DECLARATION

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

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This dissertation has been submitted for review with our approval as university supervisors.

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my husband, Nicholas Ng’ang’a Waiyaki, for his support and encouragement.
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First, I would like to give thanks to the almighty God who has enabled me to accomplish this work successfully.

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My special thanks go to my family: my husband Nick and my children Dennis, Stella and Juliet for their understanding, patience and support during my long hours of absence when I could not be with them. Thank you for being there for me. Lastly, I would like to thank all my course mates with whom I walked through this journey and all those who supported me in any way during the course of this project. May God bless you.
ABSTRACT

This study was about communication strategies in a multilingual community. It attempts to describe the speakers' pattern of use of what they know as they try to communicate with the speaker of the target language. The study was conducted in Mchana coffee Estate in Kiambu County. The objectives of the study were: to investigate the codes spoken in Mchana, to find out whether domains influence the choice of codes, to find out whether sociolinguistic variables of age, gender and ethnicity influence the choice of codes in different domains and to find out the linguistic strategies speakers in Mchana Coffee Estate employ when speaking a non-native target language.

The study adopted judgment sampling method and the sample size was 50. The data was elicited through the use of questionnaires, oral interviews and tape recording. Both qualitative and quantitative research designs were used in the study. The Estate was found to have a complex linguistic diversity. Speakers in Mchana, who come from different ethnic communities, were found to speak a mean of five codes and they were also found to use some linguistic strategies when speaking a non-native target language. Domains and variables of age, gender and ethnicity were found to influence the choice of codes.

Based on the findings, it was recommended that local languages should be recognized and given government support and people should be encouraged to learn them. It was also recommended that Kiswahili should be upheld as a national language.
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<td>MCE</td>
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DEFINITION OF TERMS

For the purpose of this study, the following terms are used as defined below:

**Code:** Any language, dialect or variety used for the purpose of communication.

**Communication strategies:** Systematic techniques employed by a speaker to express his meaning when communicating with a speaker of a target language.

**Ethnic Background:** That cultural grouping associated with a sense of linguistic distinctiveness region of origin, food or folklore.

**Interlocutor:** Speaker in a conversation

**Linguistic Repertoire:** The number of languages, dialects, varieties or even speech styles available within a speech community or an individual speaker's speech.

**Social Networks:** An individual may be linked to others in different role relationship such as a friend, Brethren or classmate.

**Speech Community:** Any regionally or socially definable human group identified by shared linguistic system.

**Multilingualism:** Phenomenon whereby speakers have mastery of two or more languages.
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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

This chapter explains the purpose of the research. It has been divided into various subsections as follows: background to the study, statement of the problem, research questions, research objectives, research assumptions, rationale of the study, scope and limitations of the study.

1.2 Background to the study

Man is an interacting social being capable of manipulating others as well as being manipulated by them. It is also true that people on average come into contact most often with people who live closest to them and least often with people who live furthest away (Waithera, 2007). When speakers from two different speech communities and their cultures interact for various activities; they adopt the speech repertoires from their interacting counterparts. This allows non-native speakers of a certain language to acquire linguistic competence of interacting community. However, the speech of non-native speakers will reflect some differences compared to the standard language in various dimensions of linguistic analysis (Waithera, 2007).

This study involved language in contact where speakers from different ethnic communities who have been brought together by the same circumstance interact with one another through speech. The study attempts to describe the speakers' pattern of use of what they know as they try to communicate with the speaker of the target language. The study was conducted in Mchana Coffee Estate in Kiambu County.
Mchana Coffee Estate, hereafter called Mchana, is one of the nine Socfinaf Coffee establishments in Kenya. Mchana was set up in 1950 when French Group in Malaysia decided to look for Agricultural investment in East Africa after the Second World War. In February 1950, they sent their agent Mr. Jas Nicoll, with a comfortable cheque book and a very large mandate (any country and almost any crop) to East Africa. Very quickly he came to a conclusion that an investment in coffee plantations in Kenya was the answer to his quest. In a few months, he managed to set up a company (Socfinaf) and acquired the first coffee estate: Ng'ewa Estate and shortly after Mchana Coffee Estate.

In January 1951, Mr Jas Nicoll managed to acquire two other estates close to Mchana and Ng'ewa. These were Kiki Estate and Makuyu Estate. The four estates were regrouped into one entity called Mchana (It was the largest of the four estates). By doing so, Mchana Estate became the single largest coffee plantation in the whole country.

In the year 2009, Socfinaf Company Limited was acquired by new investors (local and international) and it changed its name to Kofinaf Company Limited. Today Mchana is one of the best coffee producing estates of Kofinaf. It is located 38 Kilometers North East of Nairobi. It is managed entirely by Kofinaf Company limited. The entire holding of Mchana Coffee Estate (M.C.E) is 907 hectares with 447 hectares under coffee. It employs 350 permanent workers who are all housed in the estate. The permanent employees include: Manager, Assistant Manager, Supervisory staff and general workers. Approximately 600 people work in Mchana on any working day. The average casual workers per any given day are 250 and seasonal pickers vary from 300 to 2,000 per day depending on whether the crop is in season or not. A dispensary, a crèche and a primary school are also available within the estate.
Kenya, like many other African countries is a multilingual nation. There are over forty African languages spoken within its boundaries (Mbaabu, 1996). English and Kiswahili are the official languages in Kenya. They are used as languages of commerce, law, and mass media and in education (Mureithi, 2006).

Indigenous languages in Kenya have been classified into three genetically defined sub-families. **Bantu** group is concentrated in three geographical regions including Western Kenya and Lake Victoria region (Luhya and Kisii communities), East of Rift valley (Kikuyu, Embu, Meru and Kamba communities) and on the coastal belt where we have the Mijikenda community. **Nilotic** group is represented by Luo, Kalenjin, Maasai and other related groups. The **Cushitic** group is represented by the Somali speaking groups which occupy eastern portion of the arid and semi-arid north eastern province of the country and the Rendile and Ormo speaking groups which occupy the north eastern parts of the province (Mureithi, 2006; Whitely, 1974; Myers-Sscotton, 1993).

In a multilingual country like Kenya, different languages come into contact. This occurs when there is increased social interaction between speakers from different ethnic backgrounds who have traditionally spoken different languages but for some reason have come into contact with each other (Mureithi, 2006). This phenomenon is brought about by rural-urban migration, technological advancement in mass communication, modernization and globalization as well as historical aspects of colonialization (Nthiga, 2003).

Workers in Mchana come from different linguistic backgrounds. They left their rural ancestral homes and settled in the Estate where they have established their own unique community. This is a case of rural to rural migration. A common cause unite these people: They left their original homes to seek for employment in the Estate. Each of them brings
his/her own language in the Estate. Apart from these ethnic languages of the speakers, the two official languages in Kenya: English and Kiswahili are also spoken in Mchana. The Estate is therefore a multilingual setting.

Apart from their interaction in many domains, for example; work place, school, church, market and drinking places etc, others have even intermarried in the Estate. They therefore have to find a way of communicating with each other during the interactions. Although Kiswahili is the national language in Kenya and is widely used, it is not always used in every situation where languages come into contact. The ethnic languages are very much alive in such a setting. This means that there are many instances when the speaker is obliged to use an ethnic language in communication.

1.3 Statement of the problem

The research involves language in contact. There is a complex linguistic diversity in coffee estates in Kenya despite the fact that there has been a policy in place for a national language for the last 30 years (Mbaabu 1996). What is not known though is the way in which this linguistic diversity is handled in Mchana. This is because in a multiple language situation, establishing a target language is problem. In Mchana, people belong to different ranks. These are: the proprietors, managers, accountants, traders, coffee pickers and menial labourers. This situation causes the target language to keep shifting from national language to ethnic languages depending on who is being spoken to at a moment and the domain. As Odongo (2008) argues, language doesn’t exist in social structural vacuum.

This study therefore sought to establish the strategies speakers employ when they are faced with challenges while speaking a target language in different domains. This is because for a speaker, there is need to avoid social exclusion which is a direct consequence of failure to
speak a target language. The study also sought to find out whether social variables such as age, sex and ethnic background influence the choice of codes used by the speaker.

1.4 Research Questions

1. What codes are spoken in Mchana coffee estate?
2. Do domains influence the choice of codes?
3. What is the influence of social variables of age, gender and ethnicity on the choice of codes in different domains?
4. What linguistic strategies are employed by speakers in Mchana Coffee Estate when speaking a non-native target language?

1.5 Objectives of the study

1. To establish the codes spoken in Mchana Coffee Estate;
2. To find out whether domains influence the choice of codes;
3. To find out whether social variables of age, gender and ethnicity have any influence on the choice of codes in different domains; and
4. To find out what linguistic strategies speakers in Mchana Coffee Estate employ when speaking a non-native target language.

1.6 Assumptions

1. There are a number of codes spoken in Mchana Coffee Estate;
2. Domains influence the choice of codes;
3. Social variables of age, gender and ethnicity influence the choice of codes in different domains; and
4. Speakers in Mchana Coffee Estate employ some strategies when speaking a non-native target language.

1.7 Rationale of the Study

Many studies which have been done on communication have focused on accommodation (Blom & Gumperz, 1972, Labov 1963, Trudgill 1986). In Kenya particular studies on speech accommodation can be seen in the work of Myers-Scotton, (1993 and 2002); Kebeya, (1997; 2008); Russel, (1992); Kitonga, (2005); and Mathooko, (2004). Scanty studies have been done on coffee estates most of which are multilingual settings because of historical factors. There is also very little which has been done on the language situation of the rural immigrant workers in Kenya. This study therefore aims at filling this gap. The findings of this study can be used to enhance unity, tolerance and cooperation amongst communities that work together. The findings will also add more information to the already existing body of knowledge on the language in multilingual setting.

1.8 Scope and Limitations

This study dwelled on communication strategies in a multilingual community. It was based on Mchana Coffee Estate in Kiambu County. Kiambu County has very many estates owing to the fact that it is an agricultural area. These estates grow different types of crops. Our study was based on only one estate and specifically a coffee estate. This is because focusing on all estates would have made the scope too wide and difficult to handle. However, a study involving more estates in different counties could have provided useful insights and wider scope but because of time and finances, this could not be possible.
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter, review of related literature is presented under the following sub-headings: communication, communication strategies, language contact and multilingualism and other related studies done in Kenya. Some theories which are relevant in this study have also been discussed.

