respondents from urban background surpass their rural counterparts in the percentages of non-target forms. While 39% of their CPs are not on target in specified lexical items, only 33% of CPs from UR category of respondents miss the target.
Again, as is the case in school background categories, school B respondents' socio-economic background intervenes to distort the pattern observed in school A where there is a clear effect of the rural-urban divide.

Three findings emerge from the data on lexical attrition. First, respondents record comparatively higher percentages of non-target forms in their usage of lexical items than they do in the other linguistic features. Second, non-target language forms recorded in this data originate not only from retrieval difficulties but also at the level of abstract conceptual structuring of the lexical items. Third, rural respondents appear to be as much handicapped in their Gikũyũ lexicon as respondents from urban homes. Generally, the picture that emerges from these findings is that the lexicon is the first casualty in the attrition process.
4.3 Summary

4.3.1 Attrition and school background

Table 4.11: Distribution of non-target forms per school background categories of respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Linguistic features</th>
<th>PR</th>
<th>PUPR</th>
<th>PU</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>% non target forms</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tense</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aspect</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noun-Adjectives concord</td>
<td>24.5</td>
<td>21.5</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Word order</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lexicon</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.11 shows that the private primary school background category of respondents (PR), the category that had limited exposure to their L1 during their basic schooling, were most affected by attrition across all linguistic features.
The PUPR category of respondents who had attended public primary schools in the first three years of their schooling had almost the same attrition levels as PU respondents who were exposed to their L1 throughout their schooling. It appears that the PUPR respondents had achieved the expected competence in Gikuyu by the time they joined private primary schools that provided limited opportunities for speaking Gikuyu. On the other hand, the table also shows that PU respondents who had the opportunity to use their L1 throughout their schooling do not reflect that advantage as they are at par with PUPR respondents in tense and aspect. They only have a slight advantage in lexical attrition. It appears, as reported in Nyamasyo (1985) that the PUPR respondents had achieved the expected competence in Gikuyu by the time they moved to schools that limited their exposure to the language.

4.3.2. Attrition and Home Background

Table 4.12: Distribution of non-target forms per home background categories of respondents.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Linguistic feature</th>
<th>UR</th>
<th>RU</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>% non target forms</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tense</td>
<td>27.5</td>
<td>23.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aspect</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>6.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noun-adjective concord</td>
<td>39.5</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Word order</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lexical items</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4.12 shows that urban respondents are more affected by attrition across all the five linguistic features than their rural counterparts. They are most affected in Noun-Adjective concord marking where their rural counterparts record few non-target forms. The UR category of respondents' limited opportunities to use Gikuyu has taken its toll especially on Noun-Adjective concord marking, a basic indicator of fluency in Gikuyu (Barlow: 1960).

4.3.3. Attrition and Linguistic Features

Table 4.13: Distribution of non-target forms per linguistic features

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Linguistic features</th>
<th>Percentage of non-target forms</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tense</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aspect</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noun-adjective concord</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Word order</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lexical items</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.13 shows that as per the hypothesis of 4M model, the lexicon (content morphemes), is the biggest victim of attrition process among the five linguistic features studied. Noun-Adjective concord marking prefixes (late system bridge morphemes) with 21% non-target forms are only second to lexicon in susceptibility to attrition.
Although tense marking morphemes are early system morphemes which should follow content morphemes in susceptibility to attrition, they appear more resilient than Noun-Adjective concord marking morphemes. Word order, another early system morpheme (in an abstract sense), is completely impervious to the attrition process. There is also little attrition effect in aspect, another early system morpheme.
CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

5.0. General Introduction

This chapter provides a discussion of major findings of the study in view of the stated objectives, and the conclusions drawn from the same. Recommendations on appropriate language policies in education have also been provided. Finally, suggestions for further research have been made.

5.1 Summary of findings and conclusions

The motivation behind the present study was the need to account for the apparent handicap in L1 language skills observed in secondary school Gĩkũyũ L1 speakers. Specifically, the study sought to establish whether this handicap was evident in their language data, the type of Gĩkũyũ language features affected and the sociolinguistic milieu of speakers affected by this phenomenon.

