

A SYNCHRONIC SURVEY OF KIEMBU DIALECTS

BY

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DECLARATION

This research project is my original work and has not been submitted for examination in any other university.

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Date

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

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DEDICATION

To my family:

“Thank you for your patience,

your care and

your concern.”

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ABSTRACT

The study attempts to establish and describe the dialects of Kiambu by comparing their phonological, morphological and lexical features. In order to establish the extent of the variations in Kiambu, the research is set to establish the phonological, morphological and lexical features of Kiambu dialects, investigate the distribution patterns of the identified variables and establish the factors that cause the dialectal variation. The research is based on the variationist sociolinguistics theory founded by William Labov (1969) who based his work on the notion of variability. The theory was later introduced by Tagliamonte (2012) as Language Variation and Change (LVC) which has its foundational maxim based on labov's idea that variation is an inherent part of language. It was observed that the dialect features that have been discussed are not absolutely present in one dialect and absent in the other. To the contrary, the situation is fluid as the variables are found in either dialect. Our basis for identifying boundaries is based on what is considered a typical form of a word for a particular dialect region, as Kimbeti, Kiruguru and Kiveti are mutually intelligible.

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LIST OF SYMBOLS AND ABBREVIATIONS

σ	Syllable
+	Shows positive value when placed before a feature e.g [+ back]
-	Shows negative value when placed before a feature e.g [- back]
ϕ	End result of deletion
/	In the environment
	High tone
	Low tone
↓	Downstepped high
LVC	Language Variation and Change
DL	Dialect
TP	Typical
UD	known and used but not typical
KN	Known but not used
UN	Unknown
H	High
L	Low
O	Onset
C	Consonant
V	Vowel
R	Rhyme
N	Nucleus
CV	Consonant-Vowel
IPA	International Phonetic Alphabet

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

This chapter shows the background to the language of study, as well as background to the problem so as to identify if there exist a gap. The existing gap is well outlined as the statement to the problem. The objectives and the hypotheses, which the study aims to prove or disprove, are noted down. The chapter also outlines the rationale of carrying out this study. The researcher has discussed the theoretical framework on which the analysis of the data collected for this study will be based. The research methodology is stated, the significance for the study explained and literature which is related to this study is reviewed

1.2 Background to the study

This section is divided into two. The first section introduces the background to the language of study and the next section is the background to the problem.

1.2.1 Background to the language of study

Kiambu is the language under study and is spoken by the Embu people who inhabit the East, West and North districts in Embu County. This area lies in the south-eastern slopes of Mt. Kenya and is separated from the neighboring lands by Mt. Kenya to the north. It lies among four rivers: to the north is River Thuci, to the East River Tana, to the South River Ena and to the West is river Rupingazi. The Embu neighbour three other ethnic groups: to the south are Ambeere, to the east are the Achuka and to the west are the Agikuyu of Kirinyaga.

According to Githrie (1967:43) the Aembu are Bantu speakers of 'Zone E', group 50 under the label E 52. Others in this group are the Agikuyu, Ameru, Atharaka, Akamba and Thaiso. All these languages are Eastern Bantu. The latest Kenya population and Housing Census of 2009 indicate that the total population of Aembu as 324,092.

The Northern parts of Embu include: Manyatta, Nganduri and Nginda areas are very rich agriculturally and this is a tea-zone region. Dairy farming is extensively practiced in this region. The southern region of Embu include: the Embu town, the lower parts of Embu near the boarder of Embu and Mbeere. Economically, this area is the coffee growing zone with some dairy farming. Administratively, this region has advantage since all the government and non-government organizations are located in Embu town which initially was the provincial headquarters and now county headquarter.

The dialect spoken in this region is considered to be standard. Since the native speakers view the region as being economically and politically advantaged with good schools, big business premises, government and non-governmental offices are located here hence the native speakers view the southern dialect as more superior. The eastern region of Embu include; Runyenje, Kyeni, Kathageri area that boarder Embu and Chuka. Economically, this area grows tea and coffee with dairy farming.

1.2.2 General Background of the study

Dialectology is the study of dialect and dialects (Chambers and Trudgill 1998:3). All speakers are speakers of at least one dialect, for instance standard English is just as much a dialect as any other form of English and that it does not make any kind of sense to suppose that any one dialect is in any way linguistically superior to any other. Everyone speaks a

dialect and according to Crystal, no dialect is thought of as 'superior' to any other in terms of linguistic structure though several are considered prestigious from a social point of view (Crystal 1997: 24).

The term dialect is defined broadly as a regional or social variety of a language distinguished from one or more other varieties of the same language by a set of lexical, grammatical or phonological features, in a situation where the language varieties are mutually intelligible. Accent, on the other hand, refers to the way in which a speaker pronounces a variety which is phonetically and/or phonologically differently from other varieties.

Dialect refers to varieties which are grammatically (and perhaps lexically) as well as phonologically different from other varieties. If two speakers say respectively; 'I have done it last night' and 'I did it last night; we can say that they are speaking different dialects (Chambers and Trudgill 1998:1).

The term dialect was first coined in 1577 from Latin dialects. The earliest recorded instance where dialectal information played a role in history appears in the Bible, in the book of Judges Verse 12:4 – 6: 'Then Gilead asked him, "Are you an Ephraimite?" If he answered, "No", they said, "Then say shibboleth". He would say sibboleth since he would not pronounce the word correctly. Thereupon, they seized and slaughtered him by the fords of the Jordan.' The word shibboleth, which in ancient Hebrew meant either year of grain or flowing stream, has come to be a distinguishing mark or criterion. The word 'shibboleth' distinguishes one group of people from another. In the Bible story, Jephthah,

the leader of the Gileadites, was able to use it as a test to tell which were his own men, because others found the ‘sh’ sound difficult to pronounce.

Dialectologists stipulated non-mobility because they assumed the mobility is a great leveler of accent and dialect. When people from different region come together, they bring with them numerous differences, some in their speech. This mixing has long been recognized as a force in change. It could be argued that most languages spoken today were simply dialects of another language. When a single person migrates in separate directions and the resulting groups no longer maintain close communication with one another, then dialects emerge and in time evolve into separate languages.

There are two main approaches to dialectological studies; dialect geography and urban dialectology. Dialect geography also called regional dialectology or traditional dialectology aims at the production of geographical account of linguistic differences. One of its requirements was the need to describe the “speech of rural, adult and non-mobile male” as the speech representing the dialect of a particular region. Urban dialectologist felt that such an approach was unrealistic as interaction in an urban area is quite high. Urban dialectologists account for variability in language by first identify linguistic variables and then establish whether the variable is a marker that is subject to stylistic variation as well as social class, sex or age variation or is merely an indicator that is not involved in systematic stylistic variation.

1.2.3 Background to the problem

Francis (1983) defines dialectology as the study of dialects which are varieties of language used by groups smaller than the total community of speakers of a language. A dialect is a

form of language that is spoken in one area with grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation that is different from other forms of the same language. Among speakers of any language there is variation in the way that they use their language. This variation is demonstrated by linguistic differences in term of pronunciation (accent), lexicon (word choice) and preference in particular grammatical patterns.

Lexical variation occurs when different dialects use varying words for the same thing while phonological variation accounts for differences in pronunciation among the dialects. Mutahi (1977) studies Kiambu as a dialect of Southern Mount Kenya and divides it into Kimbeere, Kiambu, Kindia, Kigichugu and Kimathira. He is quick to note that Kiambu is recognized as separate from Mbeere and Gikuyu. Wachera (2008) observes that geographical and politically motivated dialects of Gikuyu have since reduced in number with Kimbeere and Kiambu becoming fully fledged languages.

The Kenya Population and Housing Census of 1962 provide classification where Gikuyu, Kiambu, Kimeru, Kitharaka and Kimbeere are placed as separate languages. Kimbeere was previously seen as part of Kiambu language.

The latest Kenya Population and Housing Census of 2009 recognize Mbeere as distinct from both Gikuyu and Kiambu. It puts the total population of Mbeere as 168,155 while that of Embu as 324,092 and Gikuyu as 6,622,576.

1.3 Statement of the problem

Kiambu is perceived in different ways by its native speakers. The Kiambu speakers often express the view that they can tell who comes from where within the Embu region by the way they speak. The native speakers of Kiambu can identify other native speakers as

speaking Kiruguru, Kiveti or Kimbeti varieties. The question this study seeks to address is whether such impressions have enough linguistic bases to justify the idea that Kiambu has dialects within itself.

Language generally changes over a period of time and Kiambu is no exception. The choice of this topic has been motivated by the fact that in spite of the variations among the Kiambu speakers no study has so far been carried out to establish the extent of the variations.

The study set out to investigate synchronically the dialectal variations in Kiambu. To the best of my knowledge, no study has been carried out on the dialects of Kiambu, therefore, there is a need to carry out a detailed analysis to fill in the gap. This will help approve or disapprove the assumption that Kiambu has dialects within itself.

In order to establish the extent of the variations in Kiambu, the research will be guided by the following questions:

1. What are the phonological, morphological and lexical features of the Kiambu dialects?
2. What are the distribution patterns of the identified dialectal variables of Kiambu?
3. What are the factors that give rise to the inherent variations?

1.4 Research objectives

1. To establish the phonological, morphological and lexical features of Kiambu dialects.
2. To investigate the distribution patterns of the identified dialectal variables.
3. To establish the factors that causes the dialectal variation.

1.5 Hypotheses

1. Kiambu has dialectal variations.
2. The Kiambu dialectal features are systematically distributed within its various regions.
3. Dialectal variations in Kiambu are not only due to linguistic factors but also due to other factors.

1.6 Rationale

As far as is known to the researcher, very little study has been carried out on Kiambu. The little literature available shows that Kiambu has been studied as a dialect of Gikuyu.

Since it is the first systematic survey of the dialects of Kiambu, it provides valuable information concerning the different Kiambu dialects and the features which mark them.

The research will be a future guide in language policies among the Aembu, especially in teaching mother tongue and various translations, for example Bible translation in Kiambu.

This study therefore, provides valuable information to linguists, teachers and scholars who are interested in Kiambu language.

1.7 Scope and limitation

Most of the studies and literature in Kiambu incorporates Kimbeere. This study does not incorporate Kimbeere for the reason that Kimbeere is a discrete language from Kiambu.

This study is carried out in the three linguistic regions in Embu County: Embu West, Embu East and Embu North.

The study limits itself to the variables exhibited in the phonology, morphology and lexical items in Kiambu varieties in terms of regional differences. The study also attempts to establish the social factors that give rise to the inherent variations in Kiambu.

1.8 Theoretical Framework

The research is based on the variationist sociolinguistics theory founded by William Labov (1969) who based his work on language. He stated that language is structured heterogeneity as it contained systematic variation which would be characterized and explained by patterns of social differentiation within speech communities.

This study is guided by a conceptual framework at whose core is the notion of variability. This is a concept that accepts linguistic change as a natural phenomenon. It seeks to establish the features distinctive to particular varieties while at the same time giving the researcher the tools and techniques for explaining the inherent variation.