2.2 Communication

Gumperz (1982) defines communication as a social activity requiring the coordinated efforts of two or more individuals. Mere talk to produce sentences no matter how well formed or elegant the outcome does not by itself constitute communication. Only when a move has elicited a response can we say communication is taking place. To participate in such verbal exchange that is to create and sustain a conversational involvement, we require knowledge and abilities which go considerably beyond grammatical competence. This knowledge is what Troike (1982) calls Communicative competence.

Communicative competence involves knowing not only the language and code, but also what to say to whom and how to say it appropriately in any given situation. It deals with the social and cultural knowledge which speakers are presumed to have to enable them to use and interpret linguistic forms. A child who uses a taboo expression in public and causes embarrassment is said not to “know better”. This means that he has not acquired certain rules for social conduct in the use of language. Within each community there is a variety of language codes and ways of speaking available to its members, which constitute its communicative repertoire. This includes all varieties, dialects or styles used in a particular
society defined population and constrains which govern the choice among them (Gumperz, 1982). The means of communication used in a community thus include different languages, different regional and social dialects of one or more of the languages, different registers and different channels of communication (Troike, 1982). The nature and extent of this diversity is related to the social organization of the group which is likely to include differences in age, sex, social status as well as difference in the relationship between speakers, their goal of interaction and the setting in which communication takes place.

Communication is essentially a social affair. Man has evolved a host of different systems of communication which renders his social life possible (Corner and Hauthorn J, 1985). The very word communication means ‘share’. In as much as you and I are communicating at the moment, we are one not so much as a union as a unity. In as much as we agree, we say that we are of one mind, or, again, we understand one another. This “one another” is the unity.

Speech and writing are not the only system of communication. Social intercourse is greatly strengthened by habit of gestures; little movements of hands and face, with nods, smiles, frowns, handshake, fist shake, kisses and so on.

2.3 Communication strategies

According to Faerch & Kasper (1983), communication strategies are a systematic technique employed by a speaker to express his meaning when faced with some difficulties. Difficulty in this definition is taken to refer uniquely to the speaker’s inadequate command of language used in the interaction. It has to do with the relationship between ends and means.

Tarone (1981) says that communication strategies are descriptive of the learners’ pattern of use of what they know as they try to communicate with speakers of the target language. They
are used to compensate for some deficiency in the linguistic system, and focus on exploring alternate ways of using what one knows for the transmission of a message without necessarily considering situational appropriateness. Strategies of communication were first invoked by Selinker (1972) in his paper entitled “interlanguage” to account for certain classes of errors made by learners of the second language. These errors were regarded as a by-product of the attempt of the learner to express his meaning in spontaneous speech with an inadequate grasp of the target language system. It is now fairly clear that all language users adopt strategies to convey their meaning but we are only able more or less readily to perceive these when the speaker is not a native speaker.

The strategies adopted by the speakers, of course depend on their interlocutors. Since communication is a cooperative enterprise, one must suppose that we adopt both productive and receptive strategies of communication (Faerch & Kasper 1983). The native speakers have to adopt their speech to make themselves understood by foreigners (Appel & Musken 1987). Even mothers do the same when speaking to their children. Foreigner’s talk is the type of language used when speaking to foreigners, not the language of foreigners. One way in which speakers adjust is by simplifying their language, perhaps imitating an impression that they have of how foreigners speak.

In a native speaker, it is ideally assumed that the end and means are in balance. In a non-native however these are not in balance. He will sometimes wish to convey messages which his linguistic resources do not permit him to express successfully (Faerch & Kasper 1983). When in the course of interaction the learner finds himself faced with this situation he has only two options open to him. He can either tailor his message to the resources he has available that is adjust his end to his means. These procedures are called message adjustment strategies or risk avoidance strategies or he can attempt to increase his resources by one
means or another in order to realize his communicative intentions. These strategies are called resource expansion strategies. They are clearly "success oriented" though risk running strategies.

2.4 Language Contact

Language contact is essentially a social phenomenon resulting from meeting of people speaking different languages (Mackey, 1979). It begins when environments put monolingual speaker's interaction that prompts them to learn another language (Myers-Scotton, 2002). The causes of contact are multiple and they include the dominance of certain languages and their social function the location of language communities and their demographic, political and economic importance and the motives which push people to master another language in addition to their mother tongue (Mackey, 1979).

Historically, multilingual communities evolve in a number of ways. One is as a result of migration, the voluntary or involuntary movement of people speaking one language into the territory of people speaking another (Spolsky, 1998). Migration from countryside or from small town to large metropolitan cities is another major cause of multilingual communities another cause of migration is where people move from their rural areas to another rural area to work in plantations. In such a case people have to learn two languages, particularly those speaking the minority language. In addition to their first language, they acquire a second language, often the majority language (Appel and Muysken, 1987). In the case of plantations, the majority language is the language of the catchment area. Members of the minority groups must attain a certain degree of bilingualism if they want to participate in mainstream society. Speakers of majority language are in much more comfortable position although they can also learn some aspects of the minority language if they want to identify with them.
Language or dialect contact may also bring about situations referred to as language shift, language maintenance or language death (Mureithi, 2006). Language maintenance denotes the continued use of language in the face of competition from regionally and socially more powerful language. In the case of coffee plantations like Mchana, people continue to use their ethnic languages despite the fact that they are given stiff competition by Kikuyu language which is the language of the catchments area and Kiswahili which is Kenya’s official and national language.

A language shift on the other hand denotes the replacement of one language by another as primary means of communication and socialization within a community. Language death refers to a situation in which a community is the last one (in the world) to use that language (Mestherie et. al, 2000).

Another outcome of language in contact is language change (Mureithi, 2006). This refers to changes in the language structure realized in verbal communication in face to face situations. For example a woman married to a man of different ethnic group may display some features in the husband’s language in her speech even in his absence. Convergence thereby becomes an individual’s speech habit.

2.5 Other relevant studies in Kenya

According to Waithera (2007), man is an interacting social being capable of manipulating others as well as being manipulated by them. It is also true that people on average come into contact most often with people who live closest to them and least often with people who live furthest away. When speakers from two different speech communities and their cultures interact for various activities, they adopt speech repertoires from their interacting counterparts. This allows non-native speakers of a certain language to acquire linguistic
competence of the interacting community. However the speech of non-native speaker will reflect some differences when compared to the standard language in various dimensions of linguistic analysis.

Language contact begins when environment put monolingual speakers in interactions that prompt them to learn another language (Mureithi, 2006). This can lead to two degrees of multilingualism: some bilinguals have mastery of one language dominating the other languages in their linguistic repertoire while others are balanced bilinguals with equal command of both languages.

According to Kanyi (2008) language in the society is basically meant for communication between language originator and language recipient. The originator of language (Initial communicator) should use a language or languages convenient to the recipient. He may switch to another language for easier understanding by the hearer. He concurs with Romaine (1982) who observes that in the use of languages there is a communicative act which involves certain costs for the speaker in terms of identity change. She supports the idea that to earn a social approval from people is the reason for the use of a language that accommodates the speaker to other in social situations.

Kenya like many other African Country, is a multilingual nation. There are over forty African languages spoken within its boundaries (Mbaabu 1996, Kebeya 2008). English and Kiswahili are the official languages in Kenya. They are used as languages of commerce, laws, and mass media and in education (The constitution of Kenya 2010). Indigenous languages in Kenya have been classified into three genetically defined sub families. Bantu group is concentrated in three geographical regions, that is Western Kenya and Lake Victoria region, East of Rift Valley and on the Coastal belt. Nilotic group and Cushitic group occupy the Eastern portion

In a multilingual country like Kenya, different languages come into contact. This occurs when there is increased social interaction from different ethnic backgrounds, which have traditionally spoken different languages but for some reasons have come into contact with each other (Mureithi, 2006). This is a good example of what happens in Mchana. Language contact in Mchana is brought about by rural-rural migration where people relocate from their rural homes and settle in the Estate where they work as employees in the settlers’ farm. The employees and their families come from different ethnic background hence they have to look for ways of communicating with each other.

2.6 Theoretical Framework

The theory adopted in this study is speech accommodation theory (SAT) which was proposed by Giles (1973). Together with SAT, the researcher has also adopted a communication theory by Hymes (1971) which is called Ethnography of speaking (E.O.S).

2.6.1 Speech Accommodation Theory (SAT)

SAT is a socio-psychological theory of language advanced by Howard Giles (Giles et al 1973). It was developed to account for the ways in which interlocutors modified their language during interaction. The theory explains the dynamics of speech adjustments in the process of interaction. The theory posits that during social interactions, participants are motivated to adjust their speech styles as a means of gaining or not gaining social approval, attaining communication efficiency between interactions and maintaining speaker’s positive social identities (Giles at al 1982).
There are two main strategies speakers employ in accommodating to one another’s speech. The first strategy is called *speech convergence* where a speaker modifies his/her speech by altering and shifting it to resemble that of the person he/she is speaking with. Speakers will therefore converge when they desire social integration and approval. That SAT also views convergence as social exchanges during which interlocutors incur certain costs in order to obtain potential rewards. The rewards of converging may be in the form of material rewards or social approval and the cost may include linguistic effort or group identity loss (Giles & Robinson, 1990).

The second strategy is called *speech divergence* whereby the speaker tries to create distance between himself and the hearer by maximizing differences in language use. Speakers will therefore diverge when they wish to be different from others. There are four social psychological sub-theories that constitute SAT.

**Similarity–attraction theory** posits that when our attitudes and beliefs are more similar to those of others; we are more likely to be attracted to them. Speakers will therefore converge when they desire social integration and approval.

**Social exchange theory** suggests that interlocutors incur certain costs in order to obtain potential rewards and that interlocutors are more likely to converge when the rewards (e.g. material rewards, social approval etc.) outweigh the costs of converging.

**Causal attribution theory** suggests that listeners interpret speaker’s linguistic convergence and divergence and evaluate them in terms of motives they attribute as a cause of the
speaker’s behavior. Understanding the motives of convergence by our interlocutors may help us view them favorably or unfavorably.

**Intergroup distinctiveness theory** is a divergence theory which suggests that when different groups come into contact, there is a tendency for them to compare themselves on the grounds of abilities, possessions, personal traits and accomplishment. These inter-group social comparisons will assist individuals in forging their group image and positive in-group distinctiveness. A group may seek divergence rather than convergence because they wish to maintain their group identity.

The present study has used the four sub-theories of SAT to explain the various strategies adopted by speakers in one speech community in order to communicate with another speaker from another speech community. The sub-theories have also helped to explain why the speakers adopt one communication mechanism rather than another when communicating with different people in different domains.

