

**ASSESSMENT OF LANGUAGE SHIFT AMONG THE YOUTH IN
NAIROBI COUNTY, KENYA**

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DECLARATION

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

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to my beloved mother Anastasia, my husband Pius and our children
Brenda and Mathew.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

DT : Domain Theory

FM : Frequency modulator

LMLS : Language Maintenance and Language Shift

KBC : Kenya Broadcasting Corporation.

NACOSTI : National Commission for science Technology and Innovation

USA : United States of America

ABSTRACT

Language shift among multilingual societies is an issue of global concern. Kenya, a multilingual society, is gradually losing her indigenous languages especially among the youth in towns and cities. The purpose of this study was to explore the extent of language shift among the youth in Nairobi County. The study was guided by the following objectives: to explore the domains in which the youth in Nairobi County use their ethnic languages; to establish the attitude the youth in Nairobi County have towards ethnic languages; to assess the influence of the gender variable on language shift among the youth in Nairobi County; and to determine the effect of ethnicity on language shift among the youth in Nairobi County. The study was based on the Domain Theory. The study employed the *ex-post facto* research design. The study targeted students and language teachers in public day secondary schools in Nairobi County. Simple random sampling was used to select the schools and the students to be studied. Ninety eight (98) students and seven language teachers participated in the study. Questionnaires were used as the tools of data collection. Descriptive statistics in form of frequencies, percentages, mean and standard deviation were used to analyse findings. Chi-square tests were conducted to establish the relationships between gender, attitude and ethnicity and the use of mother tongue in social and formal domains. The study found that the youth use their mother tongue sparingly and in very limited contexts such as at home or when their parents visit their schools. Students had negative attitudes towards mother tongue as they did not find it very useful. The study found that there was a significant relationship ($\chi^2=18.143$, $p<0.05$) between gender and the language used by students in communication with friends of the same sex. The findings also show that there was a significant relationship ($\chi^2 =13.144$, $p<0.005$) between gender and the language used at school. However, there was no significant relationship between ethnicity and any of the indicators of language shift. The study concludes that although majority of youth are conversant with their mother tongue, the extent to which the youth use mother tongue in social and formal domains is very low. The findings of the study would inform linguists on the current trend of indigenous languages in Kenyan urban centres and cities. The findings would also inform both the policy makers and curriculum developers on the challenges threatening the survival of the indigenous languages.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Language shift and maintenance constitutes a central focus on contemporary linguistic, anthropology and sociolinguistics. According to Trudgill (2003), sociolinguistics is the study of language as used in society. In this study, Trudgill outlines a number of areas in which this study focuses on. These include areas such as discourse analysis in language, ethnography of speaking, secular linguistics, anthropological linguistics, dialectology of language, psychology and sociology of language and finally language contact studies. Language shift studies is indeed one of the primary concerns which is discussed in sociolinguistics.

The topic of language shift is premised in language contact studies and was basically introduced to the field of sociolinguistics by the influential work of Uriel Weinrich and Joshua Fishman (Tsitsipis, 1989). Language contact is one of the issues emanating from language contact. Fishman (1991) illustrates the case of the loss of Maori in New Zealand where language shift took place due to language contact between the two languages; English being more powerful than Maori. Michieka (2012) states that in situations of language contact, the language of the powerful is usually maintained while that of the less powerful gradually loses its domain of use. Language shift therefore is defined as replacement of one or more languages in the repertoire of a given speech community by a language which is considered to be socially more powerful (Tistispis 1989). Tsitsipis further notes that language shift can also refer to changes to both structural and functional aspects of the language. As a result, indigenous languages are affected to a given degree in terms of grammar, lexical and in phonology. Their

functional roles are altered in a dialectical way with the changing social roles and use of the dominant languages.

Fishman (2004) looks at language shift as a situation in which a minority group in a foreign land loses its language by adapting the main language of the host country. Scholars argue that immigrants' languages are lost through language shift in three generations when the adults or their children fail to teach their mother tongue to the next generation (Ortman and Stevens, 2008). Ortman and Stevens (2008) further note that the process of language shift takes two patterns. These patterns are identified as the intra-generational language shift and inter-generational language shift. The former type of language shift is experienced when individuals abandon their own language and begin to use the dominant language of the host country, with time. The latter type of language shift, inter-generational shift, occurs when the language repertoire of the immigrants' off-springs fails to match that of their parents. This is witnessed in the disappearance of Spanish among the Hispanic Americans.

This view is further advanced by Clyne (2003) who observes that language shift is a consequence of pre-migration and post migration feature that brings different cultures into contact. This has been witnessed in the past century when immigrants and their first descendants adopt the use of English and abandon the use of their ethnic languages (Fishman, 2004). Fishman summarizes the three generational model as indicated below. First, immigrant generation maintains the use of their native language. Then, the second generation learns their foreign parents' language which they use at home but use English outside the home domain. Thus they become bilinguals. The third generation only learns English that is used in all domains. This implies that a substantial amount

of mother tongue language shift takes place between the second and third generation. Language shift, therefore, influences language policies worldwide. Nevertheless, language shift does not always happen due to migration. According to Fishman (1991) and Holmes (2001), “political, economic, and social changes,” (p. 5) can also cause language shift in non- migrant communities. Fishman (1991) classifies three main dislocations that influence language shift in a community. These dislocations include physical and demographic, social and cultural factors.

Physical and demographic dislocation has a bearing on entire linguistic community. This influences the cultural, social and economic aspect of the society (Fishman 1991). “Physical and demographic arrangements have cultural consequences, which include the language-in-culture aspect,” (p.58). The demographic feature include considerations of where the speakers live, how close they live and how accessible the language institutions for speakers of various ages are (Fishman 1991). Community issues and catastrophes such as earthquakes, severe droughts or famines; human conflicts such as genocides or ethnic cleansing; rural urban migration as well as other factors have increased instances of language shift (Fishman 1991). Conversely, rural inhabitants can easily satisfy their needs using their minority language hence will maintain it (Holmes, 2001). Holmes opines that communities with large population show more resistance to language shift. Indeed, this happened with the majority of Maltese in Australia who greatly resisted a shift from their indigenous languages despite being immigrants (Holmes 2001).

Fishman (1991) describes social dislocation as a “serious problem for the future of any ethno-cultural community” (p.61). Fishman (1991) clearly states that a socially

dislocated community suffers a number of disadvantages such as low self-worth, limited access to education and low incomes. Consequently, they develop a low self-attitude towards their own community, its culture and language (Fishman, 1991). This makes some speakers to damp their own language and adopt the dominant and more privileged language. Indeed, the Hungarian language shifted to German in order to lift up their socioeconomic status as Hungarian was associated with peasant life. This eventually led to inter-generational shift over many generations (Gal, 1979).

Finally, the cultural dislocation occurs when the dominant ruling group intentionally practises its hegemony as the most powerful culture in community. Fishman (1991) argues that some democratic communities can resist the maintenance of minority cultures because "...they undercut the very cultural and identity distinctions on which minority language maintenance must be based" (p.63). Thus democracy can little by little reduce diversity in a community, including cultural and religious differences. Fishman (1991) claims that people in democratic communities eventually rely on the same media information and institutions that are often dominated by the majority and the most powerful group. However, Fishman (1991) disputes the claim that democratization and modernization are unfavourable for minority language and cultural maintenance as true democracies have cultural democracy, which is supposed to protect vulnerable cultures and their languages.

Other scholars such as Clyne (2003), Holmes (2001) and Myers-Scotton (2006) have identified other factors that lead to language shift within minority communities. Such factors include time (the length of stay in the host country), inter cultural marriages (where one parent is a member of the dominant language) English proficiency within

the parent generation; the value of the language; religious institutions; family relations and frequency of communication in the mother tongue.

Similarly, another set of scholars have discussed other factors that are seen to determine choice and language use in ethnic minority settings. These factors include the interlocutors, domain and topic. A domain refers to the notion that each language is given specific function or context and certain participants in the society, such as work, religion, family among others (Spolsky, 2012). Fishman (1972) argues that domain is a useful consideration in analysing individual and community language use. The family and neighbourhood domains are believed to be the contexts in which ethnic languages are used. Fishman (2000) maintains that languages used in these two contexts differ from languages used in school and at work. Rasinger (2010) found out that Eastern European migrants in East Anglia have a tendency to communicate more in English outside the home domain but in home domain, the minority language is predominantly used. This clearly demonstrates that any set of speakers will determine the language to use in their conversation.

Harris (2006) in his study of linguistic behaviour among ethnic minority communities in the suburbs of London found the following patterns; parents used a mixture of English, the mainstream language and their ethnic language; siblings, who mainly used English and grandparents who used ethnic language only. This clearly confirms that language choice depends on interlocutors. Last but not the least, the topic of discussion influences language choice (Ritchie 2013). Fishman (2000) states that “certain topics are somehow handled better in one language than in another...” (p.92). Yagmur (2009) and Namei (2008) found out that Turkish and Iranian immigrants in Netherlands and

Sweden used the mainstream Dutch and Swedish to deliberate on many topics but used Turkish and Persian on religious talks.

The role of gender differences in language shift is also claimed by Harris (2006) who notes that gender determines language choice. Harris cites the case of Gujarat speakers in London where males, whose outside involvement is greater than women's, use English more than women. This is explained by the fact that women remain at home looking after the family. Consequently, they are well served by their ethnic language hence find it unnecessary to gain proficiency in English. Actually, the role of gender in language choice has been widely discussed in the variationist sociolinguistic literature. Winter and Pauwels (2005) recognise the importance of gender role in language shift whenever languages come into contact. The general consensus is that women are at the helm of language change in settings where only one language is spoken (Eckert and McConnell-Ginet 2003, Labov 2001). The question of how gender impacts on people's language choice is an issue of concern to sociolinguists. For instance, male speakers tend to interrupt female speakers more often than vice versa; female speakers more frequently use features that provide support and encouragement for other speakers ('hmm', 'right'); female speakers use more hedges and tag questions to weaken their utterances; and women tend to pay more compliments (Mesthrie et al., 2009).

Furthermore, Clyne (2003) puts forward the claim that gender variation in language shift has been observed through exogamous marriages. In communities where such marriages involve men marrying outside their ethnic languages, language shift was seen to be higher in men than women. A case in point is Lebanese and Turkish migrants in Australia. The opposite is also true. In a situation where a woman marries outside her

ethnic language, there is a high likelihood that language shift will be higher in females than in men. This is the case witnessed in the Philipines and Japanese migrant communities in Australia, (Clyne 2003)

It is well understood that language and identity go together. In a study by Labov (1972) it emerges that language can help us identify a speaker's social economic class. Indeed, it is easy to establish a person's socio-economic status by using his or her phonological features. Bucholtz and Hall (2005) look at identity as a case of emerging construct. They define identity as a way of placing oneself and others at a particular position in society. Muaka (2011) observes that this approach can help to look at how Kenyan youth negotiate their daily language performance.

Jaffe (1999) demonstrates how the dominant French ideology has initiated mixed ideologies among people of different ethnic origins. The crises in the young Corsicans who would like to emulate their elders in identifying with their ethnic culture but find themselves drawn to the French culture is a good example. The adults' effort to preserve their ethnic identity is thwarted by the influence from school that encourages the younger generation to abandon their Corsican roots and embrace French culture which promises better careers and a better future. The French ideology is used by Corsican teachers to demonize the Corsican language thereby inculcating a mind set in the youth that see them reject their Corsican identity and get assimilated in the French culture (Bokamba, 2008). When people abandon their language they also lose their culture.

The African continent is well endowed with many languages hence it emerges as one of the world's most linguistically diverse continent. Africa is truly the proud source of

the 2001 languages out of the world's 6000 languages (Muaka, 2011). In the field of sociolinguistics, ethnicity is seen as a social variable that separates social groups in which different language varieties are spoken. According to Shelton, Richeson and Vorauer (2006), members of an ethnic group share a certain ideology and often an ethnic language variety. Some examples of characteristics of an ethnic language variety are lexicon that differ from the standard variety, phonological differences, isolated grammatical features, and conversation style. This refers to a speaker's tone of voice and his or her speech volume. Every tribe has its own valuable traditions, customs and folklores which are best understood through the use of mother tongue since they represent local symbols. Labov (2001) posits that tribal groupings affect language variation because they usually have to learn the prominent language in their area. Despite viewing language as a part and parcel of their identity, they have to compromise their language and replace it with another, or combine both languages. According to Tistispis (1978), results in language shift either partial through lexical, phonological or grammatical change or total change that see the community abandon its language for another.

A speaker's feelings towards a language, its maintenance and planning comprises of what is popularly known as language attitude. Language attitude are people's feelings that their language is rich, poor, beautiful or ugly. In other words, language attitudes are actually the feelings people have about their own language or the language of others (Crystal, 1997). Garvin and Mathiot (1968) formulated the three characteristics of language attitude which indicate positive attitude towards language, namely: language allegiance, language pride and language awareness. Language allegiance or language loyalty encourages people to keep maintaining their language, protecting it from the

influence of other languages. Language pride encourages people to develop the language and use it as a symbol of identity and unity of the community. Language awareness encourages people to use language carefully and politely. Maricar (2016) indicates that language tends to change regularly; therefore, it needs the speaker's attitude in using it. Language attitude holds an important role in determining a language's vitality. The more the speakers are loyal to use their language, the more the language will live, and vice versa. On the other hand, any weakness in language maintenance will lead to language shift as well as make the language endangered.

Kenya's linguistic situation has been developing since the arrival of missionaries and the beginning of colonialism. This is the first phase which began around 1885 (Mukuria in Fink, 2005). Another phase of language change is noted at the attainment of independence between 1964 and 1982 and a third phase is 1983 culminating in the present language policy which has seen a new constitution established in 2010. Previously, English, an ex-colonial language had enjoyed the status of the official language while Kiswahili was recognised as a national language. The constitution at independence gave little regard to the Kenyan indigenous languages. Given their privileged position, English and Kiswahili have grown considerably and have encroached the domains previously reserved for indigenous languages Obiero (2008). This has resulted to a situation where the use of indigenous languages has gone down as that of Kiswahili and English has continuously risen.

The language policy in Kenya gives an undue advantage to the two official languages in education but deprives the indigenous languages a similar advantage. English comes along as the medium of instruction through all the levels of education in urban areas. In

monolingual rural areas, the policy advises that ethnic languages should be used in the first few years of education as the language of instruction in schools (Batibo, 2005). In multi-ethnic regions, Kiswahili is used for instruction up to third grade after which it becomes a subject in the curriculum. Due to its superior role, English is encouraged in public domains. Furthermore, the writing of a new constitution in 2010 that replaced the constitution that was drafted at independence has also served the role of creating a national identification for Kenya. While Kiswahili is given the priority to combat the colonial legacy of English and enhance nationalism, no such role is assigned the ethnic languages (Githiora, 2008). Consequently, when no function is set aside for the indigenous languages, they become endangered and run the risk of death.

Language, just like other creatures, has a life. A language can therefore die just like other living things do. Death to a language can occur suddenly or it can take a gradual process. When a calamity strikes speakers of a given language, the language dies together with the speakers unless it is documented (Mfwene, 2008). Other factors that pose the risk of endangerment to the ethnic languages are urbanization and the resultant language contact, industrialization and language policy in Kenya. The list is extended by Landweer (2000) who includes other factors such as group dynamics and population, position on rural-urban continuum, language use domains, type of code switching and its frequency, the social networks and their population distribution, social outlook of the speech community, the economic status and lastly, the language prestige. The extent to which these factors are in effect determine the degree of endangerment or vitality of the indigenous language.

Language shift in Kenya is also promoted by subtractive bilingualism practised in the country (Batibo, 2005). This fundamentally is the practice where the learning of a second language negatively affects the first language. In Kenya, elevating English to official position has led to subtractive bilingualism where children learn a second language (English) and lose their mother tongue. Batibo (2005) further notes that failure by the government to assign any public function to the ethnic languages complicates the matter further. Indeed, the Kenyan authority is shy to use the ethnic languages in transmitting public information for fear of creating ethnic hostility (Batibo 2005).

To promote ethnic harmony, private enterprises have come in strongly to facilitate this kind of transmission although they have sometimes been criticized as sites that enhance negative ethnicity. Though private enterprises (FMs) try to promote local languages, the national media (for example KBC) largely promote English and Kiswahili thereby side-lining the local languages. This complicates further the issue of maintenance of the indigenous languages. According to Batibo (2005), out of the 56 indigenous languages, about 13 are highly endangered while a dozen are either extinct or nearly extinct. Brenzinger, Heine and Sommer (1991) report that in the Kenyan situation eight languages are extinct while five are in the process of extinction.

Furthermore, the question of Sheng, a youth language has complicated the matter further. Sheng has been variously defined by different researchers. Mazrui (as cited in Muaka, 2011) takes it as a new language code that developed in the city of Nairobi in 1960s and 1970`s. Githiora (2002) refers to it as a Kiswahili based patois, that is, a non-standard language such as Creole, Pidgin or vernacular which has been influenced by many languages. Other researchers such as Iraki (2004), Ogechi (2005) and Momanyi

(2009) have come up with a common observation, that Sheng was created in residential areas in Eastland of Nairobi and that today's Sheng speakers are youth who can use Kiswahili competently, but who prefer to defy the norms by composing their own code for the purpose of group identification. Nevertheless, Githiora observes that today's Sheng is not restricted to the Eastland but has grown and become the basic urban vernacular for the youth across the country, rural areas included. According to Fishman (as cited in Muaka, 2011) there is a shift among young people to mass culture.

The youth in today's world no longer show allegiance to their ethnic groups. Indeed, a non-institutional transition between the value pattern, behaviour and skills of the family in the Middle Class Society has been developed. Lacking in the appreciation of ethnic culture, adolescents may achieve only semi-speaker status in their ethnic languages. In fact, it has been observed that the first speakers of Sheng are men and women in their late forties and early fifties (Muaka, 2011). Some of these parents have abandoned their ethnic languages and now speak Sheng as their primary language. Children of such parents have lacked exposure to their ethnic languages hence have not acquired them as their primary languages. Instead, they have acquired Sheng as their mother tongue and later acquire Kiswahili and English through exposure to the general public and through schooling (Muaka, 2011). This situation has a lot of significance to this study.

Media is another domain that is critical in determining language choice. Before 1992, media was controlled by the government but after the multiparty liberalization, a vibrant and diverse mass media emerged in the region (Michieka, 2012). As tool for public communication, the media play a significant role on people's lives. The KBC station that is controlled by the government, broadcasts in Kiswahili and English but has also

four hours set aside for the regional radio stations. This may be seen as the government's support to the mother tongue though the airtime given is too little. However, this changed with the 1992 liberalization that saw a rapid growth of vernacular radio stations such as Inooro, Ramogi, Musyi, Mirembe, Kameme among others (Michieka, 2012).

Other stations broadcasting in the national languages have adopted a new strategy of hiring popular announcers who are not necessarily trained in journalism. These are usually young people who have a public appeal especially with the youth to broadcast in Sheng. In urban towns the use of Sheng in this talk shows has intensified. These stations have competed quite unfairly with the vernacular stations and the consequence is loss of domains for mother tongues. The print media too has given English a lot of priority in publication. There is only one Kiswahili daily newspaper, that is, Taifa Leo. This local daily newspaper, competes quite unfairly with English. Occasionally, there are street pamphlets published in vernacular languages. These publications are usually unprofessionally done and for this reason, they are not taken seriously. This clearly underscores dominance of English in both literacy and public media avenues (Michieka, 2012).