Four major findings emerged from this study. First, it was evident from the language data of the respondents that practically all Gĩkũyũ L1 speakers in secondary school were undergoing attrition in their L1; that is, they displayed limited competence in language skills that should have been mastered long before their present age.
Secondly, respondents were found to be more prone to attrition in some Gikuyu language features than in others. Specifically, respondents displayed less competence in the translations of lexical items than they did in morphosyntactic items. Of the morphosyntactic language features, Noun-Adjective concord marking was found to be more prone to attrition than both tense and aspect marking. Aspect marking was most resilient in the attrition process.

The study found no evidence of attrition in the order of the word in the phrase; specifically, in the noun phrase. However, the sociolinguistic milieu of the respondents was found to be a predisposing factor to attrition. Respondents who had attended private primary schools which taught in English exclusively were found to be more susceptible to attrition than respondents who had attended public primary school in their first five years of schooling where Gikuyu was used as a medium of instruction. However, the proficiency in English of the two categories of respondents was almost at par. The implication is that the use of the indigenous language in the first five years of schooling while favouring L1 maintenance does not disadvantage pupils as far as achieving competence in English is concerned.

Respondents from urban home background were found, as expected, to be more prone to attrition than respondents from rural homes. However, this dichotomy was not replicated in all sets of data. Some respondents from rural homes attending the private high cost school (school B) displayed severe handicap in their language skills. Three conclusions can be drawn from the findings stated above.
First, students from homes where the indigenous language is spoken as the main language in the family domain are likely to maintain their L1 while those from homes where the language is seldom used are predisposed to attrition. Secondly, language policies and practices in school which forbid or discourage the use of indigenous languages are creating environments which promote L1 attrition in pupils. Thirdly, it is evident that in the attrition process, the lexicon is more prone to attrition than morphosyntax. At the morphosyntactic level, attrition was most evident in those Gĩkũyũ grammatical features (e.g. remote past tense, remote future tense and completive aspect) that have no equivalents in Kiswahili and in English.

On the whole, this study has shown that young speakers of Gĩkũyũ, an African indigenous language, are losing competence due to the language practices being adopted in the schooling system and at home. At the same time, the language being spoken by young people reflect significant structural handicaps that could undermine its maintenance. The same phenomenon could be affecting young speakers of other indigenous languages in Kenya.

5.2 Recommendations

There is need to enforce vigorously the government language policy in education which requires the use of a child’s first language in basic education i.e. the first five years of schooling if Kenya wishes to retains its wide variety of indigenous languages and the rich heritage they carry.
It is also imperative for parents to speak to their children in their L1 in the home environment if the children have to acquire and retain the language. Parents living in rural areas should let their children attend neighbourhood schools which offer basic education in indigenous language as this study has established that there is no significant advantage in teaching pre-school and lower school children in English in as far as their future mastery of the language is concerned.Universities and other institutions of higher education need to establish centres for research and teaching of African indigenous languages in collaboration with the Ministry of culture. It is only through the medium of indigenous languages that the ministry can realize its mandate of promotion of the diverse cultures of Kenya.

5.3 Suggestions for Further Research.

This study, by its nature limited by time, did not actually establish for a fact whether respondents who recorded non-target forms in their language data had acquired their L1 before joining the school system but relied on findings of language acquisition studies in literature. There is, therefore, need for a longitudinal study along the same lines in order to ground the findings of this study. Similar studies using other indigenous languages and on other linguistic features can help clarify findings and issues raised by this study. Finally, this study was limited to written language data. As natural language is meant to be spoken (as opposed to artificial languages), it was not possible to investigate attrition where it was best evident; at the phonological level. As such, a similar study at the level of phonology would be more illuminating.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


Republic of Kenya (1975) *Kenya national committee on education objectives and policies* Nairobi, Government Printer


APPENDICES

Appendix 1

Questionnaire – Students’ language practices

NAME OF THE STUDENT: ......................................................................................