### 2.6.2 Ethnography of Speaking (E.O.S)

Hymes (1971) attempt to give a format for the combined study of language and use in the “Ethnography of speaking”. He addresses the structuring of communication behavior and its role in the conduct of social life. He aims at a comprehensive description of communicative competence. This includes the knowledge of how to communicate appropriately with a particular speech community and the skills needed to make use of it. This knowledge includes not only the rules for communication (both linguistic and social linguistic) and the shared rules of interaction, but also the cultural rules and knowledge that are the basis for the context and content of communicative events and interaction process (Troike, 1982).
The focus of E.O.S is the speech community and the way communication within it is patterned and organized as systems of communicative events and the way in which these interact with all systems of culture. A primary aim of this approach is to guide the collection and analysis of descriptive data about the ways in which social meaning is conveyed. This meaning depends on the interrelationship between setting, participants, purpose, key, channel, code, message form, message content and act sequence.

Hymes repeatedly emphasizes that what language is cannot be separated from how and why it is used and that considerations of use are often prerequisite to recognition and understanding of much of linguistic form. The E.O.S takes language first and foremost as a socially situated cultural form, while recognizing the necessity to analyse the code itself and the cognitive process of its speakers and hearer (Troike, 1982).

This communicative behavior of a speech community is what the study sought to describe. This is because people of Mchana have lived together for a long time and have therefore formed their own unique speech community. The theory has helped to explain why a speaker uses different languages in different social situations and also in different domains.
CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter deals with the methods that were used to carry out this research. The areas covered in this chapter are: research design, area of study, research population, sampling procedures, sample size and data elicitation.

3.2 Research design

The study adopted both qualitative and quantitative research designs. The qualitative approach was used to analyze and describe the mechanisms used in communication. Quantitative approach was used to quantify the data.

3.3 Site of the Study

The research was conducted in Mchana Coffee Estate in Kiambu County. The research found the area appropriate because people in the estate come from different linguistic backgrounds. They came from their rural areas to look for employment and most of the permanent employees reside in the estate.

3.4 Target Population

Approximately 600 people work in Mchana Coffee Estate in any given working day. 350 are permanent employees who are all housed in the Estate. These permanent employees include: The manager, Assistant manager, Administration staff, supervisory staff and general workers. There are casual seasonal pickers varying from 300 to 2,000 per day depending on whether the crop is in season or not. The target population was those who reside within the estate who the researcher felt would provide more accurate data.
3.5 Sampling Techniques and Sample Size

The judgment sampling method was used in this study. A researcher who uses this method identifies in advance the “type” of speakers to be studied and then seeks out a quota of speakers who fit in the specified categories (Milroy 1987:26). The researcher used this method to identify in advance the estate that would give representative data upon which generalizations would be made.

The researcher selected three households from each of the five villages (kambi) in the estate. A total fifteen households were therefore selected. Speakers in these households were required to carry out conversations in languages other than their L1. These conversations were tape recorded. Out of these fifty respondents were selected.

The criteria for sample selection included multilingualism, sex and age (at least 20 years). Since one objective of this study was to investigate whether social variables such as age, sex and ethnic background influence the choice of codes in different domains, these variables had to be represented in the sample. The sample also incorporated respondents from different ranks in the estate. These are: managers, supervisors, security people, coffee pickers and general workers.

3.6 Data Elicitation

Questionnaires, oral interviews and tape recording were the main methods that were used to elicit data in this study. The questionnaire was prepared in five different languages so that a respondent takes a questionnaire written in a language that he or she was comfortable with. The data for the first three objectives was elicited through the use of questionnaire (see appendix 1). The first objective dealt with the number of codes spoken in Mchana. The data
was elicited through question number 10. This question asked the respondent to state the number of languages that he/she speaks. The data for the second objective which was to establish whether domains influence the choice of codes was elicited through question number 11 and 12. The two questions required the respondent to state the languages he/she uses in each of the given domain. The data for the third objective which looked at the influence of sociolinguistic variables of age, gender and ethnicity on language choice in different domains was elicited through question number 4, 5 and 9. These questions dealt with the respondent's age, gender, and his/her first language respectively.

The data for the fourth objective was elicited through tape recording (see appendix 1c). For the purpose of oral interviews prior arrangements were made so as to ensure that the given respondent was available. The interviews were carried out in a relaxed and friendly environment. The respondents were required to speak in each of the codes that they reported to speak and the conversations were tape recorded. This was done in order to find out strategies that they employ when speaking a non-native target language. The researcher engaged some research assistants who were proficient in various ethnic languages to assist in case of language barrier. Each recording took at least 30 minutes.
CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter deals with the analysis and presentation of data. It is guided by the set objectives. The discussion will be based on the tenets of two theories: speech Accommodation Theory (SAT) and Ethnography of Speaking (E.O.S). The SAT accounts for the way in which interlocutors modify language during interactions by either increasing similarities or dissimilarities in language use while E.O.S addresses the structuring of communicative behavior and its role in the conduct of social life. It describes communicative competence which includes the knowledge of how to communicate appropriately with a particular speech community and the skills needed to make use of it.

Social variables such as age sex and ethnic background were investigated into to see whether they have any influence on the choice of codes used in communication in different domains. Both qualitative and quantitative approaches were used to analyze data in this study. Data was first described and then analyzed by use of tables, charts and graphs. Tape recorded conversations were transcribed on a paper. The extracts from the transcribed data was used to identify the strategies employed by workers in Mchana when speaking a non native target language. Finally the findings were presented and conclusions drawn.

4.2 Sample Description

A total of 50 respondents were interviewed from the five villages in Mchana. The sample incorporated respondents from different ranks in the Estate. These are: managers, supervisors, general farm workers, machine operators and others (see Appendix B).
4.3 Linguistic Situation in Mchana Coffee Estate in Kiambu

4.3.1 The Respondents First Language

The estate was found to have a complex linguistic diversity. Workers in Mchana come from different regions in the country and they speak different ethnic languages. These ethnic languages are considered in this study as their first language. Out of the 50 respondents interviewed at Mchana, 46% spoke Luhya as their first language while 26% spoke Kikuyu as their first language (Figure 4.1). This was found to be an interesting situation because one would have thought that Kikuyu speakers were the majority in the estate because Kikuyu is the language of the catchment area. It was established that most Kikuyu workers in the estate prefer to live in their own homes. They go to work in the morning and then go back home in the evening. The other languages spoken by the workers were Luo (16%), Kamba (6%) and Meru (6%) respectively.

Figure 4.1: Respondent's first language in Mchana

Source: Survey data, 2011
4.3.1.1 Observations

From Figure 4.1 above, the following observations are made:

i. The Luhya speakers were the majority in the Estate. This was found to be an interesting situation because one would have thought that Kikuyu speakers were the majority in the Estate because Kikuyu is the language of the catchment area. It was established that most Kikuyu workers in the estate prefer to live in their own homes. They go to work in the morning and then go back home in the evening;

ii. It is also possible that Luhya speakers have few job alternatives in their home areas compared to the other language speakers. Other ethnic groups like Kamba, Luo and Meru might have other alternatives or they may look down upon the kind of work done in the estate thus they prefer to remain in their own home regions; and

iii. Just like in many work places in Kenya, it is also possible that the senior workers in the estate are Kikuyu, Luhya and few Luo speakers who when they get employed are able to bring their tribesmen who also get employed in the estate.

It is observed that most of the workers in the estate come from five different ethnic communities. These are Luhya, Kikuyu, Luo, Kamba and Meru respectively. These ethnic languages are considered in this study to be the respondents' first language (L1). Mchana Coffee Estate is therefore a multilingual setting.

4.3.2 Codes Spoken in Mchana

A total of eleven codes were found to be spoken in Mchana (Figure 4.2). This is in line with the first objective which sought to investigate the number of codes spoken in Mchana. Most of the respondents were found to speak a mean of five codes with two codes being the least
spoken and eight codes being the highest number of codes spoken by an individual respondent. It was however, noted that their competence in their use of different codes varied from one code to another.

Kiswahili was the most common code with 100% of the cases reporting to speak Kiswahili (Figure 4.2). Kikuyu was the second most common with 92% of the cases reporting to speak Kikuyu. The least common codes were: Embu, Kisii, Giriama and Kalenjin which tied at 2% of all cases.

**Figure 4.2: Codes spoken in Mchana Coffee Estate**

![Bar Chart](image.png)

Source: Survey data, 2011

### 4.3.2.1 Observations

The following observations are made from Figure 4.2:

i. All the respondents reported to speak Kiswahili apart from their L1. Kiswahili being a national and official language in Kenya is widely spoken. It symbolizes national solidarity and is a widely used lingua franca because it is perceived as a
neutral language. It is therefore very appropriate for use in the multi-ethnic situation.

ii. All the speakers are multilingual. They have the ability to communicate in two or more languages although their competence varies from one language to another.

iii. Majority of the people are able to speak Kikuyu (92% of the cases). This means that other language speakers sometimes shift to Kikuyu because it is the language of the catchment area. It is spoken by many people in many domains for example at the shop, in the market, drinking spree and merry go round. This makes those people who are not Kikuyu speakers to want to learn it in order to get favors and avoid social exclusion.

iv. Luo, Kamba and Meru are minorities. Research has shown that in situation where various languages are competing. Speakers of the minority languages are sometimes forced to shift to the language of the majority. Luo, Meru and Kamba’s are forced to shift either Kiswahili or Kikuyu because they have few members of their communities to speak to.

v. The low percentage found in the use of Embu, Kisii, Giriama and Kalenjin indicate that there are some people who have the ability to speak those languages in the estate but they have nobody to speak to because the speakers of these languages are very few or they are not found in the estate.

It is observed that many codes are spoken in Mchana. Kiswahili and Kikuyu are dominant codes and therefore spoken by many people. Other language speakers’ shift to Kikuyu language as can be seen in Figure 4.2. This is a convergent strategy they use when they desire social integration and approval. This is in line with similarity-attraction theory. Speakers of
the minority codes sometimes shift to the majority codes. Other codes have no native speakers in the estate and hence are rarely spoken.

4.4 Social Function and Symbolism of Different Codes

Kenya, like many African countries is a multilingual nation. It has over forty indigenous languages (Mbaabu, 1996). In addition to these indigenous languages, there are two official languages in Kenya. This makes the linguistic situation very complex. It is very normal therefore for a Kenyan to speak more than one language and to switch from one to another without hesitation. These languages serve different purposes and are used in different domains. It is therefore important to identify the role of each code in our situation.