Language shift has also occurred as a result of language convergence in urban areas and especially in major towns. Kenya is a society in which several ethnic languages are spoken (Batibo, 2005). Bantu, Nilotic and Cushitic are the major classifications of these ethnic languages though they share the same base with others such as Gurjarati and Hindu. However, Gurjarati and Hind do not fit into any of the three classes above. As is characteristic of most communities with several languages in use, Kenyans select

their languages depending on the domains of use. Indeed, there is a language preferred for formal domains such as learning institutions, government institutions among others; language for social domains such as clubs, sports and other social activities; and language suitable for family domain. Kamwangamalu (2000) has described a trilingual situation in an urban setting in Kenya where a young Kenyan uses his or her ethnic language at home, Kiswahili or Sheng at play and English at school or church. Other scholars express divergent views on the language situation in Kenya and indeed the rest of Africa especially in urban settings (Mugane, 2003; Michieka, 2005; Mugambi, 2002). It is generally noted that Kenyan youth have abandoned the trilingual pattern cited by Kamwangamalu (2000) by shifting from their indigenous languages which are now faced with the danger of becoming extinct.

On his part, Mugane (2003) talks of a generation that is “growing up in linguistic strandedness” (p.1). According to Mugane (2003) there is an onslaught on the indigenous languages by other more powerful languages and consequently the indigenous languages are losing their domains of use. The consequence of this conquest is language shift which is also likely to erode specific cultural as well as social identities. Mugane (2003) notes that the power that a language commands is the greatest threat to a weaker language. Power to a language emanates from the power of the speakers themselves. It follows that if a language is used by powerful people, it will flourish but if a language is used by weak people, it will shift or die altogether (Mugane, 2003). It is also noted that the plight of Kenyan ethnic languages is made worse by the fact that these languages are only useful in the home domain and in intra ethnic communication. This makes the youth in urban settings to have no interest in acquiring them. Mugane (2003) therefore expresses fear that the ethnic languages will lose these

two domains and become extinct. Presently, Kiswahili is used alongside English in the following formal contexts such as school, parliament among others, as well as in informal domains such as religious domains and in neighbourhoods. Mugane (2003) notes that ethnic languages dominate the home domain but there is a likelihood that this cannot be sustained especially among the young generations.

Michieka (2005) expresses concern at the distribution of power among languages by the Kenyan language policy. She observes that too much power has been given to the two main languages, that is, English and Kiswahili. The policy has discriminated against African languages from use in intellectual realms. For instance, English enjoys a high premium in formal and informal contexts. Actually, it dominates in educational activities such as being the medium of instruction, the language of examination among other things. It is also seen as a prestigious language, hence it is used in elite neighbourhoods, in international travel and trade, and in many other high society contexts. Needless to say, Kenyan ethnic languages enjoy no such privileges. This situation and others mentioned above have greatly alienated the youth from the ethnic languages and therefore, forms the background on which the present study is based.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The phenomenon of language shift from one language to another dates back to historical issues such as migration, urbanization, economic status, political dominance among others. In Nairobi County, for example, urbanization, multilingualism or bilingualism, government language policy and inter-cultural marriages are some of the factors threatening the survival of the ethnic languages. Moreover, the alienation of the youth in Nairobi from their cultural backgrounds has ensured that they have limited contact

with their ethnic languages. This has resulted to a generation of children with little proficiency in their mother tongue languages. With time, several factors have led to a limited use of mother tongues especially among the youth. This situation has greatly threatened the survival of mother tongue especially among the young people. This study, therefore, wishes to establish the extent of language shift among the youth in Nairobi County given the present circumstances highlighted above.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

This study purposes to examine the phenomenon of language shift among the youth in Nairobi County. By establishing the domains in which mother tongue is still being used by the youth, the study would reveal whether the youth in Nairobi still have a proficiency in their mother tongue. This will reflect the degree of language shift among the youth in Nairobi County.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

- (i) To explore the domains in which the youth in Nairobi County use mother tongue.
- (ii) To establish the attitude the youth in Nairobi County have towards their mother tongue.
- (iii) To assess the influence of gender variable on language shift among the youth in Nairobi County.
- (iv) To determine the effect of ethnicity on language shift among the youth in Nairobi County.

1.5 Research Questions

- (i) Which domains do the youth in Nairobi County use mother tongue in?

- (ii) What attitude do the youth in Nairobi County have towards mother-tongue?
- (iii) How does the gender variable influence language shift in Nairobi County?
- (iv) What effect does ethnicity have on language shift among the youth in Nairobi County?

1.6 Research Assumptions

- (i) The youth in Nairobi County use mother tongue in social and formal domains.
- (ii) The youth in Nairobi County have a negative attitude towards mother tongue.
- (iii) The gender variable influences language shift among the youth in Nairobi County.
- (iv) Ethnicity affects language shift among the youth in Nairobi County.

1.7 Significance of the Study

Language shift portends a serious threat to indigenous languages in Kenya (Batibo, 1992). When speakers lose their language, they lose their symbol of identity. This affects their social-psychological well-being negatively (Mutiga, 2013). This happens because language is not only an instrument of communication but it is also the carrier of cultural norms and values of a people. Loss of African indigenous languages implies loss of the national heritage and the cultural diversity transmitted through these languages, Wa Thiong'o (as cited in Fink, 2005). Therefore, the study findings will be useful, first, to the language policy makers as it will give them insights that will guide in the formulation of policies on language use. Indeed, if ethnic languages are assigned public functions, it will be easy to maintain and teach them to posterity. This will also enable the nation to appreciate its diversity and uniqueness while still working towards national cohesion.

Second, the study findings will inform the curriculum developers on the significance of the ethnic languages and cultural identity. Paternity is what gives a community the sense of continuity (Fishman, 1977). Patrimony, which is described as the value that governs ranks and phenomenology (legacy and self-worthiness) are transmitted through language. Consequently, if these languages are significantly included in the school curriculum, they can help in transmitting these values thereby creating a healthy African society.

The study findings will also serve as an update to language experts such as sociolinguists and ethnographers on the position of ethnic languages in towns and cities so that more research can be conducted to generate more resources that can enhance language preservation. The researcher made some suggestions for further study such as having a similar study carried out in private schools that will attract respondents from more economically stable respondents. The study can also be conducted in public universities where students face no restriction on the language to use within the premises. Further study can involve the youth from high economic status residence. The new findings of this study can inform the relevant authority on the language situation in Nairobi and other cities to take the necessary action against language loss and its consequences.

1.8 Scope and Limitations of the Study

The study was carried out in three sub-Counties of Nairobi County, which included Starehe, Kamukunji and Njiru Sub-Counties. Nairobi County has nine sub-counties but the study concentrated on three sub-counties which represent a third of the entire county. This study was conducted in September, 2016. Data was collected from a

sample of 98 students in public day secondary schools in the area of study. Specifically, the sample comprised of form three students, aged between 14 to 17 years.

The topic of language shift is confined within the field of linguistic anthropology and sociolinguistics (Tsitsipis, 1998). These entail investigation on the impact of language in community. The relationship between language and culture is also studied as language is indeed the medium of transmission of culture (Benson, 2004). This study is based on the concept of language shift which is a product of language contact (Fishman, 2004). The study is based on the principle that a number of things, such as linguistic borrowing, code-switching, language shift among others, happen when languages come into contact. In Nairobi County, different languages and cultures have converged leading to bilingualism and multilingualism. Furthermore, language attitude among the youth as well as failure by society to attach any function to the indigenous languages has gradually led to abandonment of these languages. The youth have tended to fall back on the more useful languages such as Sheng, English and Kiswahili to meet their linguistic needs. Consequently, this has greatly endangered mother tongue languages especially among the young generations and has enhanced the risk of language shift.

1.9 Justification of the Study

Language and identity are intertwined. Losing one's language means losing one's culture. According to Mutiga (2013), language shift and language death may result to the loss of a community's symbol of identity. This would interfere with the social well-being of a community because language is not only an instrument of communication, but it is also the means through which a people's culture is passed on from one

generation to another (Mutiga, 2013). This transmission ensures that a community's culture and value system get to the next generation. In the event that this transmission fails to happen, these values are lost with the dying generation that carried them. Wa Thiong'o (as cited in Fink, 2005) states that "language as a culture is the collective memory bank of a people's experience in history" (p.15). Consequently, language shift will lead to the loss of such memory bank and culture.

Fishman (1977) describes language as a symbol per excellence of ethnicity. Fishman discusses three human qualities which would be lost through language shift. First, language shift would cause loss of the indigenous users' paternity. Paternity refers to the symbol which links people with feelings of continuity. This connection with people's feeling of relatedness is contained in the language of a community. In the event that language transmission fails to take place, these norms and values are lost with the dying of the last generation that carried them (Mutiga, 2013). When language shift takes place, the feelings of loyalty and unity carried in that language are lost too.

Second, language shift would result to loss of a people's patrimony. This comprises the fact of inheriting occupation and skills such as rainmaking, archery, and medicine. Patrimony is also the force that prescribes who can become what leader or follower in the inherited ranks of authority (Fishman, 1977). Language connects people to something greater than themselves: their history, their science and their god, be it in medicine or rainmaking. Mutiga (2013) cites a case where Gikuyu and Kamba show loyalty to the traditional swearing where they would swear by the soil and call a curse upon themselves should they go against the swearing. Such swearing is binding compared to the modern court swearing using a foreign God and in a foreign language.

People swear and still lie in courts. It is the patrimony in the native language that is binding, the same that will be lost through language shift.

Third, language shift would interfere with people's phenomenology. Phenomenology is the meaning attached to people's legacy and their self-evaluation and self-respect. When a language is lost, a people's self-worthiness is lost along with it and a non-self-respecting-individual emerges. Loss of phenomenology through language shift has caused a breakdown of many social structures and can be blamed for the increased crimes especially in Nairobi and its surrounding (Mutiga, 2013). Mutiga clearly states that, lately, strange crimes such as rape to older women or very young girls are on increase. Homosexuality and other evils that were not happening in the past have been witnessed. In most cases, these evils are committed by young people of between 20 to 30 years. This is because there has been a shift in the value base due to language shift hence the loss of the values enshrined there in (Mutiga, 2013).

There is a general consensus in literature that acquiring and using a language is easier for individuals with a positive attitude to a language and its speakers (Garret, 2010). Holmes et al. (1993) emphasizes the importance of language attitude in shifting or maintaining the language. Baker (1992) states that, for as long as a language exists, the speakers' attitude to it plays a vital role in determining if the language will prosper or will die. Holmes et al. (1993) argue that language attitudes have a leading influence on various levels of language shift and maintenance among Tongan, Greek and Chinese in communities in New Zealand. Holmes et al. also maintains that positive attitude motivates speakers of minority languages to use their languages in various domains thereby slowing down shift to the mainstream languages. It can therefore be difficult to

maintain a language if people have a negative attitude towards it. In Nairobi County, a positive attitude towards mother tongue can encourage the youth to acquire, use and maintain the indigenous languages.

Language is indeed profoundly influenced by the common beliefs pertaining to gender. Both males and females are equipped with some predetermined tendencies that would be helpful for them to acquire some aspects of language much faster and more easily. Under normal circumstances women tend to show loyalty by sticking to the rules of a language more than men. Hence they use the standard form of language. However when change occurs in a language, women adapt to the change faster than their men counterparts. This study wishes to establish how gender affects language shift in Nairobi County.

In a broad sense, ethnic identity and motivation are believed to be instrumental in second or foreign language learning. Ethnic group affiliation does have a noteworthy effect on second language acquisition. The task in the present study is to assess the impact of ethnicity variable in language shift in Nairobi County. Fishman (1972) observes that linguistic minorities are often socially and economically disadvantaged when in competition with more powerful languages. A minority language may become associated with backwardness, both in the eyes of the majority and the minority. Thus, the minority population is faced with the dilemma of either being loyal to their cultural and linguistic roots and bearing the social disadvantages or leaving behind their traditions with the aim of attaining a better life style. Fishman (1972) notes that most democracies favour cultural disloyalty through their social, economic, and political processes. This takes place through the process of democratisation and modernisation. Such is the plight of the minority languages in Kenya. No function is attached to them

hence they face a serious challenge of shifting to the more useful languages among the youth. The current study aims at assessing the extent of language shift in Nairobi County in order to alert the relevant authorities so that proper measures can be taken to safe-guard the endangered ethnic languages and thereby protect our African identity and heritage.

1.10 Operational Definition of Terms

Bilingualism	:	Two languages in concurrent use in a society.
Domain	:	Areas and circumstances where language is used
Heritage Language	:	A mother tongue or indigenous language.
Language Shift	:	A phenomenon in which a speech community abandons its language in favour of another language in a bilingual or a multilingual community.
Language Contact	:	A situation where different languages are in use within a given community due to urbanization, migration or trade.
Language Policy	:	Decision making guidelines that determine which language will be used for what purpose in country
Speech Community	:	A group of people who share a specific language.
Subtractive Bilingualism	:	A situation where the learning of a second language interferes with the learning of the first language.
Trilingual Community	:	A society where individuals three have language in concurrent use.
Youth	:	Young adolescents of between 12 to 20 years old
Youth Languages	:	This is a speech pattern characteristic of adolescents.

1.11 Summary of the Chapter

Chapter one has presented the background information which identifies and describes the history and nature of the phenomenon of language shift with reference to the existing literature. The problem addressed by the study is presented in details together with the research gap. Chapter one also presented the objectives of the study along with assumptions, significance, scope and justification. The theoretical framework has presented the theory underpinning the study and how it relates to the problem at hand. Lastly, the operational definition of terms and phrases used is done. The next chapter will focus on literature review in which literature pertaining to language shift will be discussed.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses literature pertaining to language shift in Africa and other continents. The chapter is sub-divided into ten sub-sections. These sub-sections include: language in use in Africa and Kenya; theories in language choice; lexical, grammatical and phonological loss in language shift; language death and endangerment (further sub-divided into studies on endangered languages); studies on language shift across the world; language attitude (sub-divided into studies on language attitude in language shift); growth and development of Sheng; impact of Sheng on language shift; language shift and gender and finally language shift and ethnicity.

2.2 Languages in Use in Africa and in Kenya

Africa is both a plurilingual and multilingual. Plurilingual refers to a state in which a given country has many languages in use while multilingual refers to a situation where speakers in a given country or community have ability to use more than one language (Batibo, 2005). Batibo (2005) states clearly that Africa has between 2000 and 2500 languages in use. These languages can be classified into four major categories which are as follows; Khoesan, Afro- Asiatic, Congo-Kordofanian and Nilo-Saharan. Amongst these four categories, the two most widespread languages are the Afro-Asiatic and Congo- Kordofanian that occupy about three quarter of the languages spoken in Africa. Myers-Scotton (1993) opines that the largest spoken language is Niger-Congo, which covers most parts of Southern, Central, Western and Eastern Africa.

Languages in African continent are unevenly distributed. For instance, Oromo and Gala, Hausa and Fulani and then Swahili are used by more than twenty million people. More than one million people speak over fifty thousand languages and hundreds of languages are spoken by a few thousand people (Myers-Scotton, 1993). It is further noted that 41 languages are lingua franca for international, regional and inter-ethnic communication. Nigeria has the highest number of languages totalling to about 400 languages. Cameroon is believed to have a total of 253 languages while some countries are believed to be monolingual. Muthoka (2017) notes that these languages are Burundi, Somalia, Cape Verde, Lesotho, Seychelles and Rwanda. Rwanda enjoys one ethnic language called Kinyarwanda; in Burundi Kirundi is used and in Somalia, there is Somali.

There are also ex-colonial languages in Africa. These languages include French, English, Italian, Portuguese and German. These languages came with colonization and occupation of Africa by foreigners (Webb and Sure, 2000). The foreign speakers being stronger economically and politically, their languages gained in strength and popularity after independence. These languages are held in high prestige and have become part of the linguistic repertoire of many African nations and so have consequently become a big threat to the indigenous languages. Batibo (2005) says that Africans are not multilingual out of a talent but because they have been exposed to too many languages.

According to Abdulaziz (1972), Kenya practises a triglossic language system. This means that there are three languages in concurrent use in Kenya, just like in many other African countries. These are indigenous languages, mostly used in the home and socialisation domains, the lingua franca which is used in inter-ethnic communication

and then the ex-colonial language that is used for official and international interaction. The ex- colonial languages serve as the languages for formal domains in most of the African countries. This situation has created three categories of speakers in Kenya, and in most African countries. The first category is the educated who have proficiency in English, Kiswahili and mother tongue. The uneducated use Kiswahili and mother tongue, while a small population of speakers use mother tongue alone.

The language situation in Kenya is therefore a complicated matter. Ogechi (2005) identifies two unstable codes that are in use in Kenya. These are English and Sheng. The Kenyan indigenous languages are clustered in three major groups. These are the Bantu, the Cushites and the Nilotes (Whiteley, 1974). The Cushitic group is made up of the Somali, Borana and the Rendile. The Nilotics constitutes the Kalenjin, Teso, Dholuo and Maasai. The Bantu are the Gikuyu, Luhya, Kisii, Kamba and many more. According to Webb and Sure 2000), these speakers are represented as indicated: Kikuyu (20%), Dholuo, (14%), Luhya, (13%), Kikamba (11%) Kalenjin (11%), (6.5%) Ekegusii and Kimeru (5%). Figure 2.1 shows the distribution of languages in Kenya.

