LEXICAL VARIATION AND CHANGE IN KIIMENTI NOUNS AS SPOKEN IN MERU COUNTY, KENYA.

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C50/CE/14016/09

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

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DECLARATION

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

Signature  

Date 1/8/2013

Petronilla M. Gitonga

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

Signature  

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ABSTRACT

The proposed study will seek to investigate lexical variation and change in Kimeru language. In particular, it will focus on lexical variation and change in the Imenti dialect of the Kimeru language. It will seek to establish the nature of lexical variation and change both regionally and in correlation with the social aspects of age, gender and rural-urban-dichotomy. It is the assumption of many a sociolinguist, that lexical variation is significant in marking regional but not social differences. Due to this, most social variation studies have ignored the lexical aspect and this study seeks to fill this gap. A sample of 48 informants will be selected from the study area which comprises of Imenti North, Imenti South, Meru Central and Buuri Districts in Meru County, Eastern Kenya. The informants will be tape-recorded as they respond to interview questions and name some given pictures. The data collected will be correlated with the social variables of age, gender and education, and the observations used to explain lexical variation and change. The study will adopt a descriptive research design. Selection of respondents will be done through the social network approach. The study will be guided by The Variation Theory which will be used to explain the analysis of the study. Data will be analysed quantitatively using ANOVA and the findings presented in tables. Conclusions will be drawn and necessary recommendations made based on the findings. The information gathered will be helpful to those studying language variation especially in Kenyan languages. Lexicographers will also benefit from the study in future publications.