The theory was later introduced by Tagliamonte (2012) as language variation and change (LVC) which has its foundational maxim based on Labov's idea that variation is an inherent part of language. Tagliamonte (2012) explains that an LVC oriented sociolinguist views instances of language in use as an indication of the variable but does not view language in use as rule governed. LVC research begins with the observation that language is inherently variable. Linguistic variables of a given speech community whether morphosyntactic, phonological or discursive do not vary haphazardly but systematically (Labov 1969).

According to Mesthrie et al. (2000:91), there are three types of variables namely: makers, indicators and stereotypes. Makers are those variables like (r) and (th) that distinguish a group of speakers from another, speaking the same language, therefore, showing stratification according to style and social class. Indicators show differentiation by age or

social group without being subjected to style shifting, and have little evaluative force in subjective reaction test therefore only a linguistically trained observer is aware of indicators. Stereotypes are forms that are socially marked that is, they are prominent in the linguistic awareness of speech communities, although the judgments that bring about stereotypes are not necessarily phonetically accurate.

The theory is unique in its goals and methodology. Tagliamonte (2012:7) outlines its basic procedure as follows:

- (i) Observation – the researcher hears and /or sees variation in language use. This begins with the observation that language is inherently variable.
- (ii) Identification – the researcher then select the linguistic variables for the study, this is done by identifying the linguistic variants in a speech community that distinguish dialects of a language.
- (iii) Reconnaissance – the researcher determine if the variation occur, then how they occur and in which environment or areas these variation occur.
- (iv) Systematic exploratory observation – an analysis of the language under the study done, this include forms of inventory, patterns of variation, circumstances under which variation occur and users of variations.
- (v) The researcher then test to approve or disapprove the hypotheses.
- (vi) Lastly, the researcher interprets and attempts to explain the sociolinguistics variable patterns.

The theory is guided by the following principles:

1.8.1 The principle of accountability

It states that in addition to examining a variable, the analyst must also take into account all the other potential variants within the given system. An analyst must know what he counts and the calculation of distribution of counts means so that the information can be interpreted the appropriate way (Tagliamonte 2012: 19). It is important to know how a variant is influenced by a particular type of context compared to another which thus requires the distribution of a variant out of the total number of contexts where it could have occurred but did not.

1.8.2 The principles of quantitative paradigm

It analyses variation using statistical modelling. This provides a formal mathematical assessment of the relationship between the dependent variable and the independent variables. Bayley (2002:118) outlines the theoretical principles of the quantitative paradigm as follows:

1.8.2.1 Principle of quantitative modelling

This implies that we examine closely the forms that a linguistic variable accommodates and noting what features of the context co-occur with these forms. With enough data, it is possible to make a statement about the likelihood of co-occurrence of a variable.

1.8.2.2 Principle of multiple causes

Variables under close examination are subjected to not one but many contextual conditioning factors.

Change in a language is preceded by variation; therefore, tracking down changes requires close attention to the language systems as well as the social system. Mesthrie et al. (2000:117) outlined the procedure of change as follows:

- i) The basis of linguistic change lies in the low level phonetic variability of ordinary speech.
- ii) A given phonetic variable becomes socially significant as a marker of group identification and stylistic level.
- iii) Due to this sociolinguistic marking, the variable attains linguistic significance. While many linguistic variables are stable, in cases of language change, a variant tends to be generalized or extended to new linguistic environments.
- iv) This 'new' variant may also be extended to new social groups.
- v) The variant may eventually spread through the vocabulary system of the language and throughout the whole speech community.
- vi) The variant then becomes part of the community's repertoire.

Variability recognizes the complex interplay of linguistic and social factors in language variation, thus linguistic variation is not only due to innovation, but is also a result of influences exerted by social factors like prestige, age, sex of speakers and also convergence. Because of this covariance between linguistic variables and social variables, many researchers in the field of dialectology can much more effectively account for the association of a given dialect feature with a particular geographical region as well as its distributional pattern in the whole language area by using the concept of linguistic variable.

This study fits in this paradigm because it collects data from speakers of the Embu varieties and statistically quantifies the data. The Kiambu linguistic variable allow quantitative statements to be made, so that speaker A may be said to use more or less of a particular variant than speaker B rather than categorically, to use or not to use it altogether. The consequences of such statements are exciting for this particular study because it means that, we can demarcate our dialects on the typicality of a particular feature but not on the categorical presence or absence of a feature. Therefore, the methods of description developed in the Labovian framework centering on variability fits this study.

1.9 Literature Review

Very few studies have been carried out on Kiambu. One of existing work is a study by Mutahi (1977). He studies the sound change and classification of dialects of Mt. Kenya. In his study, he discusses how Kiambu lost /p/ and acquired the /v/. He also discusses the phonological feature of prenasalization where sound /m/ and /n/ are placed before the voiced stops. In his dialectal study, he gives an analysis of the various dialects both synchronically and diachronically. His classification of dialects is based on sound change and phonological processes. He recognizes that tone is a major distinguishing factor among the other dialects he studied. Nonetheless, his study focuses on Kiambu as a dialect, but this study sets to investigate Kiambu as distinct language and then focuses on its phonological, morphological and lexical variation.

Guthrie (1970) and Heine and Mohling (1980) mention Kiambu in their classification of Bantu languages. These two studies seek to classify Bantu languages and contribute

towards this study since they show how Kiambu related to other Bantu languages. They recognize that all languages of this group make of lexical tone

Nyaga (1993) carried out a syntactic study on Kiambu sentences within the framework of the government and Binding Theory. This study is important because it provides insight on structural properties of Kiambu sentences.

Wachera (2008) carry out a study on tone as a distinctive lexical feature in the lexicon of Gi-gichugu dialect of Gikuyu language. His study contributes towards this study since It shows how tone brings about lexical variation between dialects of a language.

Gitonga (2000) carried out a study on Kiambu. The study demonstrated how communication intentions changes with time and context. His work is in Kiswahili with a few Kiambu examples. This study is not relevant to the study I undertake but provide insight to the researcher on how communication intention changes also provides general background information of the Kiambu.

Chesaina (1997) says that Embu and Mbeere have often been erroneously regarded a splinter group of the Gikuyu ethnic group and their language has been dismissed as a 'primitive' dialect of the Gikuyu language. Her study gives the researcher information on the historical background of Kiambu language.

Another researcher, Mwaniki (1973), gives the reader knowledge about the history and culture of the Embu. His study is useful as it provides information on the background of the language under study.

Njeru (2010) studies topic and focus in Kiambu. She investigates how the information structures are encoded in Kiambu using a pragmatic theory. Her study is not relevant to this study though it provides insight about Kiambu topic and focus to the researcher. Her work provides background information of Kiambu.

Mberia (1993) dealt with Kitharaka segmental morphophonology; it is not of relevance because his work is on phonological processes and sound system. It gives us insight in phonology considering that Kiambu is slightly similar to Kitharaka.

Dressler (1985) equips us with the relevant knowledge on phonological processes that are of paramount when it comes to the stage of establishing phonological processes that exist in Kiambu varieties in the course of the study.

Francis (1983) defines dialectology as the study of dialects which are varieties of language used by groups smaller than the total community of speakers of a language. The book contributes towards this study as significant ideas can be found in his work.

Pike (1948) observes that Bantu languages are tone languages. They have pitch that distinguishes word meaning as well as distinctive pitch levels which contrast grammatical features such as tense and aspect. He noted that when tone is lexical, it distinguishes the meaning of a word. This work gives insight to our study.

Kitavi (1992) carries out a comparative study of the Kitui North and Machakos dialects of Kikamba. Her work, just as the current one is on dialects, however, her work does not employ the version of variability employed in this study as she is more concerned with a descriptive approach in identifying the dialectal differences.

Chambers and Trudgill (1998) this study is based on the premise that languages are not homogenous. The book describes dialect geography and explains the methodology to be used in dialects study. It also tackles social dialectology hence giving us good grounds to understand dialectology.

Bosire (1993) in a comparative study of Rogoro and Maates dialects of Ekegusii used the variability theory to establish and describe the dialects of Ekegusii. He compared the phonological, morphological and lexical features of the two dialects. His work contributes towards this study significantly; the current study adopts the notation of typicality that he has used in his study.

Taglimonte (2012) defines sociolinguistics as language variation and change. She describes language variation and change theory, giving its methodology and principles. The theoretical framework in this study was obtained from this text. This book also gives information on sampling of informants. “The informant should be non-mobile simply to guarantee that their speech is characteristic of the region in which they live. They should be older in order to reflect the speech of a by-gone era. They should be rural presumably because urban communities involve too much mobility. They should be male because in the Western Nations women’s speech tends to be more self-conscious than men’s.”

Labov (1980) is a landmark work in the study of dialectology. It does not only provide a source of methodology innovation, but also an orientation of the study of dialectology in particular linguistic variation. His framework represents a break in methodology from traditional dialectology to social dialectology. His methods of using the concept of

variability have shaped the course of dialectology. His work has contributed significantly towards this study.

There are two main approaches to dialectological studies; traditional dialectology or dialect geography aims at the production of a geographical account of linguistic differences. On the other hand, urban dialectology accounts comprehensively for linguistic phenomena as variability by first identifying the linguistic variables and then establishing whether the variable is a marker that is subject to stylistic variation as well as class, sex or age variation, or is merely an indicator, which is not involved in systematic stylistic variation.

Oduol (1990) in her study of Dholuo dialects gives systematic the difference and similarities in phonology, grammar and vocabulary which constituted regional dialects. In her work, the author has devised a statistical method of delineating dialects on the basis of typically of a feature in an area. Based on the distributional pattern of the feature chosen, this study has designated features as either typical (TL) of an area, known without being marked (KN), foreign (FN), near non existent (NNE), non existent (NE) or absent (ABS). This study has adopted this methodology procedure by employing typicality to demarcate our dialects.

Maundu (1980) studies sound change of Kikamba consonants from a diachronic point of view within the framework of Natural Generative Grammar. This study sets out to show that the dialectal sound variations in Kikamba are the products of historical sound developments. He attempts to establish the common original sound which he calls the proto-sound. He also shows which dialect(s) retained the proto-sound and which dialect(s) underwent sound changes.

Antilla (1972) is also a useful guide to this study. He looks at several issues on linguistic variation and points out that understanding of regional and social variation is necessary for the study of linguistic change. He further discussed the social and linguistic factors that result in language change such as sound change, analogy and borrowing. Behind such changes is the concept of convergence which relates to languages which portray features of similarity in their stages of historical development due to contact. The concept of divergence also underlies all types of diachronic change and helps group together language on the basis of shared features which have been maintained during the process of change from a common ancestor.

Langacker (1973) looks at linguistic diversity and says that it exists because languages are learned and used. Therefore, language learning and use are creative processes involving an “extremely complex system”. He also dwells on the factors behind language change.

1.10 Research Methodology

1.10.1 Site selection and description

The three districts of Embu County namely East, West and North have been selected as the study area since Aembu people live in these regions. The site selection does not recognize geography but mainly linguistic factors and grouping.

Informants from the three regions were sampled. This is in line with the theory in use whereby its sampling includes non-mobile, old, rural, male informants. This particular group has minimal exposure to other varieties hence there is minimal influence of surrounding dialects. The informants should have at least primary school education in the same region.

