

EKEGUSII MORPHOPHONOLOGY: AN ANALYSIS OF THE  
MAJOR CONSONANTAL PROCESSES

BY

OSINDE KEN NYAUNCHO

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment  
of the requirements for the degree of Master of  
Arts in the Department of Linguistics and African  
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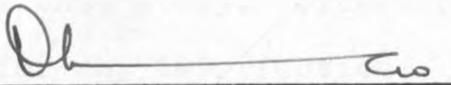
DECLARATION

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

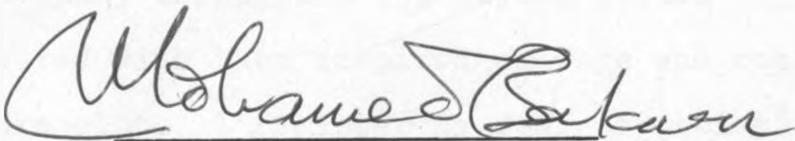
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OSINDE KEN NYAUNCHO

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



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DEDICATION

TO MY MUM AND DAD WHO WILLED IT:  
AND MY LOVE JUDY WHO SAW IT HAPPEN.

## ABSTRACT

This work is an attempt to describe the consonantal processes in Ekegusii using the theoretical assumptions and descriptive strategies of Natural Generative Grammar. The study highlights certain aspects of Ekegusii morphophonology, showing that phonological changes in the Language result from different factors. Our hypothesis is that given the nature of the processes, that is, the different factors which account for the changes, a theory with the kind of constraints found in Natural Generative phonology (NGG), can effectively describe the Ekegusii phenomena.

Phonological theories make claims about linguistic change by postulating principles which are to be employed in formulating the rules that can best describe the competence of ideal speaker-hearers of a language. While discussing the consonantal changes in Ekegusii, we test the validity of the claims made by NGG and our study reveals that although such phonological processes are motivated by different factors, the theory of Natural Generative phonology can account for all the changes in the language. Accordingly, we have demonstrated that consonantal processes in Ekegusii fall under two categories, namely, phonetically conditioned and morphosyntactically conditioned processes.

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## CHAPTER ONE

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 THE LANGUAGE

The Language to be explored in this work is Ekegusii. It is a language spoken by the Gusii people, who otherwise prefer to be called Abagusii [aBaYusii]. The Gusii people occupy the most South-West portion of the cool fertile Western section of the Kenya highlands, in Nyanza province, Kisii District. Between the Abagusii and Lake Victoria are the Nilotic Luo. To the east and South East, they are bordered by yet another of the Nilotic groups the Kipsigis and the Maasai. To the South, though separated by a corridor of Luo, are the closely related 'Tende' who call themselves Abakuria.

According to the most recent Kenya population census conducted in 1979, the Gusii people, the native speakers of Ekegusii, number eight hundred and sixty nine thousand, five hundred and twelve - 869,512.<sup>1</sup> This number excludes several Ekegusii speaking people who have settled elsewhere in the Republic of Kenya and in the various urban centres of East Africa, shown by the same population census (1979), to be seventy four thousand, five hundred and seventy five.<sup>2</sup>

The traditions of the Gusii people indicate that in the distant past, they were the same people as the

Kuria, the Logoli, the Suba, the Bukusu, the Kikuyu, the Embu, the Meru and the Kamba. Their myths of origin indicate that on their way South from a country which they identify as "Misiri", they were together with the Baganda and Basoga, who presently live in Uganda. They are said to have branched off from the rest of the migrants around Mt. Elgon, in South-Westerly direction. The Kikuyu, Meru Embu and Kamba are said to have travelled East in what is now central highlands of Kenya, while the Bukusu appear to have remained around Mt. Elgon. The remaining clusters, the Gusii, Kuria, Suba and Logoli are said to have migrated southwards and settled to the eastern shores of Lake Victoria.

The Gusii believe that their founder was Mogusii, the founder of the community and the person whom their tribe was named after. They say that Mogusii was the son of Kigora son of Ribiaka who was the son of Muntu (monto). It is believed that Muntu led the Migration from Misiri to Mt. Elgon where they stayed for some generations before they dispersed. The traditions also indicate that Moluguhia, the grandfather of Mogusii, had a number of sons who founded the various Baluyia clans and that among his remembered sons were Osogo and Mogikoyo. Osogo's

descendants are said to have founded, Gusii, Kuria, Logoli and several Suba tribes, while the descendants of Mogikoyo became, the Kikuyu, the Meru and Embu tribes.<sup>3</sup>

In his classification of the Bantu languages (1948), Professor Guthrie groups <sup>Suba</sup> Gusii (E42) along with Kuria (E43) and Logoli (E41) in group 40 of Zone E, to which most of the other Bantu languages of Kenya and Uganda also belong. This classification which followed scientific methodologies, ties well with the oral traditions of the Gusii people, which as we have already shown, indicate that they have that close affinity with the groups named by Guthrie, thus lending credence to the traditions.

The Language shows little dialectal variation . All the speakers of Ekegusii speak a uniform variety except for a slight difference which is relatively small and confined to matters of vocabulary and pronunciation rather than structure, spoken by the Gusii of South Mugirango Location. The present work will ignore the slight variation and describe Ekegusii language uniformly.

## 1.2 THE PROBLEM:-

This study is an investigation of the phonological Processes involving consonants in Ekegusii. We shall

try to find out the various phonological processes involving consonants, account for them and assess the validity of the claims made in linguistic theory concerning phonological processes from the vantage point of Ekegusii. Schane (1973) points out that:

".... general phonological theory cannot be divorced from what happens in specific languages, since the theory evolves from experience with real linguistic data. We can therefore assess the adequacy of theoretical points by referring to examples from various languages..."<sup>4</sup>

Ekegusii is a language that has not been studied to date using a modern theoretical model. It will be of interest to a linguist to study the various aspects and characteristics of the language, particularly so the phonological changes that the language undergoes using rigours of a theoretical model. In this respect we shall test the claims about linguistic changes made by the Natural generative theory of phonology, which this work adopts as its descriptive tool.

A pre-research survey carried out on the language revealed some interesting phonological phenomena. We noted that some phonological changes in morphological processes were conditioned by different factors. We noted, for example, that there are some changes that

are phonetically conditioned and others that result from morphosyntactic or Lexical conditioning. This study seeks to specifically identify and account for those processes that affect the consonants only.

We shall look at a few examples from the language to illustrate the kind of problem that the study investigates. An example of a phonetically conditioned change is that of assimilation. In assimilatory processes a segment becomes more like another by agreeing in certain features. Continuant strengthening, one of the major phonological processes that involves consonants in Ekegusii is therefore an assimilatory process. For example,

(a)  $l \longrightarrow d/n$  —

This is a case where a Liquid becomes a stop after a nasal. This change can be explained as an articulatory phenomena. This can be seen in the following data:

- (1)
- |              |                   |            |           |
|--------------|-------------------|------------|-----------|
| $/n+lfenda/$ | $\longrightarrow$ | $[ndenda]$ | 'I guard' |
| $/n+lfem+a/$ | $\longrightarrow$ | $[ndema]$  | 'I dig'   |
| $/n+foḵ+a/$  | $\longrightarrow$ | $[ndoḵa]$  | 'I dream' |
| $/n+fof+a/$  | $\longrightarrow$ | $[ndofa]$  | 'I see'   |

(b)  $\beta \longrightarrow b/n$  \_\_\_\_\_

A fricative [β] becomes a stop [b] after a nasal /n/ like in:

(2)	/n+βa <sub>l</sub> +a /	[mba <sub>l</sub> e]	'I count'
	/n+βu <sub>ɣ</sub> +e /	[mbu <sub>ɣ</sub> e]	'I dismiss'
	/n+βu <sub>ʃ</sub> +e /	[mbu <sub>ʃ</sub> e]	'I sound'
	/n+βo: <sub>l</sub> +e /	[mbo: <sub>l</sub> e]	'I say'

The above examples suffice to show these changes that can be explained in phonetic terms.

There were other interesting changes we observed that cannot be explained as being phonetically conditioned. For Example:

(3)	[Ika]	'reach'	[naiɣete]	'he reached'
	[roka]	'vomit'	[nafoɣete]	'he vomited'
	[mipoka]	'run'	[namipɔɣete]	'he ran'
	[namipokaɣete]	'he ran for/on behalf'		

When the forms inflect for tense [k] becomes [ɣ] and sometimes it does not in the same environment. If the change is phonetically conditioned then we would expect that  $k \longrightarrow \gamma$  in all cases where the structural descriptions are met. This leads us to

suspect that there are other explanations that can be given that are not phonetic. It is such phenomena that this study seeks to identify and account for.

### 1.3 SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS

The time available for this study does not allow us to broadly explore all the morphophonological processes of Ekegusii. We shall therefore venture to account for those processes that affect consonants only.

A phonological study of Ekegusii consonants processes covers a big area. It includes both a synchronic and diachronic study. While we note that the synchronic and diachronic aspects of sound change cannot be rigidly separated, the present study only deals with the synchronic aspects of the major consonantal processes. This is for practical reasons that given the time limit, the nature and number of relevant processes, it would be impossible to effectively carry out a synchronic study and at the same time delve in to historic aspects of Ekegusii consonant processes. However, although our study is basically synchronic, we cannot afford to ignore the fact that synchronic forms of a language are a result of the diachronic changes through which the language

passes in its dynamic movement towards simplicity. We shall therefore, make occasional references to the historical development of the language if such a reference will help explain better what cannot be explained in terms of the synchronic phonetic environments.

#### 1.4 THE OBJECTIVES

The objective of this study is to give a synchronic account of the phonological processes involving the consonants in Ekegusii. We aim to identify those processes, determine their nature, their domain of application and consequently their relationship to one another. Given the nature of these processes our objectives are as follows:-

- (a) Identify the major morphophonological processes.
- (b) Investigate and explain those morphophonological processes of consonants within Ekegusii.
- (c) Investigate the conditions under which each process takes place and attempt to formulate formalized rules for each one of them in order to capture phonological generalizations.

- (d) To determine the nature and domain of application for each of the processes
- (c) To account for the plausability of those processes and the contexts in which they occur.
- (f) To explain the rule types, the conditioning and limitations of their application, thus drawing a distinctions of these rule types as spelled out within the natural generative grammar framework. For example draw a distinction between phonological rules proper that are phonetically natural processes and morphophonemic rules that are morphologically conditioned.

### 1.5 RATIONALE

Many reasons can be advanced to justify a morphophonological study of Ekegusii. Among the most important reasons for carrying out this study is the fact that there is no work to date to our knowledge, that has been done on Ekegusii, in a scientific and thus systematic way. This work will therefore explore the language employing one of the theoretical models that have evolved in linguistics, to fill in this gap.

This study will provide a good testing ground for the claims and viability of the natural generative theory, which it adopts as its descriptive tool of the language.

Our study will also be a contribution to the claims about natural language, whose accumulation helps in formulating tenable claims about universality of some processes in human language. It is also hoped that a morphophonological study such as this will provide insights into the factors that seem to motivate phonological changes in languages.

In addition, this study is also a contribution towards a completion of studies currently being carried on African languages, which until recent years, had not been studied, particularly so the African languages spoken within the boundaries of Kenya, specifically languages of the Bantu family.

#### 1.6 THE LITERATURE REVIEW

Most of the available works on Ekegusii language are no more than pedagogical works mainly intended for non-native speakers who want to acquire a quick working knowledge of the language. These works have been written by Europeans who had little or no knowledge of the language. This group contains mainly

of Whiteley's works; 'An introduction to Gusii Language' 1956 and 'The Tense System of Gusii'(1960).

In the introduction of 'An introduction to Gusii language' (1956:3), Whiteley says:-

"....care has been taken to avoid the use of new or obscure grammatical items. This is from a conviction that traditional terms are more accurate or more suitable for such a language, but rather from the belief that the majority of those wishing to learn African languages have so hazy an idea about grammatical terms in general that any but the simplest inspire both confusion and fear." <sup>5</sup>

He further notes in the conclusion of his introduction that;

"... by the end of this part (2nd), it is hoped to have given the student a good working knowledge of the language up to the point at which he is able for himself to increase his vocabulary and his idioms."<sup>6</sup>

It is evident from these remarks that the book was basically intended to furnish a non-native speaker of the language with a general outlay of the language as to enable one to work among the native speakers of the language.

In 'The Tense System of Gusii' (1960), Whiteley attempts no more than a description of the tense system of Ekegusii. He does not offer any detailed analysis of this vital aspect of the language that he had chosen to tackle. The most he does in this work was to give a general overview of how tenses are formed in Ekegusii and what morphemes mark them. Although our study does not hold tense systems as its central area of discussion, we shall treat this aspect under chapter three while discussing the morphology of Ekegusii. In this way we hope to give an otherwise proper account guided by the natural generative grammar theoretical paradigms. These two works together with other materials written in Ekegusii can best be used as sources of data.

There is no work in print available to us that deals specifically with the morphophonology of Ekegusii. However, studies have been done on languages that are genetically related to Ekegusii. Such works have been done on; Kikuyu language by Mutahi (1983), Lumasaaba by Brown, (1972) Kitharaka language by Mberia (1981), Kiswahili dialects by Bakari (1985) and on Lubukusu by Mutonyi (1986), only to mention a few. These works are of interest to us from a theoretical point of view in that they all

have employed the rigours of Natural Generative grammar theory, a paradigm that our study has also adopted as the descriptive tool.

For information on the theory to be used for this study (NGG), we have depended almost entirely on Joan Hooper's 'An introduction to Natural Generative phonology' (1976) and articles by Vennemann, who developed the theory, in particular the 1974 article entitled 'phonological concreteness in Natural Generative Grammar' in a book edited by Shuy and Bailey entitled 'Towards tomorrow's linguistics.' Other articles which we found very useful are overviews of the theory. These include; Hooper (1975) 'The Archi-segment in Natural Generative phonology,' Kiparsky (1968), Linguistics and linguistic change and Kiparsky (1973), 'How abstract is phonology?'

#### 1.7 THE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theoretical model on which this description is to be based is Natural Generative Grammar (NGG) as developed by Vennemann and propounded by Joan Hooper (1976). Hooper first propounded this theory in her 1973 doctoral dissertation under the title of 'Aspects of Natural Generative phonology' (NGG), which was later published in 1976 under the title

of 'Introduction to Natural Generative Phonology'. Later, Hooper sought to extend the theory, in one of the several articles, that have been published discussing the theory entittled 'The Archi-segment in Natural Generative Phonology.' In this article, she sought to incorporate the archi-segment in the underlying representation. It appears to us that with this incorporation, there seems to be a somewhat abstractness, we therefore base our description largely on the 1973 version.

The model of Natural Generative Grammar (NGG) is preferred over Transformational Generative Grammar (TGG) in that the later theory is too powerful and cannot therefore make correct predictions about natural language. NGG which is in itself a modification of Transformational Generative Grammar is a much more constrained paradigm, with the central issue being the abstractness which Transformational Generative Grammar allows. The two theories make the same claims about the natural sound changes. However, Natural Generative Grammar has placed certain strong constraints within its framework which operate to keep to minimum if not to overcome the issue of abstractness. These apply on possible rules, alternations and underlying forms. The constraints which the Natural Generative Grammar has posited are:-

- (1) The true generalization condition
- (2) The No-ordering condition, and
- (3) The strong naturalness condition.

The true generalization condition is a constraint that is placed on phonological rules. The condition unveils the fact that not all changes have phonetic conditioning. It states that;-

"If an alternation fails to take place when the phonetic environment is present or take place when the phonetic condition is not present then it cannot be associated with a phonetic environment but must be associated with something else in the grammar"<sup>7</sup> (Hooper 1976:16)

The condition requires that "all rules express transparent surface generation"<sup>8</sup> (Hooper:13), that is, express surface forms in the most direct manner possible. The theory assumes basically that the language learner who has access only to surface data from which to construct a grammar could not possibly construct abstract underlying forms and rules. Therefore the rules that speakers formulate are based directly on surface forms and these rules relate one surface form to another surface form. By this condition therefore no rule could refer to a non-

existent segment. If it does not surface then it is not existent, therefore, Natural Generative Grammar theory restricts the notion of 'possible rule.' Because of restricting the idea of 'possible rule,' consequently certain rule types emerged each with their own characteristics. We shall look at each of them briefly in a moment.

The No-ordering condition is a constraint on the application of rules. It restricts extrinsic ordering of rules, so that rules apply sequentially and to any form that meet their structural descriptions. This is to say that rules are supposed to have an intrinsic order such that certain rules only apply after their structural description has been created by the output of the others. The condition states, however, that special rules or parts of rules always apply before the general ones. Natural Generative Grammar claims that speakers of a language do not make use of rule order and abstract underlying forms to maintain a phonological analysis. It claims that they will consistently choose the analysis that identifies phonological phenomena with morphological phenomena. This is because the function of a grammar is to associate meaning with sound - speakers prefer to consider phonological variations meaningful than predictable and meaningless. This

explains morphologization of phonological rules. Extrinsic ordering has been considered by the Natural Generativists camp as a major factor that motivates abstractness since the ordering is sometimes arbitrary.