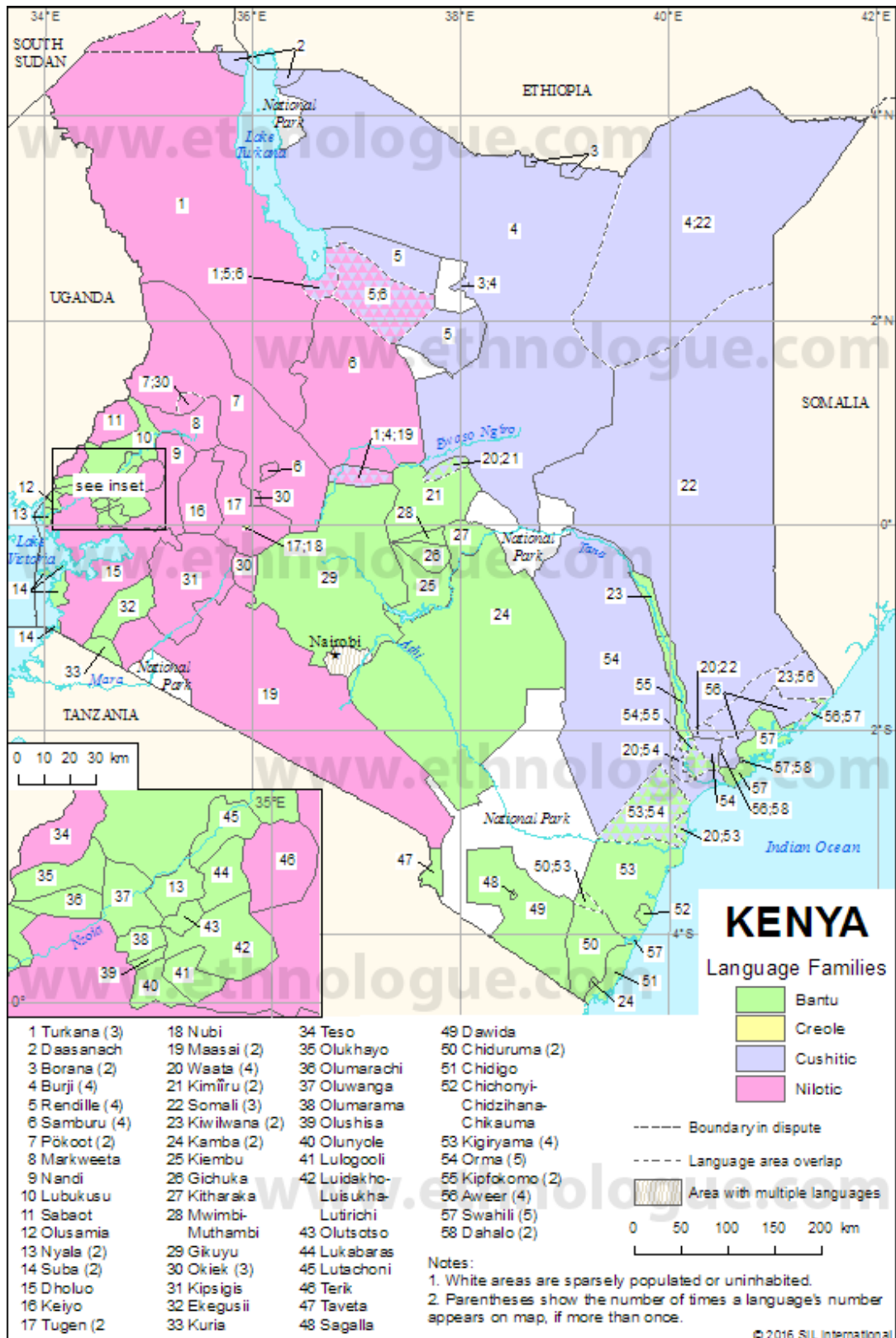


Figure 2.1: Distribution of Languages in Kenya

Kenya is also a multi-racial country. As a result of this, other languages are also present such as Asian and European languages. These languages are the likes of Hindu, Punjab,

English and French. According to Michieka (2005), the ethnic languages in Kenya have a place to call home. This does not mean that communities are totally homogenous, but various languages spread even in counties away from home-counties (Muthoka, 2017).

In Kenya, Kiswahili is the national language while English has been the official language since independence. In 2010 when a new constitution was drafted, the status of Kiswahili was uplifted to an official language, working hand in hand with English. Kenya now has two official languages though English enjoys higher status compared to Kiswahili. This is because it is considered the language of international business, trade and the language of administration. English is also used in schools as the medium of instruction right from primary to higher institutes of education (Abdulaziz & Osinde, 1997). Itebete (1974) states that it is only in rural areas where mother tongue is used for instruction in early education after it emerged that use of English was a hindrance in performance in such areas.

2.3 Theories on Language Choice

The current study aims at exploring the extent of language shift among the youth in Nairobi County. It is therefore important to look into language choice to see how this contributes to language shift. Some factors contribute to language choice such as the speaker, the topic and the domain (Fishman, 2000). Wei (1994) describes two perspectives that influence language choice. These perspectives are micro-societal and macro- societal. Wei (1994) indicates that in terms of macro societal perspective, language choice is designed systematically and follows the social structures of the bilingual community. The micro-perspective on the other hand suggests that language choice tends to follow the speakers' reactions to the behaviour of other participants in

the domain. This implies that language choice is not necessarily dependent on the domain because it is also dependent on the interaction that takes place within a group (Wei, 1994).

Within the macro-societal perspective model, Wei (1994) proposes two other approaches. These are complementary distribution approach and the conflict model. The complementary approach suggests that all the varieties of language in a linguistic community are useful in serving a given function. This implies that languages or their varieties are linked to several functions which complement each other to construct a consistent bilingual system.

In micro-societal perspective, two theories are included. These are accommodation theory and the social network approach. The accommodation theory maintains that speakers tend to accommodate the speech of persons whom they like or whom they wish to be likened with (Myers-Scotton, 2006). Myers-Scotton argues that this theory can provide an explanation why members of minority may choose to use the mainstream language as a way of assimilating within the new community. This leads to language shift (Myers-Scotton, 2006). In the current study, this theory applies in the choice made by the youth of Sheng as their language of socialization.

On the other hand, Wei (1994) states that social network factor may influence language choice. “There is a dialectical relationship between speakers’ linguistic behaviour and their inter-personal relationship, (p.23)”. In multilingual settings, language choice is affected by, and affects the speakers’ social interactions and researchers can investigate their participants by considering the identities of those they interact with (Wei, 1994).

The present study assesses the youth's choice of language in different domains within Nairobi County.

2.4 Lexical, Grammatical and Phonological Loss and Language Shift

According to Tistispis (1989), a certain degree of structural changes in lexical, grammatical and phonological resources, take place when indigenous languages shift. This also entails a change in the pragmatic roles with the social role and use of the dominant language. Language shift that occurs abruptly has less effect on these aspects. The structural changes are noted where both language shift and attrition occur and borrowing occurs to replace existing lexicons other than enrich them.

Yonenda (2010) describes the Swahilization of Matengo, a Bantu language in Tanzania. Language in Tanzania has changed tremendously following the wide diffusion of Swahili. Swahili is Tanzania's national as well as the official language. As pointed out in several studies, it has penetrated the domains of ethnic languages (Batibo, 1992: Yonenda, 2010). The language situation in Tanzania has undergone a process which, according to Yonenda (2010) can be summarised into the following phases: Phase 1, ethnic language monolingualism; Phase 2, Bilingualism with Swahili; phase 3, characterised by restricted use or competence in ethnic language and phase 4, ethnic language as a substratum.

Yonenda (2010) notes that the expanding domains in Swahili in Tanzania can easily be recognized through its phonology, lexicon and grammar. Phonologically, Yonenda states that Matengo has 7-vowel system with contrastive short and long vowels. This gives a total of 14 distinctive phonemes. However, this has been reduced to seven as

the impact of Swahilization has led to loss of long sounds. Consequently, the modern Matengo has only seven vowel sounds. The young Matengo use only five vowels (Yonenda, 2010).

The lexicon change too has occurred and has seen new Swahili words incorporated to the Matengo specially to accommodate new concepts, especially by young speakers. This is as a result of unconscious code mixing. In most cases, the Swahili words are received as new Matengo vocabulary. Swahilization has also affected the grammar of Matengo language. The significant influence of Swahili to Matengo is made apparent in the study carried out by Yonenda. In the study the young Matengo speakers were required to indicate the language they preferred to use when conversing with their grandparents. The majority who represented 75% of the participants reported that when speaking to their grandparents they used Matengo. The grandparents were also presented with the same question. They were to state language used by their grandchildren when they spoke with them. The elders reported that only 30% spoke Matengo to them. The outcome clearly shows that there is a lot of code mixing of Swahili words or use of loan words to the extent that the children thought they were speaking Matengo but their grandparents thought the children were using Kiswahili (Yonenda, 2010). The speech of the two generations does not match which indicates that the process of language shift has started.

Brenzinger (1992) cites two Eastern- Cushitic languages in Kenya which were replaced by varieties of the Nilotic language Maa. These are the Yaaku and Elmolo. The Elmolo speakers are principally fishers along Lake Turkana. The neighbouring community comprises of the Samburu ethnic community who are pastoralists. Language shift from

Elmolo to Samburu began with transfer of a set of words related to fishing and monolingual hippopotamus and crocodile hunting which has survived as a substrate (Muthoka, 2017). The current study looks into language shift among the youth in Nairobi County.

2.5 Language Death and Endangerment

Language endangerment and language death are consequences of language contact in multilingual societies. Language endangerment can reveal itself in a number of ways. For example a situation can occur that only a few people use a particular language in a given speech community and in limited domains. The consequence of this is that the younger speakers will not develop competence in such a language and will tend to abandon it altogether (Janse, 2003). The following is an illustration of language endangerment as presented by Krauss, 1992 as cited in Muthoka (2017).

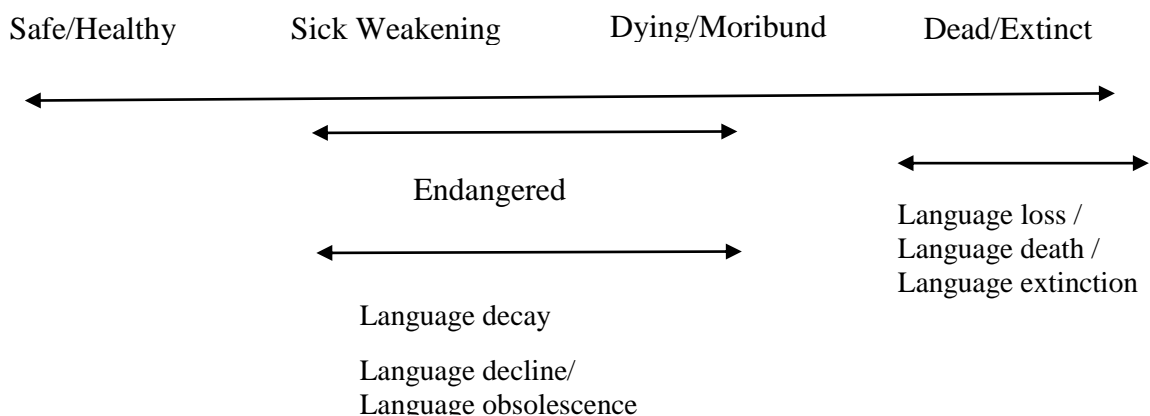


Figure 2.2: Degree of language endangerment

Source: Muthoka (2017, p.4)

Figure 2.2 shows the process of language endangerment. Language decay, language decline, and language obsolescence are used interchangeably to refer to weakening and

moribund languages. Endangerment begins with a healthy language which gradually weakens to become moribund and eventually becomes extinct. Krauss (1992) describes three categories of endangered languages. These are moribund category. This is the language that is no longer being learned or acquired by children. The second category is the endangered language, which is the language likely to be abandoned if no effort is made to preserve it. The last is the safe category which refers to the language that is enjoying official state support and a very large number of speakers. The present study tries to investigate the decline in the use and acquisition of mother tongue among the youth in Nairobi County. This poses a great danger to the survival of mother tongue languages hence making the ethnic languages to be considered among endangered languages in Nairobi County.

Batibo (2008) observes that language endangerment has increased as a result of some indigenous languages being elevated to the status of national or official languages or to lingua franca. This has resulted to marginalization and low prestige of minority languages resulting in limited intergenerational transmission. Krauss (1992) describes endangered languages as generally languages at the risk of losing their speakers.

According to Fishman (1991), physical and demographic factors can be classified into different categories. Some might be disastrous and sudden such as natural disasters like earthquakes, while others can be long lasting catastrophes such as severe and chronic droughts or famines. Other causes are human conflicts such as war, genocide or ethnic cleansing. Gal (1979), Holmes (2001) and Fishman (1991) highlight the impact of urbanization as one major factor in language shift and death. The scholars posit that urban dwellers tend to form new social networks which increase communication with the out-group community.

In her study, Muthoka (2017) quotes that there are four causes of language endangerment namely: Natural catastrophes, for instance famine and diseases like in the case of New Guinea earthquake. The second is war and genocide as in Tasmania genocide by colonists. The third is overt oppression for national unity, including forceful resettlement, as is the case of Native American languages. The fourth category can be divided into five common factors, which include: economic factors such as rural poverty that leads to migration to cities; cultural dominance by the majority community for example, education and literature through the majority or the state language; political, for example education policies which ignore the local languages and lack of recognition or political representation; historical factors such as colonization, the rise of one group and their language variety to political and cultural dominance, and lastly the attitudinal factor, for example, the majority language being associated with poverty, illiteracy, and other forms of hardships, while the dominant language is associated with progress and prestige.

2.5.1 Studies on Endangered Languages

In a study investigating the language situation of Kimvita and Kiamu dialects of Kiswahili in Kenya, Karanja (2006) observes that the survival of the two dialects is threatened by the use of the standard Kiswahili and other factors such as intermarriages, migration and urbanization. Karanja deals with two levels of language death. These are the external factors which include the influence of standard Kiswahili and Sheng, and the speech behaviour or the speakers' attitude to the language. This compares to the current study because mother tongue languages are experiencing a similar challenge

from Kiswahili, English and the Sheng languages. The youth's attitude is of great importance in determining the survival of these languages.

Another case on language endangerment involves the study of Dongolawi Nubian, which is a language variety spoken by the Eastern-Sudanic group of the Nilo-Saharan family living in the northern region of Sudan (Taha, 2010). The findings in this study reveal an extensive borrowing from Sudanic Arabic and loss of items associated with traditional ways of life. It is noted that some of these items have been replaced while others have been lost. Either way, language loss is on course. These clearly relates to the present study as the mother tongues are losing their domains within Nairobi and hence face the challenge of extinction.

Brenzinger (1992) studies the impact of migration on language death. His study focuses on a tribe in Northern Kenya called Terik who migrated from a densely populated area to a less densely populated area in Nandi. This study reveals that the Terik tribe has lost its language to Nandi culturally and linguistically. The study notes only the less mobile; the aged and women still speak Terik. The current study purposes to assess the youth's linguistic behaviour towards ethnic languages in a multilingual urban situation.

2.6 Studies on Language Shift across the World.

Okamura (1981) investigates mother tongue maintenance and development among the Japanese children living in the USA. Okamura tried to investigate the extent of mother tongue maintenance and growth in the context of learning a second language among the Japanese immigrants. He also investigated the factors which affected the individuals' success or failure in their efforts in learning of the two languages. He employed

correlation factors, multiple regression, and discriminant analyses as the methods of analyses. The results showed that the length of time of schooling in the U.S.A. significantly relates to the skill level in English. In terms of relative importance, the child's factors such as interest, attitudes and the extent of use of language contributed more significantly to the level of language shift. This study compares to the current study in a number of ways. Firstly, factors such as language attitude, group conformity, personal interest and the role of education are put into consideration as factors influencing language shift. The difference is noted in parents' role where parents of Japanese children show interest in mother tongue maintenance which does not apply in Nairobi.

A study by Subhan (2007) focuses on heritage language maintenance among Bangladesh immigrants in Toronto. Data is collected through ethnographic methods of observing, participation, supported by document reviews and historical interviews. The findings show that language maintenance is not evident within the families in Bangladesh immigrants in Toronto in major or significant ways. Although the parents always use heritage languages and that other sources of heritage language sources are present in the home environment, children generally live in their own separate worlds and interact with heritage language users only at a functional level. Most of the outside contexts and resources of heritage language is avoided by children and sometimes neglected by parents. This study shares a common ground with the study in Nairobi on the fact that both the youth and their parents are not eager to preserve their mother tongues. The point of departure is that Subha's study looks at the behaviour of immigrants while the foregoing study looks at youth in their native land and how they feel about their native languages.

The case of language death and language maintenance among Colombian immigrants in New York has been studied by Ramirez (2007). Data is collected from a group of first generation Colombian immigrants and then compared to the Spanish spoken by the bilingual immigrants and that spoken by a group of monolinguals living in Colombia. The findings of this study reveal that there is evidence of effort to maintain the mother tongue languages. However, the ethnic languages are noted to have experienced some structural adjustments due to being in contact with English. The immigrants have been noted to retain their ethnic languages for interaction and for other uses. This effort of language maintenance is not obviously noted in Nairobi County especially among the youth; thus, the risk of language shift in Nairobi County may be higher than that of Colombian immigrants. This study aids in the current study by demonstrating how language shift can occur due to introduction of a new superior language. The study however differs in that this study is conducted among immigrants while the current study is conducted among natives in Kenya.

Gals (1979) studies language shift of Oberwart in Austria. The study involves participant observation. It is observed that there is language shift caused by economic changes. German is noted to intrude the domains previously occupied by Hungarian. Oberwart as a language is noted to have lost its vitality and therefore has been relegated to a language of the traditionalists and the elderly. With German being seen as the language of upward mobility, it gains power over Obwart which continues to lose ground. These study contributes to the present study by looking at the fate of a minority language in contact with a powerful language. The same is seen when Kenyan indigenous languages share the same domains with other popular languages. However,

contrast is seen in methodology where Gals uses participant observation while the current study uses questionnaires. Gals' study also uses adult participants while the present study uses the youth in Nairobi County.

Garcia (2008) has assessed the part played by language and choices in life in language maintenance and language shift in a family in Cuba in United States. In-depth interviews and participant observations are used to study how immigration and the process of establishing a new life in the USA affect multiple generations of a family. Garcia observes that the special position of the Cuban Americans has made it easy for them to advice adequately on language across generations and on the significance of language attitude and language choice in life. These factors played a key role in the maintenance or loss of the Spanish language in this Cuban family. This is similar to the situation in Nairobi County where life choices and language ideologies play a significant role in shifting of the ethnic languages. English is ideally the language of educational and economic success. Consequently, most parents encourage their children to use it in order to obtain the benefits that it promises. Mother tongue languages have no value attached to them and therefore, receive no emphasis or support from parents. This study connects to the present one on the issue of attitude to mother tongue. The gap is that the foregoing study is conducted among immigrants and focuses on the social, economic and political factors that affect cultural change. The present study sought to reveal the attitude to mother tongue among youth in Nairobi County and whether it influences language choice.

Habtoor (2012) carries out a study on language maintenance and language shift (LMLS) among the young Tigrinya speakers of the Eritrean immigrants in Riyadh, Kingdom of

Saudi-Arabia. In this study, 64 Tigrinya-speaking immigrants in Riyadh participate. The respondents are students enrolled in the Eritrean International School in Riyadh. A questionnaire of sixty-two items was developed to elicit information from the Tigrinya speaking Eritrean teenagers. Questionnaires are used to gather data and later Chi-square tests are applied to establish the relationship. The study notes that second generation Tigrinya teenagers have no proficiency in Tigrinya as they display a limited ability to understand, speak, read and orally translate Tigrinya into Arabic and vice-versa. They are however found to have a higher proficiency in Arabic than in Tigrinya. The second generation Tigrinya teenagers speak Tigrinya at home with their parents but use Arabic to speak to their siblings. Indeed, the teenagers use Arabic among themselves regardless of whether they are at home or in public. This indicates that the use of Arabic is increasing at the expense of Tigrinya. This evidently means that the second generation Tigrinya teenagers' proficiency is shifting toward Arabic rather than being maintained. This study compares to the present one in as much as shifting proficiency in mother tongue is concerned. However, the study differs with the current study in that it is conducted among immigrants. The current study assesses the trend in mother tongue proficiency among the youth in Nairobi County.

Dorian (1981) studies Scottish Gaelic dialect in Sutherland, a community with a long history of bilingualism. The study reveals that social economic changes had converged many speakers of the dominant language, English, into the rural community. The effect of this convergence is that the Gaelic speakers who are traditionally fishermen lost their language when they gradually abandoned their fishing industry and consequently lost their fishing identity. They shifted to English. Like the present study, Dorian studies

language shift, but unlike the current study that studies language shift in Nairobi, She studies language shift in a community, particularly focusing on the adults.