4.4.1 English

English is one of the official languages in Kenya. It is the language of education because it is a compulsory subject in all educational institutions. Except in Kiswahili subject, English is the language of instruction in all other subjects (except in the lower primary school in the rural areas). This makes English an elitist language because of its association with high education status. As a language of education, it is a symbol of power and position. It is also linked with colonialism and this adds to its authoritative symbol. It is considered the language of prestige in Kenya and is thus used in many conversations among the well-educated (Muthwii, 1994; Myers Scotton, 1993a; Kanana, 2003; Kebeya, 2008).

In a multilingual setting like Mchana, English was seen to serve specific function as well. It was used by those who were perceived to be more educated. These include: the manager, accountants and secretaries when communicating with each other. It was never used by the other workers probably because of their low level of education.
4.4.2 Kiswahili

Kiswahili is both national and official language in Kenya. People speak Kiswahili as an emblem of national solidarity. It is a widely accepted lingua because it is perceived as a neutral language. It is used for achieving unity and integration at national level. It is the unmarked code which does not signal social economic status and it is often a transactional language for use in multi-ethnic situation (Parkin, 1974; Scotton, 1983; Muthuri, 2000). Kiswahili stands for a national brotherhood and imparts a sense of national pride and identity (Whiteley, 1974).

In our study, Kiswahili was found to be the unmarked code among speakers in Mchana. Most of the respondents reported to use Kiswahili more often than any other code in the Estate. Because they come from different regions, Kiswahili gives them a sense of brotherhood and helps them to accommodate each other.

4.4.3 Ethnic Languages

The ethnic languages denote group membership and in many cases are useful in enhancing relationships within an ethnic group. Different group use their mother tongues as an identity factor (Muthuri, 2000). The use of ethnic languages is intended to connote “solidarity” or “assertiveness” (Abdulazizi, 1982). In solidarity, there is a strong sense of language loyalty as a means of solidifying the identity if the community while in assertiveness, there is a constant defence of one’s mother tongue in the presence of other people from different ethnic groups (Muthuri, 2000).
In this study, it was observed that speakers often used local languages for the same purpose: to enhance ethnic identity and promote solidarity. It was observed that a speaker would strive to speak the language of the hearer for example in greetings even when he is not very competent in that language but speaks only a few words. One does this in order to be viewed positively and to be accepted as a member of the group.

4.5 Sociolinguistic Variables

The researcher also looked into some of the sociolinguistic variables to see whether they have any influence on the choice of codes and use of different codes in different domains. This was done in order to investigate the third objective of the study. The variables looked into were: age, gender and ethnicity.

4.5.1 Age

From the survey results, the respondents interviewed at Mchana had a mean age of 35 years ranging from a minimum of 20 years to a maximum of 55 years. They were grouped into four categories: 20 to 29, 30 to 39, 40 to 49, and 50 to 59. While the first three categories spoke a maximum of five codes, the fourth category spoke a maximum of eight codes (Table 4.1).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Category</th>
<th>No of languages the respondents speak</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-29</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-39</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-49</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-59</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Survey data, 2011
4.5.1.1 Observations

From the Table 4.1 above, it is observed that:

i. All the age categories use Kiswahili more commonly than any other language in the estate. This is because Kiswahili symbolizes national identity in that people in the estate come from different ethnic communities; and

ii. Members of the fourth category (50 to 59 years) are very few compared to all other age brackets. This is because after the retirement age (55 years in the old constitution) most people go back to their rural areas to be taken care of by their loved ones. Furthermore, they are no longer able to work in the Estate. Most of them therefore opt to retire to their villages to cultivate their ancestral lands.

It is observed that all respondents regardless of their age are bilinguals. In addition to their ethnic languages, all of them reported to speak Kiswahili. Age is also seen to influence the number of codes spoken. Older people are seen to speak more codes.

| Table 4.2: First most common language the respondent speaks in order of preference |
|---------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Age Category       | Kiswahili | Kikuyu | Luo | Luyha | Kamba | Total |
| 20-29              | 9         | 2      | 1  | 1     | 0      | 13    |
| 30-39              | 11        | 4      | 1  | 1     | 0      | 17    |
| 40-49              | 8         | 6      | 0  | 3     | 1      | 18    |
| 50-59              | 2         | 0      | 0  | 0     | 0      | 2     |
| Total              | 30        | 12     | 2  | 5     | 1      | 50    |

Source: Survey data, 2011

4.5.1.2 Observations

From Table 4.2 above, it is observed that:

i. 100% of the old people (50 – 59 years) prefer to communicate in Kiswahili more than in any other code. Kiswahili being a neutral language is used to bring about national solidarity. This is a convergent strategy used by this
category in order to cultivate harmony and peaceful co-existence among different communities.

ii. Compared to all other categories, age group 40 to 49 years prefer to speak in ethnic languages more than in Kiswahili. This is an age where most people are married and are bringing up children. It is possible that some respondents have married spouses who speak different codes from their L1. They therefore have a reason to learn other languages. Another possible reason is that this group is very aggressive when it comes to looking for work in order to get money to sustain their young families. They therefore move from one place to another looking for employment and in the process interact with people from different communities. Because people most communicate in order to seek assistance or favours, they are forced to learn other languages; and

iii. Few people prefer to speak Luo and Kamba and Meru. This shows that Luo speakers switch to other languages when communicating within the estate. Kamba and Meru speakers are minority in the estate. As seen elsewhere in this study, minority languages face competition from regionally and socially more powerful Languages. In the case of Mchana, Kamba and Meru languages face competition from Kiswahili and Kikuyu which are more powerful languages within the area. Speakers are therefore forced to shift to those powerful languages.

From the above observations, it is concluded that the fourth category (55 to 59 years) are more rigid in language use. Although they can speak many languages, they prefer to speak Kiswahili within the Estate. This is because Kiswahili is a neutral language and a language that everybody understands. Being a national language Kiswahili brings about cohesion and a sense of brotherhood which older people would want to cultivate.
4.5.2 Gender

Out of the total population interviewed, 68% were male while 32% were female. The maximum numbers of codes spoken by males were 8 and the minimum numbers of codes spoken were 2. The maximum number of codes spoken by females was 5 and the minimum were 2, Kiswahili was the commonly used code by each gender followed by Kikuyu.

Table 4.3: Number of codes the respondent speaks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Valid</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>6.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>23.5</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>38.2</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>32.4</td>
<td>18.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Survey data, 2011

4.5.2.1 Observations

From Table 4.3, it is observed that:

i. Majority of the respondents were male. One reason for this situation is that in many African societies, it is men who go out to look for work while women are left at home looking after the family. Many men in the estate reported that they left their wives in their rural homes where they go to see them during weekends, public holidays or when they get their annual leave; and

ii. Males speak more codes compared to females in the Estate. This can be explained by the fact that men travel more widely than women and therefore are in a position to acquire more codes from the many people they interact with.

It is concluded that gender has some influence on language use. Males are more outgoing than females and hence are able to acquire more languages in the course of their travel.
4.5.3 Ethnicity

The researcher considered the respondent first language as his or her ethnic language (see appendix A, question 9). When asked about their preferred code in the estate 69.2% of the Kikuyu respondents said they prefer to communicate in Kikuyu than in any other code while 30% said Kiswahili was their preferred code. 75% of the Luo respondents reported that they communicate in Kiswahili more than any other language followed by Luo language at 25%. 65.2% of the Luhya respondent reported that they use Kiswahili more often than in any other code in the Estate followed by Kikuyu language at 13.0%. The Kamba speakers said that their language of choice was Kiswahili (66.7%) and Kamba (33.3%). The most commonly used code by the Meru speakers in the Estate was interestingly Kiswahili (100%) and not Meru.

Table 4.4: The first language the respondent speaks in order of preference

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Valid</th>
<th>Kiswahili</th>
<th>Kikuyu</th>
<th>Luo</th>
<th>Luyha</th>
<th>Kamba</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kikuyu</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luo</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luyha</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kamba</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meru</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>30</strong></td>
<td><strong>12</strong></td>
<td><strong>2</strong></td>
<td><strong>5</strong></td>
<td><strong>1</strong></td>
<td><strong>50</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Survey data, 2011

4.5.3.1 Observations

From the Table 4.4, it is observed that:

i. The dominant language group in the estate is Luhya. This is interesting because most people would think that Kikuyu is the dominant language group because it is the language of the catchment area. This however was found not to be true. It was found that once a Luhya gets employed, he/she is more likely to invite people from his/her
home area to the Estate more than any other language speaker. This accounts for the high number of Luhya speakers in the estate.

ii. Kikuyu speakers prefer to communicate in their own ethnic code more often than any other code in the Estate. They do this to index ethnic identity and assertiveness. This is because Kikuyu is the language of the catchment area and thus many people speak the language; and

iii. All the Meru speakers reported to prefer speaking in Kiswahili. This can be explained by the fact that Meru speakers were few and therefore, Kiswahili is the natural choice in a situation where it is very difficult to come across a speaker from one’s own community. As we have seen before, speakers of minority language are sometimes forced to shift to other languages.

It is concluded that Kikuyu speakers exhibit a lot of ethnicity. This is a divergent strategy as seen in intergroup distinctiveness theory of SAT. It suggests that when different groups come into contact, there is a tendency for them to compare themselves on the grounds of abilities, possessions, personal traits and accomplishments. Kikuyu speakers therefore speak their ethnic language in order to maintain their ethnic distinctiveness and to forge a group identity.

4.6 Domains as Motivation for Language Choice

The notion of domains was investigated into in view of the second objective of the study. This is because domains or language settings were found to influence the speaker’s choice of codes. The domains looked into were: home, work-place, friends, shopkeeper, market and church. Sociolinguistic variables of age, gender and ethnicity were also investigated in different domains to determine their influence on the choice of codes.
4.6.1 Home

In this study, home is considered to be the houses that are provided for workers and their families to live in within the Estate. Most of the respondents reported to use own ethnic languages more commonly than any other code while at home. Although Kiswahili was found to be used by 38% of the respondents while at home, all the other ethnic languages spoken in the Estate formed 68% of the total number of codes used at home. This shows that use of ethnic languages at home common than that of Kiswahili.