1.10.2 Data collection

Two methods of data collection were employed in this study; elicitation and naturalistic observation. In elicitation, the researcher prepared questionnaires. The questionnaires were then distributed directly to the target respondents using purposive sampling design. Purposive sampling was adopted for obtaining information from the knowledgeable groups. The informants were selected according to their specific knowledge about the issue under study.

The second technique is naturalistic observation which involves listening to native speakers' converse naturally without being prompted. This method calls for a number of uninterrupted observation session to collect relevant data for study.

1.10.3 Data analysis

The data collected from the various regions within the three linguistic regions where Kiambu is spoken will be analyzed; to determine the linguistic differences in terms of phonological, lexical and morphological. The linguistic differences in the regions were used as dialect features that distinguish the geographical boundaries of the Kiambu dialects.

1.11 Significance of the study

The significance to any linguistic study is to fill a linguistic gap. This study is not an exception. Understanding variations in a language is vital to those who may want to learn the language. A study of dialects variation would be of help to such people especially to those who want to learn and use Kiambu so as to associate and identify with the Aembu.

This study will add knowledge to the existing gap in the language in the field concerning dialectal variations. The study will act as an eye opener and give insights to other scholars who may wish to carry out research in Kiambu dialects. The research will be a future guide in language policies among the Aembu, especially in teaching mother tongue and various translations in Kiambu.

1.12 Summary

In this chapter, we have presented the historical background of the language under study. We have established that Kiambu is a discrete Bantu language that falls under the Eastern Bantu family. The problem of the study and its guiding objectives has been stated.

The Language Variation and Change framework and its tenets which include principle of accountability and quantitative paradigm have been highlighted. The literature review is also done on what is relevant to the study. The methods of data collection and analysis have been shown in this chapter.

CHAPTER TWO

BASIC PHONOLOGY AND MORPHOLOGY OF KIEMBU

2.1 Introduction

This chapter gives an overview of the Kiembu phonemic inventory. The basic understanding of the Kiembu phonemic inventory is of great importance in understanding the dialectal variation. The chapter particularly highlights the Kiembu consonants, vowels, morphology, the syllable and the tone elements that are particular to the Kiembu.

2.2 Kiembu phonology

The phonological system of Kiembu is made up of both segmental and suprasegmental elements. However, in this study segmental are divided into the major classes of consonants and vowels while tone is discussed under suprasegmental elements.

2.2.1 Kiembu consonants

According to Mutahi (1977: 93) Kiembu has 17 consonant. However, he left out two consonant, ⁿð and ⁿv which are significant. Kiembu therefore has eighteen (19) consonant sounds. The phonemic inventory is summarized in table 1 below. The sounds are classified according to state of glottis, manner and place of articulation. In each cell the voiced sound is on the right hand side while their voiceless counterparts are on the left.

	Bilabial	Labio-dental	Dental	Alveolar	Palatal	Velar
Stop				t		k
Fricative		v	ð		ʃ	ɣ
Nasal	m			n	ɲ	ŋ
Prenasal	^m b	ⁿ v	ⁿ ð	ⁿ d	ⁿ ʃ	ⁿ g
Liquid				r		
Glide	w				j	

Table 1: Consonant sounds in Kiembu

In Table 2, each consonant is represented first in IPA notation, and then in the orthography of Kiambu. Paired with each consonant are words from Kiambu beginning with the sound followed by phonemic transcription and then gloss.

IPA symbols	Orthography	Example	Transcription	Gloss
t	t	tata taa	/tata/ /ta:/'	'aunt' 'lamp'
k	k	kama kara	/kama/ /kara/'	'milk' (verb) 'a small finger'
v	v	vuva vava	/vuva/ /vava/'	'behind' 'father'
ð	th	thani metho	/ðani/ /mεðɔ/'	'plate' 'eyes'
ⁿ ð	nth	nthata nthakame	/ ⁿ ðata/ / ⁿ ðakame/'	'barren' 'young man'
ʃ	c	cukari cukuru	/ʃukari/ /ʃukuru/'	'sugar' 'school'
ɣ	g	gara gaka	/ɣara/ /ɣaka/'	'scrub' grandmother
m	m	maua maĩ	/maua/ /mae/'	flowers 'water'
n	n	nie thani	/nie/ /ðani/'	'me' 'plate'
ɲ	ny	nyanya mwanya	/ɲaɲa/ /mwaɲa/'	'tomato' 'gap'
ŋ	ng'	ng'ano ng'ombe	/ŋanɔ/ /ŋɔmbε/'	'wheat' 'cow'
^m b	mb	mboco mbembe	/ ^m bɔcɔ/ / ^m bεmbε/'	'beans' 'maize'
ⁿ v	nv	nvandi nvare	/ ⁿ va ⁿ di/ /nvare/'	'grasshopper' 'squirrel'

ⁿ d	nd	ndegwa ndaa	/ ⁿ dɛɣwa/ / ⁿ da:z/	‘bull’ ‘louse’
ⁿ ɟ	nj	njata njara	/ ⁿ ɟata/ / ⁿ ɟara/	‘star’ ‘hand’
ⁿ g	ng	ngũrũwe ngari	/ ⁿ gorowɛ/ / ⁿ gari/	‘pig’ ‘car’
r	r	ritho rathima	/riðɔ/ /raðima/	‘eye’ ‘bless’
w	w	waru watho	/waru/ /waðɔ/	‘potatoes’ ‘rule’
j	y	yao yaku	/jaɔ/ /jakwa/	theirs ‘mine’

Table 2: The correspondence between Kiambu consonant phonemes and Kiambu orthography

2.2.2 Kiambu vowels

According to Mutahi (1977:118) Kiambu vowel structure is very much like the proto Mt. Kenya vowel structure. The vowel system identified in this study for Kiambu dialects is similar to that identified by Mutahi (1977). Kiambu has a fourteen vowel system; seven short vowels and corresponding long vowels. In words, the description for the seven short vowels is stated as follows.

Example 1: The description for the seven short vowels

/i/ high front unrounded vowel

/e/ mid-high front unrounded vowel

/ɛ/ mid-low front rounded vowel

/a/ low front unrounded vowel

/u/ high back rounded vowel

/o/ mid-high back rounded vowel

/ɔ/ mid -low back rounded vowel

Below is a presentation of the seven short-vowels and their corresponding long vowels.

IPA symbol	Orthography	Example	Transcription	Gloss
i	i	igaa tiga	/iɣa:/ /tiɣa/	‘keep’ ‘don’t’
i:	ii	riika tiira	/ri:ka/ /ti:ra/	‘age-group’ ‘support’
e	ĩ	ĩka ĩra	/eka/ /era/	‘do’ ‘tell’
e:	ĩĩ	mĩĩrĩ ĩĩrĩ	/me:re/ /e:re/	‘bodies’ ‘two’
ɛ	e	metho metha	/mɛðɔ/ /mɛða/	‘eyes’ ‘table’
ɛ:	ee	meere keera	/mɛ:rɛ/ /kɛ:ra/	‘tell them’ ‘strain’ (liquid)
a	a	tara gaka	/tara/ /ɣaka/	‘count’ ‘grandmother’
a:	aa	thaara taara	/ða:ra/ /ta:ra/	‘nappier grass’ ‘advise’
u	u	uma nduka	/uma/ /ʰduka/	‘get out’ ‘shop’
u:	uu	muuma tuura	/mu:ma/ /tu:ra/	‘oath’ ‘aching’
o	ũ	ũkĩ ũka	/oke/ /oka/	‘honey’ ‘come’
o:	ũũ	tũũra ũũru	/to:ra/ /o:ru/	‘live’ ‘bad’
ɔ	o	gĩko ona	/ɣe:kɔ/ /ɔna/	‘dirt’ ‘see’
ɔ:	oo	oothe ndoo	/ɔ:ðɛ/ /ʰdɔ:/	‘all’ ‘bucket’

Table 3: The correspondence between Kiambu vowel phonemes and Kiambu orthography

2.3 Kiambu Morphology

This study focuses on dialectal variation, therefore, the understanding of Kiambu morphological structure is deemed important. Below is the analysis of nouns taking into account their singular and plural prefixation.

2.3.1 Singular and plural prefixation

Welmers (1973:159) argues that Bantu languages have nouns which morphologically consist of a noun affix and a stem. He proposes twenty three classes of proto-Bantu nouns from which different Bantu languages have drawn their synchronic set. He says that the affixes and noun stems constitute a criterion for dividing nouns into different types of noun classes which differ from each other in a variety of grammatical categories.

Mberia (1993:44) suggests a classification based on the effect of syntactic constructions. Nouns that take identical concordial agreement patterns are grouped together since they are perceived to be of the same group. The classes are grouped into singular-plural pairs.

Kiambu, like all other Bantu languages, classify nouns into different classes. Each class is marked by distinctive singular and plural prefix which precedes the nominal stem. The following is a classification of the noun classes that corresponds to prefixes involved in singular and plural formation.

Singular**Plural**

Class	Sing	Pl	Underlying form	Phonetic form	Gloss	Underlying form	Phonetic form	Gloss
½	mo-	a-	/mo+iretu/	[moiretu]	‘girl’	/a+iretu/	[airetu]	‘girls’
			/mo+ndo/	[mondo]	Person	/a+ndo/	[ando]	‘people’
¾	mo-	me-	/mo+te/	[mote]	‘tree’	/me+te/	[mete]	‘trees’
			/mo+rimo/	[mo+rimo]	disease	me+rimo	[merimo]	‘diseases’
5/6	e-	ma-	/e+tuda/	[etude]	‘fruit’	/ma+tuda/	[matuda]	‘fruits’
			/e+ ðaduku/	[eðaduku]	‘box’	/ma+ðaduku/	[maðaduku]	‘boxes’
7/8	ke-	i-	/ke+vati/	[ke+vati]	‘broom’	/i+vati/	[ivati]	‘brooms’
			/ke+viɣɔ/	[keviɣɔ/]	‘gate’	/i+viɣɔ/	[iviɣɔ/]	‘gates’
9/10	N-	N-	/ø+ɣare/	[ɣare]	‘leopard’	/ø+ ɣare/	[ɣare]	‘leopards’
			/ø+ɣati/	[ɣati]	‘shirt’	/ø+ɣati/	[ɣati]	‘shirts’
10/17	ro-	N-	/ro + varu/	[rovaru]	‘rib’	/n + raru/	[mbaru]	‘ribs’
			/ro + tumɔ/	[rotumɔ]	‘stitch’	/n + tumɔ/	[ndumɔ]	‘stitches’
12/13	ka-	to-	/ka+mote /	[kamote]	‘small’	/to+mote/	[tomete]	‘small’
			/ka+ana/	[kaana]	tree’ ‘child’	/tu+ana/	[twana]	trees’ ‘children’
	o-	ma-	/o+ndo/	[ondo]	‘thing’	/ma+ondo/	[maundo]	‘things’
			/o +ta/	[ota]	‘bow’	/ma+ota/	[mota]	‘bows’
15/6	ko-	ma-	/ko + to/	[ɣoto]	‘ear’	/ma + to/	[mato]	‘ears’
			/ko+ɣoro/	[koɣoro]	‘leg’	/ma + ɣoro/	[maɣoro]	‘legs’
16/15	va-	ko-	/va+ndo/	[vando]	‘place’	/ko+ndo/	[kondo]	‘places’

Table 4: Noun classes with singular and plural morphemes

2.3.2 Verbs

Like in other Bantu languages, the verb in Kiambu is derivational. That is, it has a capacity to generate or derive other words by affixing. Kiambu is an agglutinating language which is characterized by adding prefixes and suffixes to the root.