Similarly, Gogonas (2009) uses adolescents of the second-generation Albanian immigrants in Athens to investigate language maintenance and shift. Data are gathered by using the concept of ethnolinguistic vitality and some items of the subjective vitality questionnaire. Findings from this study indicate that in terms of language competence of the children, and on patterns of language use within Albanian households, language shift is going on. While Albanian parents express positive attitudes to language maintenance, practically, majority do not take the necessary measures for intergenerational language transmission. This study resembles the current study on the subject of attitudes and value attached to mother tongue. However, the study is conducted among immigrants and does not assess the role of gender. The current study assesses the influence of gender variable on language shift among the youth in Nairobi County.

Soufa (2009) examines language patterns in three Arabic–Turkish bilingual families through deep interviews held with third-generation representatives of each family. The researcher employed two skills for data collection namely, interviews and content analysis. The results show that shift or maintenance takes different directions within three generations because of, mostly, outside factors shaping the attitude of bilingual speakers. The study reveals that language shift or language maintenance takes different directions depending on outside factors that shape the attitude of bilingual speakers. The study relates to the current one in the sense that factors outside the home such as school, church, friends and other social or formal domains contribute a lot to language

shift in Nairobi County. However, the present study also looks at internal factors such as attitude as a major contributor to language shift in Nairobi County.

De-Kadt (2000) identifies higher preference to use English not only in the public domains of education and the labour market, but also in the domestic context and among social peers. Similarly, De clerk (2000) investigates language behaviour of isiXhosa parents who use their ethnic language but have enrolled their children in schools that use English for instructions, despite the education policy demanding the use of African languages in the lower levels of education. Parents in De Clerk's sample insist on use of English when communicating with their children, either exclusively or alongside IsiXhosa. De clerk also reports the use of English by students from two English-medium schools in Kwa Zulu – Natal and observes that students from both urban and rural school “report English as increasingly being preferred in their home communities, including in the home itself” (p. 98). However, as Deumert (2010) observes, his study does not entirely mean that Bantu languages are being replaced by English as the home language, and therefore, a language shift is occurring. Instead what is documented is “a widening of linguistic repertoire in the home domain, with peers at school or work; that is English being used in addition to other languages” (p. 87). This study therefore matches with the current on the question of language maintenance strategies. The current study sought to establish whether the youth in Nairobi use their mother tongue alongside other languages and whether they see their ethnic languages as significant in establishing their identity. It also sought to establish if the linguistic repertoire among the youth in Nairobi is widening or narrowing.

Nigeria too has its fair share of this challenge of language shift. Like many other African nations, Nigeria has adopted English, the language of the former colonial master, as its official language to enhance linguistic unity in the country. Her major spoken languages are Hausa, Igbo, Yoruba, Fulfulda, Kanuri and Ibibio (Eme 2004). The country's constitution recognises three major languages namely: Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba. However, a UNESCO report on endangered languages (as cited in Eme 2004), notes that Igbo faces the challenge of extinction in the next 50 years if efforts are not made for its survival. Duruaka (2004) posits that the Igbo people display a negative attitude toward their language. The same sentiments are stated by Eme (2004) who notes that some parents especially the educated ones do not communicate Igbo with their children even at home. In some cases, Eme observes, parents prohibit their off springs from using Igbo when conversing with each other. According to Nwandike (2008), factors such as language policy, education and globalization have enhanced the negative attitude towards the ethnic languages therefore increasing the risk of language shift. This situation resembles the situation in Kenya as the same factors have afflicted the Kenyan urban cities and increased the threat of language shift from mother tongue to other languages.

Michieka (2012) investigates mother tongue proficiency among the Kenyan university students. The subjects in this study are 240 Kenyan university students. The participants are youth from different places across the country and represent 32 different ethnic languages. Questionnaires are used as tools of collecting data. Descriptive statistics is used to analyse the data. The results from this study reveal that mother tongue is generally preferred in the home domain. 37% of the respondents prefer to use ethnic languages at home while 35% prefer Kiswahili. Over 62% of the participants prefer

other languages apart from mother tongue. The present study matches with Michieka's as both use Kenyan youths to assess the level of proficiency among them in ethnic languages. They however differ on the fact that Michieka studies a group comprising of youth from different regions while the current study strictly looks at youth from Nairobi County.

Another study is conducted by Muaka (2011) who examines language perception and actual language practices in four different regions in Kenya. Muaka studies two rural areas and two urban regions, which are carefully selected to reflect both rural and urban linguistic behaviours in Kenya. The urban settings are Nairobi and Mombasa while the rural settings are Kakamega and Kangundo. Data are collected through surveys, which focus on participants' background, language practices, attitude, self-evaluation and translation task targeting the evaluation of the participants' proficiency levels in their linguistic repertoires. 273 questionnaires, participant observation and interview strategies are used for data collection.

The study reveals that Kenyan youth live in a diverse and dynamic society, which exposes them to different codes for different linguistic varieties. As a habit, they are able to use these different codes for different functions. The different situations make them construct different language identities that are influenced by their experiences. The present study aims at establishing the current language trend among the youth in Nairobi County. The present study is similar to Muaka's because it aims at assessing youth's proficiency in mother tongue, but different because it confines itself to the urban youth where several factors interfere with the use of the ethnic languages. The study explores whether the youth have any functional use for ethnic languages.

2.7 Language Attitude

There is a general agreement among scholars that attaining and using a language is easier if people have a positive attitude to it and to its speakers (Garret, 2010; Karaha, 2007; Zhang and Slaughter-Defoe, 2009). This is true because language does not only affect the reactions of the speakers, but it also helps to predict the reaction of others in language choice and influences this choice (Garret, 2010). Holmes et al. (1993) underscore the importance of language attitude in shifting languages. Baker (1992) posits “In the life of a language, attitude to that language appears to be important in language restoration, preservation, decay or death” (p. 9). Holmes et al. (1993) see language attitude as quite significant in determining language choice in language shift and maintenance among Tongan, Greek and Chinese communities in New Zealand. Holmes et al. (2001) concludes that positive attitude encourages the speakers of the minority language to use or to speak their language in various domains. This enabled them to preserve their language against shift to the mainstream language. A positive attitude is a very significant force in maintaining a language.

Garret, (2010) proposes three ways of investigating attitudes: societal treatment studies, direct measures and indirect measures. Garret proposes the view that societal treatment method involves inferring respondents’ attitudes from policy documents, media scripts, advertisements and other sources. Direct measures involve asking questions to participants regarding their language attitudes, also known as evaluation preference (Garret, 2010). This is usually done through the use of interviews, surveys and questionnaires. Lastly, the indirect method refers to obtaining the people’s attitude using methods that do not involve asking direct questions to participants. The most common of this methods is the matched guise technique (Garret, 2010). The direct

method is the most commonly used and it is used in the present study. Assessment of attitude in this study is relevant in establishing youth's attitude towards the ethnic languages which is paramount in deciding if language maintenance is on course.

2. 7.1 Studies on Attitude on Language Shift

According to Sonaiya (2003), claims of attitude shift from indigenous languages to national or European languages have raised concerns of drastic language shift and death. Scholars have in the past expressed concern over the linguistic situation in Africa and many put the blame on the presence of the European languages as the primary threat to their indigenous languages. Wa Thiong'o (as cited in Fink, 2005) accuses the ex-colonial languages of causing linguistic imperialism and linguistic inefficiency. As a matter of fact, a survey conducted by Batibo (2005) gives a list of all endangered languages across the continent. The main cause of these deaths is language contact. The situation has always been that a regional language such as Swahili, Somali, Arabic, Ahmaric or Hausa suffocates smaller others with which they come into contact. Language contact is seen as a predecessor of language shift in Africa (Fink, 2005). Furthermore, there is over emphasis on the foreign languages such as English and French when in pursuit of white colour jobs, whose consequence is that proficiency in one's mother tongue is totally ignored and considered as inconsequential. This attitude enhances the likelihood of a language shift.

In a study conducted in Congo, it is observed that attitude is changing from African languages to European languages (Fink, 2005). The survey is conducted to investigate language attitudes across age groups. In this study, the survey questions are designed to examine attitude in behavioural choices, evaluations and beliefs. On behaviour,

respondents are asked to state the language preferred when they are listening to the radio for news, expressing anger and when they come across a new person of the opposite sex. This is a test aimed at determining the most beautiful, most intelligent, most trustworthy and friendly language. The study assesses the participants' attitude towards European language, in this case French; national languages, that is, Lingala and Munukutuba and the 50 mother tongues used in Congo. The data collected reveal a pattern of attitude shift across age group towards the three languages. The analysis on the data gathered reveals that older respondents demonstrate more value for the mother tongue, while younger respondents demonstrate an inclination towards French and the national languages. This study is similar to the present as both use the survey design and also use questionnaires for data collection. It is however different because it compares the attitude of the older generation to that of younger generations, while the current study only focuses on the attitude of the youth to their mother tongue in Nairobi County.

Further, the attitude that English is superior to African languages is witnessed in Ghana (Batibo, 2005). Ghana, a multilingual society, has elevated English as the standard or official language. English, which is the language of the former colonial master, is given this priority because no suitable modality could be used to elevate any other indigenous language for fear that this might lead to animosity. Ghanaians have therefore placed a high premium on the English language and it has been observed that in the last few years, there has been a tendency for many children born and raised in urban centres to acquire this ex-colonial language as their first language. This is brought about by inter-ethnic marriages. In this kind of a marriage, English becomes the common language and therefore in the absence of a common mother tongue, it becomes the primary

language or the mother tongue in such a family. This is decided based on personal attitude (Batibo, 2005).

In Ghana, just like in many other ex-colonies, there is generally the attitude that English will make children have a better chance in intellectual, social and economic development (Batibo, 2005). Consequently, this has led to a situation in which the youth have shifted to using English other than the ethnic languages. This finding is relevant to the current study because it relates closely to the Kenyan situation where English is seen as the language of success and therefore, favoured over the ethnic languages.

Dweik and Qawar (2015) investigate language choice among Arabs of Quebec-Canada. Dweik and Qawar also explore Arabs' attitudes towards Arabic, French and English in particular and what has led to the use of these languages. In order to achieve the objectives of the study, a sample is selected that comprises of 100 Arab respondents who reside in Quebec-Canada, covering different age ranges, gender, and educational backgrounds. The data collection instrument for the study is a questionnaire. Results show that Arabs of Quebec-Canada have positive attitudes towards Arabic, English and French. They freely communicate in Arabic language in domains such as home (with family members), in worship places and when listening to the radio. In addition, they use English and French in Government offices and formal applications and in educational institutions. Results also show that Arabs of Quebec mix these languages in the domain of neighbourhood, with media and friends. This study compares to the current study in that it establishes the role of attitudes in language shift, but different in that it is conducted among a minority ethnic group and includes people of all ages.

Tawalbeh, Dagamseh and Al-Matrafi (2013) explore the issue of language maintenance and shift among the Saudi Hausa people in the city of Mecca. The objective is to determine the extent of language shift or maintenance among Saudi Hausa as well as to gain an insight into the effect of gender on language shift or maintenance. The data is collected by means of interviews, questionnaire and observations. Information relating to the respondents' language proficiency, language use in different domains, and attitudes towards Hausa and Arabic is gathered. The findings indicate that Saudi Hausa people do not portray signs of language maintenance and have a limited ability in four Hausa language skill areas. In contrast, Arabic is found to be being used in almost all communication domains and socio-religious practices. The results prove that there has been a fast shift among Saudi Hausa towards Arabic and such a shift could be attributed to socio-economic and religious reasons as well as negative attitudinal factors.

First, the Saudi Hausa speakers' negative attitude towards their ethnic language and the reduced appreciation towards it have led to a shift towards Arabic. Of course, when the minority language is seen as a symbol of identity, then the chances of its survival and maintenance are greater. The majority of Saudi Hausa have forgotten their Hausa roots, customs and traditions. Above all, most, if not all of them never visited their native country and have no wish to do so. Moreover, the majority of them have already forgotten their dances, national songs, and food. This study is, therefore, relevant to the current study in that it underscores the important role of attitude in language shift. However, it differs in that it is limited to members of one ethnic community and includes people of all ages. The current study focuses on examining the attitude of the multi-cultural youth in Nairobi County towards their mother tongue.

Errihani (2008) explores the dynamics of language attitudes towards the main languages used in Morocco. This is especially towards the Berber language, and the effects that these attitudes are likely to have on the application of the language policy that demands that all Moroccan children learn Berber, without consideration of their linguistic or ethnic backgrounds. Errihani (2008) investigates the views of a large and representative sampling of Moroccans regarding the inclusion of Berber in the educational fabric of Morocco. The findings are based on information collected through interviews, participant observations, and a survey of 531 individuals who are requested to answer a fourteen-question questionnaire. The study establishes that negative attitudes towards some languages exist and these attitudes eventually affect the state's attempt at implementing the language policy of making Berber a mandatory subject of study as a means of maintaining and promoting this language. The study is, therefore, similar to the present study in that it establishes the role of attitudes on language shift but different in the sense that it involves people of all ages unlike the current study which considers only the youth.

Rwanda is another African state with a similar language trend. Kinyarwanda is described as a unifier and Rwandese believe that all Rwandans should speak it. Unlike most African states, Rwanda has one language and it is believed that 99.4% of the population can speak Kinyarwanda and approximately 90% of Rwandans speak only Kinyarwanda (Rosendal, 2009). Indeed, Kinyarwanda is the language of instruction in primary schools and is generally preferred in daily life and at official public functions. However, despite the widespread use of Kinyarwanda, mass literacy in Kinyarwanda remains weak. Relatively few high-quality books with popular appeals are available in the language. There is a stiff competition for this appeal from English and French where

a recent study has revealed that billboards and signs in Kinyarwanda ranked below those in Western languages in the frequency of use (Rosendal, 2009). This study is similar to the current study in that it focuses on language shift but different in that it is limited to the advertising domain and includes people of all ages. However, the current study explores the phenomenon of language shift among the youth in Nairobi County.

In terms of mass literacy, Kinyarwanda has received the same neglect, as has been the fate of many African languages. The language has remained less developed because it is not the language of instruction beyond primary school (Rassool, 2007). Students who join secondary schools go through a form of transitional bilingualism as they shift from learning in their mother tongue to learning in an ex-colonial language. Consequently, as Kinyarwanda enjoys the advantage of being the only non-colonial language widely spoken in Rwanda, it is not the primary language of cultural, social and economic value (Samuelson and Freedman, 2010). Moreover, the drop of French as a co-official has given English an undue advantage over other languages (Gahigi, 2008). Tests at secondary and tertiary level are set in English that is also the medium of instruction with Kinyarwanda taught as a subject. Today, years after the wars and genocide, many Rwandan elites have learned some English, but the language remains largely the domain of the elite and the powerful. This overemphasis on English is gradually killing ethnicity in Rwanda and, therefore, threatening the survival of the indigenous language, like in many other African nations.

2.8 Growth and Development of Sheng

Sheng is a youth language that evolved from the Eastland of Nairobi, but which has now spread across the whole of Nairobi and even penetrated the rural areas (Abdulaziz

and Osinde 1997). Abdulaziz and Osinde (1997) observe that Sheng was created by Kenyan youth living in multi-ethnic neighbourhoods, who would skip school and hide in small crowded places to experiment on drinking and smoking. The rogue youth invented the code for communication in order to shut out the adults and younger siblings from their conversations. This code grew gradually to become the present day Sheng, which has attained the status of the youth vernacular in urban areas and generally all over the country (Mutiga, 2013). Presently, Sheng is not only used in the original domain as a language for estates gangs and street boys and hawkers, but it is widespread across Kenya as well as in East African countries such as Tanzania and Uganda (Momanyi, 2009).

It is also noted that the Sheng language has gained great popularity in certain social and business circles such as transport industry and among traders in both formal and informal sectors (Mutiga, 2013). It is also accepted as the primary language in some families especially the families of the inventors of this language, who are now adults in their late forties or fifties. Children in these families have not been exposed to any other language and therefore learn Sheng as their home language. They later learn English and Kiswahili after interacting with the society and being exposed to these languages through education. This means that such children never learn their ethnic languages (Mutiga, 2013).

Sheng popularity has also been increased by the recognition it has received from the media. Sheng has received great support from the media as the media supporters have embraced it to identify with the large and expanding population of Sheng speakers. It is found in broadcasting programmes such as Vitimbi and Vioja Mahakamani in KBC

and Mashtaka and Makutano on the Citizen Television among others. These broadcasts have had a lasting linguistic impact on school children. Momanyi (2009) notes that many young Sheng speakers do not have fluency in their ethnic languages. Unfortunately, it is these ethnic languages that transmit family values, behaviour patterns, skill and the whole cultural output (Mutiga, 2013).

2.8.1 Impact of Sheng on Language Shift

Language shift also known as language transfer entails an individual or an entire speech community reducing the functions of its native language or even stopping using it all together and replacing it with another language. The preferred language is generally one that is considered to have some benefits such as promising an upward mobility on the social ladder or a language of peer identity (Mutiga, 2013). The worst case scenario in language shift is where speakers in a community decide to abandon their first language in favour of another language and hence acquire the status of bilinguals. Then, by and by, they stop using their own ethnic language and continue using that other language in all the domains. This is what is referred to linguistically as assimilation. Language is an important tool of communication. However when families fail to teach the new generation their ethnic language, the generation is encouraged to learn and use another language especially if that language has benefits such as being more socially prestigious, is economically powerful and promises upward mobility and a brighter future. Usually, languages of communities with a huge population replace the minority languages as older speakers die and the younger ones adopt a more useful tongue. Sheng for instance is popular with the youth because of social pressure, the secrecy and the need to fit with the urbanites. In Nairobi, Sheng is slowly replacing the ethnic languages.

2.9 Language Shift and Gender

The difference in the use of language between the male and female gender is well researched and well discussed in linguistic studies. In confirming this, Holmes (as cited in Wardhaugh, 2006) outlines the following five important claims on how the two are different. These claims are as follows: that women and men display different patterns of language use; that women tend to focus on the emotional functions of a conversation more often than men do; that women have the habit of using linguistic devices that enhance cohesion or unity more often than their male counterparts do; that while women tend to interact in ways which maintain and enhance solidarity, men tend to interact in ways which will assert and improve their power and status.

The role of gender in language shift is collaborated by a case study by Cohn and Ravindranath (2014) which surveys gender class and language preference among students in Yogyakarta in Indonesia. The survey involves young Javanese. The sample includes children from two primary schools and two junior high schools. 108 students are involved whose parents are ethnically Javanese and speakers of Javanese. The data collected involves students' language use patterns, socio-economic background and their attitudes towards Javanese. Natural recording of language use, interviews and surveys on language use and economic background, participant observation and questionnaires are the main activities. From this case study, a number of things are noted. First, there is a striking difference between working class and middle class respondents concerning language use. Second, there is a contrast along gender lines between the attitudes of boys and girls, and mothers and fathers. This also suggests an underlying difference, perhaps in values whereby males attach more significance to in-

group solidarity using Javanese rather than striving for social and educational advancement through the use of Indonesian. This study relates to the present study on the question of role of gender on language shift. While Cohn and Ravindranath (2014) study focuses on gender influence on language choice, the current study investigates the role of gender in enhancing language shift among the youth in Nairobi County.