NAME OF THE SCHOOL: ............................................. DATE

My name is Mūchemi Ndūng’ū, a research student at Kenyatta University. I am carrying out a research on students’ competence in Gikūyū. I am requesting you to assist me carry out the task by completing this questionnaire accurately and truthfully. The information given will be treated with utmost confidentiality and is only meant for research purposes.

Thank you.

A. GENERAL INFORMATION

i) NAME: .................................................................................................

ii) MALE............................................../FEMALE................................. (Please tick)

iii) YEAR OF BIRTH.................................................................

iv) DISTRICT OF BIRTH.........................................................

v) FATHER’S FIRST LANGUAGE..................................................

vi) MOTHER’S FIRST LANGUAGE.............................................

vii) YOUR FIRST LANGUAGE....................................................

viii) DO YOU SPEAK YOUR FIRST LANGUAGE FLUENTLY?

   a) Very fluent

   b) Fluent

   c) Not fluent

   d) Not able at all (Please tick)
ix) OTHER LANGUAGES THAT YOU SPEAK FLUENTLY

a) First language

b) Second language

c) Third language

B. PRIMARY SCHOOL BACKGROUND

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<th>School attended</th>
<th>Period in years</th>
<th>Indicate whether private or public</th>
<th>Indicate whether day or boarding</th>
<th>Indicate language used in teaching</th>
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</table>
C. PROFICIENCY IN ENGLISH

i) K.C.P.E MARKS..............................

ii) K.C.P.E. ENGLISH MARKS...................

iii) END OF LAST TERM EXAM ENGLISH MARKS...........

iv) When were you first taught English as a subject?
   a) Baby class
   b) Nursery
   c) Pre-unit
   d) Std 1
   e) Std 4.
   (Please tick)

v) When were you taught first in English?
   a) Baby class
   b) Nursery
   c) Pre-unit
   d) Std 1
   e) Std 4
   (Please tick)

vi) In class 1 to 3, were you taught in English?
   a) At all times
   b) Sometimes
   c) Never
vii) In class 4 to 8, were you taught in English?
   a. All times
   b. Sometimes
   c. Rarely
   d. Never (Please tick)

If it depended on school attended, please specify ..........................

viii) Were ever taught in mother tongue?
   Yes/No
   If yes, in which class? ..................

D. PROFICIENCY IN GİKÜYÜ
I. What language(s) do you speak at school?

........................................................................................................

II. How would you rate your proficiency in Gikuyu?
5- Very good
4- Good
3- Average
2- Below average
1- Poor (Please tick)
III. How would you rate your ability to read in Gikũyu?  
1. Very good  
2. Good  
3. Fair  
4. Poor  
5. Not able at all  
   (Please tick)

IV. How would you rate your ability to write in Gikũyu?  
1. Very good  
2. Good  
3. Fair  
4. Poor  
5. Not able at all  
   (Please tick)

V. In your primary school(s), were you using Gikũyu?  
   (i) In class?  
      (a) Always  
      (b) Sometimes  
      (c) Rarely  
      (d) Never  
         (please tick)  
   (ii) Outside class?  
      a) Always  
      b) Sometimes  
      c) Rarely  
      d) Never  
         (Please tick)
VI. What languages(s) do you use when speaking to:

(i) Your friends in school? .........................................................

(ii) Your friends at home? ...........................................................

(iii) Your father? .................................................................

(iv) Your mother? .................................................................

(v) Your grandfather? ............................................................

(vi) Your grandmother? ...........................................................

VII. Is the ability to speak one’s first language important to you?

a) Very important

b) Important

c) Not important (Please tick one)

Give reasons for your response in VII above.

..................................................................................................................

..................................................................................................................

VIII. Do you think the next generation of Gikuyu speakers (your children) will be able to speak in Gikuyu?

(a) Yes

(b) No

(c) Not sure (Please tick)
APPENDIX 2

1) Translation test

Translate the following sentences to Gikuyu.