The strong naturalness condition constrains the abstractness of underlying representations. The condition requires that there be transparency between underlying and surface forms. This direct correspondence between forms will show the changes that are taking place and thus avoid abstractness in a grammar. NGG postulates that the phonological representations of the Lexicon and its idiosyncratic phonetic properties of the morpheme be related in a non-arbitrary way.

The Natural Generative Grammar model distinguishes between rule types. These are:-

- (1) Phonetically conditioned rules
- (2) Morphologically conditioned rules
- (3) Syllabification rules
- (4) Sandhi rules
- (5) Morphological spell-out rules (or word-formation rules and
- (6) Via - rules.

Phonetically conditioned rules (P-rules) describe alternations that take place in environments that are specifiable in purely phonetic terms. They therefore are natural, that is, they are conditioned by physical articulatory processes, thus phonetically motivated, exceptionless and are therefore unsuppressable. They describe changes that are universal in that they always take place in given environments irrespective of language. They apply each and everytime their structural description is met. The rules consists of such natural rules as assimilation rules, strengthening and weakening.

Morphophonemic rules (MP-rules) are rules that change phonological features in environments described in morphosyntactic and lexical terms. They are therefore phonologically arbitrary. MP-rules are of three basic types;-

- (a) morphophonemic rules describe the various alternations of a phoneme in different environments.
- (b) morphological spell-out rules not only show how morphemes are strung together to form words but also the changes they undergo before getting to their surface realization

- (c) Syllabification rules assign syllable boundaries to phonological strings. They can apply cyclically if the structural description allows them to do so.

MP-rules, unlike p-rules which are universal, are non universal and with exceptions. They are language specific and invariably govern meaningful alternations.

Sandhi rules fall in between P-rules and MP-rules, that is, they have characteristics of both the P-rules and the MP-rules. They are word boundary rules whose information that applies to word boundaries make them function like MP-rules. But when word boundaries coincide with syllable boundary the rules are phonological, thus regular productive processes and unsuppressable. The behaviour of Sandhi rules therefore places them in between P-rules and MP-rules.

Another important category for us is via-rules, which apply to cases which cannot be explained in phonetic or morphosyntactic terms. They relate one lexical item to another without having to claim that one is derived from the other. They express phonological relations between lexical items. Hooper (1976:17)

argues that the forms related by a via-rule are entered as separate items in the lexicon and the rule exists to show that there is some relationship in the two items although as already said there can be no claims that one is derived from the other.

Natural Generative Grammar therefore makes strong claims regarding natural language processes. If the theory is correct, then these hypotheses should be upheld by data from natural language. As such the constraints on underlying forms, rules and their application should be validated by the facts of natural language. It is this theory that we have thus far outlined whose framework that we shall use in writing a morphophonological description of Ekegusii.

We have chosen the theory because it is more constrained than Transformational Generative Grammar such that its claims are less abstract and it should be capable of predicting natural language phenomena such as Ekegusii. It takes as its domain the interaction between phonology and morphology, which as Hooper notes "the theory is in fact a theory of morphophonology." This study of Ekegusii language therefore a part from other already said contributions will also be a test ground for the empiricalness of

the theoretical rigours of NGG.

#### 1.8 METHODOLOGY

The data that was required for this study was mainly phonetic-phonological. Due to time limitations, it was not possible to explore as much as one would have liked for this kind of work. As a native speaker of Ekegusii we have used our intuition, to supply the basic data that has been used in the analysis of this work. To supplement this we had recourse to materials that have been written in Ekegusii. These included the Bible (Emuma enyia), printed religious pamphlets and basic text books that are used for teaching in primary schools. However, to ensure that our analysis is based on Ekegusii that is representative of the speech-community all the data obtained has been cross-checked with other speakers of the language.

For the actual analysis of the data this work has employed the tools provided by the Natural Generative Grammar theory, as outlined in section 1.7 above.

END NOTES

1. The Republic of Kenya, population census 1979.  
C.B.S.
2. Op. cit
3. Ochieng, W. A short history of the Gusii of  
Western Kenya.
4. Schane, S.A. 'Generative phonology' (1973:xv)
5. Whiteley, W.H. 'An introduction to Gusii language  
(1956:3)
6. Op.cit (1956:6)
7. Hooper, J. (1976:16)
8. Op. cit (1976:13)

## CHAPTER TWO

### 2.0.0 AN INTRODUCTION TO EKEGUSII PHONOLOGY

In this chapter we shall introduce the sound system of Ekegusii. We discuss the segmental and suprasegmental elements of the language and in so doing lay the necessary introductory information that will be used in discussing the morphophonology of the language later on in this work. A surface description of the consonantal changes which will be used in the analysis of the morphophonology will be provided.

### 2.1.0 PHONOLOGY

The sound system of Ekegusii contains both segmental and suprasegmental elements. The segmentals fall into two major classes namely consonants and vowels. The segmental elements are tone, prominence and stress.

### 2.1.1 CONSONANTS

The total number of consonants in Ekegusii is twenty. These include two semi-vowels /j/ and /w/, seven nasal compounds that function as unit phonemes and eleven pure consonants. In the chart below these consonants are turbulated according to manner and point of articulation.

CONSONANT CHART

	LABIAL	DENTAL	ALVEOLAR	PALATAL	VELAR	GLOTTAL
STOPS	mb	t n ṭ ṇ	n <sub>d</sub>	ç nç	n <sub>k</sub> k	
FRICATIVE	β		s n <sub>s</sub>			ɣ
GLIDES	w			j		
LIQUIDS			l			
NASALS	m		n	ɲ	ŋ ɲɛ	

From the above consonant chart, one notices that the Ekegusii language does not have pairing of its sound segments in terms of the state of the Glottis. That is, voice is not a distinctive feature in Ekegusii. Our study revealed that all the sound segments stand on their own. For instance the language does not have a voiceless counterpart of the bilabial fricative

[β], neither does the voiceless velar fricative [s] have its voiced counterpart [z], as the chart shows. Some sounds will appear voiced only either in a nasal compound, for example [nd] and [mb] and after certain phonological processes have taken place, for example [β] strengthening to [b] after a nasal /n/.

In the table below we show the correspondence between the international phonetic alphabet (IPA) representations of Ekegusii consonants to the standard orthography.

ORTHOGRAPHIC <u>PRESENTATION</u>	IPA <u>SYMBOLS</u>
B    b	β
W    w	w
M    m	m
T    t	t̥
R    r	r̥
S    s	s
N    n	n
CH   ch	ç (tʃ )
Y    y	j
NY   ny	ɲ
K    k	k

ORTHOGRAPHIC	IPA
<u>PRESENTATION</u>	<u>SYMBOLS</u>
NG' ng'	ŋ
MB mb	mb
ND nd	n <sub>d</sub>
NG ng	ŋg
NT nt	n <sub>t</sub>
NS ns	n <sub>s</sub>
NK nk	n <sub>k</sub>
NCH nch	n <sub>ç</sub>
G g	ɣ

There are two sounds which can be heard in the language that we have not entered in the consonant inventory. These sounds are; the voiceless labial fricative [ɸ] which is also sometimes heard as a voiceless labial stop [p] and the glottal stop [ʔ]. The two sounds have not been accorded full phonemic status on the following grounds. [ɸ] is used to lay stress and emphasis on a given point. [ʔ] is used for expressing disgust, pain and/or despair. [ɸ] or sometimes [p] (especially for the younger generation of Ekegusii speakers), is mostly evident in borrowed items. For example the Lexical item [pima] - 'to

weigh' is borrowed from Kiswahili [pima] - [kupima] 'to weigh'. Ekegusii has [oɣopima] - 'to weigh,' affixing the infinitive marker [oko-] which through the Dahl's law becomes [oɣo-]. This then fits 'pima' into its system. But the fact that it is a borrowed item and also that it does not occur anywhere else the segment does not hold any phonemic function.

We pointed out earlier on that [pt] is used for laying stress and emphasis. The following data demonstrates this.

(4)

[mwensI	PI]	-	'all of you'
[ɕIonsI	PI]	-	'all of them (things)
[BonsI	PI]	-	all of them (people)

The above examples can be analysed thus:

/mo+ensI /	→	[mwensI]
/ɕ+onsI /	→	[ɕIonsI]
/β+onsI /	→	[BonsI]
{mo-}	—	2nd person plural marker
{ɕI-}	—	3rd person plural marker
{β-}	—	3rd person plural marker

These morphemes mark plurality and person. {-onsI}

weigh' is borrowed from Kiswahili [pima] - [kupima] 'to weigh'. Ekegusii has [oɣopima] - 'to weigh,' affixing the infinitive marker [oko-] which through the Dahl's law becomes [oɣo-]. This then fits 'pima' into its system. But the fact that it is a borrowed item and also that it does not occur anywhere else the segment does not hold any phonemic function.

We pointed out earlier on that [pɪ] is used for laying stress and emphasis. The following data demonstrates this.

(4)

[mwensI	PI]	-	'all of you'
[ɕIonsI	PI]	-	'all of them (things)
[BonsI	PI]	-	all of them (people)

The above examples can be analysed thus:

/mo+ensI /	→	[mwensI]
/ɕ+onsI /	→	[ɕIonsI]
/β+onsI /	→	[BonsI]
{mo-}	—	2nd person plural marker
{ɕI-}	—	3rd person plural marker
{β-}	—	3rd person plural marker

These morphemes mark plurality and person. {-onsI}





ii) nd	-	[énda]	'a stomach'
	-	[é :nda]	'louse'
	-	[fenda]	'guard'
iii) nč	-	[enčoke]	'a bee'
		[ončoka]	'turn'
		[enčore]	'sword'
iv) ns	-	[ensaŋa]	'arrow'
		[ensoko]	'a well'
		[ensakŋa]	'the morning sun'
		[ensona]	'aflea'
v) nk	-	[enkoβa]	'thunder'
	-	[enkɔndu]	'maize cob'
		[enkɛnɛ]	'tapeworm'
		[enkanda]	'a big boy'
vi) nt	-	[entɔβɔ]	'a small round fruit'
		[entɔɣa]	'a termite'
		[entafo]	'a mark made when applying traditional medicine'

vii)	ŋg	-	[eŋgɔ]	'a leopard'
			[eŋgoʝe]	'a <sup>an</sup> warthog' *
			[ɛŋgɔɾɔ]	'a God'
			[eŋgefo]	'a song'

The following articulatory descriptions can be given for each nasal compound;

- mb - Bilabial nasal + a voiced bilabial plosive
- nd - Alveolar nasal + a voiced alveolar plosive
- ntɿ - Alveolar nasal + a voiceless dental plosive
- ns - Alveolar nasal + a voiceless alveolar fricative
- nç - Alveolar nasal + a voiceless palatal affricate
- nk - Alveolar nasal + a voiceless velar plosive
- ŋg - A velar nasal + a voiced velar plosive

The above articulatory descriptions shows that the nasal coarticulates with the following consonant at the same point (homorganic).

The distributional possibilities of the nasal compounds is not limited to a particular position. They occur in word initial, midial, or final positions. However, at word final position like any other consonant in the language, it precedes a vowel. They occur in basic word forms and also in derived word forms as can be seen in the following data.

vii)	ɟg	-	[ɛɟgɔ]	'a leopard'
			[ɛɟgoʝe]	'a <sup>an ape</sup> warthog' x
			[ɛɟgɔɾɔ]	'a God'
			[ɛɟgefo]	'a song'

The following articulatory descriptions can be given for each nasal compound;

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The distributional possibilities of the nasal compounds is not limited to a particular position. They occur in word initial, midial, or final positions. However, at word final position like any other consonant in the language, it precedes a vowel. They occur in basic word forms and also in derived word forms as can be seen in the following data.

(6) (i) BASIC WORD FORMS

[emamba]	-	'acrocodile'
[embe]	-	'a bad one'
[enda]	-	'a stomach'
[en'oke]	-	'a bee'
[ensoko]	-	'a well'
[enkoβa]	-	'thunder'
[enɬuʒa]	-	'a termite'
[ɛʒɛɔ]	-	'a leopard'

(6) (ii) DERIVED WORD FORMS

n+fend+e	→	[ndende]	'I guard'
n+βas+e	→	[mbaβe]	'I count'
n+kam+e	→	[nkame]	'I milk'
n+ɣof+e	→	[ʒɛ <sup>o</sup> fe]	'I buy'
n+saβ+e	→	[nsaβe]	'I ask/pray'
n+ɬa:f+e	→	[nɬa:fe]	'I walk'
n+ɕak+e	→	[nɕake]	'I start'

2.1.1.2 b,d,g PHONEMIC STATUS

According to our findings, the following sound segments are not granted phonemic status in the language; These are the voiced stops [b], [d] and [g]. Whenever they occur they are preceded by a nasal.

They occur either in a nasal compound or are derived after a phonological process has taken place.

The voiced bilabial stop [b] occurs after a bilabial nasal [m], the alveolar plosive occurs after an alveolar nasal [n] and the voiced velar plosive occurs after a velar nasal [ŋ]. They may be regarded as allophonic variants of the underlying phonemes, although on the surface they appear to cluster with the preceding nasals. The segments cannot function if isolated from the nasal, that is, they are always within the nasal compounds /<sup>n</sup>d/ /<sup>m</sup>b/ and /ŋg/ and cannot be broken down further to N+ stop, as the data below shows.

(7) (i) /<sup>m</sup>b/

/ko+ambaf+a/ → [kwambafa] 'to gather'  
/n+βamb+e / → [mba:mbe] 'I crucify'  
/ko+βaβ+a/ → [koβaβe] 'they be'

It is evident here that there is an allophonic /mb/ and a phonemic [mb]. The language has allophonic [b] from an underlying cluster /nβ/.

→	[aɣenda]	'he goes'
→	[aɣeta]	'he traps'
→	[ndonda]	'I squeeze out'
→	[ndota]	'I dream'

→	[ntɔŋga]	'I stick'
→	[ntɔɣa]	'I dont make noise (usually)'
→	[nāŋgà]	'I refused'
→	[nāɣa']	'he weeded'

es us enough evidence to

in Ekegusii the voiced stops  
emic function rather they are  
underlying phonemes. There is,  
f confusing the allophonic  
ence of these segments. That  
possibly confuse phonemic /<sup>n</sup>d/

allophonic [nd] [mb] and [ɟg]

when the latter are variants of various sound segments which are realized only when there is an environmental conditioning usually the first person singular subject pronoun, or the class 9/10 noun marker /n/. The foregoing analyses suffices to explain the phenomena whenever the said segments occur.

#### 2.1.2.0 CONSONANTAL CHANGES: A SURFACE DESCRIPTION

In this section we shall give a surface description of the changes that affect consonants in Ekegusii. We will provide introductory information that will highlight some changes that will be analysed later on in Chapter four of this work. We shall therefore sacrifice detail at this stage which will be covered in a broader spectrum later.

Ekegusii like any other natural language has a number of phonological processes that affect consonants. These include assimilation, dissimilation, strengthening or stop formation and weakening.

#### 2.1.2.1 STRENGTHENING (STOP FORMATION)

One of the major consonantal changes in Ekegusii is strengthening or what is sometimes called stop-formation. This is a process in which a continuant

becomes a stop in a given environment. There are three types of continuant strengthening in Ekegusii. One case of the phenomena affects the voiced bilabial fricative [β] which becomes a voiced bilabial plosive [b], the liquid flap [ɾ] which becomes a voiced alveolar plosive [d] and the other affects a velar fricative which becomes a voiced velar stop [g].

(i) BILABIAL FRICATIVE STRENGTHENING

β → b/n \_\_\_\_ . A voiced bilabial fricative becomes a voiced bilabial plosive after an alveolar nasal /n/. This can be seen in the following data:

(8)

/n+Baɣ+e/	→	[mbaɣe]	'I squeeze'
/n+Bo:f+e/	→	[mbo:fe]	'I say'
/n+Buɣ+e/	→	[mbuɣe]	'I dismiss'
/n+Baf+e/	→	[mbafe]	'I count'

We deduce from the above data that n → m / \_\_\_\_ b  
cf 2.2.1.2 for further discussion.

(ii) LIQUID STRENGTHENING

$\text{ɾ} \longrightarrow \text{d/n}$  . A flap [ɾ] becomes a voiced alveolar plosive [d] after an alveolar nasal /n/. The examples of the occurrence are:-

(9)

$/\text{n}+\text{ɸuɾ}+\text{e}/$	$\longrightarrow$	[nduɾe]	'I cook'
$/\text{n}+\text{ɸa}+\text{e}/$	$\longrightarrow$	[ndare]	'I sleep'
$/\text{n}+\text{ɸoɾ}+\text{e}/$	$\longrightarrow$	[ndoɾe]	'I dream'
$/\text{n}+\text{ɸuɾ}+\text{e}/$	$\longrightarrow$	[nduɾe]	'I throw'
$/\text{n}+\text{ɸem}+\text{e}/$	$\longrightarrow$	[ndeme]	'I dig'
$/\text{n}+\text{ɸend}+\text{e}/$	$\longrightarrow$	[ndende]	'I guard'

(iii) VELAR FRICATIVE STRENGTHENING

$\text{ɣ} \longrightarrow \text{g/ɣ}$  . A velar fricative [ɣ] becomes a voiced velar stop after a velar nasal /ɣ/. The following data shows the change.