In Van der Slik, VanHout and Schepens' (2015) study, gender differences are analysed across countries of origin and continents, and across mother tongues and language families, using a large-scale database, containing information on 27,119 adult learners of Dutch as a second language. Female learners consistently outperform male learners in speaking and writing proficiency in Dutch as a second language. This gender gap remains remarkably robust and constant when other learner characteristics are taken into account, such as education, age on arrival, length of residence and hours of studying Dutch. For reading and listening skills in Dutch, no gender gap is found. In addition, Van der Slik, VanHout and Schepens' study find that gender affects the language skills in Dutch for speaking, writing, reading, and listening. Female language learners turn out to profit more from higher educational training than male learners do in adult second language acquisition. Van der Slik, VanHout and Schepens' study is, therefore, similar to the present study in that it shows the relationship between gender and language shift; however, it has considered people of all ages while the current study only studies the youth.

Clyne (2003) examines the dynamics of contact between immigrant languages in Australia. The languages discussed are German, Dutch, Hungarian, Italian, Spanish, Croatian, and Vietnamese. Clyne analyses how and why the languages change and why

some survive longer than others in the Australian context. Immigrant generations are compared as well as bilinguals with trilinguals. The synthesis Clyne derives from the analyses of his data shows that established linear models cannot cover the dynamics of language contact. He observes that in more established communities, older males adapt to the main language faster than older women. This happens on the principle that traditionally, males are expected to provide for the family. Consequently, they often leave the confines of their dwelling places to work. This ensures that they get adequate chances to interact with the dominant language more than the older women who are confined at home to take care of the families. As a result, they see no need to use the dominant language since their ethnic language sufficiently addresses their communication needs. Clyne's study relates to the current study in that it supports the role of gender in language shift; however, it is different in that it is limited to immigrant's languages while the present study concentrates on Kenyan youth. The current study assesses the influence of gender variable on language shift among the youth in Nairobi County.

Murkherjee (1996) studies the case of the Panjab and Bengalis in New Delhi where men of all ages shift to Hindi faster than women. The women mostly do domestic chores at home; hence, they maintain their ethnic languages and never find it reasonable to learn a new language. However, the younger women in pursuit of professional careers seek the use of the dominant language for career progression hence do not make any effort to maintain the ethnic languages as the older women do. Murkherjee's study is relevant to the present one on the question of gender and language shift. The present study aims at assessing the role of gender in language shift as the respondents are exposed to similar experiences.

Granhemat, Abdullah, Heng and Tan (2015) investigate the impact of gender on the choices of languages among Malaysian youths in the transaction domain of language use. Data about the demographic profiles of the respondents and the choices of languages in the transaction domain of language use is collected through a self-administrated questionnaire survey. SPSS software is used to run analyses such as determining the respondents' most used languages. Chi-square tests are done to find out the relationships between variables. The results indicate that gender is not a determinant of language choice in the transaction domain of language use. This study is, therefore, relevant to the present study on the findings of the gender variable. The difference is that it is conducted among University students only. The current study, however, seeks to determine the role of gender variable on language shift among the youth in Nairobi County.

The purpose of Hamdani (2012) study is to discover and analyse the phenomenon of language choice and gender toward teenagers, which indicates the language death of Sudanese language. The study involves 134 (53 males and 81 females) university students; the first and third grades of Pharmacy and Management Programs at University of Garut. The participants are given ten questions on the use of language toward their male and female friends. Using Chi square test, the results show that there is influence of gender in determining the language of choice among teenagers. For code-switching, there is no specific difference between males (48) and females (50). However, the difference occurs when females use code-mixing. Actually, the number is bigger for females (75) than for males (32). From this information, the study concludes that gender totally influences code-mixing among teenagers. The study is,

therefore, similar to the current study in that it establishes the relationship between gender and language shift but different in that it does not identify specific domains such as the formal and informal domains considered in the current study.

A study by Smith-Heffner (2009) explores the shift from formal styles of Javanese to the use of the national language, Indonesian. This occurs within the context of new educational and social opportunities for Javanese youth. Smith-Heffner uses ethnographic observations, interviews, and survey data, gathered over a nine-year period to explore the shift away from more formal styles of Javanese to the use of the national language, within the context of new educational and social opportunities for Javanese youth. Smith -Heffner (2009) looks at gender discrepancy in language attitudes and considers how socialization and cultural ideologies regarding men's and women's relationship to language, shape those attitudes. Smith-Heffner's study is relevant to the current study in that it provides empirical evidence of gender's role in language shift and more so among the youth. However, it differs with the present study in that it is conducted in Indonesia which has a different social-cultural fabric to that of Nairobi County, Kenya. Empirical evidence was, therefore, sought in the Kenyan context to assess the influence of gender variable on language shift among the youth in Nairobi County.

2.10 Language Shift and Ethnicity

The question of ethnicity cannot be overlooked in the assessment of factors influencing language shift. Language plays an important role in defining who we are and makes us recognisable to other members of our particular speech community. Shannon (2007) views language as the most important part of developing ethnic identity. However, minority languages are held in such low esteem in the world today. Grillo (1989)

describes the ideology of contempt exhibited so consistently towards minority languages. Grillo states that subordinated languages are despised languages. Grillo (1989) further states that, the negative view of ethnicity in academic and popular discourses arises from its unfavourable juxtaposition historically with national identity and recently globalization and new forms of global identity. For example, it is common in academic discourses to view ethnicity as socially and politically constructed as essentially an anti-modern and regressive phenomenon that is mobilized to achieve certain self-centred political ends. As a result, the cultural stuff of ethnicity, that is, the ancestry, culture, religion and language to which such groups regularly lay claim to is regarded as largely fictitious and fabricated. Indeed, many academic commentators view ethnicity as simply a convenient construct meant for engendering ethnic solidarity for social and political action.

Many ethnic groups have converged in the UK over centuries through migration. These include Dutch speaking Flemings during the fifteenth century; Spanish and Portuguese during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries; and Eastern migrants as well as Arabic and German speakers, during the nineteenth century (Alladina and Edwards, 1991; Gibson, 2007). Edwards (2009) looks into two major waves of migration to post war Britain. These are migration to UK after the World War 11 where people were to provide labour in the reconstruction of the nation (Martin 2010). This wave brought aboard people from common wealth and former British colonies such as Carribean, South Asian countries and migrants from Kenya and Uganda, majorly Gujarat speakers who mainly came in as political refugees (Stubbs, 1985)

The second set of migrants settled in Britain at the beginning of the new millennium. This group of migrants were more cosmopolitan and came from different parts of the world. According to the UK 2011 national census, ethnic minorities' population had almost risen to 15% of the population of England and Wales. This is the first census to investigate directly the linguistic minority languages by asking the participants' main language, and their level of English proficiency. The census revealed that around 91% of the population spoke English as their main home language. Around 9% spoke other languages besides English at home and 4% of those did not speak English as the main language in the home domain.

Linguistic diversity in the UK is also revealed through the media and social services. By 2004, approximately 40 newspapers were serving 11 different minority language communities (Edward, 2004). Police services in London were also provided in ten different languages with authorities having to engage a translator when interrogating an individual from a minority group (Salverda, 2002). Following this situation where children with different ethnic needs converged in schools, the UK government decides to initiate complementary schools where minority ethnic groups would teach their youth their languages to help maintain this heritage languages threatened with a shift due to loss of domain of use especially among the youth. This was received differently as demonstrated.

Francis et al. (2009) studies pupil's motivation for attending complementary schools, their attitude to these schools and the effect on developing their learner and social identities. It is found out that one of the reasons students attend these schools is to maintain the heritage languages and develop literacy in it. The study finds out that the

main reason for studying Chinese among the young Chinese migrants in UK is to maintain their heritage culture by preserving it which is perceived as necessary for Chinese identity. This study relates to the current study because it seeks to assess the learners' attitude to their minority language, which is instrumental in language maintenance. It differs in the sense that it studies the attitude of migrants while the current study looks at youth in Nairobi County. A similar study by Archer et al. (2009) revealed that pupils preferred learning in mainstream schools as they were taught on weekends.

Thomas (2011) examines language transitions among the children of Caribbean immigrants in the US from two main perspectives. First, speed of language transitions among children in French and Spanish-Caribbean immigrant families are compared. Second, the mediating roles of socio-demographic factors and sibling characteristics in language transitions are also examined. The results reveal that with increasing assimilation, children in French-Caribbean families experience a faster transition to English monolingualism than their counterparts with Spanish-Caribbean parents. Race and ethnicity also play important roles in mediating language transitions in Caribbean immigrant families. These roles appear to work through processes associated with the choice between an ethnic identity rather than a US racial identity. As such, even though children of Spanish-Caribbean families have similar parental language-origins, those identified as Hispanic are less likely to speak only English, presumably retaining the use of Spanish longer, than their Black or White counterparts. At the same time, among second-generation children, there is suggestive evidence that children identified as Whites have faster language transitions relative to other children. The study is similar

in that it shows the role of ethnicity on language shift. However, it differs with the present study in that it focuses on children while the current study focuses on the youth.

According to Gurr (2000), popular commentary reflects a similar negative opinion towards ethnicity. Fuelled by lurid media reports of ethnic conflicts, the public sees ethnicity as the principal cause of most of today's social and political problems. Places such as Rwanda, Sri-Lanka, Northern Ireland and former Yugoslavia suggest starkly the destructive and unproductive nature of ethnicity and ethnic mobilization. Indeed since the end of the cold war, ethnic languages have been being blamed as the most common source of political unrest in the world today. A case in point is the 2008 post-election violence in Kenya. These views are relevant to the current study because Nairobi County is a multi-ethnic community; hence, the call for ethnic harmony through use of the official languages may limit the acquisition of the ethnic languages. The present study seeks to verify whether ethnicity has contributed in any way to language shift among the youth in Nairobi.

Granhemat et al. (2015) examines the influence of ethnicity on the choices of languages of Malaysian youths in the transaction domain of language use. Data about the demographic profiles of the respondents and the choices of languages in the transaction domain of language use is collected through a self-administrated questionnaire survey. SPSS software is used to run analyses such as determining the respondents' most used languages and Chi-square test to find out the relationship between variables. According to the results, the linguistic situation in Malaysia is similar to a diglossic situation. The issue of ethnicity is noted to be influential in the choice and use of linguistic codes among the Malaysian youths. This study is, therefore, relevant to this study as the

findings give support to the assumption that ethnicity influences language shift. The difference is that the study is conducted among university students only. The current study, therefore, determines the role of ethnicity as a variable on language shift among the youth in Nairobi County.

Kenya is a multi-ethnic community in which over 42 indigenous languages are spoken (Batibo, 2005. Omondi (2012) observes that many Kenyans adore their ethnic languages. This claim is supported by the fact that most of these ethnic languages provide their speakers a way of expressing their ethnic identities (Omondi, 2012). These indigenous languages thrive in rural areas where the community is more homogenous and people lack proficiency in English and Kiswahili.

In 2009 Kenya’s population and Housing Census, it was revealed that the total population stood at 38.6 million. The Census revealed that the Kikuyu, Kalenjin, Luo, Kamba and the Luyhia were the major ethnic communities in the country. The distribution of these languages is illustrated below.

Table: 2.1 Distribution of Kenyan Ethnic Languages from 2009 Population Census.

ETHNIC GROUP	POPULATION
Kikuyu	6,622,576
Luyhia	5,338,666
Kalenjin	4,967,328
Luo	4,044,440
Kamba	3,893,157

Omondi (2012) carries out a study in a place called Kiboswa to show how ethnicity determines language behavior. The investigation includes two communities that is Luo and Luhya. The study examines what happens when two mutually unintelligible languages come into contact. The goal of the paper is to correlate three communication strategies with ethnicity in order to show how language loyalties interplay with ethnicity in a rural bilingual speech community in Africa. Omondi analyses data from two unofficial indigenous languages in Kenya. From the analyses carried out, it emerges that when Luo and Luyhia languages are in contact there are three possible outcomes: speech divergence, speech convergence and code switching. The Luo respondents in this study are found to employ more speech divergence than their Luhya counterparts. As regards speech convergence, Luyhias outscore Luos. Code switching, which is characterized by very low mean scores in the two ethnic groups, is the least preferred mode of communication. Omondi also reveals that each of the three ways serve a different social function. The study is, therefore, relevant to the current study in that it analyses the role of ethnicity in language shift but differs in that only two languages are considered and people of all ages are included.

Obondo (1996) carries out a study on a group of Luo urban children in Nairobi. The children are asked to share narratives in Dholuo. The narratives are characterised by a great deal of codeswitching, lexical borrowing from the dominant languages such as Kiswahili and English. The study by Obondo is relevant to the current study because it reveals that Dholuo is losing its domain as children lose fluency in it and depend on borrowing and code switching. It however differs from the current study in methodology. In the present study, students of diverse ethnic groups from day public secondary schools in Nairobi fill questionnaires while in Obondo's study, children from

the Luo community are involved in story-telling. The two studies, nonetheless aim at assessing the status of the ethnic languages in Nairobi.

2.11 Theoretical Framework

This study is based on Domain Theory (henceforth DT) which is derived from sociolinguistics. The DT was introduced by Schmidt- Rohr in 1932 and posits that as a social and cultural phenomenon, language cannot be studied without the social context in which communication takes place. That is, the way the society members choose varieties of a language or switch towards another code can determine the influence of social factors on language choice (Fishman 1972). In society, for example, one may be concerned with dyadic encounters, small group interaction, large group functioning, the articulation of social classes, contacts and contracts between entire nations. Furthermore, Fishman (1977), clearly states that each of these social groupings may be examined with respect to heterogeneity of composition, permeability of group barriers, status-role pattern and context of interaction, norm restrictiveness and stability.

In Fishman's version of the Domain Theory of language, domains are described as theoretical constructs that can explain language, which are supposed to be a more powerful explanatory tool than the observable parameters like topic, place, and interlocutor (Fishman, 1972). Fishman's domain analysis describes the use of languages in various institutional contexts in a multilingual society. That is, "domains attempt to designate the major clusters of interaction situations that occur in particular multilingual settings' (p. 19). Fishman further states that there are five domains of language use. These domains include family, friendship, religion, education and work domain.

Similar views are expressed by Holmes (2008), who identifies the same typical domains in a speech community. Sahgal (1991) identifies three domains of language use in India. These are family, friendly and institutional domains. Another scholar by the name of Gorlach (1991) posits that in countries where English is a native language, the society has used its language for a number of functions but in India and Singapore where English has been handled as a secondary language, English has been restricted for administrative purposes. It is also used for law, media and in literature. Other functions of language have been strictly reserved for the mother tongue.

The current study is majorly concerned with the language choice in a number of domains in order to establish whether mother tongues are part of the choices. Indeed, DT informs this study because Nairobi County, which is a multilingual society, presents different domains such as family, school, church, government and social institutions. These domains demand different languages especially among the youth. In most cases, English and Kiswahili are preferred in formal domains. Sheng and Kiswahili dominate at home and peer activities. This pattern isolates the indigenous languages which are not assigned a domain for use or function among the youth. Michieka (2005) clearly notes that the Kenyan language policy presents the distribution of power among languages but has not assigned the African languages any role in intellectual realms as it has done others. DT, therefore, helps to explain the reason why there is a likelihood of language shift away from the ethnic languages in Nairobi County. The respondents indicate in the questionnaire the languages they use in different domains. This data would enable the researcher to identify domains where mother tongue is used by the youth if at all they do.

2.12 Summary of the Chapter

Chapter two has presented a literature review on language shift. Extensive literature has been reviewed on the phenomenon of language shift and its determinants. In particular, empirical studies have been reviewed on attitudes towards language, gender and language shift as well as ethnicity and language shift. Reviewed literature suggests that age, gender and ethnicity variables have a significant effect on language shift. Methodology is also reviewed to inform the current study in the best practices of conducting such a study while gaps are identified to justify the need for the current study. The theoretical framework on which the study is anchored is also discussed here. The next chapter deals with research methodology.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the research methodology that was applied in conducting this study. The chapter has twelve sub-sections as listed below. The research design, the research location, the target population, the sample size and the sampling procedures, the research instruments, the validity of instruments, the reliability of the instrument, data collection procedures, the data analysis and presentation and finally, the ethical issues.

3.2 Research Design

A Research design can be explained as the plan of action which gives the direction of operation to the researcher and propagates the process of enquiry (Cohen and Manion, 2000). The research process becomes purposeful, meaningful and systematic if the pattern to carry out research blends well with research objectives. This study, therefore, adopted the *ex-post facto research* design. Kothari (2004), states that the *ex-post facto* design is appropriate where the researcher only describes the state of affairs as it exists at present. Kothari further states that “*ex-post facto research* projects are used for descriptive studies in which researchers wish to measure items such as the frequency of shopping, preferences of people among other things” (p.5). In the current study, the researcher investigated and described the phenomenon of language shift among the youth in Nairobi County. This is a matter of choice and preference hence, the applicability of the *ex-post facto design*.

3.3 Location of the Study

The current study was conducted in Nairobi County which is the capital city of Kenya. The County has nine Sub Counties namely: Starehe, Makadara, Langata, Kamukunji, Westlands, Kasarani, Dagoretti, Embakasi and Njiru (see Appendix 3). The choice of Nairobi County for this study is guided by the fact that the city is ethnically diverse with all major ethnic groups in Kenya residing there. These include Luo, Luhya, Kamba and many others. The population comprises of approximately 20% Kikuyu, 14% Luo, 13% Kamba, 11% Kalenjin among others (Webb and Sure, 2000). There are also many Asians, Europeans and Somalis. Its economic prospects have seen many people move from the rural areas to settle in Nairobi. Consequently, Nairobi is a multilingual and multi-ethnic community hence appropriate for this study.

3.4 Target Population

The population of the study included students in public day secondary schools in three Sub Counties in Nairobi County. These were Starehe, Kamukunji and Njiru sub counties. The study targeted youth born and bred in the city who would have minimal contact with their ethnic communities in order to assess how proficient they are in indigenous languages. Public day schools were preferred for this study because their catchment area is Nairobi, unlike boarding schools which can admit students from all over the country including the rural areas. Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), claims that 30% of the target population is sufficient in a descriptive study. Therefore, 30% of the 9 sub- counties is 3. Three sub- counties were selected for the study. The three Sub Counties, Kamukunji, Starehe and Njiru represent 30% of the nine counties of Nairobi County. Kamukunji and Starehe districts are, on one hand, situated at the centre of Nairobi County (cf. Appendix 4). They also have a better representation of the public

day schools compared to other Sub Counties (cf Appendix 3 & 4). Njiru sub-county, on the other hand is more peripheral but has the highest number of public day schools in Nairobi County (see Appendix 3 & 4). Records from the County Director of Education office indicated that there are 22 public day and 6 public boarding schools in the area of study. The target population for this study was therefore, the 8692 students in the 22 public day schools in Kamukunji, Starehe and Njiru Sub-Counties of Nairobi County. The distribution of these schools and their student population is displayed on the table below.

Table 3.1: Distribution of the Public Secondary Schools in the Three Sub-Counties of Nairobi County in 2016

District	Public Day Schools	Student Population	Teacher Population
Kamukunji	6	3197	135
Starehe	7	2803	111
Njiru	9	2692	73
Total	22	8692	319

Data Obtained From Nairobi County Educational Office.