**Figure 4.3: Frequencies for languages used at home**

![Language frequencies chart]

*Source: Survey data, 2011*

4.6.1.1 Observations

From Figure 4.3, it is observed that:

i. Many people use their ethnic languages at home. This is because home is the place where most people feel free to communicate in the language that one is most
comfortable with. Many people are more competent in their L1 than in any other language:

ii. Some people still use Kiswahili at home. This is an indication that some people have married spouses whose L1 is different from theirs. In such a situation Kiswahili becomes a neutral language for communication because sometimes it can be difficult for a couple to choose one of their L1 as the language of communication in the house; and

iii. It is also possible that in some homes, there are children who do not know their parents L1. In such situation, Kiswahili becomes the first language of these children and the language of communication in such homes.

It is concluded that while majority of the people use their ethnic languages at home, some are not comfortable using their own ethnic languages even at home, others are slowly forgetting them and yet others were unable to speak them at all. In such cases, they have to use a national language.

4.6.2 Ethnicity at home

The variable of ethnicity was looked into in the domain of home to find out whether it has any influence on the choice of codes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 4.5: The most common language the respondent uses at home</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Valid</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kikuyu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luyha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kamba</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meru</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Survey data, 2011*
4.6.2.1 Observations

From Table 4.5, it is observed that:

i. Kikuyu, Embu and Meru speakers use their own ethnic languages at home more often than any other language while Luo and Luhya speakers prefer communicating in Kiswahili. The reason for this is probably that since the three originated from the same sub-family, they are close to Kikuyu language which is the language of the area and therefore spoken by many people;

ii. Luo and Luhya speakers sometimes shift to Kiswahili and other languages. This is a convergent strategy that these speakers use in order to gain social integration and approval from other communities;

iii. Kikuyu and Meru speakers exhibit a lot of ethnicity within the homes. This can be attributed to speakers having a lot of loyalty to their languages; and

iv. Luhya and Meru group do shift to other ethnic languages. The reason for this is that they are either more accommodating towards other ethnic languages or some of them may be married to spouses who speak different languages and therefore this makes them to learn the L1 of their spouses.

It is concluded that languages which are close to Kikuyu may be viewed positively by speakers in Mchana and hence are more widely used at home just like Kikuyu which is the language of the area. Those which are not close to Kikuyu shift to the national language.
4.6.3. Gender and language spoken at home

When the variable of gender was looked into within the domain of home, males were found to communicate in Kiswahili more than females while the females were found to use ethnic languages more than males (Table 4.6).

Table 4.6: Gender and language the respondent uses at home

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Valid</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kiswahili</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kikuyu</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luo</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luhyia</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kamba</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meru</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td><strong>34</strong></td>
<td><strong>16</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Survey data, 2011

4.6.3.1 Observations

The following observations are made from Table 4.6:

i. More male prefer speaking in Kiswahili than females while at home. Many of them may be married to spouses who do not speak their ethnic languages. Males may also want to use a language that does not portray them as tribal; and

ii. More female prefer Kikuyu, Kamba and Meru at home than their male counterparts. This can be explained by the fact that since all three languages originate from the same sub-families, most women would like to identify themselves with Kikuyu which is the language of the catchment area and therefore spoken by many people.
It is concluded that the males are more conservative as they tend to shift from their local dialect and use Kiswahili in their homes while females are more flexible in language use. Females were also seen to be loyal to their ethnic languages than males. This is further seen as a strategy used by females to impart local dialects (mother tongue) to their children.

4.6.4 The Workplace

Workplace in this study is used to mean the area of duty where the worker is assigned and where he spends most of his working hours. In the Estate, most of the workers report to their supervisors who then reports to the manager. The supervisors are therefore workers immediate bosses while the manager is the overall boss in the Estate.

4.6.4.1 Language used when speaking to managers

Most of the respondents (71.5%) reported that they prefer communicating to the manager in Kiswahili more than any other language. Kikuyu was the second most preferred language as indicated by 26.5% of the respondents while English was only used by 2% of the respondents. The low levels of use of the English language while communicating to managers can be attributed to the low levels of education for the majority of the workers. When asked why one would prefer to speak to a Kikuyu manager in Kikuyu language, 70% of all the cases\(^1\) were of the opinion that this would make them friendly to the manager while 47.5% of all the cases indicated this would be done for prestige. Only 5.3% of the respondents said that this would be used to exclude other people (Figure 4.4).

---

\(^1\) Cases imply the total responses received. It is possible for one respondent to give more than 1 response. The percentages therefore may add to more than 100%. For this particular case, there were 50 respondents but 85 responses received meaning that some respondents gave more than one reason for talking to a Kikuyu manager in Kikuyu.
Figure 4.4: The first common language used by respondent when speaking to the manager

Source: Survey data, 2011

4.6.4.1.1 Observations

From Figure 4.4, it is observed that:

i. Majority of the people prefer to speak to the manager in Kiswahili. Kiswahili is one of the Kenya’s official and national languages. It is therefore very appropriate for use when communicating to the manager as a person in authority. The use of Kiswahili by Kikuyu speakers when speaking to the manager can be used to index distance and respect to a person of authority;

ii. The 26% of the speakers who prefer to speak to the manager in Kikuyu language may do so as a convergence strategy when they want to seek favours, or to portray ethnic solidarity; and
iii. For the few who use English when communicating to the manager, they might do so to index their level of education. Such a person is likely to be a supervisor or a person who works in the office.

It is concluded that being the national and one of the official languages of Kenya, the use of Kiswahili at the work place was appropriate. It is a neutral language and it also index national solidarity. It is a suitable language in a multilingual community like Mchana. A manager is a very senior person in the Estate. He has to use a language that index power and position. The workers also use Kiswahili when speaking to the manager as a sign of respect. The few people who speak to the manager in Kikuyu or English are probably his friends.

4.6.4.2 Age variable when speaking to the manager

Majority of the respondents in all categories reported to use Kiswahili more often than any other language when speaking to the manager. However, the third category uses Kikuyu more often than all the other categories while a few people in second category use English while communicating with the manager.

Table 4.7: The first most common language used by the respondent when speaking to the manager

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Category</th>
<th>Kiswahili</th>
<th>English</th>
<th>Kikuyu</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20-29</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-39</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-49</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-59</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Survey data, 2011
4.6.4.2.1 Observations

From Table 4.7, it is observed that:

i. Most young people (20 – 29 years) prefer to speak to the manager in Kiswahili. This is because the manager might be older than them and therefore in an age where he commands respect from the young;

ii. The middle aged group (30 – 39 and 40 – 49 years) sometimes uses English or Kikuyu to communicate to the manager. This might be people of almost the same age bracket with the manager and hence are free with him; and

iii. Older people (50 – 59 years) use Kiswahili as a language of respect because of their difference in age.

It is concluded that people of the same age are free with each other and hence can use a language that index age solidarity. This explains the use of English and Kikuyu by the second and third category. People with a wider gap in age are less free with each other hence are likely to use a language that portrays respect to each other. This explains why the younger and older people prefer to communicate to the manager in Kiswahili.

4.6.4.3 Gender variable when speaking to the manager

Both genders prefer to use Kiswahili when speaking to the manager. The few who speak to the manager in English are male while some females did not indicate any language.
Table 4.8: Most common languages used by respondent when speaking to the manager

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language spoken to manager</th>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Respondent's Gender</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kiswahili</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% of Total</td>
<td>40.5%</td>
<td>15.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% of Total</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
<td>.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kikuyu</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% of Total</td>
<td>31.0%</td>
<td>9.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Count | 63 | 21 | 84
% of Total  | 75.0% | 25.0% | 100.0%

Source: Survey data, 2011

4.6.4.3.1 Observations

From Table 4.8, it is observed that:

1. Both genders prefer to use Kiswahili when communicating to the manager more often than any other language. This is because Kiswahili is a national and official language in Kenya; and

2. That the few people who use English are male (3.6%). This indicates that most of the people who work in the offices are male.

It was concluded that the people who hold senior position in the Estate are male. This contravenes the government policy of affirmative action.

4.6.4.4 Ethnicity variable when speaking to the manager

Majority of Kikuyu, Kamba and Meru speakers prefer to speak to the manager in Kikuyu while all the Luo and Luhya speakers prefer to use Kiswahili.
Table 4.9: The first common language used when speaking to the manager

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Valid</th>
<th>Kiswahili</th>
<th>English</th>
<th>Kikuyu</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kikuyu</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luo</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luyha</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kamba</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meru</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>35</strong></td>
<td><strong>1</strong></td>
<td><strong>13</strong></td>
<td><strong>49</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Survey data, 2011*

4.6.4.4.1 Observations

From Table 4.9, it is observed that:

i. Majority of the Kikuyu, Kamba and Meru speakers prefer to communicate to the manager in Kikuyu. This might be a convergence strategy that they use in order to help them gain favors or to index ethnic identity which might bring about special privileges; and

ii. All Luo and Luhya speakers prefer to use Kiswahili when communicating to the manager. This might be a strategy to show formality and respect to the manager who comes from another community.

It was concluded that Kamba and Meru speakers switch to Kikuyu language when communicating to the manager. This is a convergent strategy that these speakers employ in order to get favors like promotion or deployment. The use of Kiswahili by Luo and Luhya speakers is a strategy of portraying formality and respect. Although some can speak Kikuyu language in other domains, one cannot be viewed positively if he speaks broken Kikuyu to the manager.
4.6.4.2 Supervisors

Majority of the respondents reported to use Kiswahili when speaking to the supervisors. Very few use ethnic languages. The two ethnic languages used are Kikuyu and Luhya.

**Figure 4.5: Most common language used when speaking to a supervisor**

![Pie chart showing language usage](image)

*Source: Survey data, 2011*

4.6.4.2.1 Observations

The following observations are made from Figure 4.5:

i. Most of the respondents speak to the supervisors in Kiswahili. This can be used to index distance because the supervisors are the worker’s immediate bosses. This makes them to be in a position of authority. Kiswahili can also be used as a convergent strategy because it is a neutral language; and

ii. The few people who communicate to the supervisors in either Kikuyu or Luhya may be portraying ethnic solidarity. They might also be the supervisors’ friends who don’t
fear speaking to the supervisors in their own ethnic languages. Some supervisors are Kikuyus while others are Luhyas.

It is concluded that just like with the manager, a supervisor is also a senior person because he is the worker’s immediate boss and hence should also be addressed in an official language. Kiswahili is also appropriate because it is a neutral language and as we have seen earlier is spoken by everyone in the Estate unlike English which is spoken by only a few who are educated.

4.6.4.2.2 Ethnicity variable when speaking to the supervisor

Unlike with the manager, majority of the respondents in all ethnic groups reported to speak to the supervisors in Kiswahili. Very few use Kikuyu or Luhya languages.