(10)

$/\text{n}+\text{ɣoɾ}+\text{e}/$	$\longrightarrow$	[ɣgoɾe]	'I become old'
$/\text{n}+\text{ɣoɾ}+\text{e}/$	$\longrightarrow$	[ɣgoɾe]	'I become happy'
$/\text{n}+\text{ɣos}+\text{e}/$	$\longrightarrow$	[ɣgose]	'I frighten'
$/\text{n}+\text{ɣof}+\text{e}/$	$\longrightarrow$	[ɣgofe]	'I buy'

For the change that the nasals undergo see 2.1.2.2 (ii) below:

2.1.2.2. HOMORGANIC NASAL ASSIMILATION

Homorganic nasal assimilation is a process in which a nasal assimilates to the same point of articulation of the following consonant.

(i)  $n \longrightarrow m / \text{---} b$ . An alveolar nasal becomes a bilabial nasal before a voiced bilabial stop. The examples of this change are as follows:

(11)

$/n+Bek+e /$	$\longrightarrow$	$[mbeke]$	'I put'
$/n+Bu\delta+e /$	$\longrightarrow$	$[mbu\delta e]$	'I say'
$/n+Ba\zeta+e /$	$\longrightarrow$	$[mbafe]$	'I count'
$/n+Bu+a\zeta+e /$	$\longrightarrow$	$[mbwa\zeta e]$	'I hold'

(ii)

$n \longrightarrow \text{ŋ} / \text{---} \delta$ . An alveolar nasal becomes a velar nasal before a velar fricative. The examples of this change are given in the data below:

(12)

/n+ʃof+e/	[ŋgofe]	'I buy'
/n+ʃap+e/	[ŋgape]	'I wait'
/n+ʃok+e/	[ŋgokɛ]	'I become happy'
/n+ʃot+e/	[ŋgotɛ]	'I become Old'
/n+ʃɛɛ+e/	[ŋgɛɛɛ]	'I measure'
/n+ʃek+e/	[ŋgeke]	'I slash'

### 2.1.2.3 DISSIMILATION

The process of dissimilation is the opposite of assimilation. It is defined as the process in which a segment becomes more differentiated in certain features with its neighbouring segment. Neighbouring segments has twofold meaning. First it could involve segments that are in contact, and secondly, segments that are not in contact, but in adjacent syllables.

In Ekegusii  $k \longrightarrow \gamma$ , which is a case of dissimilation (a voiceless velar stop becomes a voiced velar fricative before a voiceless segment). The data below demonstrates the change.

13)

/ko+ɬera/	→	[ɣotera]	'to sing'
/ko+kana/	→	[ɣokana]	'to refuse'
/ko+sefa/	→	[ɣosera]	'to grind'
/ko+ɬafa/	→	[ɣoɬara]	'to walk'
/ko+ɣofa/	→	[koɣofa]	'to buy'
/ko+ɣoma/	→	[koɣoma]	'to strike'
/ko+ɬema/	→	[koɬema]	'to dig'

This phenomena will be discussed in details in chapter four of this work.

#### 2.1.2.4 WEAKENING

Weakening has been defined as a process whereby a stop becomes either a fricative, an affricate or even a liquid. In Ekegusii language, there is one case of weakening. This affects the voiceless velar stop /k/ which becomes a voiced velar fricative

[ɣ] . This is demonstrated below:

(14)

/ko+kam+a/	→	[ɣokama]	'to milk'
/ko+sefa/	→	[ɣosefa]	'to grind'
/ko+kuɬa/	→	[ɣokuɬa]	'to scream'
/ko+ɬaɕa/	→	[ɣoɬaɕa]	'to tap'

The phonological changes that have been highlighted in sections 2.1.2.1. to 2.1.2.4 will be discussed in details in chapter four.

### 2.1.3.0 VOWELS

There are in Ekegusii fourteen (14) vowel phonemes, seven short and seven long ones. These are:

i	ii
e	ee
ɛ	ɛɛ
a	aa
u	uu
o	oo
ɔ	ɔɔ

One characteristic that is unique to the language is the pairing of mid vowels, both the front and back vowels, into tense and lax vowels. From the list of vowels above it can be noticed that the front mid vowel [e] which is tense has its lax counterpart [ɛ]. Likewise for the back mid vowel [o] has its lax counterpart [ɔ]. These vowels are unit phonemes as is illustrated below:

(15)

(i) [o] and [ɔ]

[ɪʝofɔ]	-	'up'
[ɪʝɔfɔ]	-	'yesterday'
[eɟgofɔ]	-	'a hole'
[eɟgɔfɔ]	-	'God'

(ii) [e] and [ɛ]

[tɛma]	-	'cut'
[tɛ:ma]	-	'try'
[sɛfa]	-	'push with a stick'/
		'start the ball'
[sɛ:fa]	-	'grind'

The mid vowels have been singled out here because the rest of the vowels, [ɪ], [a] and [u] are not paired into tense and lax vowels.

The table below illustrates the correspondence between the international phonetic alphabet (IPA) representations of the vowels to the standard orthography.

(15)

(i) [o] and [ɔ]

[ɪɔfo]	-	'up'
[ɪɔɾɔ]	-	'yesterday'
[ɛgɔfo]	-	'a hole'
[ɛgɔɾɔ]	-	'God'

(ii) [e] and [ɛ]

[kɛma]	-	'cut'
[kɛ:ma]	-	'try'
[sɛɾa]	-	'push with a stick' / 'start the ball'
[sɛ:ɾa]	-	'grind'

The mid vowels have been singled out here because the rest of the vowels, [ɪ], [a] and [u] are not paired into tense and lax vowels.

The table below illustrates the correspondence between the international phonetic alphabet (IPA) representations of the vowels to the standard orthography.

ORTHOGRAPHIC		IPA
<u>REPRESENTATION</u>		<u>SYMBOLS</u>
A	a	a
E	e	e ε
I	i	ɪ
O	o	o ɔ
U	u	u
AA	aa	a a:
EE	ee	e: ε:
II	ii	ɪ:
OO	oo	o: ɔ:
UU	uu	u:

The corresponding vowel chart is given below:

	FRONT	BACK
HIGH	ɪ ɪ:	u u:
MID	e e: ε ε:	o o: ɔ ɔ:
LOW	a a:	

The data below illustrates the phonemic status of the vowels (the short and long vowels).

(16)

[sɪka]	- 'respect'	[sɪɪka]	'ferment
[βeɾa]	- 'boil'	[βe:ɾa]	'sit on'
[ɛɾa]	- 'sieve'	[ɛ:ɾa]	'give for'
[kɔna]	- 'bewitch'	[kɔ:na]	'be spiteful'
[kuɾa]	- 'prick'	[ku:ɾa]	'shout for help'
[βoɾa]	- 'lack'	[βo:ɾa]	'say'
[βasa]	- 'elope'	[βa:sa]	'skinning'

#### 2.1.3.1. VOWEL SEQUENCE

All vowel phonemes occur in all positions except [I], [II], [U] and [UU] which occur infrequently word initially. They all may bear a high, low and mid level tone or a falling or rising tone. This will be discussed under section 2.2.1.

Long vowels do not occur in the nominal prefix system but do so commonly in that of verbals. They occur contrastively in verbal radicals as data 16 above shows.

In general, all sequences retain their individual tones within a given radical or stem where the first member of a sequence (I,o,u) is a component of an affix, it tends to be realized as a glide. This will be discussed in detail under glide

formation. The tones of members of dissimilar vowel sequences are realized as falling if the tone of the first component is high, for example [t<sup>o</sup>+a] it will be realized as [t<sup>w</sup>a] and as rising or high if the tone of the second component is high for example [t<sup>o</sup>-a] will be realized as [t<sup>w</sup>a] 'we' or [akà-eβa] as [ake:βa] 'He forget'.

The preprefix that marks negativity in Ekegusii is [t<sup>I</sup>-] in sequences of the negative preprefix [t<sup>I</sup>] and a following verbal prefix [o] or [a], they are realized as [t<sup>o</sup>-] and [t<sup>a</sup>-]. Sequences of similar vowels, where either component is long are characterized by a very slight pause, as shown in the following data:

(17)

[fII: II <sup>o</sup> ]	-	'flock'
[fII: II <sup>o</sup> a]	-	'cooking stone'
[eke: e <sup>o</sup> gwe]	-	'stump of a tree'
[eke: eera]	-	'a fall'
[aa: aakwe]	-	'he will be beaten'

Another characteristic of the vowel sequences of Ekegusii is the occurrence of more than two vowels. This is very common. For example;

(18)

- [eβIaao] - 'different ones'
- [ɣIaeta] - they passed(things)'
- [okoeeofokereβIa] - 'to learn by oneself'

we shall discuss under vowel processes how such vowel sequences are broken in some cases by glide insertion.

The last vowel sequence we would like to point out here is the sequence of a - e. This only occurs with short vowels. The sequence is realized as [ɛ] (similarly this will be treated under height assimilation and deletion in the subsequent section).

a - e sequence is realized as [ee] or [ɛ]  
For example:

(19)

- /oka+eβa / → [oke:βa] 'you forgot'
- /na+eβa / → [neeβa] 'he forgot'
- /na+eβa / → [neβa] 'I <sup>winnowed</sup>sieved'
- /na+eβa / → [nɛ:βa] 'I sieved myself'

The sequence of a+o is realized as [oo]  
as in:

(20)

/ja+oma/	[jooma]	- 'it dried up'
/aka+oma/	[akooma]	- 'he dried up'
/aka+ofa/	[akoofa]	- 'he skinned'/waded through
/ja+ofa/	[joofa]	- 'It waded through'

#### 2.1.3.2.0 VOWEL PROCESSES

In this section we shall make a few introductory remarks on the major phonological processes involving vowels in Ekegusii. This will provide, it is hoped, useful information which might be of great use in the subsequent sections of our study. Among the phonological processes that will be discussed are glide formation, vowel harmony, Height assimilation and vowel deletion.

#### 2.1.3.2.1 VOWEL DELETION

The process of deletion involves the loss of sound segments of a language in some given environments. In Ekegusii, some vowels are deleted in some words optionally. (Note that the vowels are not lost from the sound system after deletion). For instance in the process of glide formation, some vowels are deleted. For example  $o \rightarrow \emptyset$  when it is followed by [a] or [e]. This is when the labial glide /w/ is formed.

(i) o- DELETION

The back mid vowel [o] is deleted when it is followed by either a front mid vowel [e] or a low vowel [a] as the data below shows.

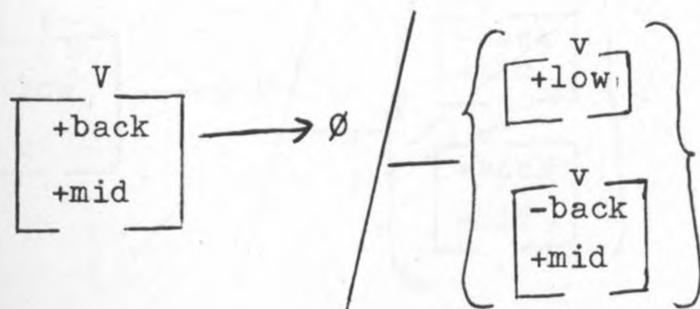
(21)

/ko+ana/	→	[kana]	'it mowed'
/ko+era/	→	[kera]	'it winnowed'
/ko+eβa/	→	[keβa]	'it forgot'
/ko+fa/	→	[kafa]	'it spread the bed'
/ko+aef+a/	→	[kaefa]	'it gave using'

(Note that the [ko] infinitive marker in the derived form plays the function of diminutive marker).

The rule for the o - deletion phenomena is formalized thus;

1)



A back mid vowel is deleted before a low vowel and/or a front mid vowel.

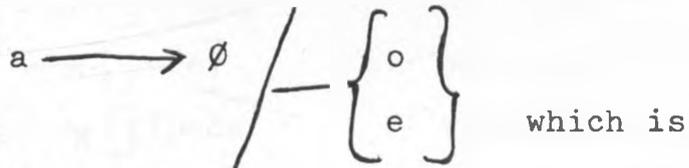
(ii) a- DELETION

The low vowel [a] is deleted before a mid vowel either [e] or [o]. For example;

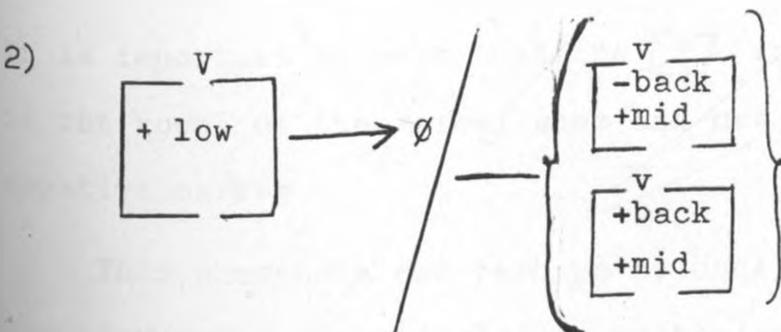
(22)

/ka+oɬa/	→	[ɔɬa]	'he warmed himself'
/ka+efa/	→	[kɛ:fa]	'he sieved'
/ka+oma/	→	[koma]	'he dries up'
/ka+eβa/	→	[ke:βa]	'he forgets'

This process will be dealt with further under height assimilation. Note that ka- marks diminutive. The rule that deletes a- is therefore



formalized as follows:



The rule reads that a low vowel is deleted before a mid back vowel and/or a mid front vowel.

(iii) I- DELETION

There are several instances where the speakers of Ekegusii drop a high front vowel [I] without the influence of the environment. This can be seen as a strategy to maximize communication with least effort. For the same word, however, the vowel may still be retained. It appears that the deletion of [I] is a matter of choice by the speakers. With or without the deletion of the vowel the meaning of the word is not affected, therefore the rule is optional. For example:

(23)

[ɬaIɕa]	→	[ɬaɕa]	'he should not come'
[ɬoIɕa]	→	[ɬoɕa]	'you should not come'
[ɬIβaɪɕa]	→	[ɬIβaɕa]	'they should not come'
[mbaIɕa]	→	[mbaɕa]	'they should not come'

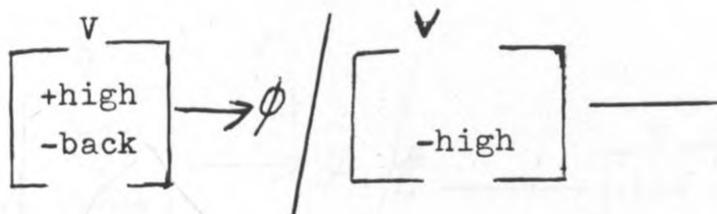
It is important to note that the [I] that is deleted is the vowel of the verbal stem and not that of the negative marker.

This phenomena can perhaps be understood from the view point of articulatory mechanism. That is to say that [I] a high front vowel following a back mid vowel [o] and a low vowel [a] could be difficult

for the speaker during a fast speech act to articulate the two sounds consecutively. In order to attain easy articulation, they opt to drop the high vowel. But why not drop [a] or [o]? Possibly they consider the frequency of occurrence such that in say a word like [t̪aɪʃa] 'he should not come', [a] occurs more times than [ɪ] so that this frequency other than phonetic motivation dictates the deletion. Assuming then that [ɪ] is deleted as a way of easing efforts to articulate far placed vowels in heights, consider the following word [t̪eɪʃa] - 'It should not come' [e] and [ɪ] are fairly near placed in their articulatory positions or height. Both are front vowels. But [ɪ] is still deleted, and we have [t̪eʃa] - 'It should not come'. This contradicts our hypothesis that [ɪ] is deleted because the speakers strive to attain ease in articulating the vowels in the words and that also the height does not seem to play any part in the deletion of the vowel. There is no example of a high vowel like [u] occurring with [ɪ] in a sequence to test the hypothesis of height conditioning. The most plausible conclusion we draw here is that [ɪ] is deleted optionally whenever it is preceded by any vowel that is not of its kind, that is, so long as the vowel that follows it is not a high vowel. The rule for this can

then be formalized as follows:

3)



A high front vowel is deleted after any vowel that is not a high vowel.

(iv) e - DELETION

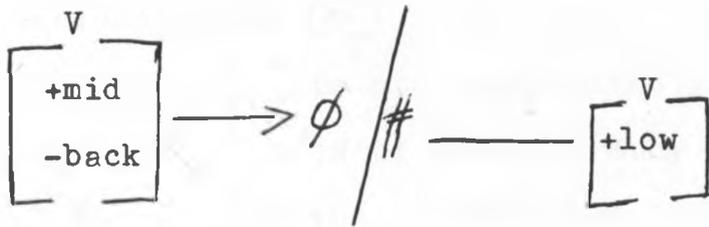
[e], a front mid vowel, is deleted before a low vowel. This takes place across word boundary. The final [e] in the first word is deleted before the initial [a] in the following word. The data below illustrates the phenomena.