3.5 Sample Size and Sampling Procedures

A sample is a subsection of a larger population that an investigator studies in order to make a valid estimate of the characteristics under study in the population (Kool, 1994). As long as a sample is properly constituted, it is capable of capturing the salient characteristics of the defined population. To accomplish this requirement, probability sampling technique is required so as to come up with an unbiased sample (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2003). Kisilu and Tromp (2011), indicate that probability sampling

entails use of random sampling that allows all entities in the target population to have an equal chance of being picked.

In this study, stratified and simple random sampling procedures were used. Stratified random sampling involves dividing the population into homogeneous subgroups and then taking a simple random sample in each subgroup. Simple random sampling on the other hand involves obtaining the well-defined population and then picking the required number through an established procedure. In the present study, the starting point was to determine the number of schools whose students would participate in the study. The schools (see Table 3.1) were stratified according to their sub counties, that is, public day schools at Kamukunji, Starehe and Njiru. Data from Nairobi County Educational Office showed that there were 22 Public Day secondary schools in the area of study. Going by Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), 30% of the target population is sufficient in a descriptive study. Consequently, 30% of 22 gave seven schools. The simple random sampling was used to select the seven schools in the ratio of 2:2:3. This ratio was preferred because Kamukunji and Starehe had six and seven public day schools respectively but with a higher student population than Njiru which had nine public day schools but a lower population (see Table 3.1).

14 form three students were selected from the sampled schools through simple random. A standard class is supposed to have 45 students. 30% of 45 led to 14 students. This class was selected because the form one's and two's were considered to be relatively new to the school and therefore may not have had a long exposure to the school domain as their senior counterparts and may have been shy to give reliable data. The form fours were exempted as they were busy preparing for a major exam, Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) and were therefore exempted from the study.

Consequently, the study involved 98 students and 7 language teachers purposively selected. Purposive sampling is a procedure that sees the researcher select a number of people believed to possess the desired characteristics and are therefore thought to be helpful for the study (Kisilu and Tromp, 2011). Purposive sampling aids the researcher to select a case because it portrays some characteristics that the researcher wishes to investigate. In view of this, language teachers were considered reliable for the study as they interact more with students on language proficiency in both written and spoken form and would be at a position to note the students' language behaviour more than other teachers. The teachers completed questionnaires to provide their views on the topic.

3.6 Research Instruments

Data used for this study were collected with the help of questionnaires that were filled by both students and teachers. The following were the reasons why this tool was preferred for data collection. Firstly, they can reach out to many respondents at a very short time. Since the data were collected in the late afternoon after classes, the questionnaire proved to be most efficient. Secondly, it provides some sense of security to the respondents since they do not disclose their identity. This makes the respondents to give truthful and reliable information. Kothari and Pals (1993) observe that using questionnaires for collection of data is the best instrument in a survey research as they help in gathering data pertaining to opinions, attitude, preferences and perceptions of the respondents. The fact that language shift is a product of language attitude played a crucial role in choosing questionnaires as tools of data collection. This is so because questionnaires are recommended for a study involving choice and attitude.

The questionnaires used were therefore designed to have three sections. These sections were labelled A, B, C. (cf. Appendix 1). Section A comprised of simple answer questions which would identify the gender, ethnicity and language preference of the respondents. This was important as the collected data would present information that was required for the third objective that sought to assess the impact of gender on language shift among the young people in Nairobi County. Students also needed to indicate their ethnicity in order to provide data for the fourth objective whose aim was to assess the effect of ethnicity on language shift among the youth in Nairobi County. Section B interrogated the role of language choice and ethnic language by the youth in different domains in Nairobi County while section C was a Likert scale to assist the researcher to identify the youth's attitude towards mother tongue in Nairobi County.

3.7 Validity of Instruments

Validity is described by Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), as the ability of an instrument to be able to measure what it is made to measure. Airasian and Gray (2000) explain that validity deals with issues such as whether one is measuring suitable indicators of the idea and the accuracy of the results to the extent of what it is meant to measure. The instrument was validated by ascertaining the fact that the items were in line with the stated objectives of the study. Validation was further verified through piloting of the instrument. Piloting is the process through which a researcher puts the instruments, in this case questionnaire, to test on a small sample of the population to prove their effectiveness (Kisilu and Tromp, 2011). According to Murray (2003), piloting helps to identify vagueness of items and questions for improvement. Orodho (2005) gives a recommendation that the sample, which is to be used in the pilot study, should be equal to 10% of the sample in the main study. Therefore, the pilot study involved two (2)

language teachers and 10 students drawn from two (2) schools. Participants in the pilot study did not participate in the main study.

3.8 Reliability of the Instruments

Reliability of an instrument considers to what extent an instrument can generate similar results when used two or more times to gather data from a given population (Leedy and Ormrod, 2005). A tool is considered as reliable if it is consistent in yielding the same outcome when measurements of the same subjects are repeated and taken under the same conditions. To prove validity of the current instruments, the data gathered from the pilot study was used to work out the reliability of the instrument. Cronbach's coefficient method was effected to determine the internal consistency of the item. This method is suitable owing to the fact that it requires only a single application of the instrument (Cohen and Swerdlik, 2005). In social sciences generally, acceptable reliability coefficient ranges from 0.7 to 1.0 (George and Mallery, 2003). Thus, the items are considered reliable if the scale shows a reliability coefficient of 0.7 and above. This figure is always considered desirable for consistency levels (Fraenkel and Wallen, 2000). A reliability coefficient of 0.83 was achieved in this study and consequently the instrument was taken to be reliable for use in this study.

3.9 Data Collection Procedures

In a research, data collection refers to gathering specific information aimed at proving or refuting some facts (Kombo and Delno, 2006). Before engaging on the data collection exercise, a letter of introduction was obtained from the Department of Languages of Karatina University. This was required in order to get permission from the National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI). The letter of authorization, once obtained, was taken to the County Director of Education of

Nairobi County for the permit to carry out the study. A copy of the permit was then given to the Sub County Directors of Education in the areas of study. The researcher then communicated the intention to collect data to the seven Principals in the sample schools to make appropriate arrangements on the date of data collection. The researcher personally administered the questionnaires with the help of the class teachers in each school and also presented the teachers' questionnaire to the language teachers. The questionnaires were issued to the students after classes in the afternoon of the specified day to avoid interference with the school learning programmes, and later collected for analysis.

3.10 Data Analysis and Presentation

The raw data that was collected was classified according to attributes. In this study, attributes were the languages chosen in different contexts or domains by the youth in Nairobi County. These languages include Sheng, English, mother tongue and Kiswahili. The quantitative data collected for objective one were coded, tabulated and analysed using descriptive and thematic statistics such as mean, frequency counts and percentages. The qualitative data were organized in major themes and used to make conclusions that helped to answer the research questions. Chi-square tests were applied in analyses of objective two whose objective was to assess the youth's attitude. The data from the likert scale were used to calculate the significance index to establish if there was a relationship between gender, attitude and ethnicity and use of mother tongue in social and formal domains among the youth in Nairobi County. SPSS version 22 for windows was used in Analysis. The findings were presented in form of tables and figures.

3.11 Ethical Issues

Ethics is defined as that branch of philosophy that looks into one's conduct and serves as a guide to one's behaviour (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2003). Researchers deal with people's sensitive information hence must be people of great integrity who will not harm others in the name of conducting their research. Besides, Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) state that there are laws which prohibit unethical behaviour and clearly states that researchers could be faced with extremely embarrassing situation if such laws were ignored. Moreover, the subjects participating in a research project also participate on the basis of trust hence their privacy must be protected under any circumstances.

In view of the above, the researcher indicated the significance of the study on the questionnaires and informed the respondents that the data collected would only be used for the study and not for any other purpose. An appeal was made to the respondents to give their responses honestly and not to write their names or any other identification details on the questionnaires. They were also assured of total confidentiality in the exercise.

3.12 Summary of the Chapter

The foregoing chapter details the methodology of how the study was carried out. It includes the research design, location, population, sampling procedures, data collection instruments and procedures. Chapter three also clearly describes data analysis methods and ethical considerations made in the study. All sections are extensively detailed and provide justification for each selected strategy.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of the study as well as their interpretation and discussion. The chapter discusses the findings in line with the objectives of the study.

These objectives include:

- i. To assess the extent to which mother tongue is used in social and formal domains of Nairobi County by the youth.
- ii. To examine the attitude the youth in Nairobi County have towards mother tongue.
- iii. To establish the influence of gender variable on language shift among the youth in Nairobi County.
- iv. To determine the effect of ethnicity on language shift among the youth in Nairobi County.

There are three sections outlined which include the demographic characteristics of the respondents. This section tries to investigate language choice in relationship to gender and ethnicity. Language choice in various domains such as home, church, school and friendship are sought. This aims at establishing the language choice of the respondents to enable the researcher assess whether mother tongue is one of the languages used in the selected domains. Language attitude comes next. Attitude is considered an important factor which is thought to play an important role in language choice. Both descriptive and inferential statistics are used in the analysis of the data in the study. The findings are presented in form of tables and figures. The purpose of analysis is to

explore the phenomenon of language shift among the youth in Nairobi County. The information gathered for this study is organised according to the research questions in the questionnaires.

4.2 Response Rate

A total of 7 language teachers and 98 form three students participated in the study which represents a maximum (100%) response rate. Language teachers or teachers of English and Kiswahili were purposively used in this study. This was considered necessary because of the teachers' instrumental role in teaching and assessing the learners' proficiency in languages. They would therefore stand a better chance to notice when mother tongue interference influences language study, acquisition and proficiency. The findings from these data would be indicative of whether mother tongue is in use among the youth in certain domains. The students were sampled to represent the many youth in Nairobi County.

4.3 Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

The study tried to establish the gender and ethnicity of students. These data would be important in providing answers to objectives three and four in which the study would establish the impact of gender and ethnicity on language shift. The importance of this question was to assess any possibility that there was a relatedness between gender and ethnicity with the languages of choice. The study also tried to establish the language taught by participating teachers. The findings are presented in this section.

4.3.1 Gender of Students

Students in the study were required to indicate their gender. The purpose of this was to enable the study assess the influence of the gender variable on language shift among the youth in Nairobi County.

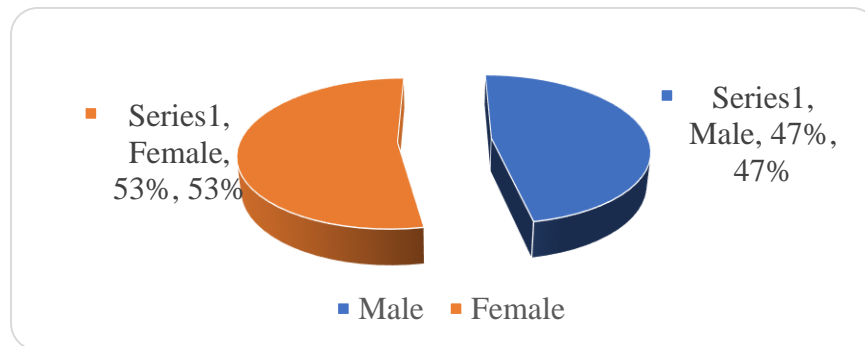


Figure 4.1: Gender of Students

The data from the study showed that majority 53% (n=52) of the participating youth were females while the male respondents accounted for 47% (n=46) of the participants. This meant there was a fair representation of the two genders in the study. The findings also revealed that there were more females than males attending the public Day secondary schools in Nairobi.

4.3.2 Ethnicity of Students

The study also sought to establish the ethnic representation of the participating youth. They were therefore required to indicate their ethnic language on the questionnaire. This was necessitated by the need to establish the role of ethnicity on language shift among the youth in Nairobi County. This data would assist in determining if one's ethnicity influenced their language choice and therefore lead to language shifts.

Table 4.1: Ethnicity of Students

Ethnic community	Frequency	Percentage
Kikuyu	22	24%
Luhya	19	21%
Luo	18	19%
Kisii	4	4%
Kalenjin	2	2%
Maasai	1	1%
Somali	10	11%
Kamba	14	15%
Others	3	3%
Total	93	100%

Findings in Table 4.1 show that 24% (n=22) of the students were from the kikuyu community, 21% (n=19) from the Luhya community while 19% (n=18) were from the Luo community. Also, there were 15% (n=14) Kamba, 11% (n=10) Somali, 4% (n=4) Kisii, 2% (n=2) Kalenjin and 1% (n=1) Maasai among the respondents. The findings show a good representation of most of the ethnic communities in Kenya. The findings also show that there were non-Kenyan ethnic groups such as Congolese, Sudanese and Nubians. These were referred to as others. These findings agree with Batibo (2005) that Kenya is society in which many languages are used concurrently. Batibo clearly indicates that Kenya has over 42 ethnic languages are in use. According to Webb and Sure (2000), these ethnic languages are clustered into three families. One such classification is the Bantu family comprising of Luhya, Kikuyu, Kikamba, Embu,

Swahili and Kimeru. The second language family is Cushitic language. The family has Boran, Somali and Rendile speakers. The third family is the Nilotic language family which belongs to the Kalenjin, Dholuo, Teso and Maasai. From the findings, it is clear that, the sample of students was well distributed among the existing communities in the country. The sample size also gave a distribution that agrees to that given by Webb and Sure (2000) of Kikuyu, 20%, Dholuo 14%, Luhyia 13%.

4.3.3 Language Taught by Teachers

Teachers participating in this study were asked to indicate the language that they taught. The data collected revealed that 29% (n=2) taught English while 71% (n=5) taught Kiswahili.

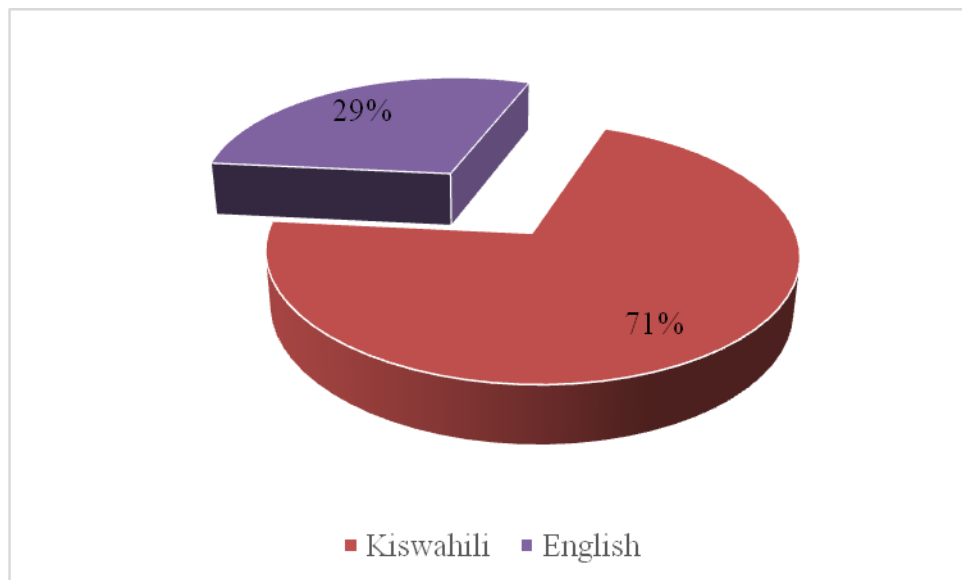


Figure 4.2: Language Taught by Teachers

The findings, therefore, show that teachers of both subjects, which are English and Kiswahili were represented in the study.

4.4 School Policy on Mother Tongue

Teachers who were participating in the study were asked to indicate what their school's policy on the matter pertaining to the use of mother tongue by students was. All 100% (n=7) teachers indicated that mother tongue was prohibited within and without the classroom. In addition, the teachers indicated that students who were found using mother tongue were punished. Indeed one of the respondents had this to say: "Strictly no mother tongue and failure to adhere to this costs a student a punishment of buying literature books and summarizing them within a week." Another respondent added that: "A student who is reported to be using mother tongue is made to write a given number of 'inshas' or compositions."

The findings, therefore, show that use of mother tongue was greatly restricted in public day secondary schools. This same view is brought out by Mugambi (2002) in his statement that Kenya is well endowed with many ethnic languages. Indeed he indicates that ethnic languages spoken in Kenya exceed 42 languages. However, he points out that there is a bias towards the use of English and Kiswahili which dominate over the numerous mother tongues. This situation occurs because the two languages have been elevated as the official languages and therefore have been found to encroach domains previously occupied by the indigenous language. Mugambi further states that English enjoys a number of privileges such as being used for education purposes, for official use and in international communication while Kiswahili is the national language.

Indigenous languages however are relegated for use in the home domains and for inter-ethnic communication (Mugambi, 2000). Similar sentiments are expressed by Batibo (2005), who sees the Kenyan education policy as discriminative in power allocation of

roles where English is privileged as the medium of instruction in the urban areas at all levels. The findings further echo Michieka (2000) observations that the Kenyan education policy unfairly distributes power to languages and has actually given African languages a very low deal. The policy has denied the African languages a domain of use in intellectual realms thus condemning them as home languages only.

4.5 Preferred Languages in School Co-Curriculum Activities

Teachers in the study were asked which languages the school preferred students to use in Co-Curriculum activities such as sports, drama and music festivals. All 100% (n=7) teachers indicated that only English and Kiswahili were preferred by the school. This shows that mother tongue was discouraged among students even in Co-Curriculum activities. This is similar to views expressed by Michieka (2005) who questions the modality used in power distribution among the language in use in the country. The finding of the present study is also in agreement with the findings of Oluoch (2017) which states that despite the benefits of use of mother tongue as the language of instruction in lower primary in schools in the rural areas, many primary schools in Kenya do not use it for instruction. The finding is also in agreement with Otieno (2010) observations that though the education policy recommends that primary schools use mother tongue in the first years of education, majority of these schools do the opposite. They use English and Kiswahili and ignore the policy guidelines. The schools end up prioritising English and Kiswahili as the languages of instruction. The findings also agree with Mugambi (2002) in his observation that the language policy in Kenya recognises English and Kiswahili as official languages but the indigenous languages are ignored. He further posits that indigenous languages are only recognised as only suitable for household use and for intra-ethnic communication. Therefore, the schools

especially the public and community schools in Nairobi are not able to adapt Kiswahili exclusively for reading instruction as is recommended by the Ministry of Education.

4.6 Extent of Mother Tongue use in Social and Formal Domains

The study sought to establish the degree to which the youth in Nairobi County use mother tongue in social and formal domains. The findings are presented in this section.

4.6.1 Language Used by Students outside the Classroom

Teachers in the study were asked to indicate which language the students preferred to use outside the classroom. This information would send some light on students' language preference when communicating with close associates such as friends and peers. Being the implementers of the curriculum, teachers would be interested in what students did inside and outside classroom, hence the need to seek their opinions.