Table 4.10: The first common language used when speaking to the supervisor

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Valid</th>
<th>Kiswahili</th>
<th>Kikuyu</th>
<th>Luhya</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kikuyu</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luo</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luyha</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kamba</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meru</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Survey data, 2011

4.6.4.2.2.1 Observations

From Table 4.10, it is observed that:

(i.) Majority of the respondents from all ethnic communities speak to the supervisors in Kiswahili. This might be because as their immediate boss, supervisors command a lot of fear and respect from the workers.
Only a few people speak to the supervisor in either Luhya or Kikuyu. This shows that the supervisors in the estate are from the two ethnic communities.

It is concluded that since supervisors are workers immediate bosses, they are feared even by their own kinsmen hence the use of Kiswahili by majority of the people. It is also a divergent strategy that supervisors may use in order to maintain distance. The few people who speak to the supervisors using their ethnic languages are probably their friends.

4.6.5 Languages used when speaking to friends

Kiswahili was the most preferred language while communicating to friends as indicated by 53% followed by Kikuyu with 37%. This might be because Kiswahili symbolizes national solidarity. Kikuyu on the other hand is the language of the catchment area. This means that even those who are non-Kikuyu speakers strive to communicate in the language to gain social identity and approval. Most people however said that they prefer to communicate to members of their ethnic communities in their first language (L1). Only a minimum number of respondents (2%) used English language while communication to friends.
From Figure 4.6, it is observed that:

i. Most people use Kiswahili in the estate to speak to their friends. Friends in this case are people who belong to one’s ethnic community and others from different ethnic communities. Kiswahili in this case is used as an emblem of national solidarity;

ii. The use of Kikuyu by 37% as a language of socialization shows that being the language of the catchment area; many people try at least to know the language in order not to be from others while they speak. They can also strive to communicate in Kikuyu in order to gain social identity and approval;

iii. Ethnic languages are used when speaking to friends. This means that many people speak to friends who are members of their ethnic group in their L1. They do this to index ethnic solidarity;

iv. Meru and Luo speakers do not use their own language when communicating with their friends. As we have seen earlier, these speakers are minority. They may not have
friends who speak their own ethnic language. They are therefore forced to use other
languages; and

v. Only a minimum number of respondents (2%) use English when communicating to
friends. These are probably senior workers because they are more educated.

It is concluded that people in the Estate have friends from different ethnic groups. Kiswahili is
the obvious choice in a situation where one is unable to speak the language of the hearer.
Other people shift to Kikuyu which is the language of the catchment area hence spoken by
many people.

4.6.5.2 Age variable when speaking to friends

All age categories use Kiswahili when communicating with friends. There is a big shift to
Kikuyu language and few people speak Kamba, Luhya and English. Meru and Luo languages
are missing. The middle aged group (Category 3) speaks the highest number of ethnic
languages.

Table 4.11: The first common language used when speaking to friends

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Category</th>
<th>Kiswahili</th>
<th>English</th>
<th>Kikuyu</th>
<th>Luyha</th>
<th>Kamba</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20-29</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-39</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-49</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-59</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>26</strong></td>
<td><strong>1</strong></td>
<td><strong>18</strong></td>
<td><strong>2</strong></td>
<td><strong>2</strong></td>
<td><strong>49</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Survey data, 2011*
4.6.5.2.1 Observations

From Table 4.11, it is observed that:

All age categories except category 4 (50 to 59 years) uses both Kiswahili and Kikuyu when communicating to friends. As we have seen, these are the language that most people speak in the estate.

(i.) Although they can speak very many languages, older people, (50 to 59 years) prefer to speak to their friends in Kiswahili. This is a convergent strategy because these old people would like to accommodate to all people irrespective of their ethnicity, age or gender.

(ii.) Category 3, (40 to 49 years) speaks the highest number of ethnic languages when communicating with friends. Few in this category also use English. This is because most people in this category are raising their families and hence they are very aggressive in looking for jobs, thus it is possible that majority of workers in the estate (including office workers) belong to this age bracket.

It is concluded that the third category is the most flexible of all. They are the most convergent as they try to communicate in the language of the hearer. They are also the most educated since this is the only category that speaks English with their friends. The senior workers probably belong to this category.

4.6.5.3 Ethnicity variable when speaking to friends

Majority of Kikuyu and Meru speakers prefer to speak to their friends in Kikuyu while the majority of Luhya and Luo speakers prefer to speak to their friends in Kiswahili.
Table 4.12: The first common language used by respondent when speaking to friends

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Valid</th>
<th>Kiswahili</th>
<th>English</th>
<th>Kikuyu</th>
<th>Luyha</th>
<th>Kamba</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kikuyu</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luo</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luyha</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kamba</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meru</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Survey data, 2011

4.6.5.3.1 Observations

From Table 4.12, it is observed that:

i. Unlike other ethnic communities, Kikuyu and Meru speakers prefer to communicate to their friends in Kikuyu more often than any other language. The reason for this may be that because Kikuyu is spoken by many people in the estate, they see no reason to speak in another language. Another reason is assertiveness. Kikuyu speakers believe that other ethnic groups should learn Kikuyu and not the other way round.

ii. Meru speakers show the highest shift when communicating to friends. This is probably because they would like to be identified with the Kikuyu. Being minority, they may also not have many friends from their own community.

iii. Luo and Meru speakers do not use their ethnic languages when speaking to friends. It is possible that most of their friends belong to other language communities. This forces them to switch to those other languages.

It is concluded that different language speakers in the estate have friends who are either Kikuyu speakers or who have learnt to speak Kikuyu. This explains why Kikuyu is spoken so much in the Estate. People from other ethnic communities are forced by circumstances to learn it in order to gain social identity and approval.
4.6.6 Languages used when speaking to shopkeepers

Kiswahili and Kikuyu were the most common codes used by the respondents when speaking to the shopkeeper at 52% and 46%. When asked why one would prefer to speak in Kikuyu to a Kikuyu shopkeeper, 82% revealed that this would make one to look friendly to the shopkeeper. Other important reasons were: for prestige, to get favors, for better understanding and to exclude other people in that order.

Figure 4.7: Most common language used when speaking to the shopkeeper

![Pie chart showing language usage]

Source: Survey data, 2011

4.6.6.1 Observations

From Figure 4.7, it is observed that:

i. From the three languages used when communicating to the shopkeeper, it is possible that shopkeepers in the estate are either Kikuyu or Meru speakers. People from other
ethnic groups converge to Meru to in the same way as they do regarding the Kikuyu shopkeeper; and

ii. When speaking to the shopkeeper, the percentage of use of Kikuyu language shot to 46% from 26% in figure 4.1. This means that other language speakers switch to Kikuyu when speaking to the shopkeeper.

It is concluded that the shopkeepers in the Estate are mostly Kikuyu speakers and a few Meru speakers. Other language speakers converge to these two languages in order to access better services, get favors or get information on some products. When one is unable to speak the two ethnic languages, then Kiswahili as a national language becomes the obvious choice.

4.6.6.2 Age variable when speaking to the shopkeeper

The first and the third age categories prefer to speak to the shopkeeper in Kikuyu more often than in Kiswahili while the other two categories prefer to use Kiswahili.

Table 4.13: The first common language when speaking to a shopkeeper

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Category</th>
<th>Kiswahili</th>
<th>Kikuyu</th>
<th>Meru</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20-29</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-39</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-49</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-59</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>26</strong></td>
<td><strong>23</strong></td>
<td><strong>1</strong></td>
<td><strong>50</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Survey data, 2011*
4.6.6.2.1 Observations

From Table 4.13, the following observations are made:

i. Age category 1 and 3 use Kikuyu more than Kiswahili when communicating with the shopkeeper. They might do so in order to access better services and favours; including discounts and after sale services;

ii. Elderly people (category 4) do not use ethnic languages when communicating to the shopkeeper even though they can speak them. The use of Kiswahili can be a strategy that they use to command respect from the shopkeepers who might be younger than them.

iii. Only categories 3 use Meru when communicating with the shopkeeper. The shopkeeper might be of the same age bracket as them.

It is concluded that all age categories except the fourth one switch to the language of the seller in order to access better services and also to get favours. The fourth category uses Kiswahili in order to command respect from the seller. This could make them access faster services because of their age.

4.6.7 Languages spoken in market places

Kiswahili was the most common language of communication in the market (59%). Kikuyu on the other hand registers 41% of the respondents. It is obvious that most of the market traders in the area are Kikuyu speakers because Kikuyu is the language of the catchment area.

52
4.6.7.1 Observations

From Figure 4.8, it is observed that:

i. Most of the respondents use Kiswahili at the market. The reason for this may be that most of those who reside within the estate are non-Kikuyu. Kiswahili as a neutral language is the most appropriate when speaking to strangers. Kiswahili is also a language of trade in Kenya hence it is the most appropriate language in such a multilingual environment; and

ii. It is suggestive that most of the traders at the market are Kikuyu speakers. Other ethnic communities switch to Kikuyu at the market. This is because buyers are likely to get a better deal if they bargain in the language of the trader.
It is concluded that in any business, the buyer and the seller have to negotiate the price. A buyer will therefore use a language that will help him get a better deal. Bargaining in the seller's L1 will make the buyer to be viewed favorably and make him get a price reduction.

4.6.7.2 Age variable in the market

While all the other categories prefer to speak Kiswahili more often in the market, the middle aged (Category 3) prefer to speak Kikuyu more than Kiswahili.

Figure 4.9: The most common language when speaking in the market

Source: Survey data, 2011

4.6.7.2.1 Observations

From Figure 4.9, it is observed that:

i. While all the other age categories use Kiswahili more often than any other language at the market, the middle aged group (40 to 49 years) uses Kikuyu language more often than Kiswahili. This is the group with growing up children who need a lot of
food. They therefore converge to the language the seller in order to get favours in terms of price reduction;

ii. Sellers in the market are more probably in this age category (40 to 49 years). People of the same age group are more likely to use a language that index age group solidarity and identity; and

iii. The elderly (50 to 59 years) use only Kiswahili in the market. We have seen that although they can speak many languages, they prefer a language that everybody understands. In any case Kiswahili is the expected language of trade in Kenya.

It is concluded that the third category is more converging. One reason for this is that this is the category of married people with growing up children who need a lot of food. They therefore go to the market most often they need to bargain and negotiate the prices. One can get a better deal if he can speak the language of the seller.

4.6.7.3 Ethnicity Variable in the Market

While all the other communities prefer to use Kiswahili more often in the market the Kikuyu speakers prefer to use their own language.