2.3.2.1 Verb negation

Verb negation has two possible morphemes in Kiambu. These are /t-/ and /ⁿd-/ morphemes which are attached to a word depending on the number and person. The realization of morphemes that represent negation in verbal words is illustrated in example 2 below.

Example 2: verbs negation in Kiambu

/tenema/ 'I will not cultivate'

/ⁿdokoðie/ 'You will not go'

/ⁿdanaoka/ 'He/she did not come'

/matinaruɣa/ 'They did not cook'

2.3.2.2 Tense and aspect

In Kiambu, tense and aspect morphemes are affixed to the verb stem. Tense specifies the temporal status of the events at the moment of speaking as a referent point. Tense of a verb therefore shows the time; present, past or future, when the action takes place, took place or will take place.

Tense	morpheme	Example	Gloss
Past	-rε	/ne-a-ði-e-rε/ / ne-ðɔ-mi-rε/	‘He/she went’ ‘I read’
Present	-ne	/ne-ma-o-ka/	‘They have come’
Future	-ka- γa-	/ne-a-ka-ðɔma/ /ne-γa-i-na/	‘she/he will read’ ‘i will sing’
Progressive	-ra-	/ne-a-ra-i-na/ /ne-ma-ra-ðɔ-ma/	‘she/he is singing’ ‘they are reading’
Perfect	-wa-	/ne-wa-i-na/ /ne-wa-ði-e/	‘she/he has sung’ ‘she/he has gone’
Habitual	- γa-	/ne-a-re-ma-γa/ /ne-ðɔ-ma-γa/	‘she/he cultivates’ ‘i usually read’

Table 5: Kiambu tense and aspect morphemes

2.4 Kiambu syllable structure

Syllables are constructed by combining phonemes together in neighbouring environments and forming a pattern that is articulated as one. Several definitions of a syllable have been provided by a number of linguists.

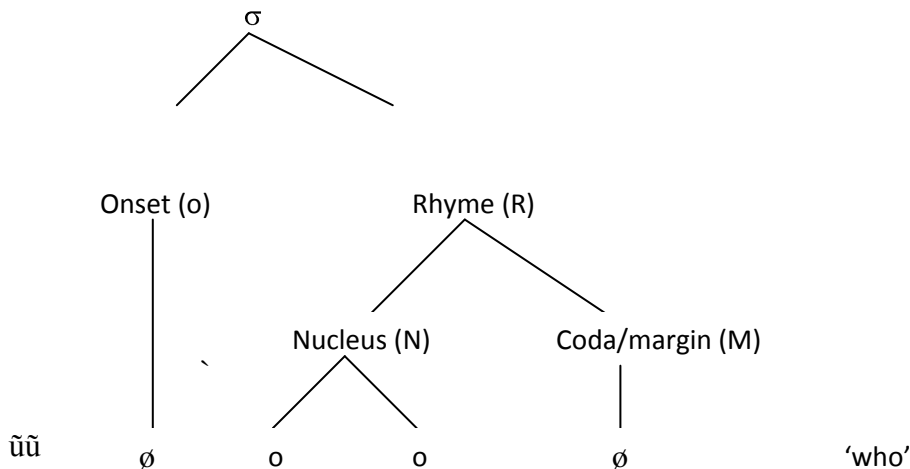
Crystal (1997) defines a syllable as a unit of pronunciation typically larger than a single sound and smaller than a word. He asserts that the understanding of the syllable structure of a language is important in the analysis of its phonology and that it involves combining sounds in individual languages to produce typical sequences. Katamba (1989) says that the syllable is the basic unit in terms of which phonotactic rules are best stated. These are rules that control the language users in terms of the possible sound combinations of that

language. It is the syllable that dictates which sound combine or do not combine in a given language.

Radford et al. (2006) explains that different languages permit different kinds of syllables, and native speakers of languages bring their knowledge of syllables and syllable structure, in their attempt to produce words from other languages. According to Clements and Keyser (1983) the syllable is a three tiered structure that consists of a syllable node, a CV-tier and a segmental tier which consist of bundles of distinctive features representing consonants and vowels.

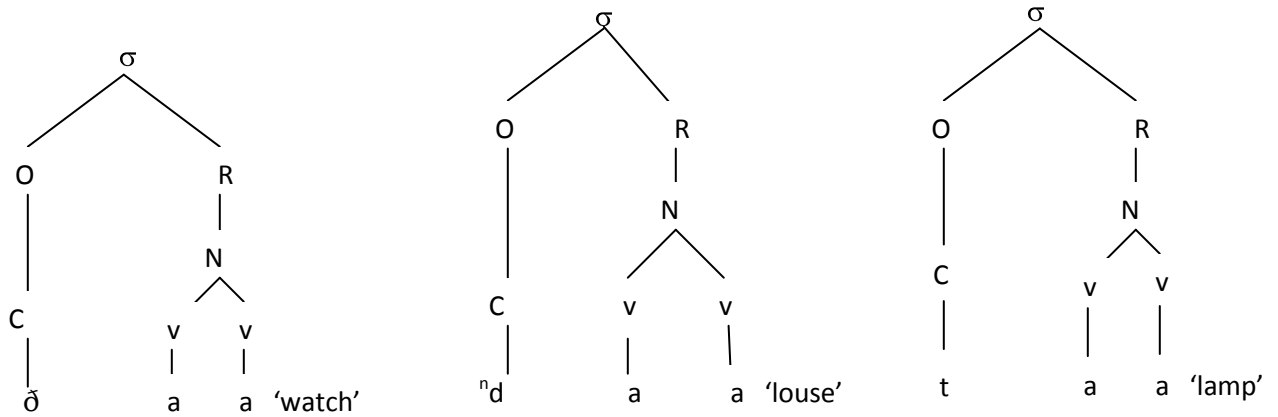
Structurally, the syllable consists of an optional consonantal onset followed by a rhyme. The rhyme consists of the obligatory nucleus followed by an optional consonantal margin or coda. The rhyme is the only obligatory constituent in a syllable as seen in example 3.

Example 3: The obligatory constituent of the Kiambu syllable



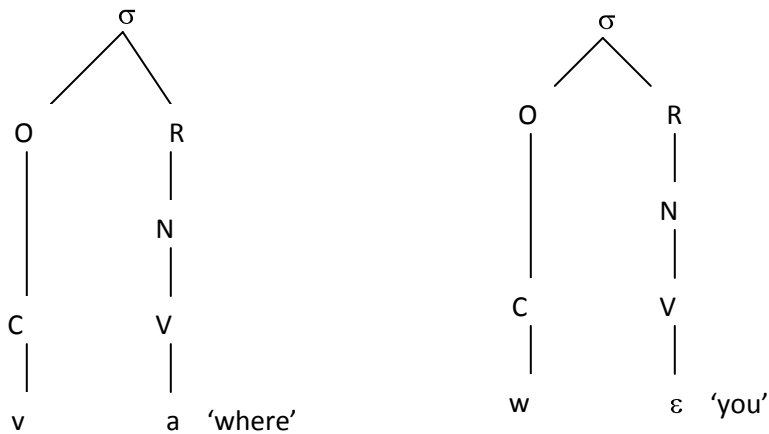
In Kiyebu, the obligatory constituent of the syllable is the nucleus and it is the head of the rhyme as seen above. Kiyebu has open syllables since its syllables end in a vowel as opposed to closed syllables that end in a consonant. Katamba (1989) defines open syllables as ending in a vowel (CV) and closed syllables (CVC) as ending in a consonant.

Example 4: Kiyebu open syllables with long vowels

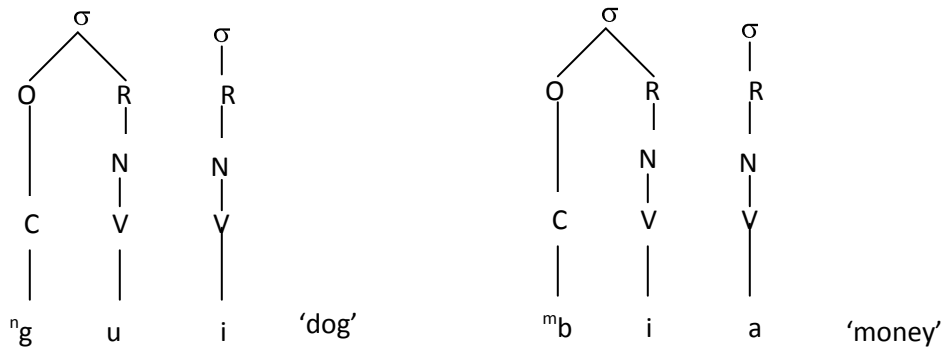


Kiyebu has open syllables with short vowels as seen in example 5 below.

Example 5: Kiyebu open syllables with short vowels



Example 6: Kiambu open syllable with diphthong



Kiambu has the following syllable types.

Example 7: Kiambu syllable types

- i) V-syllables e.g. /ita/ ‘kill’
- ii) V V-syllables e.g. /e:/ ‘yes’
- iii) CV-syllables e.g. /vava/ ‘father’
- iv) CVV-syllables e.g. /ɔ̃a:/ ‘watch’
- v) CV-syllables e.g. /^mbɔ̃ri/ ‘goat’
- vi) CCCV-syllables e.g. /ⁿɣwa/ ‘thunder’

2.5 Tone

Hyman (1975) refers to stress, tone and duration as suprasegmentals of prominence. He states that these features are always present in all utterances and hence any utterance in any language is characterized by differing degrees of loudness, melody and rhythm. The suprasegmental feature found in Kiambu is tone.

Tone plays a very significant role in bringing out a number of contrasts such as in lexical differentiation, in tense and aspect constructs.

Pike (1948) observes that a tone language is a language having lexically significant contrastive but relative pitch on each syllable. He further notes that significant pitch distinguishes the meaning of utterances. When tone is lexical it distinguishes the meaning of words.

Katamba (1989) observes that very many of the world's languages are tone language. He notes that tone is used to make grammatical distinctions. Mutahi (1977), states that Kiambu is a tonal language. He adds that, tone plays an important role in dialect classification. He also notes that a word that begins in a low tone (L) in one dialect may begin with a high tone (H) in another dialect and may have a sequence of two high tones in a third dialect.

In Kiambu tone brings out lexical differentiation as well as word class distinction as illustrated below:

Lexical differentiation

Example 8: lexical differentiation by use of tone

mbia	/ ^m bí↓á/	‘money’
	/ ^m bìà/	‘rat’
ngiri	/ ⁿ gírí/	‘a thousand’
	/ ⁿ gìrì/	‘fence’

Word class distinction

Example 9: word class distinction in Kiambu

aka	/àká/	‘women’	(noun)
	/ákà/	‘build’	(verb)
kana	/ká↓nà/	‘child’	(noun)
	/káná/	‘deny’	(verb)

The contour tone requires the syllable to be said with pitch movement that is high to low or low to high also described as either falling or rising tones, respectively.