Table 4.2: Language Used by Students outside the Classroom

Languages(s)	Frequency	Percentage
Sheng	3	43
Mother tongue	1	14
Kiswahili	2	29
English	1	14

A high percentage of 43% (n=3) of the teachers said that Sheng was preferred, 29% (n=2) of the teachers spoke in favour of Kiswahili as the language used outside classroom while 14% (n=1) of the teachers indicated that mother tongue is used outside classroom. The findings also showed that only 14% (n=1) of the students use English

outside classroom. The findings, therefore, show that mother tongue was still used by students even though it was against the school policy. The findings are in agreement with Kamwangamalu (2000) who cites a case where a young Kenyan has three language at his disposal in an urban Kenyan context. Indeed a young boy uses mother tongue or ethnic language at home, Kiswahili or Sheng at play and English at school or church. The findings also agree with those of Gogonas (2009). The two scholars argue that language shift or language maintenance takes different directions depending on outside factors that shape the attitude of bilingual speakers. The findings show that most of the teachers 43% said that Sheng was the peers' most popular language. This seems to agree with the claim that young people use Sheng for group identity and cohesiveness (Muaka, 2011). Githiora (2002) calls it the basic language for the youth. The findings match those from the study by Atwetwe (2013) that the use of mother tongue led to low performance in English in public day secondary schools of Gatundu. It also emerges from the study that mother tongue interferes with the way students write and pronounce English words. Consequently, the study reveals that mother tongue use negatively affects the students' proficiency in Nairobi County.

4.6.2 Language Used between Parents and Students within the School

Teachers in the study were requested to indicate what language students used to communicate with their parents within the school premises school. Parents in day public schools visit the school when invited for various reasons such as to do a follow up on performance, for discipline cases or for occasions such as prize giving ceremonies. The study sought to know the language used between parents and their children during such visits.

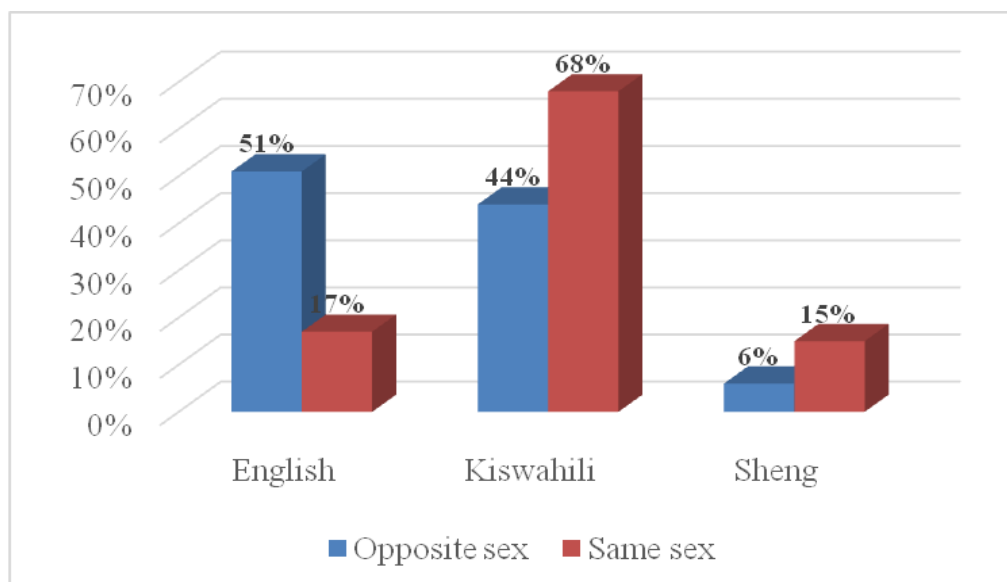
Table 4.3: Language Used between Parents and Students within the School

Languages(s)	Frequency	Percentage
Mother tongue	4	57
Kiswahili	3	43
English	0	0

Majority (57%) (n=4) of teachers indicated that mother tongue was used while 43% (n=3) indicated that Kiswahili was used. This can be explained based on the fact that some parents only understood their mother tongue and or Kiswahili hence the use of the two languages. The findings, therefore, are in harmony with Subhan's (2007) findings that state although parents always use ethnic languages and that other sources of heritage language are present in the home environment, children generally take no interest and live their own separate worlds and interact with heritage language users only when absolutely necessary. The findings are however in conflict with studies by Errihani (2008) and Tawalbeh et al. (2013) who found that mother tongue was still in use between parents and their children. The findings are also in disagreement with Mugane (2003), Michieka (2005) and Mugambi (2002) who indicate that the young Kenyans have deviated from the use of trilingual pattern by casting away their ethnic languages and replacing them with English, Kiswahili and Sheng. The above findings clearly show that mother tongue has not yet been thrown out.

4.6.3 Language Used by Students in Communication with their Friends

Students in the study were asked to indicate what language they used when they were communicating with same sex friends and members of the opposite sex. The finding would shed light on the implication of gender on language shift.



Figures4.3: Language Used by Students in Communication with their Friends

Findings in Figure 4.3 show that 68% (n=67) of the students indicated that Kiswahili was the most popular language when students were communicating with same sex peers. The findings also show that 51% (n=50) of the students used English when they were communicating with members of the opposite sex. The findings, therefore, show that the students chose the language of communication depending on who they were communicating with. This is similar to the findings of Michieka (2012) that Kenyans have always chosen their languages to fit specific contexts. Indeed, there is a language chosen for formal domains such as learning institutions, government institutions, among others; language for social domains such as clubs, sports and other social activities; and language suitable for family domain. The finding is, however, in contrast

with the studies by Gogonas (2009), Habtoor (2012) and Hamdani (2012) who discovered that the youth resisted using mother tongue and actually, most never used it in any domain.

4.6.4 Language Used by Students in Various Contexts

The students were asked whether they ever used their ethnic language in any domain.

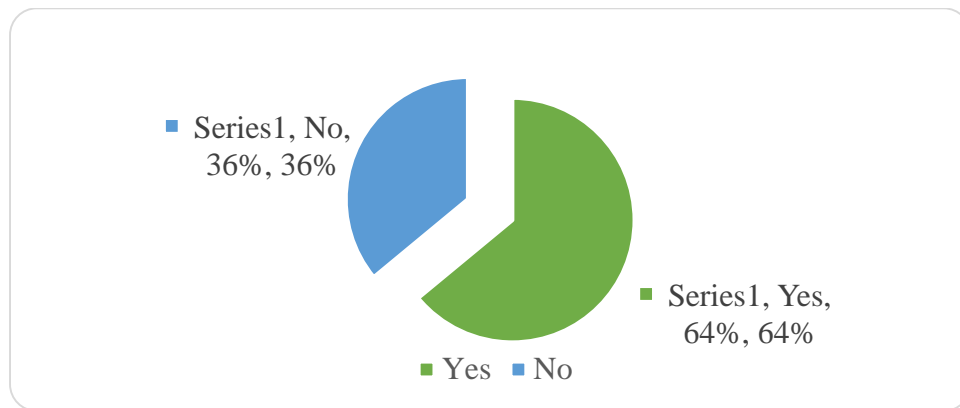


Figure 4.4: Use of Ethnic Language by Students

Findings in Figure 4.4 show that majority 64% (n=63) used their ethnic language at one time. The findings, therefore, show that use of vernacular is prevalent among the youth in Nairobi. This finding is in contrast with Mugambi (2002), Mugane (2003) and Michieka's (2005) studies that young Kenyans no longer give loyalty to the three language pattern of mother tongue, Kiswahili and English, and unfortunately, the languages on the receiving end are the indigenous languages. The youth have no function for these languages. The finding is also in conflict with Batibo's (2005) observation that subtractive bilingualism brought about by the promotion of English to official position has impacted negatively on mother tongue acquisition. Consequently the learning of English lead to loss of domain for the mother tongue. The finding is also in contrast with the findings of Gogonas (2009), Habtoor (2012) whose study

revealed that youth had insignificant ability to comprehend, speak, read and translate mother tongue language. Hamdani's (2012) study also contrasts with these findings as it reveals that the youth keep off from mother tongue and majority never use it under any circumstances.

The study also sought to find out from the students what language they use at home.

Table 4.4 below highlights the frequency and percentages used by students:

Table 4.4: Language Used by Students at Home

Language (s)	Frequency	Percentage
English	1	1
Kiswahili	48	64
Mother Tongue	6	8
English + Kiswahili	3	4
Kiswahili + Mother Tongue	6	8
English + Kiswahili + Mother Tongue	1	1
Sheng	9	12
English + Sheng	1	1
Kiswahili + Sheng	1	1
Total	76	100

Findings in Table 4.4 show that Kiswahili 64% (n=48) was the mostly preferred language of communication by students while at home. The second most popular was Sheng with a 12% (n=9) preference. 8% (n=6) of the students used mother tongue. The findings also show that English 1% (n=1) was least popular in this context. The findings, therefore, show that the students used mother tongue, English and Kiswahili at home. The finding is in agreement with Mugane (2003) that ethnic languages are mostly chosen for communication in the home domain but there is a possibility that

they might lose this domain of use too, especially among the young people and in future generations. It however disagrees with Kamwangamalu (2000) who indicates that a young Kenyan boy in the urban context uses mother tongue at home, Kiswahili and Sheng at play and speaks English at school or church. This also is in disagreement with Mugambi's (2002) findings that indigenous languages are reserved for use at the household level and for intra-ethnic communication. The finding is also in disagreement with the findings of Gogonas (2009), Habtoor (2012) and Hamdani's (2012) studies that the use of mother tongue by the youth is negligible.

The students were also asked to indicate the language (s) they use to communicate when in church. Table five below highlights the language (s) used at church:

Table 4.5: Language Used by Students at Church

Language (s)	Frequency	Percentage
English	25	30
Kiswahili	39	48
English + Kiswahili	17	20
Sheng	2	2
Total	83	100

Findings in Table 4.5 show that 48% (n=39) of the students used Kiswahili at church while 30% (n=25) used English. 20% (n=17) use a combination of English and Kiswahili while 2% (n=2) use Sheng at church. This may be explained by the fact that majority of churches in Nairobi conduct their religious services in English and Kiswahili. The findings, therefore comply with Muaka (2011) views that Kenyan youth live in a society that is open to changes that also enables them to interact with different linguistic varieties. As a habit, they are able to use these different languages for different

functions. Each of these situations make them construct different language identities that are controlled by their experiences. The findings are in agreement with Dweik and Qawar's (2015) postulation that Arabs of Quebec mix these languages in their neighbourhood domains, with friends, and media. The findings are also in agreement with Hamdani's (2012) study that among university students in the first and third grades of Pharmacy and Management Programs at the University of Garut, there is plenty of codemixing.

The students were also asked to indicate the language (s) they used to communicate when in school. Table 4.6 highlights the commonly used languages by students at school.

Table 4.6: Languages Used by Students at School

Language (s)	Frequency	Percentage
English	26	27
Kiswahili	16	17
English + Kiswahili	45	48
Sheng	6	6
English + Sheng	1	1
Kiswahili+ Sheng	1	1
Total	95	100

The findings show that 48% (n=45) of the students used English and Kiswahili while in school, 27% (n=26) used English only while 17% (n=16) used Kiswahili only. Only 6% (n=6) used Sheng and an insignificant number, 1% (n=1) used a combination of Kiswahili and Sheng. This may be by the fact that English and Kiswahili are official languages in Kenya and hence have gained acceptance in many domains including public institutions such as secondary schools. This finding is similar to the findings of

Mugambi (2002) and Michieka (2005) that English and Kiswahili are the preferred languages in professional and educational circles. The findings concur with Mugane’s observation that the fate of ethnic languages is compounded by the fact that there is no benefit associated with their mastery.

4.7 Students’ Attitude towards Mother Tongue

The study sought to examine the attitude the youth in Nairobi County have towards their mother tongue. The findings are highlighted in Table 4.7 below:

Table 4.7: Students’ Attitudes towards Mother Tongue

Statement	SA	A	U	D	SD	\bar{x}	s^2
Mother tongue is useful in expression of scientific and technological information	3%	12%	15%	34%	36%	3.86	1.129
Mother tongue is outdated.	9%	19%	13%	36%	22%	3.45	1.267
The government should start a policy for preserving Kenyan mother tongues	28%	32%	11%	19%	10%	2.51	1.334
Mother tongue should be introduced at the higher levels of education	2%	10%	6%	40%	42%	4.11	1.026
Proficiency in mother tongue is crucial for the job market	13%	20%	21%	24%	22%	3.23	1.340
Mother tongue proficiency negatively affects performance in KCSE.	35%	23%	2%	16%	24%	2.72	1.642
Mother tongue use enhances tribal animosity.	36%	31%	9%	12%	12%	2.33	1.378
Total mean						22.21	9.116
Average mean						3.173	1.302

SA = Strongly Agree A = Agree U = Uncertain D= Disagree SD = Strongly disagree \bar{x}
= mean s^2 = Standard deviation

Majority (70%) of the respondents disagreed that mother tongue is useful in expression of scientific and technological information. However, 58% disagreed that mother tongue is outdated. Majority (60%) of respondents agreed that the government should start a policy for preserving Kenyan mother tongues. Majority (82%) disagreed that mother tongue should be introduced at the higher levels of education. Findings in Table 4.5 indicate that 46% of respondents disagreed that proficiency in mother tongue is crucial for the job market. Majority (58%) agreed that mother tongue proficiency negatively affects performance in KCSE. In addition, 67% agreed that mother tongue use enhances tribal animosity.

The average mean was 3.173 ± 1.302 indicating a general lack of agreement with statements put to the students. This implies that students had negative attitudes towards mother tongue, as they did not find it very useful or very important. The finding is in agreement with Michieka (2005) that there is no domain left for the mother tongues hence increasing the danger of shifting. The finding is also in agreement with Garcia's (2008) argument that parents do not encourage the use of mother tongue languages because they add no value to their children. The finding is also consistent with Mugane's (2003) findings that mother tongues will not survive, as the youth do not see their usefulness in their mastery except for Kiswahili. The finding is also in agreement with Bongeni and Kapp's (2007) argument that students see English as the language that can push them to greater prosperity and future self-advancement. The finding is, however, in disagreement with Dweik and Qawar's (2015) study that found that Arabs

of Quebec mix their mother tongue language in the domain of neighbourhood, with friends, and media.

The finding is also in disagreement with Ngidi's (2007) claim that while parents and pupils have a positive attitude towards the use of English as a language of learning and teaching and an additional language in schools, the educators have a negative attitude towards English as a language of learning and teaching and as an additional language in schools. The finding is further in disagreement with Abuhmaid's (2014) study that there are positive students' attitudes towards using Arabic in EFL classes. The students in the study preferred the use of Arabic for various situations and reasons. The finding also disagrees with Galely's (2015) study that the affective component of attitude had weaker tie with students' performance in mother tongue attitude and there was a significant difference on how teachers and students perceived mother tongue.

4.8 Influence of Gender on Language Shift among the Youth

To assess the influence of gender variable on language shift among the youth in Nairobi County, Chi-square tests were applied between the gender of students and the various indicators of language shift in the study. Chi -square tests are highlighted in Table 4.8 below:

Table 4.8: Chi-Square Tests between Gender and Language Shift

	χ^2	df	Sig.
Language Used by Students in Communication with Friends of same sex	18.143	2	0.000**
Language Used by Students in Communication with Friends of opposite sex	2.169	2	0.338
Use of mother tongue	1.18	1	0.277
Language used at home	10.482	8	0.233
Language used at church	6.664	3	0.083
Language used at school	13.144	5	0.022**

** Significant at 95%

The findings show that a significant relationship of ($\chi^2=18.143$, $p<0.05$) was detected between gender and the language used by students in communication with same sex peers. The findings also show that there was a significant relationship ($\chi^2 =13.144$, $p<0.005$) between gender and the language used at school. The findings, therefore, clearly demonstrate that gender influenced language shift. This is in agreement with outcomes of Labov (2001), Eckert and McConnell-Ginet (2003), Winter and Pauwels (2005), Garret (2010) and Mesthriel et al (2009) studies that there are statistically noteworthy relationships between gender and language shift. The finding is, however, in contrast with Granhemat et al. (2015) study in which gender was found not to determine the language to use in the domain of language us

Cross tabulation between the variables in the significant relationships were conducted to enable the researcher gain a deeper understanding of the said relationships. Cross tabulation of gender and language used by students in communication with friends of the same sex was conducted. The findings are highlighted below:

Table 4.9: Cross Tabulation of Gender and Language Used between Same Sex.

Gender	Language used					
	English		Kiswahili		Sheng	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Female	11	85	27	50%	0	0
Male	2	15	27	50%	12	100
Total	13	100	54	100	12	100

The findings show that majority (85%) (9n=11) of those students who used English in communication with friends of the same sex were females. The findings also reveal that all (100%) (n=12) of Sheng users in communication with friends of the same sex were males. Therefore, it generally means that female students were more likely to be using English while male students were more likely to be using Sheng in communication with friends of the same sex. This finding is in agreement with Hamdani's (2012) study which found that gender gender was a key determinant in language choice. The study established that 75 females used code mixing; only 32 males did the same. The finding also contradicts Clyne's (2003) finding that males shift to majority language faster than women do. Cross tabulation of gender and language used by students in school was conducted and findings are highlighted in Table 4.10 below:

Table 4.10: Cross Tabulation of Gender and Language Used by Students in School

Gender	Language used											
	English		Kiswahili		English + Kiswahili		Sheng		English + Sheng		Kiswahili + Sheng	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Female	15	58	6	38	29	64	0	0	0	0	0	0
Male	11	42	10	62	16	36	6	100	1	100	1	100
Total	26	100	16	100	45	100	6	100	1	100	1	100

Findings in Table 4.10 show that majority of the females used English (58%) (n=15) or English and Kiswahili (64%) (n=29). The findings also show that majority of the males, used Kiswahili (62%) (n=10), Sheng (100%) (n=6), English and Sheng (100%) or Kiswahili and Sheng (100%). The findings, therefore, show that in school, female students were more likely to use English while male students were more likely to use Sheng. There was a balance in the use of Kiswahili among male and female students while mother tongue was not used by either. The findings, therefore, show that both female and male students used languages differently and therefore, language shift occurred differently between the two genders. This finding is therefore, in agreement with Nicholas (1978), Murkherjee (1996, 2003), Clyne (2003), Wardhaugh's (2006) studies which established that there was a notable difference in the use of language along gender lines. The finding is, however, in disagreement with Granhemat et al's (2015) study in which gender is not taken to be a determinant of language choice in the domain of language used

4.9 Impact of Ethnicity on Language Shift among the Youth

The study sought to assess the impact of ethnicity on language shift among the youth in Nairobi County. To achieve this, chi-square tests were conducted between ethnicity of students and the various indicators of language shift in the study.

Table 4.11: Effect of Ethnicity on Language Shift

	χ^2	df	Sig.
Language Used by Students in Communication with Friends of same sex	21.789	14	0.083
Language Used by Students in Communication with Friends of opposite sex	19.839	14	0.135
Use of mother tongue	12.734	8	0.121
Language used at home	56.426	56	0.459
Language used at church	22.617	24	0.543
Language used at school	30.423	40	0.863

Findings in Table 4.11 The study showed no significant relationship between ethnicity and any of the indicators of language shift. The findings imply that students' ethnicity did not influence the languages used or language shift in their communication. The findings are, therefore, in disagreement with the findings of Grillo (1989), Gurr (2000), Labov (2001), Duruaka (2004), Eme (2004), Shelton et al. (2006), Shannon (2007), Thomas (2011) and Omondi's (2012) studies who reported a relationship between ethnicity and language shift.