Table 4.14: The most common Language used by respondent when speaking in the market

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Valid</th>
<th>Kiswahili</th>
<th>Kikuyu</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kikuyu</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luo</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luo</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kamba</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meru</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Survey data, 2011
4.6.7.3.1 Observations

From Table 4.14, it is observed that:

i. While all other ethnic groups use Kiswahili more often than any other language at the market, almost all Kikuyu speakers reported to use their own ethnic language more often than any other language; and

ii. Although speak Kiswahili more often than any other language at the market, all the other ethnic groups sometimes converge to Kikuyu.

It is concluded that Kikuyu speakers use their own ethnic language in the market to index ethnic identity and solidarity. This helps them get more favours in terms of price reduction. Other ethnic groups shift to Kikuyu language. This is in line with the social exchange theory which says that interlocutors incur certain costs in order to obtain potential rewards. Rewards in the market include reduction in prices, getting free samples and advice on where to access the best goods and services.

4.6.8 Language used while speaking in church

This data is for Christians and church here refers to such denominations as Catholic, P.C.E.A, Anglican, Pentecostal and Evangelical churches. At the Church, 70% of the respondents indicated that Kiswahili is the most popular language in the church. Other ethnic codes such as Kikuyu, Luhya, Luo and Kamba were also reported to be used in the church although with a very small percentage.
4.6.8.1 Observations

From Figure 4.10, it is observed that:

i. The use of Kikuyu language has reduced significantly. Most churches use Kiswahili in order to accommodate people from all ethnic groups, Kikuyu speakers included;

ii. Many ethnic languages are reported to be used in the church although in small percentage. This shows that there are people from various ethnic communities who have established their own churches in the Estate; and

iii. Established churches like the Catholic, P.C.E.A and Anglican are more likely to use Kiswahili than ethnic language because they are old and they have more members of the congregation than Evangelical and Pentecostal churches.
4.6.8.2.1 Observations

From Figure 4.11 above, it is observed that:

i. Both genders use Kiswahili more often than any other language at the church. Church is a place where everybody should feel at home regardless of one’s gender, ethnicity or class. Kiswahili as a national language is the most appropriate in such a multilingual setting.

ii. There is a high percentage of missing systems in the table (20.7%) and all of them are in the frequency of the males.

It was concluded that Kiswahili as a national language creates a sense brotherhood and national solidarity. It is very appropriate for use at the church. The high percentage of missing systems indicates that there are many males who do not go to the church. This reflects the situation in the wider society. There are many African Men who believe that it is only women and children who are supposed to go to the church and not them.

4.6.9 Conclusions

The following conclusions are made:

i. M.C.E is a multilingual community. People in the Estate come from different regions in the county and thus speak different ethnic languages depending on the region where an individual comes from;

ii. Most of the workers in the estate are multilingual. Two codes were found to be the minimum number of code spoken by an individual speaker and eight codes were found to be the maximum. The speakers competence varied from one code to another;
iii. Domains were found to influence the choice of codes. Some codes were found to be used more in some domains and less in others;

iv. Kiswahili was found to be the most common code in the estate. 100% of the cases reported to speak Kiswahili, Kikuyu language was the second most common code with 92% of the cases reporting to speak it. Kamba and Meru were used by minority speakers while Embu, Kisii Giriama and Kalenjin were spoken as second language and had no native speakers in the estate;

v. When looked in terms of age, the elderly (Category 4) were found to be more rigid. They preferred to use Kiswahili almost all the domains instead of their ethnic languages. Middle age groups, (Categories 2 and 3) were found to be more flexible. They used ethnic languages more often than the other categories and they also showed the highest shift towards other languages;

vi. Males were seen to speak more codes than females. This was attributed to the fact that males travel more widely than females and thus they acquire more codes in the process of their interaction. The females were found to be more converging. They were more flexible in language use and were seen to use ethnic languages more often than the males; and

vii. Kikuyu speakers exhibit a lot of ethnicity within the Estate. They preferred to speak their own ethnic language in almost all the domains. This is a divergent strategy they use in order to maintain their ethnic distinctiveness and group identity.
4.7 Strategies Adopted in Communication in Mchana

This section deals with techniques employed by the speakers to express their meaning in the target language. It seeks to investigate the fourth objective of the study which looks into the strategies speakers in Mchana employ when speaking a non-native target language. It was observed that although most people in Mchana could speak more than one language, the level of competence varied greatly from one language to another. Spolsky (1998) defines a bilingual as a person who has some functional ability in a second language. This may vary from limited ability in one or more domains, to a very strong command of both languages (which is sometimes called balanced bilingualism).

Typically multilinguals have varying degrees of command of different repertoires. The difference in competences in the various languages might range from command of a few lexical items, formulaic expressions such as greetings and rudimentary conversational skills all the way to excellent command of the grammar and vocabulary and specialized registers and styles (Wardhaugh, 2010). Thus, different respondents in Mchana had different levels of competence in different languages. When they were tape recorded speaking other target languages apart from their L1s, they were found to use the following strategies.

4.7.1 Mastery of a language

This is a strategy that many workers in the estate have adopted. It was very interesting for the researcher to find that many people are competent in more than one ethnic language such that when he or she speaks one has no doubt that he or she belongs to that community of the language that he or she is speaking. This is almost a case of balanced bilinguals as can be illustrated by speaker in the following conversation.
A. (Mwanamke anaitwa aje kwa Kikuyu)

(what do you call a woman in Kikuyu?)

B. Mutumia (Woman)

A. Msichana anaitwa aje kwa Kikuyu?

(Girl is called what in Kikuyu?)

B. Muiritu (girl)

A. Na ukisema utaenda kesho

(And if you say you will go tomorrow?)

B. Ngathii ruciu

(I will go tomorrow)

A. Na kwa kiluo mvulana anaitwa aje?

(And in Luo what do you call a boy?)

B. Wuoi (boy)

A. Msichana (a girl?)

B. Nyako (girl)

A. Mwanamke? (A woman?)

B. Thako (Woman)

A. 'Na ukisema “nitaenda kesho” kwa kijaluo?

(And if you say “I will go tomorrow” in Luo?)

B. Abirwo thii (I will go tomorrow)

The respondent in the above conversation is a Luhya man who is very competent in both Kikuyu and Luo languages such that one would not notice any difference in speech between him and the native speakers of the language.
4.7.2 Pointing

The researcher identified pointing as a strategy used by the speaker to identify the object when they are unable to get the right word for it in that language.

A. *Na viatu vyenye umevaa*

(And the shoes that you are wearing?)

B. *Ino? (Pointing) kwa Kikuyu? Hapo ndipo nashidwa kidogo*

(This? (Pointing at his shoe) That is where I have a little difficulty)

The speaker is a Luhya who said that he could speak Kikuyu. When he is told to give the Kikuyu name for shoes, he points at his shoes to ask the interviewer whether it is the object she was referring to.

4.7.3 Approximation

This is where the speaker uses a single target language vocabulary item or structure which he knows is not correct but which shares enough semantic features in common with the desired item to satisfy the speaker.

A. *Na gari Kama hii (pointing to a car) kwa kijaluo?*

(And a vehicle like this (pointing to a car) in Luo?)

B. *Kwa kijaluo gari kama hii (pointing to a car) ni tinga*

(In Luo a vehicle like this one (pointing to a car) is tractor)

The speaker who is a Luhya calls a car a tractor because he knows that a car and a tractor share so many features (They are both automobiles) and therefore the listener will decipher the identified object even if the word is not correct.
4.7.4 Simplification

When speaking a non-native target language, speakers employed a lot of simplification of language in order to enable them communicate the meaning without paying any attention to the rules of grammar. When compared the standard languages, their non-native target languages were found to exhibit the following characteristics.

4.7.4.1 Lack of concord in number

A: Mwanamme anaitwa aje kwa Kiluhy?  
(What do you call a man in Luhya?)

B: Kwa kiluhy?... Unajua kiluhy ni mara mingi  
(in Luhya?...you know Luhya has many dialects)

The speaker wants to explain to the interviewer that there are many varieties of Luhya but uses a singular subject (kiluhy) with a plural quantifier (mingi)

4.7.4.2 Lack of concord in gender

A: Mwanamme anaitwa aje kwa Kikuyu?  
(What do you call man in Kikuyu?)

B: Kikuyu inaita (mwanamme) muthuri  
(Kikuyu calls (man) muthuri)

Kikuyu as a language has been personified to mean that it is the language that calls the man at name and not Kikuyu speakers.

4.7.4.3 Lack of concord in tense

A: Na ukihema utaenda kesho?  
(What if you will go tomorrow?)
B: Ninguthii ruciu – Gikuyu

(I will go (immediate future) tomorrow)

Gikuyu has immediate and remote future. The sentence therefore should have been in the remote future instead of immediate future. It should have been:

Ningathi ruciu (I will go (remote future) tomorrow)

4.7.4.4 Use of wrong demonstrative.

Some speakers were seen not to apply the correct rules when using the demonstratives in the target language. For example a speaker would say *Iratu ino.* (This shoes) when talking about his shoes. In such a case, he has used a plural subject (*iratu*) with a singular demonstrative (*ino*). The speaker should have instead said *iratu ici* (These shoes).

Another speaker while introducing her husband said *Hii ndiyo bwana yangu* (This (for inanimate object) is my husband). She does not know that Kiswahili has many demonstratives and their use depend on whether the object is human or non-human. She should instead have said: *Huyu ndiye bwana yangu* (This is my husband).

4.7.5 Over-generalization

This is the application of a rule of the target language to inappropriate language forms or context. For example when a Luo speaker is asked how he greets people in Meru, he says *ni kwega* (it is fine) instead *wi mwega* (are you fine) This is because he thinks that Kikuyu and Kimeru are very close. When asked how he greets his Kikuyu wife in the morning a Luo speaker replied *ni kwega* (it is fine) instead of *wi mwega* (are you fine?).
4.7.6 Transfer from the speakers L1

This refers to the type of negative transfer from the speakers L1 to the target language resulting in utterances that are not just inappropriate but actually incorrect by native standard. When a Kikuyu speaker is asked what a woman is called in Kikamba she says *Kibeti* (Woman). In Kikamba, the word *Kiveti* means a woman. *Kibeti* in Kikuyu language is a bag.

4.7.7 Code switching

Code switching was found to be a very common strategy in Mchana. Speakers in the Estate are able to switch from one language to another to negotiate their social identities and their rights and obligations with each other. They will usually assess the relative cost and gains of the interaction as seen in their motivation by the type of codes they use.