.According to Katamba (1989) tone notation used by Africanist are:

- a) Acute accent (high tone) ´
- b) Grave accent (low tone) `
- c) Level accent (mid tone) -
- d) In combination (falling tone) ^
- e) In combination (rising tone) ˇ

Kiambu has high (H) and low (L) tone. The tones are represented in lexical items across Kiambu lexicon on syllabic basis.

The following are examples of High (H) tone

Example10: Word with a high tone in Kiambu

a) mbu Segmental tier ´scream´
 |
 H tonal tier

b) nva Segmental tier ´give me´
 |
 H tonal tier

The following are examples of Low (L) tone

Example 11: Words with a low tone in Kiambu

a) ⁿgo segmental tier ´shield´
 |
 L tonal tier

b) ⁿgi segmental tier ´housefly´
 |
 L tonal tier

2.6 Summary

In this chapter, we have given an overview of Kiambu phonemic inventory. Kiambu has a fourteen phoneme vowel system; seven short and seven long vowels. All the vowels are realized in word initial, medial and final positions. There are nineteen consonant sounds as evident on the Kiambu consonant phonemic chart. All the consonants are realized in word initial and medial positions.

We have also looked into Kiambu syllable structure. Kiambu has an open syllable structure as opposed to closed syllables. We have also looked at tone, the only suprasegmental feature in Kiambu. It has been noted that tone has a significant role in distinguishing the meaning of words.

CHAPTER THREE
PHONOLOGICAL AND MORPHOLOGICAL DIALECT FEATURES AND
VARIATIONS

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter, we present the phonological and morphological features that were observed to distinguish the Kiambu dialects. The variables isolated are not mutually exclusive and this means that the reader understands our dialect boundaries on typicality of features. The aim of this chapter is to indicate the geographical dialect areas on the basis of typical differences which can be easily recognized.

The features are tag as typical (TP), feature that are known and used but are not typical (UD), features which are known in the area but not used (KN) and (UN) to represent unknown or absent features in a region.

3.2 Phonological dialect features

Phonological features are defined as general phonological properties which are not restricted to small sets of words (Oduol 1990:48). We describe here those phonological features which defines the Kiambu dialects. The aim of this section is to demonstrate the dialect areas that can be identified on the basis of phonological features as demonstrated by the data below.

3.2.1 The (a) variable

(a): [a] / [i] in tonya / tonyi ‘enter’

(a) variable defines two dialect area; where (a) is pronounced [a], another where (a) is pronounced [i]. DL 1, where (a) is pronounced [a] , is spoken in Nembure, Manyatta,

Kianjokoma, Mbuvoĩ, Kangarũ, Muthirũ and Werũ regions. DL2, where (a) is pronounced [i], is spoken in Karurumo, Gikũũrĩ, Rũnyenje, Kyeni and Kathagerĩ regions. The following is an illustration of the (a) variable in Table 6.

Table 6 (a): [a] / [i]

<u>Gloss</u>	<u>Variants</u>	Transcription	<u>Status</u>	
			DL ₁	DL ₂
‘enter’	tonya	/tɔŋa/	TP	KN
	tonyi	/tɔŋi/	KN	TP
‘Stand’	rũngama	/ro ⁿ gama/	TP	KN
	rũngami	ro ⁿ gami/	KN	TP
‘praise’	goca	/ɣɔʃa/	TP	KN
	goci	/ɣɔʃi/	KN	TP
‘stop that’	tiga	/tiɣa/	TP	KN
	tigi	/tiɣi/	KN	TP
‘spread’	tandĩka	/ta ⁿ deka/	TP	KN
	tandĩki	/ta ⁿ deki/	KN	TP
‘buy’	gũra	/ɣora/	TP	KN
	gũri	/ɣori/	KN	TP
‘blow’	vuva	/vuva/	TP	KN
	vuvi	/vuvi/	KN	TP
‘wait’	eterera	/ɛtɛrɛra/	TP	KN
	etereri	/ɛtɛrɛri/	KN	TP

3.2.2 Vowel deletion variable

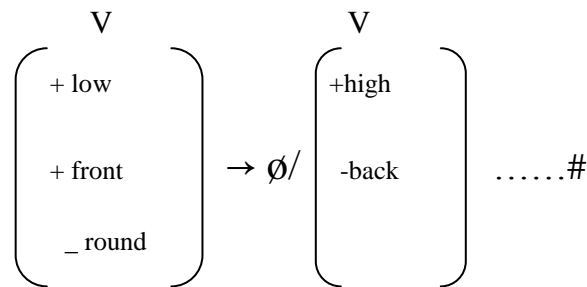
The deletion mostly occurs in word final position; where /a/ is typically pronounced [a] in a final position and where /a/ is pronounced [∅] in the same position. This variable defines two dialect areas. DL1, where /a/ is pronounced [a] in a word final position, is spoken in Embu North and West region. DL2, where /a/ is deleted in word final position, is spoken in Embu East. Table 7 below represents the vowel deletion variable.

Table 7: [a] vs [a]

<u>Gloss</u>	<u>Variant</u>	<u>Transcription</u>	<u>Status</u>	
			DL1	DL2
‘bring closer to me’	neng’ereria	/neŋeɾeɾia/	TP	KN
	neng’ereri	/neŋeɾeɾi/	KN	TP
‘sufuria’	thavuria	/ðavuria/	TP	KN
	thavuri	/ðavuri/	KN	TP
‘search’	caria	/ʃaria/	TP	KN
	cari	/ʃari/	KN	TP
‘win’	toria	/tɔɾia/	TP	KN
	tori	/tɔɾi/	KN	TP
‘save’	vonokia	/vɔnɔkia/	TP	KN
	vonoki	/vɔnɔki/	KN	TP
‘touch’	vutia	/vutia/	TP	KN
	vuti	/vuti/	KN	TP
‘to lit fire/lamp’	gwatia	/gwatia/	TP	KN
	gwati	/gwati/	KN	TP
‘pray for us’	voithia	/vɔiðia/	TP	KN
	voithi	/vɔiði/	KN	TP
‘investigate’	tuñria	/tueɾia/	TP	KN
	tuñri	/tueɾi/	KN	TP
‘ask’	ŭria	/oria/	TP	KN
	ŭri	/ori/	KN	TP
‘look’	roria	/rɔɾia/	TP	KN
	rori	/rɔɾi/	KN	TP

The [a] variable is realized in Kimbeti and Kiruguru and in kivetu it is realized as [∅], i.e. it is deleted. This deletion occurs as it is phonologically less distinctive of the word and is therefore relatively weak. This deletion is more productive in Kivetu where it has consequently become a dialect marker. Note for instance the case of toria (win) [a] which is a low vowel in word final position in Kimbeti and Kiruguru dialect but which is always realized as tori in kivetu. This rule which effects the deletion of [a] in word-final position in kivetu can be formalized as shown below.

Example 12: deletion of [a] in word final-position



The rule shows that a low back unrounded vowel is deleted before /i/ in the word final position.

3.2.3 Vowel length variable

In Kiambu vowel length is distinctive. It brings about difference in meaning as exemplified in the following words.

kūra	/kora/	‘grow’
kūūra	/ko:ra/	‘uproot’
kora	/kɔra/	‘find’
koora	/kɔ:ra/	‘a small frog’
thura	/ðura/	‘spit’
thuura	/ðu:ra/	‘select’
kīra	/kera/	‘cross’
kīūra	/ke:ra/	‘dawn on’
ta	/ta/	‘throw’
taa	/ta:/	‘lamp’

However, vowels which occur as a result of lengthening should not be confused with the phonemically long vowels because the two are different. Phonemically, long vowels have much more freedom of distribution than short ones. This is because they occur in many environments. However, derived long vowels occur in limited environments. In Kiambu vowels occurring before prenasalized segments are underlying long vowels

This variation of vowel lengthening defines three dialect areas: one where the vowel lengthening rule always applies, another where it hardly applies and a third where it applies optionally. DL1, where the vowel lengthening rule hardly applies, is spoken in Nembure, Mūtūndūrī, Kangarū and Werū regions. DL2, where the vowel lengthening rule optionally applies, is spoken in Embu North and entire Mūthirū area. DL3 where the vowel lengthening rule always applies is spoken in Gikūūrī, Runyenje, Kyeni and Kathagerī. The Table 8 below illustrates the vowel lengthening variable.

Table 8: vowel lengthening variable

<u>Gloss</u>	<u>Variants</u>	<u>Transcription</u>	<u>Status</u>		
			DL1	DL2	DL3
‘bed’	gītanda	/ʏèta ⁿ da/	TP	TP	KN
	gīta:nda	/ʏeta: ⁿ da/	KN	KN	TP
‘cow’	ng’ombe	/ŋɔ ^m bɛ/	TP	KN	KN
	ng’o:mbe	/ŋɔ: ^m bɛ/	KN	TP	TP
‘cup’	gīkombe	/ʏekɔ ^m bɛ/	TP	TP	KN
	gīko:mbe	/ʏekɔ: ^m bɛ/	KN	KN	TP
‘door’	mūrango	/mora ⁿ gɔ/	TP	TP	KN
	mūra:ngo	/mora: ⁿ gɔ/	KN	UD	TP

‘rope’	mũkanda	/moka ⁿ da/	TP	TP	KN
	mũka:nda	/moka: ⁿ da/	KN	KN	TP
‘pumpkin’	ĩrengε	/erε ⁿ gε/	TP	KN	KN
	ĩre:ngε	/erε: ⁿ gε/	KN	TP	TP
‘nine’	kenda	/kε ⁿ da/	TP	TP	KN
	ke:nda	/kε: ⁿ da/	KN	UD	TP
‘knock’	vingĩra	/vi ⁿ gera/	TP	TP	KN
	vi:ngĩra	/vi: ⁿ gera/	KN	KN	TP
‘corpses’	cimba	/ʃi ^m ba/	TP	UD	KN
	ci:mba	/ʃi: ^m ba/	KN	TP	TP
‘repair’(wall)	thinga	/ði ⁿ ga/	TP	TP	KN
	thi:nga	/ði: ⁿ ga/	KN	KN	TP

One of the distinctive characteristics of the Kiveti dialect is vowel length. Vowel length constitutes a variable which defines the dialects of Kiambu. The vowel of Kiveti lengthens much more productively than that of Kimbeti. For instance the case of (mũrango/mũra:ngo distinction). The circumstance which makes the scope of the vowel lengthening process irregular in Kiambu can be explained by the tendency of some speakers of Kiveti dialect to accommodate to the Kimbeti dialect. When such accommodation process takes place, one gets the impression that Kiambu vowels are lengthened in both dialects.