1. Kamau ran yesterday.
2. Njeri has cut a tree.
3. My elder sister visited me.
4. Kamau ran the marathon last year.
5. I spent the day helping the old woman who was staying with us.
6. Kamau was running last Saturday.
7. Kamau ran today in the morning.
8. Njeri had cut the tree in the morning Kamau has run.
9. Njeri cuts the tree every morning.
10. Kamau was running today in the morning.
11. A black dog bit him.
12. That is a rotten fruit.
13. Njeri cut the tree in the morning
14. Kamau had run the marathon before he was eighteen.
15. Kamau was running yesterday.
16. Njeri was cutting a tree last Saturday.
17. Honourable guests are asked to remain standing until the last doctor takes his seat.
18. Njeri was cutting a tree last Saturday.
19. “See you Mum” the boy said to his mother as he boarded the bus.
20. Sheep farmers in Molo get a lot of money from sale of wool.
22. Kamau had cut the tree yesterday.
23. Njeri had cut the tree before she sold the land.
24. Kamau was running his final lap after everybody had completed the race.
25. My father's elder brother fought my mother's brother in the presence of my mother's young sister.
27. Njeri cut the tree last year.
28. We will go the day after tomorrow.
29. Kamau had run yesterday.
30. Holy Mary prays for us.
32. Kamau will run in the morning.
33. Kamau will run after this race.

(2) WRITING TASK
In about 250 words, describe a funny incident that occurred during your family gathering.
Write in Gikuyu.
APPENDIX 3

A SELECTION OF INVARIANT LANGUAGE FORMS CULLED FROM THE DATA

Tense

1. Arateng’erire Jūmamothi hitūkū – He ran last Saturday
2. Njeri niagūtinagia mūtī ira – Njeri was cutting a tree yesterday
3. Njeri niagūtinagia mūtī Jūma hitūkū – Njeri was cutting a tree last Saturday
4. Kamau niarateng’erete kiroko – Kamau had ran in the morning
5. Njeri niarattinitie mūtī mbere ya kwedia mūgūnda – Njeri had cut the tree before selling the land
6. Kamau ngteng’erire ūmūthe rūcio – Kamau ran today in the morning
7. Tūgūthie oke – We will go the day after tomorrow

Aspect

1. Kamau ngteng’era ūmūthi kiroko – Kamau had run in the morning
2. Kamau ateng’erire Jūmamothi hitūkū – Kamau was running last Saturday
3. Kamau ateng’erire marathoni kamūira akinyitie miaka ikūmi na inana - Kamau had run the marathon before he was eighteen
4. Njeri niaratemire mūtī mbere ya kwendia mūgūnda - Njeri had cut the tree before she sold the land
5. Kamau niarateng’era ira – Kamau was running yesterday
Noun-Adjective Concord Marking

1. Mwaka ḳyo – This year
2. Itunda ṭibūthū – rotten fruit
3. Itunda ṭithūkū – rotten fruit
4. Itunda ḋūrū – rotten fruit
5. Mūthenya úcio ūma kiūmia – It was on Sunday

Word order

1) Mūtheru Mary – Holy Mary

Lexical items - Nouns

1. Nyina wakwa – My mother
2. Mūrū wa nyina mūkūrū – My elder sister
3. Ndiratindire mūthenya ngiteithia cūcū – I spent the day helping an old woman
4. Mwari wa nyina ūria mūkūrū – my elder sister
5. Arūmi a mbūrī – sheep farmers
6. Mwaka ira – last year
7. Ithe wakwa – My father
8. Ndīrahūthīrire mūthenya – I spent the day
9. Mwarī wakwa wa Mami – my elder sister
10. Mama mūkūrū – my father’s elder brother
11. Mūrū wa nyūkwa wa mami – My mothers brother

Lexical item – verb

1. Baba mūkūrū niararūite Mama – My elder father fought uncle.