A: *Welcome, hii ndio boma (Calling out) nyina wa Njeri, ndurehere mugeni giti.*

(Welcome, this is home (calling out) *Mama* Njeri, bring a seat for the visitor.)

The speaker uses English because he feels that the researcher is a learned person, then switches to Kiswahili which he is more comfortable with as a national language. He speaks to his wife in Kikuyu because it is the language they use at home.

4.7.8 Conclusion

Speakers in Mchana were seen to adopt some linguistic strategies when speaking a non-native target language. The above strategies should not be seen as errors by the native speakers but as creative use of language that the speaker employs when he is faced with some difficulties in the target language. As Hymes (1971) emphasizes in E.O.S, what a language is cannot be separated from how and why it is used and that considerations of use are often
prerequisite to recognition and understanding of much of linguistic form. These linguistic strategies therefore are means that the speaker uses to achieve his goal of passing the message.
CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This study focused on communication strategies in a multilingual community. It was based in Mchana Coffee Estate in Kiambu County. The objectives of the study were: to find out what codes are spoken in Mchana, whether domains influence the choice of codes, the influence of variables of age, gender and ethnicity on the choice of codes in different domains and finally to discuss the linguistic strategies employed by speakers in Mchana when speaking a non-native target language. This chapter therefore presents a summary of the major findings, the implications of the findings and the recommendations. It has also highlighted the areas that require further research.

5.2 Summary and conclusion

The Estate was found to have a complex linguistic diversity. A total of eleven codes were found to be spoken in Mchana. Most of the respondents were found to speak a mean of five codes with two codes being the least spoken and eight codes being the highest number of codes spoken by an individual respondent (Figure 4.2). It was however noted that their competence in their use of different codes varied from one code to another.

Kiswahili was the most common code with 100% of the respondents reporting to speak it. Kikuyu was the second most common code with 92% of the respondents. The least common codes were Embu, Kisii, Giriama and Kalenjin which tied at 2% (Figure 4.2).

It was also observed that people in the Estate use different codes in different domains. Many people were found to use their ethnic languages at home although there were some who used
Kiswahili (Figure 4.3). At the workplace, majority of the respondents reported to speak to the manager and supervisors in Kiswahili. It was further observed that few people use English and ethnic languages to speak to the manager and supervisors (Figure 4.4 and 4.6). While speaking to their friends, many people reported to use Kiswahili, but also acknowledged using ethnic language where their friends come from the same community.

Kiswahili and Kikuyu codes almost tallied in their use when speaking to the shopkeeper (Figure 4.8). It was noted that many people shifted to Kikuyu or Meru language when speaking to the shopkeeper in order to get some favours or to access services. While Kiswahili and Kikuyu were found to be the common codes at the market, the use of Kiswahili increased significantly in the church (Figure 4.8). The church was found to accommodate people from different communities and therefore Kiswahili as a neutral language was the most appropriate.

When it comes to sociolinguistic variable of age, elderly people were found to be more conservative. They preferred to speak Kiswahili more often although they are the people who could speak majority of the codes. The middle aged group (40 to 49 years) was found to be more converging. They were the most flexible and they used ethnic languages more than the others in the various domains (Table 4.1).

In the variable gender, males were found to speak more codes than females. The females were however, found to converge more than males. They were more flexible in language use and they could easily switch to different codes to accommodate other speakers (Table 4.3).

On the variable of ethnicity Luhya speakers were found to be the majority in the Estate. Kikuyu speakers were found to use their own ethnic language more often than any other ethnic group in all the domains except the church. While Kikuyu, Embu and Meru speakers
reported to use their own ethnic languages more often at home, Luo and luhya speakers preferred to use Kiswahili (Table 4.5). It was interesting to note that many children in the Estate were more fluent in Kikuyu than their own ethnic languages. This was attributed to lack of exposure of their own ethnic languages at home.

Speakers were seen to adopt some strategies in communicating in a target language different form their language. Multilingualism was found to be one such strategy. It was observed that most people could speak more than one language. Speakers used different languages depending on their interlocutors. This is in line with similarity attraction theory which states that when our attitudes and beliefs are more similar to those of others, we are more likely to be attracted to them. Speakers will therefore speak in a certain target language when they desire social integration and approval. Speakers were also seen to code switch to negotiate their social identities and obligation sets with each other. Speakers were seen to switch to particular codes when they wished to achieve integration, approval or to be perceived favourably. Other strategies employed by speakers in the Estate include: pointing, approximation, simplification, overgeneralization and transfer from the speakers LI (4.6).

5.3 Implications

Human beings need to communicate with each other. The speaker should identify the language which is convenient for him and the hearer. This is important because language does not just communicate some messages but it also helps to reduce (or increase) social distance between the interlocutor and the hearer. Multilingualism is a convergence strategy employed by speakers when they desire social integration and approval. A speaker will speak the language of the listener in order to increase his attraction to the listener.
As demonstrated by the findings some codes are more appropriate than others in particular domains it is therefore very important for a speaker to pick the correct choice from his repertoire. Speakers are also forced to learn other codes as a mean of security and survival. As demonstrated by the findings, most of the senior officers in the Estate come from one linguistic community. In order to get some favours and relate well with the officers, one has to learn their language. The same applies when one wants to access services at the shop and in the market.

When a speaker has passed a message, he has communicated. Making errors in grammar during communication should not be viewed negatively. A speaker should therefore not feel embarrassed when he or she is unable to speak fluently in the target language. Instead, the little effort he or she makes should be appreciated.

5.4 Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are made:

i. Knowledge of many codes is a positive tool of enhancing solidarity. Solidarity or a common group membership is an important social force and has a major impact on language (Spoisky B, 1998). The solidarity relations (the claim that we belong to the same group), underlie the notion of accommodation. By choosing the form of language associated with a specific group, we are making a claim to be counted as members of that group;

ii. In a multilingual setting, people should be encouraged to learn to speak many codes in order to cultivate unity, peaceful co-existence and intimate interaction. This is because although they come from different linguistic background, they have to interact with one another. As we have seen before, man is a social being and no one
is self-sufficient. When people communicate in the same language, whether it is the national language, their LI or the LI of one of them, they bring about cohesion in the society and are also able to relate intimately;

iii. Various codes have different social and symbolic functions and one of the common ways of identifying a person is by his or her language. Because language is inherently involved in socialization, social group whose language you speak is an important identity group for you. Knowledge of many languages is a positive tool in solving economic, political and social misunderstanding;

iv. Different codes are best suited for different domains. Speakers have a repertoire of domain related rules of language choice. It is therefore recommended that the interlocutor picks from his repertoire the most suitable code and switch to it as determined by the situation; and

v. When an interlocutor wishes to communicate in a target language, he should not shy away from using any strategy in order to communicate his meaning. Even if he encounters some problem or make some grammatical errors, he should know that the end justifies the means.

5.4.1 To language planners

i. Kiswahili should be upheld as a national language because indexes national solidarity and creates a sense of brotherhood;

ii. People should be encouraged to study other ethnic languages. As we have seen this can foster peaceful co-existence among different groups of people. This point is recognized in the new constitution but it is yet to be put into practice. This study is the closest that we can come to realizing the importance of
learning the various ethnic languages in Kenya. The government should set up centers where people are taught these languages; and

iii. Local languages should be recognized and given government support. This is because they contribute positively to the economic and social welfare of the people as the case of Mchana has demonstrated.

5.5 Areas for further research

The present study has focused on communication in a multilingual setting. It was concerned with language use and mechanism of communicating the message in the target language. Studies can be carried out on accommodation of different linguistic communities in phonological, lexical and syntactic level. Studies on language shift, borrowing and maintenance by different communities would also yield very interesting insights.


Waweru, M., (2003). Lexical and Phonological error in spoken English Language of Pre-
school Teachers in Classrooms in Kasarani Division. Unpublished Thesis. Kenyatta
University.

Blackwell publishers.
APPENDIX A: QUESTIONNAIRE

KENYATTA UNIVERSITY

TOPIC: COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES IN A MULTILINGUAL SOCIETY

RESEARCH AREA: KIAMBU

RESEARCH SITE: MCHANA COFFEE ESTATE

Questionnaire No: ----------------------------------

Date: -------------------------------------------------------

Name of Interviewer: --------------------------------------

A. Respondents background Information

1. Name --------------------------------------------------

2. Worker's Village --------------------------------------

3. Mobile No: -------------------------------------------

4. Age---------------------- years

5. Gender: 1 = Male 2 = Female

6. Education Level: 1 = None 2 = Lower Primary 3 = Upper Primary
   4 = Secondary 5 = College 6 = University

7. Main area of duty
   1 = Manager 2 = Supervisor 3 = Farm worker 4 = Watch man
   5 = Trader 6 = Any other (Specify) ------------------------

8. Period of stay in Mchana --------- years
B. Linguistics Information

9. Which is your first language

10. (a) How many languages do you speak

(b) Please specify the languages you speak (in order of preference)

1. 
2. 
3. 
4. 
5. 
6. 

11. Which language/s do you commonly use at home (rank starting with the most common)

1. 
2. 
3. 

12. Which language/s do you use when speaking to: (rank starting with the most common)

(a) Manager

i. 
ii. 
iii. 

(b) Supervisor

i. 
ii. 
13. What makes you change from using one language to that of the hearer? (Rank 1 – 5, 1 being most important)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Rank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To look friendly to the hearer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To get some favours</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To make the hearer understand well what you are saying</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To exclude other people</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For prestige</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any other (specify)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
14. (a) Why would you speak to a Kikuyu manager in Kikuyu? Rank 1 – 5, 1 being most important)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Rank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To look friendly to the manager</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To get some favours</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To be assisted</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To make the hearer understand well what you are saying</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To exclude other people</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For prestige</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any other (specify)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(b) If yes, which are the languages (list in order of most commonly spoken)

i. 

ii. 

iii. 

C. ORAL INTERVIEW GUIDE

1. What is the name of the following in the various languages you speak? (indicate the language in the provided space)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Language 1</th>
<th>Language 2</th>
<th>Language 3</th>
<th>Language 4</th>
<th>Language 5</th>
<th>Language 6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Man</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Woman</td>
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<td>Boy</td>
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<td>Girl</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tree</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shoes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Translate the following sentences in each of the ethnic languages you speak?

(a) The book is on the table
(b) These women will go to town tomorrow

(c) I bought a new handbag

3. Please say what you like about Mchana coffee estate in a language other than your first

**APPENDIX B: THE RESPONDENT’S MAIN AREA OF DUTY**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Valid</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
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