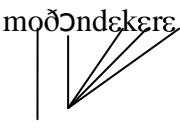
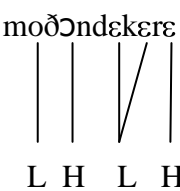
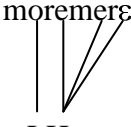
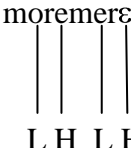
3.2.4 The tone patterns variable

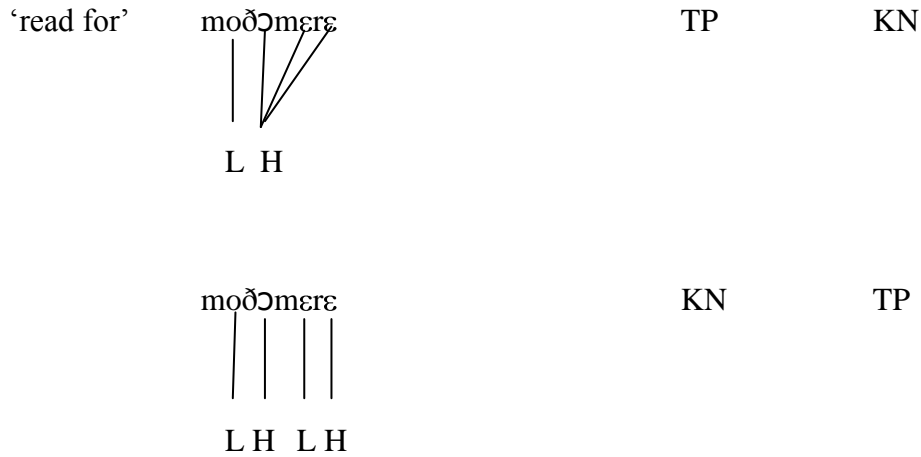
Tone is defined by Crystal (1997:389) as a term used in phonology to refer to the distinctive pitch level of a syllable. Tone concerns the pitch patterns of word. A change in tone patterns bring about dialect differences if one tone is exchanged for another on syllables while keeping the segmental composition unchanged. The situation results in sets of words distinguishing dialects only by tone.

Tone plays a very significant role in bring out a number of contrasts in Kiambu. Tone creates a situation where words which are semantically related have different tone patterns depending on the dialect, therefore, the words are pronounced differently.

Tone pattern variable defines two dialect areas; one where LH tone patterns applies is spoken in Embu North and West region, another where LHLH tone patterns applies in spoken in Embu East. The Table 9 below demonstrates the tone pattern variable.

Table 9: Tone patterns variable

<u>Gloss</u>	<u>Variants</u>	<u>Status</u>	
		DL1	DL2
'make for him/her'	 <p>LH</p>	TP	KN
	 <p>L H L H</p>	KN	TP
'cultivate for her/him'	 <p>LH</p>	TP	KN
	 <p>L H L H</p>	KN	TP



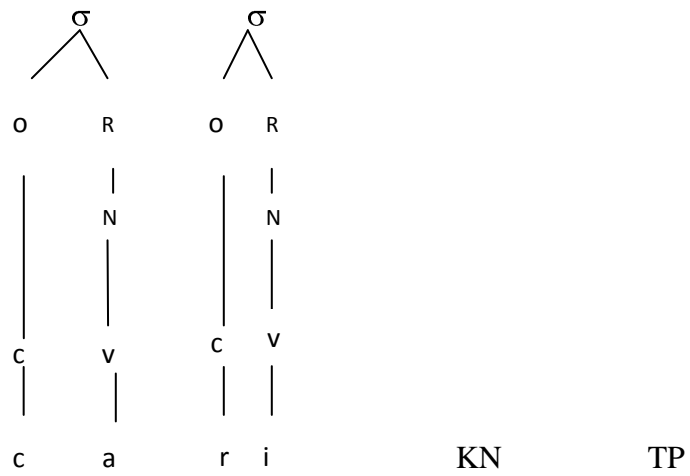
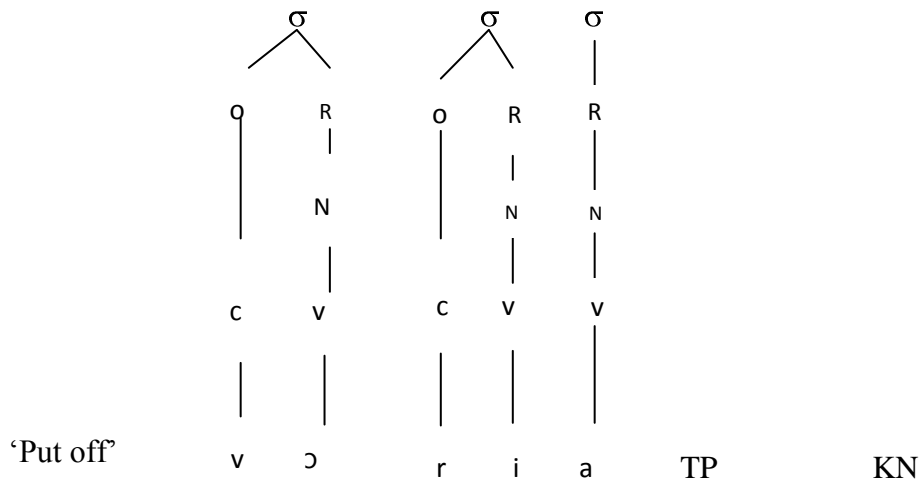
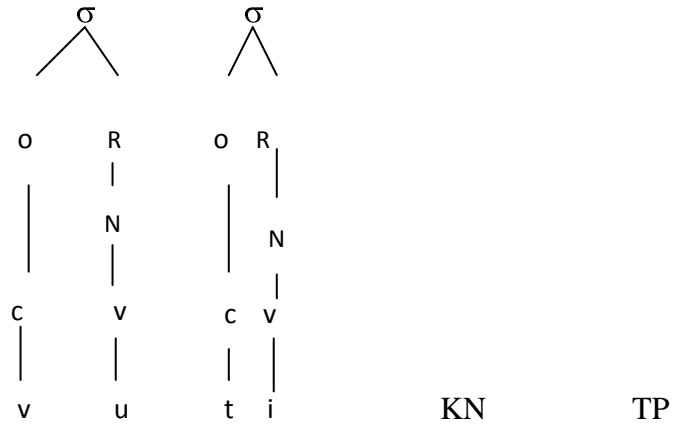
3.2.5 The CVV versus CV variables in the last syllable (of a word)

Katamba (1989:153) notes that the syllable is at the heart of phonological representations. It is the unit in terms of which phonological systems are organized. It is this organization of the syllable that differentiates one language from another or a dialect from another.

The CV₁V₁ versus CV variable in the last syllable of a word defines two dialect areas; one where CV₁V₁ is used in a word final position, another where CV is used in a final position. DL1 where CV₁V₁ is used in a word final position is spoken in Embu North and West. DL2 where CV is used in a word final position is spoken in Gikũũrĩ, Runyenje, Kyeni and Kathagerĩ.

Table 10 – CV₁V₁ Vs CV variable in the last syllable

Gloss	Variants			Status	
				DL1	DL2
'Search'				TP	KN
	c	a	r i		
				KN	TP
	c	a	r i		
'touch'				TP	KN
	v	u	t i		



Simplification which makes vowel reduction processes more productive in the dialect is responsible for the realization of [a] as [∅] in Kiveti. We can argue that it is lost because it is phonologically less distinctive.

3.3 Morphological Dialect features

In this section, we describe the morphological differences in Kiambu dialects. We also examine the distributional patterns of these variables. In particular, we examine emphatic demonstratives variables and tense and aspect variable that distinguish Kiambu dialects.

3.3.1 Emphatic demonstratives variables

Kiambu has a class of demonstratives used to indicate emphasis. In structure, they are similar with the ordinary Kiambu demonstratives but with an added emphatic morpheme or word as seen in Table 11 below.

Table 11: Kiambu emphatic demonstrative

Gloss	Emphatic morpheme or word	Demonstrative =	Empathic demonstrative
a) 'this' (thing)	e-	/enɔ/	/eɛnɔ/
b) 'these' (things)	i-	/inɔ/	/iɛnɔ/
c) 'those' (people)	a-	/aria/	/aaria/
d) 'this one here' (person)	ava	/ojo/	/ojo ava/
e) 'that one there' (person)	varia	/ũria/	/ũria varia/

This construction is used whenever somebody wants to emphasize on a particular person, object, thing or idea in discourse. This kind of construction in a, b & c typically occurs in Kiveti, while d & e are typical in Kimbeti dialect. However, Kiruguru uses both. In Kiveti dialect, the typical usage is where this emphasis morpheme is incorporated in the demonstrative although, in structure, it seems like vowel lengthening. Kimbeti uses a word

to emphasize, together with the demonstrative lexical item, while the Kiruguru speakers use either of the two in their discourse.

DL1 (Kiveti)

/ eənɔ̃ ˈgari/

‘this car here’

DL2 (Kiruguru)

/ eənɔ̃ ˈgari/

/ˈgari eənɔ̃ ava/

‘this car here’

DL3 (Kimbeti)

/ˈgari eənɔ̃ ava/

‘this car here’

Example 17: emphatic demonstratives in Kiambu dialects

3.3.2 Tense and aspect variable

Tense and aspect are marked by inflecting the verb. In DL1, which is spoken in Embu West and North regions, the speakers mark future tense by {-ya-} morpheme, while in DL2, the future tense is marked by {-ka-} morpheme which is spoken in Embu East regions.

DL1

ne - **ya** - ði - e ‘ I shall go’

1st person future root
Singular tense
Marker morpheme

DL2

ne - **ka** - ði - e ‘ I shall go.’

1st person future root
Singular tense
Marker morpheme

Example 18: future tense markers in Kiambu dialects

As a result of these different realizations of the future tense, DL2 is further distanced from DL1. In terms of the distribution patterns of the future tense marking, it was noted that once again, the trend tends to move towards typicality i.e. statistical predominance. Since the two dialects form a continuum, consequently, we described this dialectal feature based on typicality and not mutual exclusivity.

3.4 Summary

We have described the phonological and morphological features which tend to distinguish the dialects of Kiambu. Their differences demonstrate the geographical areas distinctions that distinguish the Kimbeti, Kiruguru and Kiveti dialects. We have defined the dialect areas on the basis of whether features are distinct in a given area, i.e. typical (TP) whether used (UD) but not typical, those that are known (KN) but not used and those that are unknown (UN).

In this chapter, we have examined phonological variables that distinguish Kiambu dialects, these variables include: vowel deletion variable, vowel lengthening variable, tone patterns variable and the CVV versus CV variables in the final position of a word. In morphology, we examine emphatic demonstratives variables and tense and aspect variable that distinguish Kiambu dialects.

CHAPTER FOUR

LEXICAL DIALECT FEATURES AND VARIATION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter identifies the Kiambu dialects on the basis of lexical features. The aim of this chapter is to indicate the geographical dialect areas on the basis of typical differences which can be easily recognized and are clear and systematic. The existence of Kiambu dialects is demonstrated by the typicality of occurrence of the lexical features. A large number of features occur with greater frequency than their contrasting counterparts in specific areas; it is such features that we consider typical of a given region.

We observe the typical differences which create geographical dialect boundaries. We have defined the dialect areas on basis of whether features are distinct in a given area, typical (TP), (UD) for features that are known and used but not typical. For those features which are known in an area but are not used, we use (KN) and those features that are unknown in the dialect area we use (UN).

The lexical features have been grouped into three groups using Oduol's (1990:68) method of classification. The three classes include:

- (i) Lexical items similar in all respects except aspects of pronunciation.
- (ii) Lexical entries similar in all respects except meaning whether partially or completely.
- (iii) Cases in which the same concept is represented by radically different physical forms.