(24)

[ofuʒefe	aβantɔ]	[ofuʒefapantɔ]	'You cook for people'
[ofaʒefie	aβana]	[ofaʒefiaβana]	'You feed the children'
[ondetɛfe	amaʒe]	[ondetɛfamaʒe]	'You bring for me water'

The rule is formally as follows:

4)



A mid front vowel becomes zero (is deleted) at word final before a low vowel at the initial position of the following word.

#### 2.1.3.2.2. VOWEL HARMONY

The process of vowel harmony in Ekegusii involves the modification of the tongue root position of a given vowel under the influence of a neighbouring vowel. The process usually takes place when an affix is attached to the root of a word. When affixation takes place the vowel in the affix acquires the tongue root position of the root vowel, thus causing all the vowels in the word to agree in some well defined feature.

Ekegusii vowels, specifically the mid vowels, are categorized into two groups. In one group, there is

the tense vowels and the other contains the lax vowels. The tense vowels are characterized basically as [+ATR] (advanced tongue root position) and these are [e] and [o] and the lax vowels that are [-ATR] include [ɛ] and [ɔ]. The rest of the vowels [i], [u] and [a] are not categorized in the same way. Once the process of vowel harmony takes place, all the vowels in the lexical item then belong to the same category. The [+ATR] vowels usually determine vowel harmony, since the assimilation process usually takes place from a [-ATR] position to a [+ATR] position. This is because the [+ATR] vowels are dominant thus causing the [-ATR] vowels in the same lexical item to become [+ATR]. The direction of the assimilation process depends on the part which contains the [+ATR] vowels. It thus can spread from the root which contains the [+ATR] vowels or from the affix to the root. The data below illustrates the process.

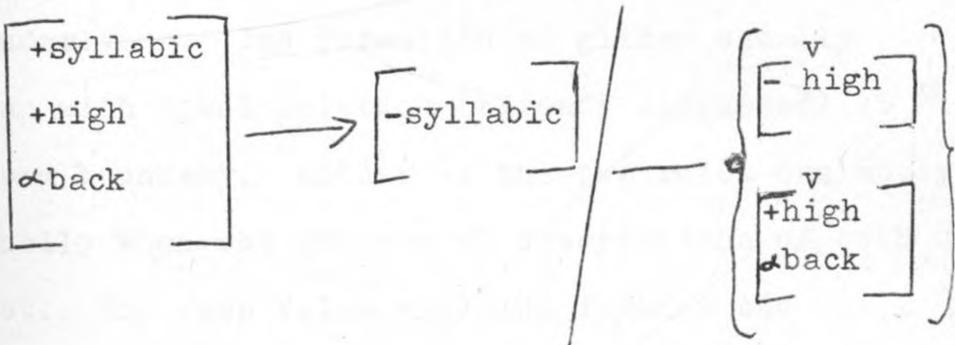
(25)

/aʃɛnd+e/	→	[aʃɛndɛ]	'he goes'
/aʃɔk+e/	→	[aʃɔkɛ]	'he becomes happy'
/akɔɫ+e/	→	[akɔɫɛ]	'he should do'
/atɛt+e/	→	[atɛtɛ]	'he should make love'
/-mentɛ-enke/	→	[mentɛnke]	'add the small one'

### 2.1.3.2.3 GLIDE FORMATION

One of the major phonological processes that involve vowels in Ekegusii is the process of glide formation. There are two glides formed in the language. These are the palatal glide /j/ and the labial glide /w/. The general rule for the formation of glides states that a high vowel becomes a glide when it is immediately followed by either a non - high vowel or a high vowel with the opposite value for the feature (back) that is when it is followed by a different vowel. This general rule can be formalized as follows;

5)

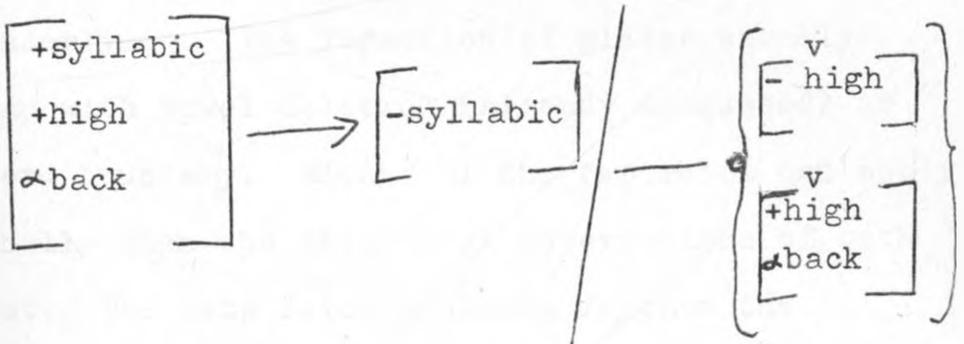


The two glides in the language have both the phonemic and allophonic status. This is to say that Ekegusii has underlying /j/ and /w/ and the derived surface glides through the process of glide formation. The data below shows the underlying glides thus

2.1.3.2.3 GLIDE FORMATION

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5)



The two glides in the language have both the phonemic and allophonic status. This is to say that Ekegusii has underlying /j/ and /w/ and the derived surface glides through the process of glide formation. The data below shows the underlying glides thus

phonemic, with the derived surface glides being shown under palatal glide and labial glides respectively in the discussion to follow :

(26)

[eɣwaɣwa]	-	'a certain weed'
[eɣwanɪ]	-	'a cock'
[jane]	-	'mine'
[jaja]	-	'No'
[jaβe]	-	'it will be' (plural)

The glide formation processes take place both across morpheme and word boundaries. The glides such as the ones in data 26 above which occur elsewhere are underlying. The formation of glides usually overlap with vowel deletion (already discussed) at the word boundary. Either of the two rules can apply optionally when the structural descriptions of both are met. The data below explains further the phenomena.

(27)

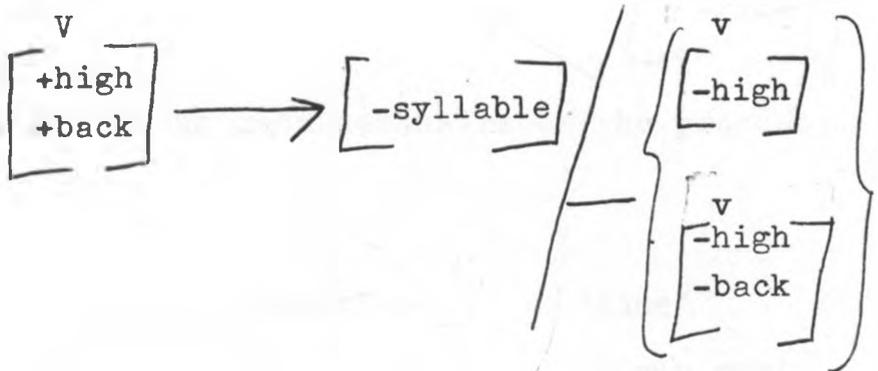
/ko+ana/	→	[kwana]	'to say'
/ko+eβa/	→	[kweβa]	'to forget'
/kɪ+ane/	→	[kɪjane]	'mine'
/ko+ara/	→	[kwaɸa]	'to make the bed'

The above data 27, shows the simultaneous occurrence of the two processes of glide formation and vowel deletion, both of which take place when the infinitive marker {ko} is affixed to the verbal root.

(i) LABIAL GLIDE FORMATION

The labial glide [w] is formed by the following rule;

6)



The following data illustrates the rule.

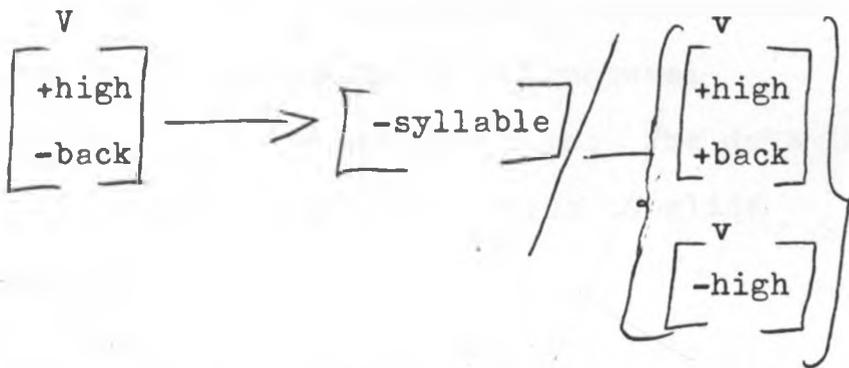
(28)

/ko+ama/	→	[kwama]	'to grow'(plants)
/βo+aɕa/	→	[βwaɕa]	'hold'
/mo+efe/	→	[mwefe]	'you sieve'
/mo+aɕa/	→	[mwaɕa]	'you be coming'

(ii) PALATAL GLIDE FORMATION

The palatal glide [j] is derived by the following rule;

7)



The following data demonstrates the process;

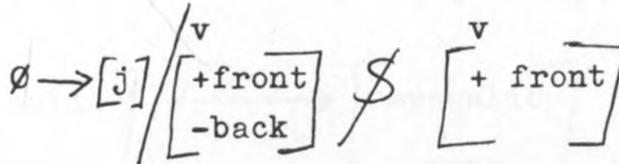
(29)

/kɪ+ane/	→	[kjane]	'mine'
/eke+ɪ+a/	→	[ekejɪa]	'a new one'
/čɪ+aje/	→	[kjaje]	'his'

2.1.3.2.4 GLIDE INSERTION

The glide insertion rule applies in order to break vv sequence in the language to attain the preferred structure of vcv. Normally it is the palatal glide [j] that is inserted. The rule that inserts the glide can be formulated as follows;

8)



The rule applies only if there is a syllable boundary between the two vowels, with this structural description thus crucial for the rule. The data that follows below illustrates the process of glide insertion.

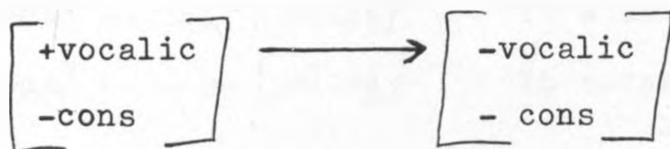
(30)

/eɪo/	→	[ejɪo]	'that one'
/aɪo/	→	[ajɪo]	'those ones'
/eke + a/	→	[ekejɪa]	'a new one'
/eβ + ao/	→	[eβjao]	'different ones'

### 2.1.3.2.5 VOWEL DISSIMILATION

Under section 2.1.2.3 of this work we discussed the process of dissimilation of consonants. We defined it as the process in which a segment becomes more differentiated in certain features with another segment which is neighbouring it. The same process applies to vowels. The most notable dissimilatory process affects the change of one major class

of segments to another. That is, the process of glide formation is a dissimilatory process, where



This process changes the vowels from one major class to another thus becoming a member of another class. The details of the formation mechanism of the glides have been dealt with under sections 2.1.3.2.3 and 2.1.3.2.4 above.

#### 2.1.3.2.6 HEIGHT ASSIMILATION

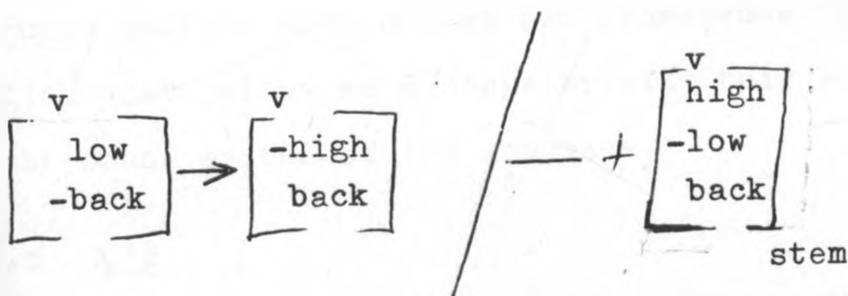
The main motivating factor that seem to trigger the process of height assimilation is to create an ease in articulation. In Ekegusii the low vowels of the nominal prefixes are the ones that are usually affected. They are raised to the mid - position, that of the mid-vowels, of the verbal stem. There are only two vowels namely [e] and [o] that pull the vowel [a] to a merging point in the mid position. The result usually is the lax counterparts of [e] and [o] as the data below shows;

(31)

/ka+ɔ̄ka/	→	[kɔ̄t̄a]	'It warms'
/ka+eɸa/	→	[kɛ:fa]	'It winnows'
/ka+oma/	→	[kɔ̄:mà]	'It smears'

Note that {ka} marks diminutives. The rule is formalized thus

9)



This rule collapses two vowels into a third vowel that is [a] + [e] → [ɛ], and [a] + [o] → [ɔ].

### 2.1.3.2.7 VOWEL COALESCENCE

Coalescence always takes place when the stem with a vowel agrees in height with that of the prefix. The tendency is vowels coalesce as the following data demonstrates;

(32)

/eke+efo/	→	[ekefo]	'when'
/aka+ana/	→	[akana]	'a small baby'
/eke+eɸe/	→	[ekeɸe]	'a bad one'

In sections 2.1.1. to 2.1.3.2.7 of this chapter an attempt has been made to give a general description of the segmental elements of Ekegusii phonology. The following sections will deal with the suprasegmental elements.

## 2.2.0 SUPRASEGMENTAL ELEMENTS

The suprasegmental elements in Ekegusii language include tone, stress and prominence. In the section that follow we discuss briefly this elements of the sound system of the language.

### 2.2.1 TONE

Ekegusii, like most Bantu languages, is a tone language. Pike (1948:43) has defined a tone language as "a language having lexically significant contrastive, but relative pitch on each syllable" Welmers (1959:116) defined it as "a language in which both pitch phonemes and segmental phonemes enter into the composition of at least some morphemes." The distinctive characteristic of a tone language, Welmers adds, is that some of its morphemes - usually nearly all of them, contain both segmental phonemes and pitch phonemes." (1959:116)

The domain of tone in Ekegusii is the word and the units that bear it are vowels.

The major function of tone in Ekegusii is its participation in distinguishing different lexical items from each other. This is a universal function of tone, as Welmers notes;

"Commonly these are some pairs of sets of words in which tone is minimally contrastive, that is, the consonants and vowels, in such words are identical and the words differ from each other only in tone" (WELMERS 1973:116)

This is an observation that he made on African languages. In Ekegusii minimal pairs are abundant and even sets of three words showing minimal contrasts in tone are recorded. The data below illustrates tone in the language.

(33) (1) DISTINGUISHING WORD MEANING

(i) MINIMAL PAIRS

[fókà]	- vomit
[fóká]	- 'naming after'
[fòtá]	- 'investigate'
[fòtā]	- 'dream'
[síkà]	- 'respect'
[síkā]	- 'farment'

[βāfā̀]	- 'count'
[βāfā̄]	- 'skinning a beast/ surgery'

30) (ii) EXAMPLES OF SETS OF THREE WORDS SHOWING  
MINIMAL CONTRASTS.

[lī́kà̀]	- 'holding to mud'
[lī́:kà̀]	- 'write'
[rī́:kà̀]	- 'ageset'
[ēfā̀]	- 'winnow'
[ḗfā̀]	- 'give for'
[ḗfā̄]	- 'a coin (five cent)'

Two levels are recognized, a high ( / ) and low ( \ ) level. There is apparently a third mid toneme ( - ) though in the majority of contexts this may be regarded as either a raised low or a lowered high. A falling tone from high to low ( / \ ) is indicated over a long vowel by an acute accent over the first mora (cf 2.1.3.1).

Other than determining word meaning, tone also plays a role in distinguishing tense and aspect.

30) (2) DISTINGUISHING TENSE AND ASPECT

[ōčī:re]	'he has gone now'
[ōčī:re]	'he has gone (long time ago)'
[ōčī:re]	'he has gone (immediate past)'
[ōčīrè]	'has he come'
[ōča]	'he come'
[ōča]	'be coming'
[ōča]	'the one who came (sometime)'
[āχāčā]	'he keeps (always)'
[āχāčā]	'build'
[āχāčā]	'he came'

2.2.2 STRESS

Studies that have been carried out on Bantu languages reveal that primary stress occurs on the penultimate syllable. However, there is no clear distinction that categorizes the kind of stress found in these languages into secondary and tertiary stresses. Most studies on other languages, for example, English, however, agree that the vowels of words, short phrases and sentences are differentiated by relative degrees of stress. Lieberman (1967) in his book 'Intonation perception and language,' quotes Sweet (1892) who differentiated ...three

degrees of stress - strong, half strong and weak. Other scholars like Jespersen (1907) used four levels. Pike (1945) believes that;

"only one phonemic innate stress contrast can be demonstrated to exist in English"  
(Lieberman 1967:144)

In these studies, stress is a phonetic element that has definite acoustic correlates in the speech signal that are independent of the acoustic correlates of the segmental phonemes.

Prominence on the other hand is the perceived "loudness" of a vowel relative to its environment. The acoustic correlates of prominence are duration fundamental frequency and sound pressure level (or amplitude). In Ekegusii, prominence tends to occur on the radical if this is of a shape *vc*, *cvc*, *cvvc*, *cv* and on the syllable of long radicals. In such longer radicals there may be a subsidiary prominence on the final syllable.