4.10 Summary of the Chapter

Chapter Four presents the findings of the study. The findings are presented in the order of the study objectives. The findings comprise descriptive and inferential analysis and are presented in the form of tables and figures. Presentation of findings is accompanied

by interpretation and discussion of the findings. The next chapter presents the summary of the findings, conclusions and recommendations.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the summary of findings presented in the previous chapter. Conclusions and recommendations are also presented.

5.2 Summary of Findings

The purpose of the study was to explore the phenomenon of language shift among the youth in Nairobi County. The major findings of the study are presented below in respect to the study objectives.

5.2.1 Extent to Which the Youth Use Mother Tongue

Majority 64% (n=63) of students had used their ethnic language at one time. Mother tongue was used by only 8% of the students at home. Mother tongue was never used in school and church among the respondents. The study revealed that 14% of the teachers indicated that mother tongue was used among students outside the classroom. Majority, (57%) of teachers indicated that mother tongue was used by students to communicate with their parents who came to visit the school.

5.2.2 Attitudes of the Youth towards Mother Tongue

The study found that majority (70%) of respondents disapproved the statement that mother tongue is useful in expression of scientific and technological information. Majority, (82%) also did not support the opinion that mother tongue should be introduced at the higher levels of education. The study found that 46% of respondents disagreed with the claim that proficiency in mother tongue is crucial for the job market.

However, majority of the respondent students (58%) agreed that mother tongue proficiency negatively affects performance in KCSE. In addition, 67% agreed that mother tongue use enhances tribal animosity.

5.2.3 Influence of Gender on Language Shift among the Youth

The higher percentage, 53% (n=52) of the respondents were females while the male respondents accounted for 47% (n=46) of the participants. The study found that there was a significant relationship ($\chi^2=18.143$, $p<0.05$) between gender and the language used by students in communication with friends of the same sex. The findings also show that there was a significant relationship ($\chi^2 =13.144$, $p<0.005$) between gender and the language used at school. Further analysis revealed that majority (85%) of the students who used English in communication with same sex friends were females. The findings also showed that all (100%) of those who used Sheng in communication with same sex peers were males. Findings showed that most of the females used English (56%) or English and Kiswahili (64%). The findings also showed that majority of those who used Kiswahili (62%), Sheng (100%), English and Sheng (100%) or Kiswahili and Sheng (100%) were males.

5.2.4 Impact of Ethnicity on Language Shift

On the issue of ethnicity, the study found out that 24% of the students were from the kikuyu community, 21% from the Luhya community while 19% were from the Luo community. However, the study found no significant relationship between ethnicity and other of the indicators of language shift.

5.3 Conclusions

The study concluded that although majority of the youth are quite familiar with their mother tongue, the extent to which the youth use mother tongue in social and formal domains is very low. The youth use their mother tongue sparingly and in very limited contexts, such as at home or when their parents visit their schools.

The study also concludes that in terms of attitude, the youth show no language pride in their mother tongues. Instead, they have little regards towards it; hence, they hardly use it except in very limited domains. They consider their ethnic languages as non-beneficial and a source of tribal animosity. This attitude comes from the fact that mother has no special domain for use in Nairobi and no effort is made by parents or the government to maintain these languages. Secondly, the restriction in the use of mother tongue in schools adds to woes of these languages. Teachers in the study reported that use of mother tongue in school leads to punishment. With most people in Nairobi County being bilingual, other languages are often time chosen hence slowly pushing mother tongues out of the way. This has played a key role in bringing about language shift among the youth in Nairobi County.

The study also concludes the gender variable has a contribution towards language shift among the youth in Nairobi County. This is because boys differ from girls in the use of various languages. It emerges that gender plays an important part in language choice among the youth in Nairobi County because when female students choose to use English to speak to same sex friends, their male counterparts are more likely to use

Sheng with friends of the same sex. In school, female students are more likely to use English while communicating with female students while their male counterparts are more likely to use Sheng with their male peers. Kiswahili is used equally among male and female students while mother tongue is not used at all.

On effect of ethnicity on language shift, this study concludes that ethnicity plays no role in language shift among the youth in Nairobi County. The youth displays little or no language allegiance, language pride or language awareness to their ethnic languages. This may have emanated on the negative attitudes found among the youth towards their mother tongue. This may also be attributed to the fact that the current study was conducted in Nairobi which is multi-ethnic and where Kiswahili and English are widely used to cater for communities' language needs thereby suppressing the mother tongue.

5.4 Recommendations

This study has highlights a number of important recommendations that the Ministry should consider to avert the looming disaster. First, the Ministry of Education should relax the current policy to create room for communication in mother tongue among students in extra curriculum activities. In such activities, songs and drama in mother tongue should be encouraged. This will prevent loss of mother tongue languages and culture. Researchers in the field of education should conduct studies to find out best practices on how mother tongue can be used alongside English and Kiswahili without the former affecting performance of students in the two main languages.

5.5 Areas for Further Study

The current study was done in an urban setting with a convergence of many ethnic groups. Future studies can be carried out in rural areas for comparative purposes. Further studies can also be conducted in private schools to provide a different view on the relationship between selected variables. A similar study can also be carried out in public universities where ethnic diversity is larger and where use of mother tongue outside class is not restricted to enable a greater analysis of the impact of ethnicity on language shift. The study recommends inclusion of more variables in similar studies such as socio-economic characteristics and residence. Future studies can also look at how language shift has affected culture

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Questionnaires for the Students

The purpose of this questionnaire is to gather information for use in the study to examine language shift among the youth in Nairobi County, Kenya. You are kindly requested to respond to each question by ticking the appropriate response where applicable or by writing in the space provided. Your responses are going to be treated with total confidentiality. This questionnaire will not be used for any other purpose apart from for the purpose of this study.

Do not write your name.

Section A: Socio- Demographic Profile

1. Indicate your gender by ticking the correct choice.

a) Female

b) Male

2. Indicate your ethnic community (Kisii, Luhya, Kikuyu et cetra).....

3. Which language do you prefer to use to communicate with:

(i) Opposite sex friends.....

(ii) Same sex friends.....

Section B: Language used in various domains

1. Do you ever use your ethnic language?

a) Yes

b) No

2. What language do you use in the following domains (contexts)?

(a) Home _____

(b) Church _____

(c) School _____

SECTION C: Attitudes towards Mother Tongue

The following statements refer to the way young people feel about their mother tongue.

Show the extent to which you agree with each statement.

Key: S.A – Strongly Agree, A – Agree, U – Undecided, D – Disagree,

SD – Strongly Disagree

	STATEMENT	SA	A	U	D	SD
1.	Mother tongue is useful in expression of scientific and technological information					
2.	Mother tongue is outdated.					
3.	The government should start a policy for preserving Kenyan mother tongues					
4.	Mother tongue should be introduced at the higher levels of education					
5.	Proficiency in mother tongue is crucial for the job market					
6.	Mother tongue proficiency negatively affects performance in KCSE.					
7.	Mother tongue use enhances tribal animosity.					

~Thanks for your participation and your cooperation~

Appendix 2: Questionnaire for Teachers

The purpose of this questionnaire is to gather information for use in the study to examine language shift among the youth in Nairobi County, Kenya. You are kindly requested to respond to each question by ticking the appropriate response where applicable or by writing in the space provided. Your responses are going to be treated with total confidentiality. This questionnaire will not be used for any other purpose apart from for the purpose of this study. Please do not include your name or the name of your school. The information provided will be treated with total confidentiality.

1. Which language do you teach?
2. What is the school policy on mother tongue use?.....
3. Which language do the students prefer to use outside classroom?
.....
4. Which language (s) is / are preferred in co-curriculum activities such as:
 - a) Sports.....
 - b) Drama
festivals.....
 - c) Music
festival.....
5. Which language do the parents use with their children within the school premises?.....

Thank you for participating in this study

Appendix 3: Public Secondary Schools in the 3 Sub-Counties

FIRST QUARTER, APRIL 2015 REPORT

STAREHE SUB-COUNTY

NAME OF SCHOOL	SIZE	F1	F2	F3	F4	NO. OF CLASSES	ENROLMENT	MALE	FEMALE	C.B.E.	TEACHERS ON DUTY	TYPE OF SCHOOLS
DR.RIBIERO SEC.	3	3	2	3	3	11	367	367		26	26	D
PUMWANI SEC	4	4	4	4	4	16	562	9	27	42	36	D
JAMHURI	6	6	6	6	6	24	961	961		56	42	B
STAREHE BOYS	6	7	7	7	7	28	1040	1040	0	56	51	B
GIRL SCHOOLS												
NGARA GIRLS	5	5	5	4	4	18	863	0	863	48	39	B
PANGANI GIRLS	6	6	6	6	6	24	1138	0	1138	49	47	B
PUMWANI GIRLS	2	2	2	2	2	8	295	0	295	18	13	D
ST. TERESAS GIRLS	3	3	3	3	3	12	464	0	464	29	23	D
MIXED SCHOOLS												
C.G.H.U MIXED	1	1	1	1	1	4	181	97	84	10	6	D
NDURURUNO	2	2	2	2	2	8	371	235	136	18	17	D
COUNTY GIRLS	2	1	1	2	2	6	183	96	87	16	10	B
TOTAL	40	40	39	40	40	159	6425	2805	3094	368	310	

D – Day Schools

B – Boarding

School

KAMUKUNJI SUB-COUNTY

Name of school	Size	F1	F2	F3	F4	No of class	Enrolment	Male	Female	C.B.E	Teachers on duty	Type of School
BOY SCHOOLS												
UHURU SEC.	2	2	2	2	2	8	205	205	0	19	16	D
ST. TERESAS BOYS	3	3	3	3	3	12	418	418	0	28	23	D
MOI FORCES	6	6	6	6	6	29	1154	1154	0	60	57	B
EASTLEIGH	5	5	5	5	5	20	925	928	0	48	44	D
GIRL SCHOOLS												
O.L.M (SHAURI MOYO)	3	3	3	3	3	12	502	502	0	19	14	D
MIXED SCHOOL												
MAINA WANJIGI	3	3	3	3	3	12	502	216	288	28	25	D
KAMUKUNJI	2	2	2	2	2	8	314	224	91	1	13	D
TOTAL	24	24	24	24	24	101	4020	3647	359	21	192	

D – Day Schools

B – Boarding School

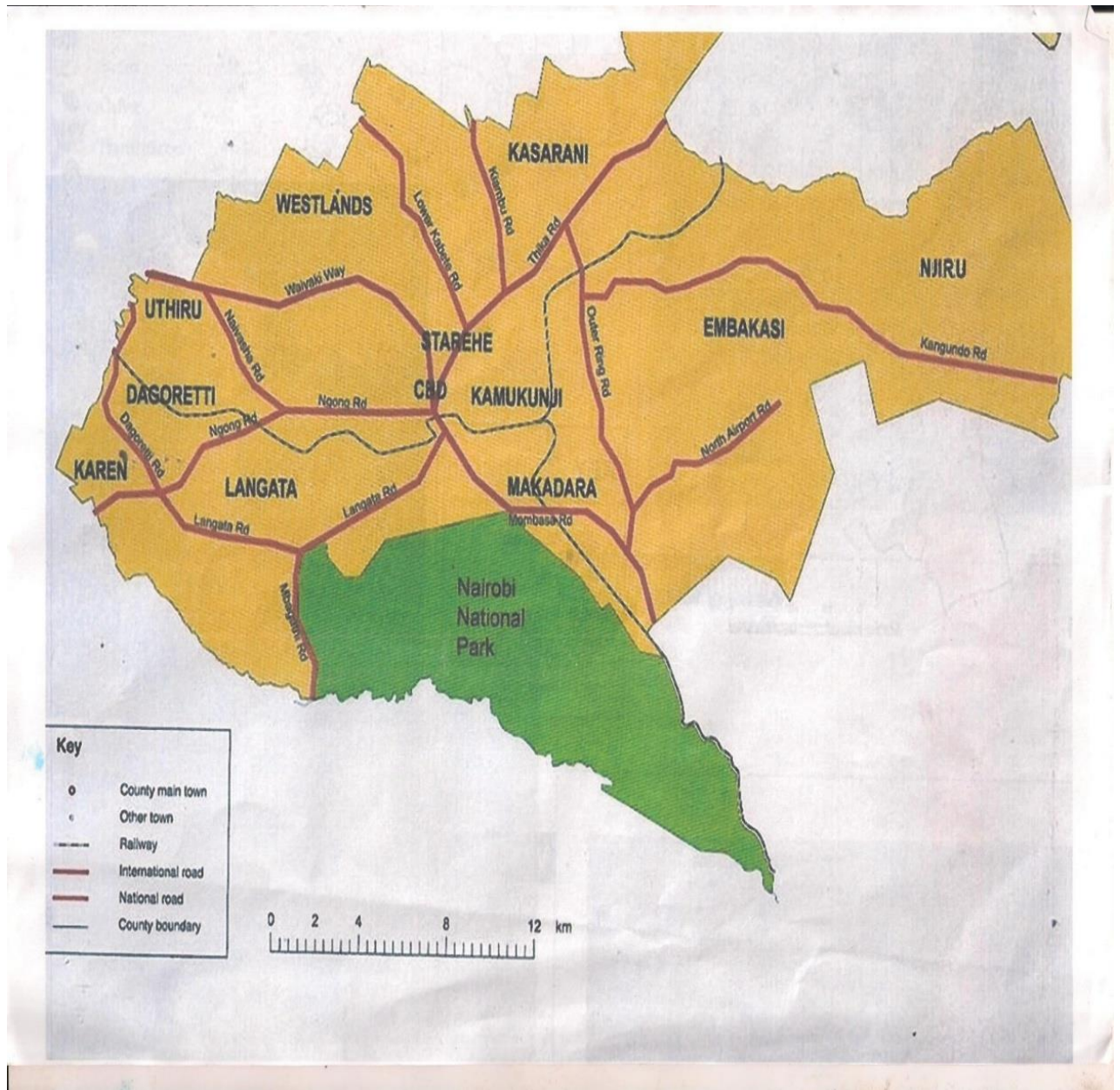
NJIRU SUB-COUNTY

Name school	Size	F1	F2	F3	F4	No of class	Enrolment	Male	Female	CBE	Teacher on duty	Type of school
BOY SCHOOLS												
MUHURI MUCHIRI							625	625	0	28	26	D
RUAI BOYS	1	1	1	1	1	4	137	137		9	6	D
GIRL SCHOOLS												
RUAI GIRLS	1	1	1	1	1	4	229		229	9	6	B
MIXED SCHOOLS												
DRUMVALE	2	2	2	2	2	8	437	256	181	18	12	D
DR. MWENJE	2	2	2	2	2	8	357	187	170	19	12	D
JEHOVA JIREH	2	2	2	2	2	8	321	166	155	18	13	D
USHIRIKA	3	3	3	2	3	11	359	166	193	28	16	D
DANDORA	4	4	4	4	4	16	784	414	370	39	30	D
ST.GEORGES ATHI	1	1	1	1	1	4	113	55	58	9	8	D
MIHANGO	1	1	1	1	1	4	197	103	94	9	6	D
TOTAL	17	17	17	16	17	67	3559	2109	1450	186	135	

D – Day Schools

B – Boarding School

Appendix 4: A Map of Nairobi County



Appendix 5: Letters of Authorization



**KARATINA UNIVERSITY
OFFICE OF THE DEAN
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION & SOCIAL SCIENCES**

Tel. +254 - (0)729721200/0202176713

Email: sess@karu.ac.ke

P.O. Box 1957 - 10101

KARATINA, Kenya

Ref: KarU/RC/SESS/2016

Date: 7th December, 2016

Ministry Of Higher Education, Science and Technology
National Council for Science and Technology
P O Box 30623 - 00100
NAIROBI

Dear Sir,

RE: ROSEMARY WAMAITHA KIMANI - E229/2475P/13

This is to confirm that the above named of Admission No. **E229/2475P/13** is a Bonafide Post Graduate student of Karatina University Department of Languages, School of Education and Social Sciences, pursuing Master of Arts in English and Linguistics.

She has finished course work and has defended research proposal. She is recommended to collect data for her thesis entitled: "**Assessment of Language Shift among the Youth in Nairobi County, Kenya**".

Ms. Kimani is a hardworking student and dependable. She is a dedicated person of sound academic and social interaction. She has also acquired Computer Skills alongside her Post Graduate Degree. The results are in process.

I would therefore on behalf of Karatina University, School of Education and Social Sciences, recommend her for any necessary assistance that would enable her to further her career.

Thank you,

07 DEC 2016

Prof. JOHN MWARUVIE
DEAN, SCHOOL OF EDUCATION AND SOCIAL SCIENCES



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9th Floor, Utalii House
Uhuru Highway
P.O. Box 30623-00100
NAIROBI-KENYA

Ref. No. **NACOSTI/P/17/15289/17734**

Date: **4th July, 2017**

Rosemary Wamaita Kimani
Karatina University
P.O. Box 1957-10101
KARATINA.

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION

Following your application for authority to carry out research on "*Assessment of language shift among the youth in Nairobi County, Kenya*," I am pleased to inform you that you have been authorized to undertake research in **Nairobi County** for the period ending **4th July, 2018**.

You are advised to report to **the County Commissioner and the County Director of Education, Nairobi County** before embarking on the research project.

On completion of the research, you are expected to submit **two hard copies and one soft copy in pdf** of the research report/thesis to our office.


GODFREY P. KALERWA MSc., MBA, MKIM
FOR: DIRECTOR-GENERAL/CEO

Copy to:

The County Commissioner
Nairobi County.

COUNTY COMMISSIONER
NAIROBI COUNTY
P. O. Box: 30124-00100, NBI
TEL: 341966

The County Director of Education
Nairobi County.

CONDITIONS

1. The Licence is valid for the proposed research, research site specified period.
2. Both the Licence and any rights thereunder are non-transferable.
3. Upon request of the Commission, the Licensee shall submit a progress report.
4. The Licensee shall report to the County Director of Education and County Governor in the area of research before commencement of the research.
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**National Commission for Science,
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RESEARCH CLEARANCE
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Serial No.A 14649

CONDITIONS: see back page

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT:

**MS. ROSEMARY WAMAITHA KIMANI
of KARATINA UNIVERSITY, 166-10100
NYERI, has been permitted to conduct
research in Nairobi County**

**on the topic: ASSESSMENT OF
LANGUAGE SHIFT AMONG THE YOUTH IN
NAIROBI COUNTY, KENYA**

**for the period ending:
4th July, 2018**

Permit No. : NACOSTI/P/17/15289/17734

Date Of Issue : 4th July, 2017

Fee Received :Ksh 1000



**Applicant's
Signature**

**Director General
National Commission for Science,
Technology & Innovation**



Republic of Kenya

STATE DEPARTMENT OF BASIC EDUCATION

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REGIONAL COORDINATOR OF EDUCATION
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P.O. Box 74629 – 00200
NAIROBI

DATE: **23rd August, 2017**

Rosemary Wamaita Kimani
Karatina University
P.O BOX 1957-1010

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION

We are in receipt of a letter from the National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation regarding research authorization in Nairobi County on "**Assessment of language shift among the youth in Nairobi County,**"

This office has no objection and authority is hereby granted for a period ending 4th July, 2018 as indicated in the request letter.

Kindly inform the Sub County Director of Education of the Sub County you intend



**FOR REGIONAL COORDINATOR OF EDUCATION
NAIROBI**

C.C.

Director General/CEO
Nation Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation
NAIROBI