4.2 Lexical items similar in all respects except aspect of pronunciation

There are lexical items in the dialects of a language that are genetically related to each other, which are similar in all respects except aspect of pronunciation. Kiambu is no exception to this phenomenon, i.e. its dialects share lexical items which are similar but different in their pronunciation as exemplified in the data below.

4.2.1 The (nv) variable

(n): [nv] / [mb] in nva/mba ‘give me’

(nv) variable defines the two dialects areas; where (nv) is pronounced [nv] and another where (nv) is pronounced [mb]. DL1, where (nv) is pronounced [nv], is spoken in Nembure, Mütündūrĩ, kīanjokoma, Mbuvořĩ, Kangarũ, Mũthirũ and Werũ regions. DL2 where (nv) is pronounced [mb] is spoken in Ena, Gikũũrĩ, Rũnyenje, Kyeni and Kathangerĩ areas. Table 12 below is a data presentation of the (nv) variable.

Table 12: /nv/ - [nv]/ [mb]

<u>Gloss</u>	<u>Variants</u>	<u>Status</u>	
		DL1	DL2
‘give me’	nva	TP	KN
	mba	KN	TP
‘palm’	nvĩ	TP	KN
	mbĩ	KN	TP
‘sweep’	nvata	TP	KN
	mbata	KN	TP
‘donkey’	nvuunda	TP	KN
	mbuunda	KN	TP
‘hunger’	’nvota	TP	KN
	mbota	KN	TP

4.2.2 The (ny) variable

(ny) :[ny] / [n] in kanywa / kanwa ‘mouth’

(ny) variable defines two dialect areas; one where (ny) is pronounced [ny], another where (ny) is pronounced [n]. DL1, where (ny) is pronounced [ny], is spoken in Embu North and West sub-counties. DL2, where (ny) is pronounced [n], is spoken in Embu East. The following Table 13 is a data presentation of (ny) variable.

Table 13: (ny): [ny] / [n]

<u>Gloss</u>	<u>Variants</u>	<u>Status</u>	
		DL1	DL2
‘mouth’	kanywa	TP	UD
	kanwa	UD	TP
‘drink’	nywa	TP	UD
	nwa	UD	TP

4.2.3 The (w) variable

(w): [w]/ [g] in kauwa /kauga ‘coffee’

(w) variable defines the two dialect areas; where (w) is pronounced [w] and another (w) is pronounced [g]. DL1, where (w) is pronounced [w], is spoken in Nembure, Gatündürĩ, Manyatta, Kianjokoma, Mbuvoĩ, Kangarũ, Werũ and Mũthĩrũ area. DL2, where (w) is pronounced [g], is spoken in Rũnyenje, Kyeni and Kathagerĩ areas. The table 14 below is a data presentation of the (w) variable.

Table 14: [w] / [g]

<u>Gloss</u>	<u>Variants</u>	<u>Status</u>	
		DL1	DL2
'coffee'	kauwa	TP	KN
	kauga	UN	TP

4.2.4 The (g) variable

(g): [g] / [ϕ] in magembe /maembe 'mangoes'

(g) variable distinguishes two dialect areas; one where (g) is pronounced [g] and another where (g) is pronounced [ϕ]. DL1, where (g) is pronounced [ϕ], is spoken in Kivue, Mūtūdūrī, Kianjokoma, Kangarū, Werū and Mūthirū areas. DL2, where (g) is pronounced [g], is spoken in Karurumo, Gikūūrī, Runyenje, Kyeni, and Kathagerī areas.

The Table 18 below is a data presentation of the (g) variable.

Table 15:(g): [g] / [ϕ]

<u>Gloss</u>	<u>Variants</u>	<u>Status</u>	
		DL1	DL2
'mangoes'	magembe	KN	TP
	maembe	TP	KN
'a mango tree'	mūgembe	KN	TP
	mūembe	TP	KN

4.3 Lexical entries similar in all respects except meaning whether partially or completely

According to Antilla (1972) meaning is the aspect in language that is least resistant to change. There are lexical items in the dialects of a language that are genetically related to each other, which are similar in all respects except in meaning whether completely or partially. Kiambu has lexical items similar in all respects except in meaning as seen in the data below.

4.3.1 The ‘kauwa’ variable

‘kauwa’ defines two dialect areas; one where it means ‘coffee plants/berries or small flower’ and another ‘a small flower’. DL1, where it means ‘coffee plants/berries or a small flower’, is used in Embu West and North sub-counties areas. DL2, where it means ‘a small flower’, is used in Embu East sub-county areas. Table 16 below is the data presentation of the ‘kauwa’ variable.

Table 16: kauwa -‘coffee plants/berries or a small flower’ / ‘a small flower’

<u>Item</u>	<u>Variants</u>	<u>Status</u>	
		DL1	DL2
kauwa	‘coffee plants/berries or small flower’	TP	KN
	‘a small flower’	KN	TP

4.3.2 The ‘thuruarĩ’ variable

‘Thuruarĩ’ defines two dialect areas; one where it means ‘underwear’ and another where it means ‘underwear /short’. DL1, where it mean ‘under wear/short’, is used in Mũthirũ, Werũ, Nembure, Gatũndũrĩ and Kangarũ areas. DL2, where thuruarĩ means is underwear, spoken in Embu East. The Table 17 below is a data presentation of the ‘thuruarĩ’ variable.

Table 17: thuruarĩ– ‘underwear or short’/ ‘underwear’

<u>Item</u>	<u>Variants</u>	<u>Status</u>	
		DL1	DL2
thuruarĩ	‘under wear or short’	TP	KN
	‘underwear’	UD	TP

4.3.3 The ‘rũgwacĩ’ variable

This lexical item defines two dialect regions; one where it means ‘a big sweet potato’ and another where it typically means ‘cassava’. DL1, where rũgwacĩ means ‘a big sweet potato’, is spoken in Runyenje, Karurumo, Mũtũndũrĩ, Manyatta, Mũthirũ and Werũ regions. DL2, where Rũgwacĩ’ means ‘cassava’, is spoken in Kyeni and Kathagerĩ regions. Table 18 below is a presentation of ‘rũgwacĩ’ variable.

Table 18: rũgwacĩ – ‘a big sweet potato’/ ‘cassava’

<u>Item</u>	<u>Variants</u>	<u>Status</u>	
		DL1	DL2
rũgwacĩ	‘a big sweet potato’	TP	UN
	‘cassava’	UN	TP

4.3.4 The ‘nvĩ’ variable

‘Nvĩ’ defines two dialect area one where it means ‘clap/slap/palm’ and another where it means ‘slap’. DL1, where nvĩ means ‘slap or clap’, is spoken in Nembure, Mûtũndũrĩ, Manyatta, Kangarũ, Mũthirũ and Werũ areas. DL2, where nvĩ means ‘slap’, is spoken in Gikũũrĩ, Runyenje, Kyeni and Kathangerĩ areas. Table 19 below is an illustration of ‘nvĩ’ variable.

Table 19: nvi -‘slap or clap’/‘slap’/ ‘palm’

<u>Item</u>	<u>Variants</u>	<u>Status</u>	
		DL1	DL2
nvĩ	‘slap or clap/palm’	TP	KN
	‘slap’	UD	TP

4.3.5 The ‘kanwa’ variable

The lexical item defines two dialect areas; one where it means ‘warned’ and another it typically means ‘a small-bodied or young person drank something’. DL1, where it means ‘warned’, is used in Embu West and North sub-counties region. DL2, where it means ‘a small bodied or young person drank something’, is used in the Embu East region including Kathagerĩ, Kyeni and some parts of Runyenje areas. Table 20 illustrates the variants of ‘kanwa’ variable.

Table 20: Kanwa – ‘warned’/ ‘small-bodied or young person drank something’

<u>Item</u>	<u>Variants</u>	<u>Status</u>	
		DL1	DL2
kanwa	‘warned’	TP	KN
	‘a small bodied or young person drank something’	TP	KN

4.3.6 The ‘cenji’ variable

‘Cenji’ defines two dialect areas one where it means ‘a fool’ and another where it means ‘to change’. DL1, where cenji means ‘a fool’, is spoken in Nembure, Mūtūdūrī, Manyatta, Kangarū, Mūthirū and Werū areas. DL2, where cenji means ‘to change’, is spoken in Gikūūrī, Runyenje, Kyeni and Kathagerī areas. Table 21 below illustrates the variants of ‘cenji’ variable.

Table 21: cenji – ‘a fool’ / ‘to change’

<u>Item</u>	<u>Variants</u>	<u>Status</u>	
		DL1	DL2
cenji	‘a fool’	TP	KN
	‘to change’	KN	TP

4.3.7 The ‘ndumu’ variable

‘Ndumu’ defines two dialect areas; one where it means ‘a variety of beans’ and another where it typically means ‘beans generally’. DL1, where it means ‘a variety of beans’, is used in Embu West. DL2, where it means ‘beans generally’, is used in the Embu North and East regions including Kathagerī, Kyeni and Mūthirū, Runyenje areas. Table 22 below illustrates ‘ndumu’ variable.

Table 22: ndumu – ‘a variety of beans’/ ‘beans in general’

<u>Item</u>	<u>Variants</u>	<u>Status</u>	
		DL1	DL2
ndumu	‘a variety of beans’	TP	KN
	‘beans generally’	KN	TP

4.4 Cases in which the same concept is represented by radically different forms

There are cases in the three dialects under study, where the same concept is represented by radically different physical forms as is shown in the data below. Although the same concept is represented in the dialects by different lexical items, it is important to note that all lexical items below are basically Kiambu words as they correspond to the phonology and morphology structure of the language. The following are Kiambu lexical which have the same concept but different physical forms.

4.4.1 The ‘no’ variable

The ‘no’ variable is represented by /ici or aca/ narĩ/ ĩka as radically different forms.

This feature defines three dialect areas. DL1, where ‘no’ is typically represented by ici/aca, is spoken in Embu West areas. DL2, where ‘no’ is typically represented by narĩ, is spoken in Embu North region. DL3, where ‘no’ is typically represented by ĩka, is spoken in Embu East region. Table 23 below illustrate the ‘no’ variable.

Table 23: ‘no’-ici or aca or narĩ/ĩka

<u>Gross</u>	<u>Variants</u>	<u>Status</u>		
		DL1	DL2	DL3
‘no’	ici/aca	TP	UD	KN
	narĩ	UD	TP	KN
	ĩka	KN	KN	KN

4.4.2 The ‘climb’ variable

The ‘climb’ variable is represented by/Kũambata /kũnukia/kũthang’ata as radically different forms. This feature defines three dialect areas. DL1, where ‘climb’ is represented by kũambata, is spoken in mūtũndũrĩ, Kivue, Kangarũ and Werũ areas. DL2, where

‘climb’ is typically represented by *kūnukia* is spoken in the northern region which include Manyatta, Ng’andorī, Ngīnda and the entire Mūthirū areas. DL3, where ‘climb’ is typically represented by *kūthang’ata*, is spoken in the Eastern region including Rūnyenje, Kyeni and Kathagerī. Table 24 below represents the ‘climb’ variable.