Given the scope of this work, a lot may not be said on these two aspects of Ekegusii phonology. A thorough investigation needs to be done on the suprasegmental elements of the language which perhaps will bring out clear distinctions of stress and

prominence. The only observable feature that should be noted is that stress occurs on the penultimate syllable for which we formulate the following rule to show stress acquisition.

$$10) \quad [+syllable] \longrightarrow [+stress] \quad / \quad \_ \quad (c) \quad V\#$$

### CHAPTER THREE

#### 3.0.0 AN INTRODUCTION TO EKEGUSII MORPHOLOGY

Our aim in this chapter is to discuss the various aspects of the morphology of Ekegusii, which will set the stage for the ensuing discussions in the subsequent chapter. The chapter is divided into various sections each dealing with different aspects of the morphology of the language. It is divided as follows:

- 3.1 The noun
- 3.2 The pronoun
- 3.3 The adjective
- 3.4 The verb

We do not intend to go into details of these aspects, but shall only discuss enough on each as to provide the necessary information to be employed later.

#### 3.1.0 THE NOUN MORPHOLOGY

##### 3.1.1 NOUN CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM

In Ekegusii, as in other Bantu languages, nouns are classified by a system of prefixes into various genders. Gender concord operates between the noun and its modifiers, and between the noun as a subject

of the sentence and the predicate.

Carl Meinhof (1899, 1932), presented the first outline of the class system of a reconstructed proto-Bantu, based, of course, on a comparison of the individual class systems of several languages. He followed Bleek's numbering system and added a number of classes that do not appear in the languages with which Bleek had worked. Meinhof (1932:39) gives each of the prefixes which can immediately precede a noun stem a separate number. According to this system, there are eighteen different classes of nouns in Ekegusii as illustrated in the following chart:-

CLASS	PREFIX	MARKER	EXAMPLE	GLOSS
1	o	mo-	omosača	'a man'
2	a	Ba-	aβasača	'men'
3	o	mo-	omote	'a tree'
4	e	me-	emete	'trees'
5	e		eβiso	'eye'
6	a	ma-	amaiso	'eyes'
7	e	ke-	ekefojo	'chair'
8	e	BI-	eβirojo	'chairs'
9	e	N-	eβomba	'house'
10	č	N-	čiβomba	'houses'

CLASS	PREFIX	MARKER	EXAMPLES	GLOSS
12 DIMUNITIVE	a	ka-	akana	'a small child'
14	o	ʃo-	oʃoɪʃɪ	'theft'
15 INFINITIVE	o	ko-	okofuʒa	'cooking'
16 PLACE	a	aa	aase	'place'
17 LOCATIVE 'IN'		-me	ʃombaime	'in house'

The class thirteen is lacking in the language. It possibly may have merged with another class. The classes are divided into the singular and plurals. The plurals of classes 14 and 15 are carried in class 6. Classes 1 and 2 contain only human and superhuman entries. No absolute restrictions govern entry to other classes but some preferences may be noted; class 9 and 10 contain animals and domestic belongings and class 14 contains many uncountable items and abstract nouns.

Each noun stem is characteristically associated with one gender and normally occurs preceded by one of the prefixes appropriate to that gender.

### 3.1.2 THE NOUN

The simple noun in Ekegusii consists of a basic structural sequence of pre.1 + pre.2+ stem. In Bantu

Literature, prefix 1 is often referred to as preprefix and together with prefix 2 as 'a reduplicated prefix'. Prefix 2 is traditionally analysed as a class prefix or classifier. This is always present and precedes the noun stem. In this section we will concentrate on highlighting the various types of nouns that are present in Ekegusii. We draw a distinction between common and proper nouns.

### 3.1.3 DERIVED NOUNS

In this section we discuss derived nouns showing vividly which classes they derive from. Derived nouns are nouns that are formed from other nouns, verbs and adjectives. They take noun class markers and concordial agreement prefixes if they meet the basic requirements that allow such a structure.

#### (i) NOUNS DERIVED FROM VERBS

##### - DEVERBATIVES:

(31)

<u>verb</u>		<u>Noun</u>	
/-fɪk+a/	'write'	[omofɪkɪ]	'a writer'
/-tɛf+a/	'sing'	[omote]	'singer'
/-fuy+a/	'cook'	[omofuyɪ]	'a cook'
/-fem+a/	'dig'	[omofemɪ]	'a farmer'

<u>Verb</u>		<u>Noun</u>	
/-ʃend+ɪa/	'drive'	[omofendɪa]	'a driver'
/-rend+a/	'guard'	[omofendi]	'a watchman /guard'
/-ʃan+a/	'narrate'	[omofano]	'a story'
/-βuŋ+a/	'lock'	[ekeβuŋuo]	'a key'
/-tɔm+a/	'send'	[omotɔmɪ]	'a sender'
		[ofotɔma]	'to send'
/-saβa/	'pray'	[ofosaβa]	'prayer'
		[omosabɪ]	'one who prays'

Two important observations that we make on the above data is that there is a very important morphological role of deriving nouns from verbs and also that the final vowel in all the forms mark case, especially, the doer of the action or to put it mildly it is an agentive marker. This also applies to the final back mid vowel /o/.

(ii) NOUNS DERIVED FROM OTHER NOUNS:

Nouns that are derived from other nouns normally have a characteristic of attributiveness, which refer to a certain quality inherent in a certain category of people.

(32)

<u>NOUN</u>			<u>DERIVED NOUN</u>
/omomufa/	'boy'	[oβomufa]	'boyhood'
/omwana/	'child'	[oβwana]	'childshness'
/omokuggu/	'woman'	[oβokuggu]	'womanhood/femininity'
/omosani/	'friend'	[oβosani]	'friendship'
/omosača/	'a man'	[oβosača]	'manhood'

(iii) ABSTRACT NOUNS DERIVED FROM VERBS:

(33)

<u>VERB</u>		<u>NOUN</u>	
/ɬɔ+a/	'bewitch'	[oβɔɬɔɪ]	'witchcraft'
/som+a/	'read/learn'	[oβosomɪ]	'scholarship'
/ɬem+a/	'dig/farm'	[oβofemɪ]	'farming'
/IB+a/	'steal'	[oβoɪβɪ]	'theft'
/ɬuɣ+a/	'cook'	[oβofuɣɪ]	'cooking'
/ɪta/	'beat/kill'	[oβoɪtɪ]	'beating/murder'

The abstract noun derived from the verb takes the class 14 prefix. Other nouns which refer to non-count objects and abstract notions also take the class 14 prefix.

(32)

<u>NOUN</u>			<u>DERIVED NOUN</u>
/omomufa/	'boy'	[oβomufa]	'boyhood'
/omwana/	'child'	[oβwana]	'childshness'
/omokuggu/	'woman'	[oβokuggu]	'womanhood/femininity'
/omosani/	'friend'	[oβosani]	'friendship'
/omosača/	'a man'	[oβosača]	'manhood'

(iii) ABSTRACT NOUNS DERIVED FROM VERBS:

(33)

<u>VERB</u>		<u>NOUN</u>	
/sɛɣ+a/	'bewitch'	[oβɛɣɛɣɛ]	'witchcraft'
/som+a/	'read/learn'	[oβosomi]	'scholarship'
/fem+a/	'dig/farm'	[oβofemi]	'farming'
/IB+a/	'steal'	[oβoIBɛ]	'theft'
/ɬuɣ+a/	'cook'	[oβofuɣɛ]	'cooking'
/Ita/	'beat/kill'	[oβoItɛ]	'beating/murder'

The abstract noun derived from the verb takes the class 14 prefix. Other nouns which refer to non-count objects and abstract notions also take the class 14 prefix.

(iv) NOUNS DERIVED FROM ADJECTIVE:

The nouns that are derived from adjectives take the prefix /oβo/, just like the abstract nouns. These derived nouns denote the quality and/or state of objects under description. Once the prefix /oβo/ has been affixed to the adjective, they are given a new status of nouns or in other words changing their category.

(34)

<u>ADJECTIVES</u>			<u>NOUNS</u>
/-gge /	'much'	[oβogge]	'plenty'
/-muam-/	'black'	[oβomwamu]	'blackness'
/-t̄ambe/	'tall/ long'	[oβot̄ambe]	'tallness/ longness'
/-Baŋ /	'red'	[oβoβa]	'redness'
/-fab-/	'white/ bright'	[oβofaβu]	'whiteness'
/-uofo/	'lazy'	[oβwofo]	'laziness'
/-buɪa/	'good'	[oβuja]	'goodness'

One noticeable surface difference exists between the derived abstract nouns from verbs with the nouns derived from adjectives, and that is the suffix. The suffix / I/ which was constant for abstract nouns and nouns derived from verbs remains as in adjectives.

That is, the final vowels on the adjective remains so even in a new form as a noun. There are also processes which some vowels undergo, changing their class to that of consonants, that is glide formation, in particular the labial glide in

/oβo+ansu/ → [oβwansu]      'sweetness'

/oβouofo/ → [oβwofo]      'laziness'

and the palatal glide as in; /Buɪa/ → [oBuja].

### 3.2.0 PRONOUNS

A pronoun is a word used instead of a noun (proper or other) to designate, without naming person or thing already mentioned or known from context or forming the subject of inquiry. The pronouns in Ekegusii can be classified as personal, possessive, demonstrative, interrogative and relative. In this section, we examine them under the five basic categories mentioned above.

While giving a surface description of consonantal changes in chapter two (cf 2.1.2.1 and 2.1.2.2), we observed the role pronouns play especially the first person singular subject pronoun in those changes. Although not all the pronouns undergo interesting morphological changes, we shall discuss each type as

to achieve completeness.

### 3.2.1 PERSONAL PRONOUNS

Personal pronouns occur in emphatic and non-emphatic forms. Their occurrence is determined by the role they play in a grammatical structure. The following are the emphatic forms;

[Inče]	1st person singular
[aje]	2nd person singular
[efe]	3rd person singular
[Inčwe]	1st person plural
[Inwe]	2nd person plural
[Bača-]	3rd person plural

When a personal pronoun is the subject of a verb, a short, non-emphatic form of one of the emphatic forms is prefixed to the verb. The short forms are:-

EMPHATIC	SHORT FORMS
inče	n-
aje	o-
efe	a-
Inčwe	In-
Inwe	mo-
Bača	Ba-

The personal pronouns may function as head words in a phrase or clause. For example:

(35)

[Into <sup>ɔ</sup> e	mambIa]	'we shall come tomorrow'
[βaru <sup>ɔ</sup> e	mambIa]	'they cook tomorrow'
[βaru <sup>ɔ</sup> e	βaraxefe]	'they cook and eat'
[mofo <sup>ɔ</sup> e	epomba]	'you(pl) make a house'
[osIBie	esani]	'you(sg) clean a plate'
[asIBie	epomba]	'he/she(sg) washes the house'
[Indo <sup>ɔ</sup> e	βono]	'I dream now'

The above data demonstrates that a personal pronoun stands on its own in the absence of a nominal.

The second form occurs as a prefix of concord on the verbs and adjectives in the structure for which the antecedent noun is head as in;

(36)

[asIBie esani	asIefe	oβokIma]	'he washes the plate to eat ugali'
[osIBie esani	osIefe	oβokIma]	'you(sg) wash the plate to eat ugali'
[nsIBie esani	IndIefe	oβokIma]	'I wash the plate to eat ugali'

### 3.2.2 POSSESSIVE PRONOUNS

Possessive pronouns indicate ownership of persons or items. In Ekegusii the possessive pronominal forms is made up of three elements; they are;

- the pronominal class concord,
- the connective particle '-a-' and
- the relevant possessive stem.

There are six forms of the possessive pronouns in Ekegusii. These are -ne, -o, -je, -I<sub>ko</sub> -I<sub>no</sub> -I<sub>βo</sub>. These can be seen in the following data

(37)

/j+a+ne/	→	[jane]	'mine' 'my'
/j+a+o/	→	[jao]	'yours' (sing)
/j+a+je/	→	[jaje]	'his/hers'
/j+a+I <sub>ko</sub> /	→	[jaI <sub>ko</sub> ]	'ours' (pl)
/j+a+I <sub>no</sub> /	→	[jaI <sub>no</sub> ]	'yours (pl)
/j+a+I <sub>βo</sub> /	→	[jaI <sub>βo</sub> ]	'theirs'

The pronominal class concord is inflected for the noun class and the number as demonstrated below;

(38)

CLASS 1/2

[omwana one]	'my child'
[aβana βane]	'my children'

CLASS 3/4

[omote one]	'my tree'
[emetε jane]	'my trees'

CLASS 6/7

[ekelojo kjao]	'your chair'
[eβilojo βjao]	'your chairs'
[ekerojo kjaje]	'his chair'
[eβilojo βjaɪno]	'your chairs (pl)'
[ekelojo kjaβo]	'their chair'
[eβilojo βjaβo]	'their(pl) chairs'

3.2.3 DEMONSTRATIVES

Demonstratives are 'outline words' which as their distinguishing feature have an association of nearness or distance in place or time. Demonstrative pronouns are therefore referential in that they indicate someone or something within the spatio-temporal proximity of that object being referred to from the speaker and the listener. In English these are; this/these, and that/those.

That/those and this/these can be both substantival and adjectival. In substantival use 'that' and 'this' cannot represent a person.

There are four basic demonstrative pronouns in Ekegusii. These are;

eje , eke , ejio , ekio

(39)

[ekesojo	eke	nekjiane]	'this chair is mine'
[ekesamu	ejio	nejane]	'that pen is mine'
[esani	eje	nejane]	'this plate is mine'
[emesondo	eje	nejane]	'these farms are mine'
[ekesojo	ekio	nejarto]	'that seat is ours'

(away from the speaker)

when it is class 1 noun, the following forms occur  
ojio and ojio thus;

(40)

[omwana	ojo	nojone]	'this child is mine'
[omonto	ojio	nomobe]	'that person is bad'

(Both near and away from  
depending on the context)

[omonto	ojo	nojominto]	'this person is my brother'
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3.2.4 INTERROGATIVE:

Ekegusii appears to have two interrogative pronouns [-ɪɔgo] who(se) and [-kɪ] 'which/what.

[-ɪɔgo] 'who' is used as a subject and a predicate complement. For example;

[ɪɔgo oɓwate ensa?] 'who has a watch'

[kɪmɔpɛɪ ɔose nɪɔgo oɓwate omwana] 'I do not know who has a child.'

[ɪɔgo] 'who' as the subject is followed by a verb in the singular like in;

(41) (b)

[ɪɔgo oɔoɔa] 'who is coming?'

[ɪɔgo okoɔofa] 'who is buying?'

[ɪɔgo okofuɔa] 'who is cooking?'

[ɪɔgo oɔoɔta] 'who is passing?'

[ɪɔgo okomɪɔoka] 'who is running?'

when [ɪɔgo] 'who' is the predicate complement the form of the verb is determined solely by the subject.

(41) (c)

[ɪnɔe nɪɔgo] 'who am I?'

[aje nɪɔgo] 'who are you?'

when used for questions as to a persons identity

[Iʒgo] is used as a subject like in;

(41) (d)

[Iʒgo ore ne esio] 'who is the lucky one'

[Iʒgo ofe omofaβu] 'who is white/brown/clean'

[-kɪ] 'what/which' is both used substantivally and adjectivally. Substantivally, it is the counterpart of 'who' in that it is used in questions as to non-persons and in some cases persons.

(42)(a)

[monto kɪ?] 'which person?'

[ɪnki eke?] 'what is this?'

[ʒgombe kɪ?] 'which cow?'

As the subject [ɪnki] 'what' is followed by a verb in the singular. For example;

(42) (b)

[ɪnki ekeβe] 'what is wrong/bad'

[ɪnki kɟɪaɣwa] 'what fell'

[Iʒgaɪ], 'where' seems to have the same base as [Iʒgo] 'who'. This is an adverbial of place. The following data demonstrates this;

(43)

[Iɲgɑɪ kwafɛ]	'where were you?'
[Iɲgɑɪ okofua]	'where are you coming from?'
[Iɲgɑɪ waɪkaʌnsetɛ]	'where were you sitting?'
[kefoka Iɲgɑɪ efɛ]	'where is Keroka?'
[kaɪ afɛ]	'where is he/she?'
[Iɲgɑɪ afɛ]	'where is he/she?'

### 3.2.5 RELATIVE PRONOUNS

Relative pronouns refer to noun antecedents which immediately precede them. They serve to introduce adjective clauses in which they serve as subjects or objects (Frank, M. 1972:21).

In Ekegusii, there are two forms of relative pronouns;

/-o/ and /-e/

These forms occur in cases where the antecedent noun is the subject of the verb in the noun clause. The following data shows their occurrences;

(44)

[omofondo oɪra one]	'the farm that is mine'
[eggombe eɪra jaɪsetɛɪre]	'the cow which ate grass'
[oβofemɪ oβwo tɔɣɔkɔfa]	'the farming which we do'

[omoiſeke ojio ṭwaṭaḷeṭe 'the girl who(m) we wanted'

[omwana ofia ṭwafoḷe 'the child whom/that we saw'

[omonṭo oiḃeṭe naſiḃwa] 'the person who stole  
was jailed'

[ekefoḷo ekio ṭwaṭaḷeṭe] 'the seat which/that we  
wanted.'

