

**A NATURAL GENERATIVE PERSPECTIVE OF THE
PHONOLOGICAL STUDY OF THE KIKAMBA VOWEL SYSTEM:
A CASE STUDY OF THE KITUI CENTRAL DIALECT OF
KIKAMBA.**

BY

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ABSTRACT

In this study, we investigate the phonology of the Kikamba vowel system: a case study of Kitui Central dialect of Kikamba within the framework of Natural Generative Phonology.

This study aims at providing a descriptively adequate analysis of the phonology of the Kikamba vowel system. The study shows how some phonological processes affect vowels. It also investigates the segments behavior and patterning, what causes the phonological processes and comes up with formalized rules for each major process so as to show the important phonological representations.

The study also investigates the extent to which some of the prominent phonological processes of the Kikamba vowel system are realized, it accounts for them and assesses the validity of the claims made by NGP theory about phonological processes of Natural languages like Kikamba.

Chapter one presents a general background to the study. In this chapter, a background to Kikamba is given, the problem under investigation is stated, the objectives and hypotheses of the study are given, the descriptive tools used in the study is examined, a review of the

relevant texts is given, methodology used in this study is outlined and the significance of this study in general is also stated.

Chapter two is an introduction to Kikamba segmental phonology. The general overview of the Kikamba sound segments (the consonants and the vowels) is looked at. The Nature of the diphthongs and the vowel length in Kikamba is also discussed.

Chapter three is basically an analysis of the data collected. This is therefore the core of this study. Using the data, the study analyses phonological processes of glide formation, vowel harmony, vowel height assimilation, vowel deletion, vowel coalescence and vowel lengthening.

Chapter four deals with the Kikamba borrowed vocabulary. Borrowing processes like Epenthesis which includes paragogue, Anaptyxis and Prothesis are discussed at length accompanied by examples. The general issues on vowel substitution and insertion are also looked at.

Chapter five is the final chapter of this dissertation. Basically, it is a summary and conclusion of this study. In this chapter, we give the summary of the findings; we show whether our hypothesis have been confirmed or falsified as the case may be. We also give the significance of our study in the world of linguistics and the recommendations for further research.