[esese eſia ja moromeṭe] 'the dog which bit him/her'

### 3.3.0 THE ADJECTIVE

Adjectives take the concordial agreement morpheme just like the nouns, pronouns and verbs. They also have class markers, in their structure like nouns. They take an attributive role or usage in the language. In this section we discuss the adjectives which indicate quality, quantity and possession.

The fact that adjectives have class markers in their structure makes it difficult to distinguish them from nominals. Other than the structural aspect, the functional role they play in some cases also adds a bit of confusion which might lead one to group them together with nouns. This is especially so when adjectives function as the head in the absence of a noun.

The difference, however, is that nouns or a noun that functions as the head has an inherent gender

that determines concord, which the adjectives lack. The noun has its gender marked whether it occurs in isolation or in a sentence. Adjectives on the other hand are ever context free and they also take the concordial marker from the noun that it replaces as head. These remarks explain the fundamental difference that exists between the two and therefore the question whether adjectives are a subcategory of nouns does not arise.

### 3.3.1 ADJECTIVES OF QUALITY

The adjectives in this class denote quality or state of the noun which they modify. The data below exemplifies them;

(45)

[esese embe ]	'a bad dog'
[omonto omuja]	'a good person/man'
[ejg>mbe enofu]	'a fat cow'
[esani enene]	'a big plate'
[omonto omnene]	'a big man'
[omonto omowamu]	'a black man'

The adjectives follow the nouns in the data 45 above.

### 3.3.2 ADJECTIVES OF QUANTITY

These adjectives express quantity as the data below demonstrates. In the data they follow the noun.

(46)

[eʒa:sɪ eɪɪŋge]	'plenty of work'
[oβoɾɪmo oβoɾŋge]	'a lot of lies'
[eβɪsoʒo βɪβere]	'two chairs'
[aβaŋto aβaŋge]	'many people'
[endaɟeɟa eɪɪŋge]	'a lot of food'
[ʒɪɪmbɛ ʒɪɪnsɪ]	'all the cows'
[eʒeɟanda ekemo]	'one bed'

### 3.3.3 POSSESSIVE ADJECTIVES

The possessive adjectives indicate ownership. They function as possessive pronouns. However, their distribution other than form draws the very important distinction between them and the possessive pronouns. Possessive adjectives modify the noun being referred to, while possessive pronouns occur as complements to verbs of state. In the data below the noun precedes the possessive adjective:

(47)

[oβoſemɪ βwaβo]	'their farming'
[aβana βaβo]	'their children'
[omwana oo]	'you child'
[ekafamu jane]	'my pen'
[eməkɔɔ jaβo]	'their arms'
[oβoſemo βwane]	'my farm/land'
[omokuggu one]	'my woman/wife'
[ɕɾɔmbɛ ciaβɔ]	'their cows'
[eɣeɣaβu kjraje]	'his book'
[esukuru jaje]	'his school'
[ɛɣgɔndɪ jane]	'my sheep'

### 3.4.0 THE VERB

The grammatical categories of tense, aspect, mood and number are usually crucial and central in the study of verbs and usually show a lot of morphological changes. Given the nature, scope and limitations of our study, we only look at two main features of the Ekegusii verb morphology namely, tense and aspect, which will directly show the basic morphological changes that affect the verb. This section will therefore concentrate on tense and aspect.

### 3.4.1 TENSE

In general terms tense is a form taken by a verb to indicate the time of an action. The traditional grammarians divided tense into three time perspectives, namely, the present, the past and the future. In this work we view tense in those three basic perspectives, although as it will be seen shortly, the past tense present tense and future tense are expressed in different ways in Ekegusii.

In 'The Tense system of Gusii', Whiteley W.H.(1960), discusses the tense system of Ekegusii language - a language he calls Gusii. His was an attempt to furnish a formal description of Ekegusii tense system, with a belief that his description represents the most economical way of describing the system exhaustively. He discusses the number of tenses and their capacity for combination. He does not however discuss the specific features such as the shape of the tense signs. In discussing tense in this section, we hope to shed light on some morphological changes that will play a vital role in analysing the consonantal changes to be discussed in chapter four. We shall also show how tone is one of the most striking features in Ekegusii system in the number of tenses it distinguishes.

In his study, Whitely shows that the language is characterised by four post radical suffixes only, namely -a -e -ire and -eṭe. The present study reveals that past tense alone is expressed in four different ways which excludes the suffix -e-, present tense by one and future tense by one, with tone playing a major role in drawing the time difference most significantly especially on the past tense.

In Ekegusii, past tense is marked as, remote past (RP) Far past (FP) immediate past (IP) and near past (NP). These are no such distinctions drawn on the present and future tenses.

### 3.4.1.1 THE PRESENT TENSE

It is from the present tense that time reference of an incident or event is made. This is made in relation to the time past, that is, after the event and the time an event or action will take place in the future. In Ekegusii /- e / marks present or present continuous tense as the data below demonstrates;

(48)

[Inkoṛemafe]	'he is digging'
[Inkom <sup>h</sup> okafe]	'he is running'
[Osinde naraife]	'Osinde is sleeping'

[omwana inkořenda are ećiro]	'the child is going to the market.'
[ći>mbē inkořwa ćire amaće]	'cows are drinking water'
[omwafimu oćife]	'the teacher has come'
[Iřosoma afe]	'he/she is reading'
[Iřosoma ofe]	'you are reading'
[Iřosoma inde]	'I am reading'

In the last example of our data [Iřosoma inde] 'I am reading,' one interesting thing is the process of strengthening that takes place when the first person singular marker /n/ is followed by a liquid (flap). Let us have a look at the following, with /-fe/ marking the tense;

/In-fe/	'I am'
/o-fe/	'you are'
/a-fe/	'he/she is'

/In-/, /o-/ and /a/ mark the first second and third singular person. On the surface structure the following is derived.

/In+fe/	→	[Inde]	'I am'
/o+fe/	→	[ofe]	'you are'
/a+fe/	→	[afe]	'he/she is'

This phenomena (change) will be discussed in detail while discussing the processes in chapter four.

For imperative forms of intransitive verbs which consists of a base only and can be analysed as words, the /-ʔe/ is not marked, as exemplified by the data below:

(49)

[aʔa]	-	'make the bed'
[Inɔwo]	-	'come'
[ʔema]	-	'dig'
[ʔama]	-	'run away'
[ʔenda]	-	'go'
[ʔaʔa]	-	'walk'

### 3.4.1.2 THE FUTURE TENSE

The future tense marks an action or event that will take place in future from the time of speech. Ekegusii has one future tense marker /-e/. This is unlike the Bantu languages like Lubukusu, for example, in which future tense is marked in four different ways. According to Mutonyi (1986:74), future tense in Lubukusu is determined by the distance into the future from the present, ranging from a few minutes to come to an indefinite time in future. In

Ekegusii, however, the tense is marked by /-e/ with the particular time, day or year specified without it being carried by the form /-e/. The marker is usually a suffix surfacing as the final vowel on the verb it is attached to. We see this in the data that follows;

(50)

[oce ]	'you come'
[ofeme]	'you dig' (future)
[ofafe]	'you sleep'
[nɪŋgende]	'I shall go'
[noɣende]	'he will go'
[naɔɣende]	'he shall go'
[namoɣende]	'you shall go'
[nabaɣende]	'they shall go'
[ndeme mambra]	'I will dig tomorrow'
[ndeme mambra ende]	'I will dig tomorrow but one'
[nindeme omwaka oɣoča]	'I will dig next year'
[nindeme ɣgakɪ ende]	'I will dig some other time'
[oče ofeme aase aɾɪa]	'you (come) farm that place (indefinite)
[nače asomie mambra]	'he will teach tomorrow'

- [naβo afače ače βwajgo] 'he will (might) come soon'  
[naβo afafeme] 'he can dig' (future)

The future tense is marked by /e/ as the above data demonstrates. In the last two sentences of our data;

- [naβo arače ače βwajgo] 'he will come soon'  
[naβo afafeme] 'he can dig'

[afa<sup>f</sup>eme] can be broken into the following units,

/a<sup>f</sup>a<sup>f</sup>em<sup>e</sup>/, if {a} marks the third person singular, {-rem-} the root for dig and {e} marks the future tense, then what does {-fa-} mark? One can be tempted to assign it to future tense marking. Our study reveals this morpheme as marking willingness and continuity and not future. For example;

(52)

- [afa<sup>f</sup>enda] can he go? (now)  
[afa<sup>f</sup>iča] can he come?(now)  
[afača fende] what if he comes?(future)

This demonstrates that {-ra} does not have anything to do with the marking of future tense. The general future tense in Ekegusii is therefore marked by a final /-e/ form.

Perhaps we should ask ourselves at this point a question as to the part played by negativeness in tense marking. Does the form change? Let us observe the following data where [tɪ-] marks negativity and [ko-] infinitive marker;

(52)

[tɪnkoʒenda]	'I shall not go'
[takʒenda]	'he/she will not go'
[tokoʒenda]	'you (sg) will not go'
[tɪtokoʒenda]	'we shall not go'
[tɪmokoʒenda]	'you (pl) will not go'
[tɪBakoʒenda]	'they will not go'

While expressing negativity in the future, /-e/ future tense marker seems to be lost and replaced by /-a/ which otherwise marks the past tense. This is a phenomena that needs to be investigated further with a more conclusive data to establish what exactly happens to the /-e/future tense marker in such cases, otherwise given the nature and scope of our work the matter rests there.

### 3.4.1.3 THE PAST TENSE

Four main division of past time are recognised in Ekegusii. These are represented by two pairs of tenses, the members of each pair looking a like in shape but being distinguished by tone. In section 3.4.1, while discussing tense generally, we noted that past tense is marked as immediate past, near past, (for past) <sup>? far past??</sup> and remote past. The forms that mark past tense are /-a/ and /e<sub>h</sub>e/, with tone playing a major role in allocating the time in the past.

#### (i) IMMEDIATE PAST:- [-a]

This tense is used for a time that has passed from the time of speech which extend upto the dusk of the same day.

(53)

/In+a+fuɣ+a/	→	[inafuɣa]	'I cooked'
/In+a+rem+a/	→	[inaremə]	'I dug'
/In+a+mɪjok+a/	→	[inamɪjoka]	'I run'
/In+a+saβ+a/	→	[inasəβa]	'I prayed'
/In+a+ɣend+a/	→	[inaɣenda]	'I guarded'
/n+β+a+saβ+a/	→	[mbəsəβa]	'they prayed'
/In+ɬof+a eɕae/	→	[inaɬofa eɕae]	'I picked tea'

(ii) NEAR PAST [-e<sub>te</sub>]

The near past tense is used in referring to an action of the previous day.

(54)

[Inasome <sub>te</sub> ]	I read yesterday'
[mbaikaransete]	'they sat down yesterday'
[mbayambe <sub>te</sub> ]	'they talked yesterday'
[Intwačete]	'we came yesterday'
[In twasaβete]	'we prayed/asked'

In most cases the speakers of the language specify the day by adding the day of the event before or after the verb thus;

(55)

[Intwačete Iɔɔɔ]	'we came yesterday'
[Iɔɔɔ twafu <sub>te</sub> ]	'It is yesterday the we cooked'
[Iɔɔɔ akwe <sub>te</sub> ]	'It is yesterday that he died'
[načete Iɔɔɔ]	'he/she went yesterday'

This addition of specifying the day is done optionally.

(iii) FAR PAST [-a<sup>ˈ</sup>]

The tense for far past is distinguished by a grammatical tone. The form is the same as for the immediate past except for the tone. It refers to an action that took place sometime back after the day of speech. The tone is marked with a high tone on the vowel /-a/ after the first person singular marker /n/, therefore on the first syllable and on the final syllable also as high. The following data demonstrates this occurrence;

(56)

[nā <sup>ˈ</sup> u <sup>ˈ</sup> ʃa <sup>ˈ</sup> ]	'I cooked' (sometime back)
[nā <sup>ˈ</sup> ʒenda <sup>ˈ</sup> ]	'I went'
[nā <sup>ˈ</sup> ʃuoma <sup>ˈ</sup> ]	'I married'
[nā <sup>ˈ</sup> soma <sup>ˈ</sup> ]	'I read'
[nā <sup>ˈ</sup> mɪ <sup>ˈ</sup> ʃka <sup>ˈ</sup> ]	'I ran'

So as to show time, the speakers usually add a phrase [ʃelo ɪʃa] 'recently' after the verb to show that the time in question is not so long ago neither is it yesterday. The time in reference may start from the previous day.

(iv) REMOTE PAST [-eṭe]

This tense refers to a time past that seem to be long ago. The remoteness seems to be emphasized more on an event than on the time lapse. This refers to a month or a year or even many years ago. The tense takes the same shape as the tense for the previous day [-eṭe] save for the tone which is rising on the penultimate syllable and the falling tone on the final syllable. The initial syllable tone is high. The data below shows remote past tense marked;

(57)

[Inaḵōrēṭe]	'I bought'
[mbāḵgāḵēṭe]	'they migrated'/moved'
[Inafūḵēṭe]	'I cooked'
[mbāfūānēṭe]	'they fought long ago'
[Intḵwā:ḵācēṭe]	'we had built'
[ḵitḵwācīēṭe]	'we did not go'

Tone therefore plays a significant role in drawing a distinction of time span in past tense in Ekegusii language.

### 3.4.2.0 ASPECT

Events take place through time. The duration of these events are seen as having a beginning, a middle and an end. Aspectual indicators have a semantic burden of marking whether the event in question is at its initial or terminal state, in which case it is a perfective aspect or a long the way between these terminals thus imperfective aspect. Events may be marked as continuing through time that is durative aspect or just beginning, inceptive aspect, in some languages. In Ekegusii aspect is divisible into progressive, habitual and the perfective.

It is sometimes hard to draw a clear line between aspectual notions and tense, and even more difficult between the different aspects. In this section we discuss the progressive, habitual and the perfective aspects of the language.

### 3.4.2.1 THE PERFECTIVE ASPECT

The perfective aspect has three categories, the present, past and future perfective. The past and future perfective are marked by a lexical item.

(i) THE PRESENT PERFECT [-fe]

The present perfect aspect has the same form as the present tense marker [-fe]. It is in fact the same morpheme that marks the two notions of aspect and tense. This is the reason why we made a statement earlier on that it is sometimes difficult to draw a hard line between aspectual and tense markers. The present perfect is used to refer to an event that has just taken place.

(58)

[omwafimu o'ife]	'the teacher has come'
[omwana o'if:fe]	'the child has gone'
[cɔmbe čia'ife]	'the cows have come'
[aβanto βaβeife aβage]	'people have become many'

(ii) PAST PERFECT: [ekefo]

This aspect seems to line two events but placing them one after another. It is marked by a lexical item [ekefo] which means after. The verb that follows [ekefo] carries the present perfect aspect [-fe]. We infer that past perfect is used at the same time with the present perfect. This is exemplified in the following data.

(59)

[ořa ekefo nařife] 'he/she came after I had come'

[Inařa ekefo aľařife] 'I came after he/she had  
slept'

[nařenda ekefo aľařife] 'I went when he was sleeping'

[mbasoma ekefo omwařimu ařife] 'they read after the  
teacher had come'

We deduce from the data that the tense of the verb preceding /ekefo/, that is /ořa/ also signals the pastness of the action, it would then seem that /ekefo/ is a perfective marker. It seems that only context gives an utterance the idea of past perfect and in this case the context is the tense of the verb preceding /ekefo/.

(iii) THE FUTURE PERFECT

The future perfect is marked by the future tense marker which signals the futureness of the designated action. Like in the past perfective, /ekefo/ marks perfectiveness. It also takes the same position in the structure as the past perfect where it places one event after the other but the events referred to will take place in the future.

(60)

[nɪŋgɪde ekefo arandaygerie]	'I will come when he will call me'
[naɪafe ekefo afayere]	'he/she will sleep after he has eaten'
[naɪende ekefo oface]	'he will go after you will come'
[napuome ekefo asomife]	'he will marry when he will have read'

### 3.4.2.2 PROGRESSIVE ASPECT

The progressive aspect can be subdivided into the past progressive, the present and the future progressive. This is marked along with the tense which mark the three time perspectives of the event or action.

#### (i) THE PRESENT PROGRESSIVE ASPECT

The present progressive aspect is marked by the same form that marks the present tense [-fe]. The following data exemplifies this;

(60)

[ŋgoɔafe]	'he is coming'
[nkofafa afe]	'he is sleeping'
[nkofajefa afe]	'he is eating'
[nkofajefa βafe]	'they are eating'
[Inkofemafe]	'he is digging'
[Inkorɪsɪa ʒife]	'they are grazing(animals)'

The most notable thing about the above data is that the same form that marks the present tense also at the same time marks the present progressive aspect.

(ii) THE PAST PROGRESSIVE ASPECT

The past progressive aspect is marked by past tense marker and the [-fejge] form. The latter form also marks the habitual aspect as will be seen later. The [-fejge] form in the past progressive aspect can occur with or without [ekefo] form. This is demonstrated by the following data;

(62)

[oiɕa ekefo afejge kofafa]	'he came when he was sleeping'
[mbasoma ekefo Bafejge ekelasɪme]	'they read when they were in class'
[Inkofema afejge]	'he was digging'

- [Inkolajefa bareŋge] 'they were eating'  
[Inkomɪɰka bareŋge] 'they were running'

(iii) THE FUTURE PROGRESSIVE

The future progressive aspect is also marked by the future tense marker [-e]. In some cases, the form is affixed to [-ɸ] thus [-ɸe]

(63)

- [mbaɸe ɸajɔɕa] 'they will be coming'  
[oBe ɰokoluɰa] 'you be cooking'  
[koɰaBe ɰokoluɰa niŋgɔke] 'If you will be cooking  
I will be happy'  
[ɰoɰɔɰka oɕiɛ: amaɕe] 'when you reach give  
them water'  
[koɰaɕe niŋkoe] 'If you will come I will  
give you'  
[oBe ɰokoluɰa] 'you be grazing'

We infer that the prefix (preprefix) before the infinitive marker [-ko-], which becomes [ɰo] in some cases, due to Dahl's law, seems to play apart in emphasizing and marking the future progressive aspect. This is an aspect that however, needs a further thorough investigation to establish it.

### 3.4.2.3. THE HABITUAL

The notion of habitual aspect is used to denote the habit of actions or states. The habit viewed from a time perspective can be daily past or future. In section 3.4.2.2 (ii), while discussing the past progressive aspect we noted that the form

[*-feʒge*] is used to mark both the past progressive aspect and the habitual. As we noted again earlier, tense cannot be divorced from aspect. In this regard tone plays a major role in determining or marking habitual aspect in the past. We shall in this section analyse habitual aspect in three time perspectives in order to see the interplay of the three aspects in the language.

#### (i) PRESENT HABITUAL

The present tense marker [*-fe*] plays a dual role of marking the present tense and the present habitual aspect. It is, however, qualified with [*Boʻtambe*] 'always' to stress that the habit is on a daily basis. This does not however occur in all cases.

(64)

[nkoʃaʃeʃa are ʔoʔambe]	'he is eating always'
[nkoʃesa aʃe]	'he is harvesting'
[ŋgosoma aʃe ʔoʔambe]	'he is reading always'
[nkoʃeʃa aʃe ʔoʔambe]	'he is crying always'
[ŋgotefa aʃe]	'he/she is singing.'

(ii) THE PAST HABITUAL

The past habitual is characterized by the presence of tone in distinguishing the time in the past. Two time perspectives are distinguished, the remote past and the near past. The near past and the immediate past are marked by the same form and tone, thus no difference is drawn.

(a) REMOTE PAST

The examples in the data refers to long ago.

(65)

[ŋgoseʃa aʃeŋge]	'he was grinding'
[nkoʃuʔa aʃeŋge]	'he was/used to be throwing'
[nkoʃamba aʃeŋge]	'he was ruling'
[nkoʃʔa aʃe ŋge]	'he was stealing'
[omoʃambi oʃeŋge]	'he was a ruler'

The tone is high on all the syllables, that is, the initial, penultimate and final syllables.

(b) THE NEAR AND IMMEDIATE PAST HABITUAL

This is characterised by lack of tone and thus tone is contrastive in this case, in delimiting the time of the habits in relation to time past.

(66)

[nkofema afeɟge]	'he has been digging'
[nkofenta afeɟge]	'he was bringing'
[nkoluɣa afeɟge]	'he was cooking'
[ɟgɔsɔma afeɟge]	'he has been reading'
[nkoɪβola afeɟge]	'she was giving birth'

In our investigations we found out that the near past and immediate past habitual aspects are marked by the same form [-reɟge] which is characterised by lack of tone thus distinguishing it from the remote past habitual aspect.

(c) THE FUTURE HABITUAL

This aspect is not so clearly marked, although it is our conviction that an action can take place repeatedly in the future, our study revealed that there is no overt habitual marker in

Ekegusii. However, the future tense marker /-e/ performs the dual role of marking the future habitual and the future tense. It will be understood by the speakers that the action described that will take place in the future will be done repeatedly. This is demonstrated by the data below;

(67)

[asome ]	'he/she (to) read'(future)
[aɔyeɛfe aɓanto]	'he/she to feed people'
[aɓutofe]	'he/she cuts'
[ateneneɛfe]	'he/she stand for/on behalf'
[aɛnde ]	'he/she guards (future).'

This could, however, seem as if it marks the future progressive aspect, thus the observation we made earlier that it is difficult to draw a hard line between the different aspects seems to have or gain credence.

In this chapter we have outlined the major aspects of the morphology of Ekegusii, showing the major morphological processes that take place in the language. In chapter two we gave an introductory information on the phonology of the language. The two chapters have been treated separately without an explicit indication of where the two aspects of the Ekegusii

grammar interact. In the following chapter we will attempt to show the interaction of the two levels of the grammar with special attention paid to the major consonantal changes which this work set out to do.

CHAPTER FOUR

4.0.0 A MORPHOPHONOLOGICAL STUDY

In the previous chapters, we provided introductory information of two levels of grammar namely phonology and morphology (cf 2.0.0 and 3.0.0), without explicitly showing where and how the two levels of grammar interact. In this chapter, we make a simultaneous study of both levels so that we can show the various points at which phonology and morphology interact. The information that we gathered in those chapters will thus be used in this chapter while discussing the major consonantal processes in the language which are realized during the morphological processes.

Phonological changes in morphological processes are conditioned by different factors. The bringing together of morphemes in a word formation processes might lead to a natural process as the change might result from the natural movements of the articulatory system from one point to another in order to accommodate the change of features where dissimilar segments co-occur. Such changes are said to be phonetically conditioned. There are other changes which result from morphosyntactic or lexical conditioning. All these can be captured in the rules which represent

the native speakers intuition about his language. We noted in chapter one (cf 1.4) that our aim is to identify, account for the changes and formulate generalized rules in order to capture the phonological generalizations. Radford (1981:20) notes that;

"The task of the linguist devising a grammar which models the linguistic competence of the native speaker is to devise a finite set of rules which are capable of specifying how to form interpret and pronounce an infinite set of well - formed sentences"

Among the phonological abilities subsumed under grammatical competence are the native speakers intuition about the phonological well formedness or ill-formedness of sentences in his language. In 'Language and mind' 1972:26), Chomsky further notes that;

"the person who has acquired knowledge of a language has internalized a system of rules that relate sound and meaning in a particular way. The linguist constructing a grammar of a language is in effect proposing a hypothesis concerning this internalized system"

As we discuss the various kinds and nature of the

consonantal changes in Ekegusii, we formulate formalized rules to capture the phonological generalizations, employing the rigours of the Natural Generative Grammar theory of phonology, which as already indicated in section 1.7 of this work is our descriptive tool.

#### 4.1.0 CONSONANTAL CHANGES IN EKEGUSII

In chapter two, we gave a surface description of the changes that effect the consonants in the language (cf. 2.1.2.0 to 2.1.2.3). This served as introductory information that we shall use presently. A number of phonological changes were identified each with its own characteristics. In the following sections 4.2 and 4.3, we attempt to give the environmental explanations for each of the changes applying the tools of Natural Generative Grammar theory in accounting for them. We isolate those processes that we consider as phonetically conditioned to be discussed under section 4.2.0 from those that are not phonetically conditioned in section 4.3.0

#### 4.2.0 PHONETICALLY CONDITIONED CHANGES

A large number of phonological changes which involve consonants in Ekegusii lead to natural processes as the changes results from the natural

movements of the articulatory system from one point of articulation to the other in order to accomodate the change of features where segments that are not similar co-occur. These changes take place in environments that are specifiabile in purely phonetic terms. That is why they are natural by virtue of being conditioned by the physical articulatory processes, hence phonetically motivated. Such changes are exceptionless and are un-supressable since they take place each and everytime their environments dictates. The changes of this type are said to be phonetically conditioned.

Given the nature of these changes, the natural generative theory of phonology postulates rules called phonetically conditioned rules (P-rules - cf. 1.7) that accounts for them. Hooper describes them as;

"...P-rules are rules describing alternations that take place in environments that are specifiabile in purely phonetic terms. "Phonetic terms" refer to phonological features (that have intrinsic phonetic content) and phonological boundaries (that have a necessary and consistent phonetic manifestation" (Hooper 1976:14).

These rules, she adds, are automatic rules of phonetic detail and as long as the rule contain only phonetic information, it belongs to this class.

A number of the phonetically conditioned consonantal changes have been identified. In the following analysis, we take each change in turn to see what conclusions can be drawn with regard to the objectives set in section 1.4.

#### 4.2.1 STOP FORMATION

We pointed out earlier on in chapter two (cf 2.1.2.1) that the process of stop formation or strengthening in Ekegusii involves segments that are continuants which in a given environment become stops. The phenomenon affects the consonants of the language and was singled out as one of the major changes. We specifically noted the change of the voiced bilabial plosive /β/ which becomes a voiced bilabial plosive [b] , and a liquid /ɹ/ which becomes a voiced alveolar plosive [d] . For purposes of analysis and clarity we discuss each change in isolation.

##### 4.2.1.1. FRICATIVE STRENGTHENING

In Ekegusii, the underlying voiced bilabial fricative is realized as a voiced bilabial stop on the surface when it occurs after an alveolar nasal.

$\beta \longrightarrow b / n \longrightarrow$

The nasal in question here is the first person singular subject marker /n/. At the same time, the alveolar nasal /n/, becomes a bilabial nasal /m/. The two processes take place simultaneously. The latter change will be discussed later on in section 4.2.1.3 of this work. The phenomenon results from a natural articulatory process.

The most plausible explanation that can be given in this case is purely phonetic since the process results from an articulatory process. In chapter two section 2.1.2.1 (i) the data illustrating this change was provided. However, for continuity purposes, we provide an additional data;

(68)

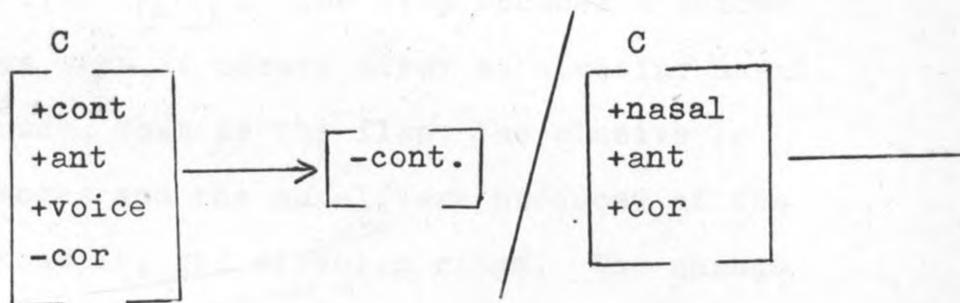
/n+βaɪ+e/	→	[mbaɪe]	'I count'
/n+βo:ɪ+e/	→	[mbo:ɪe]	'I say'
/n+βo:s+e/	→	[mbo:se]	'plough'
/n+βas+e/	→	[mbase]	'I elope'
/n+βun+e/	→	[mbune]	'I break'
/n+βan+e/	→	[mbane]	'I foretell'

We observe from the data the phenomena of the

voiced bilabial fricative /β/ becoming a voiced bilabial stop when it follows an alveolar nasal. In Natural Generative Grammar theory this phenomena is described by a P-rule. Given the change then, our rule reads as follows in terms of Chomsky and Halle features(1968);

$$\beta \longrightarrow b / n \text{ ---}$$

11)



The rule in words reads that a voiced bilabial fricative becomes a voiced bilabial stop after an alveolar nasal.

One definite observation we make from the change and rule, is the direct relationship between the underlying form /β/ and the surface representation. The theory states that there be transparency between underlying and surface forms thus express surface forms in the most direct manner possible. Thus a rule such as the one we have formulated does not allow abstract analysis, that is, it is not a possible

rule, but a rule that captures the true phonological generalization. This is one of the main postulates of the Natural Generative Grammar theory about a natural language.

#### 4.2.1.2 LIQUID STRENGTHENING

In chapter two (cf. 2.1.1), while discussing the consonants of Ekegusii language, we noted that, the language has only one liquid. We described the liquid as a flap [ɾ]. The flap becomes a voiced velar plosive when it occurs after an alveolar nasal. Both the sounds, that is the flap, the plosive to which it changes and the nasal, are produced at the same point, that is, the alveolar ridge. The change can be explained in phonetic terms, since it results from the physical articulatory mechanism. It would be difficult to produce an alveolar nasal and then immediately produce the liquid. In order to ease this articulatory process, the liquid is strengthened into a plosive while retaining the feature voice. Thus

$\text{ɾ} \rightarrow \text{d/n}$  —. This process takes place after the first person singular subject marker /n/ a change that is manifested in a phonetic environment. We supplement the data provided in section 2.1.2.1 (ii) with the following data to illustrate the change;

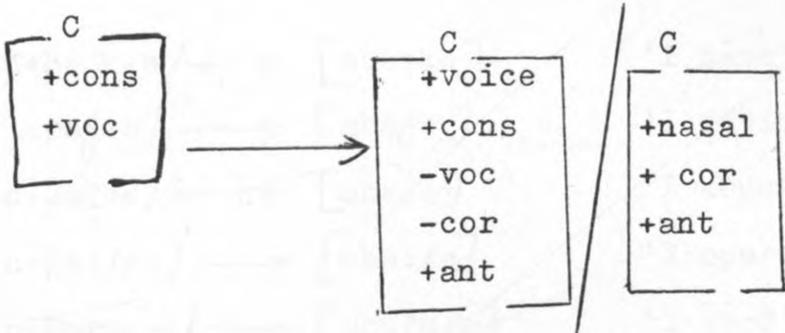
(69)

/n+fom+e/	→	[ndome]	'I bit'
/n+fot <sub>ɹ</sub> +e/	→	[ndot <sub>ɹ</sub> e]	'I dream'
/n+faf <sub>ɹ</sub> +e/	→	[ndafe]	'I sleep'
/n+fem+e/	→	[ndeme]	'I dig'
/n+fam+e/	→	[ndame]	'I abuse'
/n+fisi+e/	→	[ndisie]	'I graze'
/n+fusi+e/	→	[ndusie]	'I remove'

We can use the p-rules that our theory provides to describe the change as follows;

12)

$f \rightarrow d/n$



A liquid (flap) becomes a voiced alveolar plosive after an alveolar nasal.

#### 4.2.1.3 HOMORGANIC NASAL ASSIMILATION

We defined homorganic nasal assimilation in section 2.1.2.2, as a process in which a nasal assimilates to the same point of articulation of the following consonant. In Ekegusii, the alveolar nasal /n/ changes to a bilabial nasal [m] and a velar nasal [ŋ] in different environments. We examine the two changes separately.

##### 4.2.1.3.1 n → m / — b

This is a case where the alveolar nasal becomes bilabial nasal before a voiced bilabial stop. The following data which is an additional one to the one in section 2.1.2.2 (i) illustrates the change;

(70)

/n+βa:k+e/	→	[mba:ke]	'I name'
/n+βaʃ+e/	→	[mbaʃe]	'I divide'
/n+βaʃ+e/	→	[mbaʃe]	'I count'
/n+βa:f+e/	→	[mba:fe]	'I operate/dissect'
/n+βuru +e/	→	[mburuʃe]	'I weed'
/n+βe:f+e/	→	[mbe:fe]	'I sit on'
/n+βok+e/	→	[mbo:ke]	'I wake-up'

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/n+βuru +e/	→	[mburuʃe]	'I weed'
/n+βe:f+e/	→	[mbe:fe]	'I sit on'
/n+βok+e/	→	[mbo:ke]	'I wake-up'

We noted earlier on in section 4.2.1. that two processes take place simultaneously, the stop formation process and homorganic nasal assimilation. We have already shown and discussed the stop formation process. The homorganic nasal assimilation change can be explained in purely phonetic terms. Like all the other phonological processes that we have already discussed the process is effected through the natural articulatory process.

The change is described by a p-rule as postulated in Natural Generative Grammar theory. The rule can then be formalized as follows;

13)

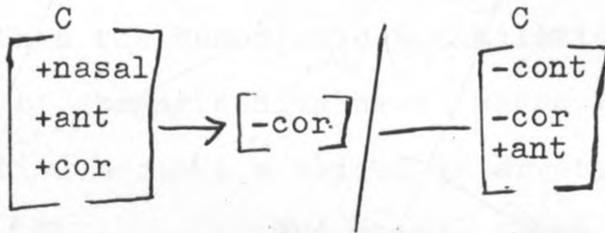
$n \longrightarrow m / \text{---} b ,$

$\left[ \text{+nasal} \right] \longrightarrow \left[ \text{point} \right] / \text{---} \left[ \text{point} \right] \text{ stop.}$

The rule could include all the stops in general, but since we have indicated that it is only the bilabial stop that affects the change, then it suffices in pointing out the stop that is affected. In words

the rule reads as; a nasal assimilates to the same point of articulation of a following stop consonant. To, however, specify the consonants in question the rule can be formalized thus;

14)  $n \longrightarrow m / \text{---} b$



4.2.1.3.2  $n \longrightarrow \eta / \text{---} \delta$

This is yet another case of homorganic nasal assimilation, where an alveolar nasal becomes a velar nasal before a velar fricative. The motivating factors in terms of the articulatory processes are the same except that the environments differ. The conditioning consonant for this change is a velar fricative and the resultant segment is a velar nasal. In section 2.1.2.2 (ii) while giving a surface description of the changes, we provided some data that illustrated the change. We, however, supplement the data with the following data;

(71)

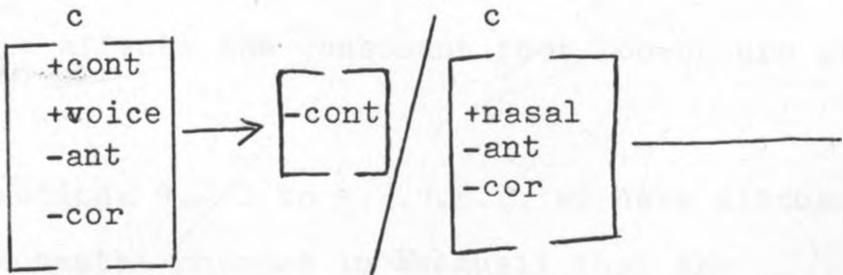
$/n+\gamma ek+e/$	$\longrightarrow$	$[ŋgeke]$	'I cut grass'
$/n+\gamma it_6+e/$	$\longrightarrow$	$[ŋgite]$	'I fence'
$/n+\gamma ɔf+a/$	$\longrightarrow$	$[ŋgɔfa]$	'I usually buy'
$/n+\gamma ɛs+e/$	$\longrightarrow$	$[ŋgɛsɛ]$	'I harvest'
$/n+\gamma ɛnd+e/$	$\longrightarrow$	$[ŋgɛndɛ]$	'I go'

Other than the homorganic assimilation there is also a case of strengthening here, where the voiced velar fricative becomes a voiced velar stop,

$\gamma \longrightarrow g/\text{ŋ}$  ———. The change takes place after a velar nasal.

The change was pointed out earlier on in chapter two (cf. 2.1.2.1 (iii)) The rule for the change can be stated as follows

15)  $\gamma \longrightarrow g/\text{ŋ}$  ———.



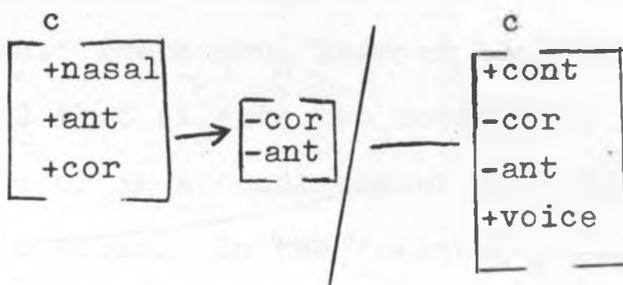
The rule states that a voiced continuant loses the feature continuant retaining the rest of the features

thus becoming a stop.

For the homorganic nasal assimilation, the velar fricative is the conditioning factor. It pulls the alveolar nasal to its point of articulation thus velarizing it. Using the Chomsky and Halle features (1968), the rule or that change can be stated thus;

16)

$n \longrightarrow \eta / \text{---} \delta$



Stated in words the rule reads: an alveolar nasal becomes a velar nasal before a voiced velar fricative. The change, as already noted triggers off another change that affects the consonant that co-occurs with it.

. In sections 4.2.0 to 4.2.1.3.2, we have discussed those consonantal changes in Ekegusii that are phonetically conditioned. We have seen that such changes are natural and unsupressable and that they

take place each and everytime their structural descriptions are met. We further employed the tools provided by the Natural Generative Grammar theory to account for these changes. We have shown how the p-rules then describe the way the surface contrastive features will be manifested in a phonetic environment and how further they describe the processes that are governed entirely by the physical properties of the vocal tract. The processes that have been analysed in the above section are among the major consonantal changes, which as we have indicated are phonetically conditioned. There are, however, some changes that our study found that affects the consonants that are not explainable or an account cannot be given for them in phonetic terms. In the following section we analyse those changes and attempt to give plausible explanations guided by the Natural Generative Grammar theory of phonology.

#### 4.3.0 NON-PHONETICALLY CONDITIONED CHANGES

In sections 2.1.2.3 and 2.1.2.4, we briefly discussed the processes of dissimilation and weakening as part of the consonantal changes in Ekegusii. We provided data that demonstrated that the voiceless velar stop [k] changes into a voiced velar fricative [ɣ]. In this section we attempt to

offer an explanation to this phenomena.

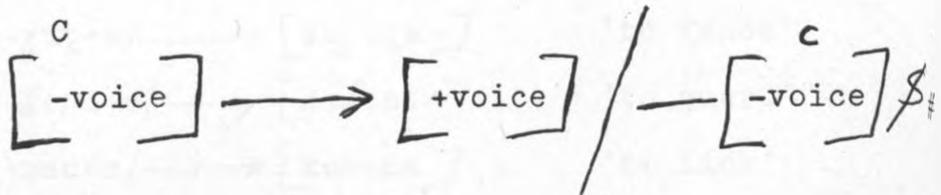
A number of pertinent issues can be raised about the change. First we observe that a voicing rule takes place. [k] is a voiceless segment and it becomes voiced when it changes to a velar fricative. For example;

(72)

/ko+kama/	→	[ɣokama]	'to milk'
/ko+ku:fa/	→	[ɣoku:fa]	'to shout for help'
/ko+ko:fa/	→	[ɣoko:fa]	'to finish'
/ko+kɔfa/	→	[ɣokɔfa]	'to do something'
/ko+kɪ:na/	→	[ɣokɪ:na]	'to grow up'
/ko+se:fa/	→	[ɣose:fa]	'to grind'
/ko+te:ma/	→	[ɣote:ma]	'to cut down trees'

There is a voicing rule which operates in these cases that involve the initial stop. Our voicing rule can thus be formalized thus;

17)



A voiceless consonant of the initial syllable becomes voiced before a voiceless consonant at word initial

position. The question to ask here is, does this rule apply to all voiceless consonants in the language? Let us consider the following data;

(73)

/t̥o+t̥ɛfa/	→	[t̥o <sup>h</sup> t̥ɛfa]	'we sing'
/t̥o+saβ+a/	→	[t̥osaβa]	'we pray/ask'
/t̥o+sɪβ+a/	→	[t̥osɪβa]	'we tie'
/t̥o+sɪ:βa/	→	[t̥osɪ:βa]	'we sip'
/t̥o+sɪβɪ+a/	→	[t̥osɪβɪa]	'we wash'
/t̥oča:ka/	→	[t̥oča:ka]	'we start'
/čɪ+sɪfa/	→	[čɪsɪfa]	'they get lost'

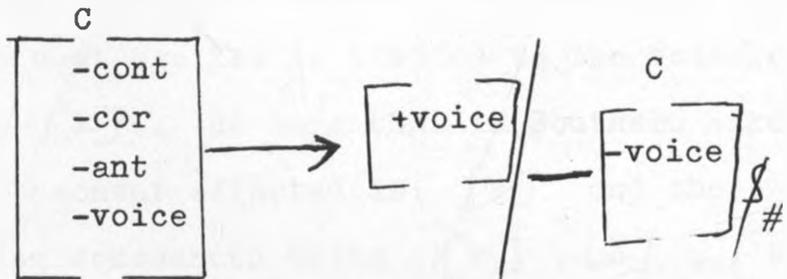
The data above (73) contradicts our rule 17. We deduce from the datas (72) and (73) that it is only the voiceless velar stop that is voiced when it occurs before any voiceless consonant. Let us consider the following data to compare and proof our statement.

(74)

/k>ɣɛnd+a/	→	[k>ɣɛnda]	'to go'
/ko+ɣɪt̥+a/	→	[koɣɪt̥a]	'to fence'
/ko+ɬend+a/	→	[koɬenda]	'to guard'
/ko+men+a/	→	[komena]	'to lick'
/ko+βun+a/	→	[koβuna]	'to break'
/ko+ɬem+a/	→	[koɬema]	'to dig'

We deduce that it is only the voiceless velar stop that is voiced when it occurs before any voiceless consonant our new rule is therefore:

18)



What appears to be taking place in the language is the Dahl's law. In their book entitled 'Introduction to the phonology of the Bantu languages' (Berlin 1932:183), Carl Meinhof and Van Warmelo discusses the Dahls law in Bantu languages. They presented the law simply as the voicing of the first of any series of two voiceless stops. We refute this suggestion as improbable while considering the case of Ekegusii. The application of the law is limited to only the velar stop [k] which changes to a voiced velar fricative. The law does not affect all the voiceless consonants. The dissimilation which thus affects the consonant is a phenomena distinct from the more general dissimilation. The law does not apply all in general except within a morpheme.

Bennett, P.R, in his article entitled 'Dahls' law and Thagicu', discusses the law among the central Bantu group of Kenya, to the east and South of mount Kenya. It includes; the Kikuyu, the Kamba, Embu, Mbere, Meru and Tharaka, which he collectively calls the Thagicu. He found out for this group that the law is limited to the voiceless velar stop [k]. He says that in Southern Kikuyu the only consonant affected is [k] and the conditioning consonants being [k], [x], [t] and [θ]. The rule applies not only within the morpheme but also to prefix consonants - where two or more prefixes having [k] as their consonant occur before one of the effecting consonants all are affected, not only the one nearest the conditioning consonant; where, however, a stem begins with a [x] owing to the operation of Dahls law prefixes are not affected. The differences he noted in the group was that the conditioning consonants were not all uniform in the group. For example, Tharaka has the following conditioning consonants [t], [c̣] [k] [nt] and [nk] and in Mwimbi, the affecting factors are; [t] [c̣], [k] [mp] [nt] and probably [nk]. What Bennett was out to prove is that for as much as there is Dahls law among the Bantu languages, its operation is limited to a particular segment which is a velar

stop and not simply that any one of the voiceless consonants can be voiced in a series of voiceless consonants. This as we have found out is true of Ekegusii, where only the velar stop is affected, which also includes the velar nasal compound [nk] . A lot or a number of qualifications must therefore be made to produce a wholly accurate statement about Dahls law.

In Ekegusii, as already hinted, [k] and [nk] are affected in as far as Dahl's law is concerned. The conditioning consonants are all the voiceless consonants that will follow the velar segments affected. These includes [t], [s], [ç], [k], [nt], [ns], [nç] and [nk] . The following data shows the operation of Dahl's law;

(75)

/n+ko+sefa/	→	[ŋgosefa]	'when I mill'
/n+ko+ča/	→	[ŋgocă]	'when I come'
/n+ko+saria/	→	[ŋgosafra]	'when I spoil'
/ko+tefa/	→	[ɣotefa]	'to sing'
/ko+n+kofa/	→	[ɣonko:fa]	'to finish me'
/ko+sreka/	→	[ɣosreka]	'to close'
/ko+ɣenda/	→	[kɣenda]	'to go'
/ko+ɬenda/	→	[kofenda]	'to guard'

The other question is: is the change of dissimilation or weakening phonetically conditioned? That is, is the change from a stop to a fricative a result of a natural process? If so what are the motivating factors? And if not, then, how do we explain or account for the change? In order to get plausible explanations and answers let us consider the following data.

(76).

[Ika] 'reach' [naɪɟete] 'he reached' [narkereɟe] 'he reached for'

[ɸoka] 'vomit' [naroɟete] 'he vomited' [naɸokerete] 'he vomited at'

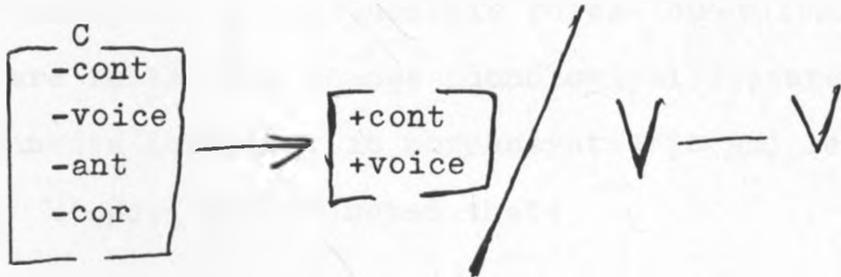
[seka] 'laugh' [naseɟete] 'he laughed' [nasekeɟete] 'he laughed at'

[ɟeka] 'cut grass' [naɟete] 'he cut grass' [naɟekerete] 'he cut grass for'

[mɪɸoka] 'run' [namɪɸete] 'he ran' [namɪɸokeɟete] 'he ran for/at'

We observe from the data that the forms undergo various morphological processes, for example, inflecting for tense, where [k] → [ɸ], so that the rule which is applying here reads:

19)



That is a voiceless velar stop becomes a voiced velar fricative intervocallically. But is this true in all the cases where [k] occurs in an intervocalic position? From the data we deduce that it is not true as in the following data;

(77)

[naɪkefete]	'we reached for'
[naɪokefete]	'he vomited at/for'
[naɪkefete]	'he cut grass for'
[naɪkefete]	'he laughed for/at'

The [k] occurs in intervocalic position and yet it does not change. The most plausible conclusion we can draw here is that the change is not phonetically conditioned. We therefore resort to our theory of Natural Generative Grammar to seek tools with which to offer an explanation. The change takes place in a morphosyntactic environment and according

to the tenets of our theory such changes are described by the morphophonemic rules- MP-rules. These are rules that change phonological features in environments described in morphosyntactic and lexical terms. Hooper(1976:16)notes that;

"In NGP, a rule expressed in phonetic terms must actually correspond to the physical details of articulation. These physical details are quite regular; thus an alternation is considered to be phonetically motivated only if it always takes place when the phonetic motivation is present on the surface. If an alternation fails to take place when the phonetic environment is present or takes place when the phonetic environment is not present, then it cannot be associated with a phonetic environment but must be associated with something else in the language, e.g. a particular morpheme, a syntactic category etc. such an alternation will be described in an MP-rule"

The rule which changes  $k \rightarrow \delta$  would therefore belong to the class of MP-rules. The change can thus be explained only by the use of an MP.rule.

The difference between P-rules and MP-rules is one of the most important innovations in NGP. We noted in section 1.7 that in TGP (Transformational Generative

phonology) no clear distinction is made between rules with phonetic conditioning versus rules with non-phonetic conditioning, because there are no strong constraints (such as true generalization condition), that specify how a rule should be formulated, given the facts of the language.

#### 4.4.0

In this chapter we examined the various phonological processes that affect consonants in Ekegusii and provided evidence to support the argument that sound change results from different factors. As we attempted to explain cases of phonetic and morphophonemic alternations, we constantly referred to the P-rules and MP-rules postulated by Natural Generative Grammar theory of phonology and in the course of our analysis assessed the validity of the claims made by the theory within whose framework we analysed the processes.

CHAPTER FIVE

5.0.0 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

5.1.0 SUMMARY

This study has highlighted certain aspects of Ekegusii morphophonology. We adduced enough evidence to show that phonological changes in the language result from different factors which can be accounted for in phonetic, lexical and/or morphosyntactic terms, as outlined in Natural Generative Grammar theory.

We discussed the phonology of the language, examining the segmental and suprasegmental elements which served as the background information for the main discussion in the study. We outlined the major aspects of the morphology of Ekegusii showing the major morphological processes that take place in the language, with special attention paid to the changes that the consonants of the language undergo.

All changes attested have either a phonetic conditioning or a morphological conditioning. The phonetically conditioned changes were shown to be natural processes, exceptionless and unsuppressable since they take place each and everytime the

environments dictates. They occur as much in Ekegusii as they would in other natural languages so long as their structural description are met.

Finally our study identified and examined the morphosyntactically conditioned changes in the language and attempted to offer explanations for such changes in the language, using the tools outlined in Natural Generative phonology and thus attempted to capture all the consonantal changes in Ekegusii.

#### 5.2.0 CONCLUSIONS

The Natural Generative Grammar, which this work adopted as the descriptive **tool** makes strong claims regarding natural language processes (cf. 1.7) in an attempt to constrain abstractness in phonology. We noted in this work (cf. 1.7) that NGP has placed certain strong constraints within its framework which operate to keep to minimum the issue of abstractness. These constraints apply to possible rules, alternations and unerlying forms. With these constraints, NGG makes strong claims regarding natural language processes. If therefore the theory is correct, then these hypothesis should be upheld by data from natural language. In discussing the consonantal changes, we aimed at testing and assessing the validity of the

claims using facts on Ekegusii.

The processes that we examined using the rigours of N.G.G, lead us to submit that the theory provides enough tools to account for changes in the language appropriately, and because of the constraints within its framework, our submission is that it is just powerful enough to describe the facts of a natural language.

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