Table 24: ‘climb’ – *kūambata/kūnukia/kūthang’ata*

<u>Gross</u>	<u>Variants</u>	<u>Status</u>		
		DL1	DL2	DL3
‘climb’	<i>kūambata</i>	TP	KN	KN
	<i>kūnukia</i>	KN	TP	KN
	<i>kūthang’ata</i>	KN	KN	TP

4.4.3 The ‘run’ variable

The ‘run’ is represented by /*teng’era* /*vinyūra*/*ng’ari*/ as different forms.

Run defines three dialect regions. DL1, where ‘run’ is typically represented by *teng’era*, is spoken in the western region of Embu. DL2, where ‘run’ is typically represented by *vinyūra*, is spoken in the entire Mūthirū area and Embu North area. DL3, where ‘run’ is typically represented by *ng’ari*, is spoken in Embu East. Table 25 below represents the ‘run’ variable.

Table 25: ‘run’ – *teng’era* / *vinyūra* / *ng’ari*

<u>Gross</u>	<u>Variants</u>	<u>Status</u>		
		DL1	DL2	DL3
‘run’	<i>teng’era</i>	TP	UD	KN
	<i>vinyūra</i>	UD	TP	KN
	<i>ng’ari</i>	KN	KN	TP

4.4.4 The ‘enter’ variable

The ‘enter’ variable is represented by /ĩngĩra or tonya / gukuma / tonyi/ as different forms. ‘Enter’ defines three dialect regions. DL1, where ‘enter’ is typically represented by ĩngira/tonya, is spoken in Embu West. DL2, where ‘enter’ is typically represented by gukuma, is spoken in Mũthirũ area and Embu North. DL3, where ‘enter’ is represented by tonyi, is spoken in Gikũũrĩ, Runyenje, Kyeni and Kathagerĩ. Table 26 below represents the ‘enter’ variable.

Table 26: ‘enter’- ĩngĩra or tonya / gukuma/tonyi

<u>Gross</u>	<u>Variants</u>	<u>Status</u>		
		DL1	DL2	DL3
‘enter’	ĩngĩra/ tonya	TP	KN	KN
	gukuma	KN	TP	KN
	tonyi	KN	KN	TP

4.4.5 The ‘beans’ variable

The ‘beans’ variable is represented by /mboco/ ndumu/ mboco or ndumu as radically different forms. ‘Beans’ defines three dialect areas. DL1, where ‘beans’ is typically represented by mboco, is spoken in Embu West. DL2, where ‘beans’ is typically represented by ndumu, is spoken in Muthiru area and Embu North. DL3, where ‘beans’ is typically represented by either mboco/ndumu, is spoken in Embu East. Table 27 below is a representation of the ‘beans’ variable.

Table 27: ‘beans’ mboco/ndumu/mboco or ndumu

<u>Gross</u>	<u>Variants</u>	<u>Status</u>		
		DL1	DL2	DL3
‘beans’	mboco	TP	KN	KN
	ndumu	KN	TP	KN
	mboco/ndumu	KN	KN	TP

4.4.6 The ‘down the valley’ variable

The ‘down the valley’ variable is represented by ngurumo/itherero as radically different forms. ‘Down the valley’ defines two dialect areas. DL1, where ‘down the valley’ is typically represented by ngurumo, is spoken in Embu North and West. DL2, where ‘down the valley’ is represented by itherero, is spoken in Embu East. Table 28 is a presentation of ‘down the valley’ variable.

Table 28: ‘down the valley’ – ngurumo/itherero

<u>Gross</u>	<u>Variants</u>	<u>Status</u>	
		DL1	DL2
‘down the valley’	ngurumo	TP	KN
	Itherero	KN	TP

4.5 Summary

In this chapter, we have made an observation of the Kiambu lexical dialect features and variations. We have grouped the lexical dialect features into three categories. First, these are lexical items similar in all respects except an aspect of pronunciation; second, lexical items similar in all respects except meaning whether partially or completely; and third, cases which the same concept is represented by radically different forms.

We have observed that, some of the lexical dialect features used were overlapping. This demonstrates the great interaction going on among speakers of these dialects. Consequently, the dialects reflect a continuum, a gentle gradient in the transition from one dialect to the next. It is for this reason that our demarcation of dialects has been based on typicality rather than on mutual exclusive dialect features.

It should be noted however, that the lexical dialect features that we have discussed are not absolutely present in one dialect and absent in the next. To the contrary, the situation is fluid and as we have said earlier, the variables are to be found in either dialect. Our basis for drawing boundaries is based on what is considered a typical form of a word for a particular dialect region. It demonstrates the fact that though language by its nature is shifty, it has forces within itself that counter these shifting tendencies. These forces operate under convergence, the intimate interaction among the dialects. Thus Kimbeti, Kiruguru and Kiveti are mutually intelligible.

CHAPTER FIVE

FACTORS THAT HAVE CAUSED DIALECTAL VARIATION IN KIEMBU

5.1 Introduction

One must in defining Kiambu dialect features pay attention to the factors which combine with linguistic factors to determine regional variation. These factors have given rise to the factors behind the distribution patterns of the variables. In this chapter, examines divergence Kiambu, geographical features influence on language, convergence, borrowing and accommodation. These affects have lead to variation among the kiambu speakers. Universally, the studies of language change have revealed that change can be explained into two broad ways, namely: as a consequence of borrowing and as a result of divergence.

5.2 Divergence

According to Francis (1983:15) no language spoken by a very small number of people is homogeneous and when changes occur, they characteristically affect the speech of only part of the population of the total language community. Divergence assumes that change in language results from spontaneous and continuous change and once it has entered a language, the resultant varieties go on diverging till a period when they practically become different languages. This change however, affects only a part of the speech community since change is differential.

5.2.1 Geographical features

Geographical features often play a role in the development of dialects in because rivers, mountains, valleys and other features of the terrain determine the migratory routes that people take and where they settle. When we cite the significance of physical boundaries,

we are really talking about lines of communication and the fact that discontinuities in communication have taken place between communities due to physical conditions. The most affected kind of communication is face to face. When a group of speakers does not interact regularly with other speakers, the likelihood of dialect divergence is heightened. For instance, the Kiruguru speakers who border Mount Kenya do not interact with Kirinyaga community since the forest and Ruringazi River create a physical barrier for speakers of kirinyaga and Kiambu communities at the northern region so their dialect is diverged.

Consider the data in Table 29 below.

Table 29: divergence variable

<u>Kiruguru</u>	<u>Kimbeti</u>	<u>Kiveti</u>	<u>Ki-kirinyaga</u>	<u>Gloss</u>
Gukuma	tonya	tonyi	tonya	‘enter’
Ndumu	mboco	mboco/ndumu	mboco	‘beans’
kũnukia	kũambata	kũthang’ata	kũambata	‘climb’
naĩ	aca	ĩka	aca	‘no’

It is seen from Table 29 that Kiruguru is more conservative since the speakers of this dialect are not influenced by the speakers of Kirinyaga as compared to Kimbeti and Kiveti. Kiruguru dialect is more diverged because this region is surrounded by the mountain at the north and eastern parts, river Ruringazi at the southern regions.

5.3 Convergence

Convergence explains changes as a result of the interaction and inter-influencing of languages in proximity. According to Langacker (1968:176), he says that no language whose speakers have ever had contact with any other language is completely free of

borrowed forms. This introduces foreign elements into nearby languages which in turn cause change in the receiving languages. Kiambu has had a long history of contact with Mbeere, Chuka and Kirinyaga languages.

Kimbeere, Kichuka and Gi-kirinyaga have greatly influenced Kiambu dialects due to the intensity of interaction between the three linguistic groups. This interaction takes place in natural settings of inter-communication such as in the markets, hospitals and schools which are shared by these linguistic groups due to their proximity to each other. For instance, for social economic reasons, the Embu market is a meeting place for the Mbeere, Kirinyaga, Chuka and Embu speakers for purpose of trade. This market is the biggest in this region, therefore, speakers of these three languages converge here as they sell and buy goods and services. As a result of this contact, the speakers of these languages influence each other hence change in their linguistic structure.

Speakers of Kiambu, Kichuka, Kimbeere and Ki-kirinyaga also often visit Embu Provincial Hospital since it's the referral hospital in this region therefore interacting with each other. Students learn in different schools across the three speech communities, speakers also work in different areas across the region and they attend churches that could not necessary be from their speech community. All these activities enhances contact, therefore, a language may have in its lexicon a number of words that can be traced back to others languages resulting in a change in the linguistics structure of a language. Language contact presupposes some degree of social and cultural contact and as a result, some inter-marriages have taken place between some speakers of these linguistic groups.

Convergence phenomenon is seen in the development of areal features common to otherwise very unrelated languages close together. In such a case, the phonologies, vocabularies and even morphological structures of unrelated languages become more and more similar. This convergence could be due to the possibility that the foreign accent is more prestigious.

5.3.1 Borrowing from Kimabere, Kichuka and ki-kirinyaga languages

Radford et al. (1999) states that the new words brought to a language are known as borrowing. He says that borrowing is not just restricted to just lexical items taken from one language to another but any linguistic material. Borrowing is therefore a phenomenon where there is use of a linguistic item of language A by the speakers of language B. When a word is borrowed; it is often gradually changed so that it can fit the phonological and morphological structure of the language or dialect.

Arlotto (1972:184) defines borrowing as the process by which one language or dialect takes and incorporates some linguistic element from another language or dialect. He adds that the appropriateness of the term 'borrowing' is debatable as the borrowing language does not return the borrowed item. 'Stealing', he says could be a better term though the lending language does not take offense as it has nothing to lose. Aitchison (1994:113) also says that term 'borrowing' is inappropriate. He says, "Borrowing is somewhat misleading word since it implies that the element in question is taken from the donor language for a limited time and then returned, which is not means the case. The item is actually copied, rather than borrowed in strict sense of the term."

According to Lyons (1981: 207) two of the most general factors of language change are analogy and borrowing. The investigation of sound change that has taken place at the present time has shown that they can originate in one or more borrowed words and then spread by analogy into others over a period of time.

Borrowing is one of the main factors behind changes in the lexicon. It can be described as the process by which one language or dialect takes and incorporates some linguistic elements from another (Arlotto, 1972:184). The lexicon of a language is the most unstable part of a language. It is therefore not surprising that, lexical borrowing is the most common type of interaction between languages.

According to Langacker (1973) borrowing is never a linguistic necessity. This is because, it is always possible for a language to extend and modify the use existing of lexical items to meet new communicative needs. Therefore, the reasons behind borrowing are no doubt more historical and cultural than linguistic.

Borrowing is one the most manifestation of language change and the process of linguistic change cannot be directly observed because the change is so slow. Bloomfield (1933:444) says that written records of earlier speech show resemblance between languages and their varieties of dialects that languages change in the course of time. Fromkin et al. (2003) also says that if we were to turn on a radio and miraculously receive a broadcast in a native language from the year 3000, we would probably think we have tuned in a foreign radio station. They acknowledge that all languages change and no part of grammar remain the same over a span of time.

Bloomfield (1933) recognizes two levels of borrowing: pure borrowing and adjusted borrowing, these are direct and indirect borrowing respectively. Direct borrowing occurs when the borrowed item is a native word in the language from which it is borrowed whereas indirect borrowing is where a borrowed linguistic item is not a native word in the language from which it is borrowed.

Lexicons are typically adapted to the phonology of the borrowing language. However, the borrowed word remains as similar as possible to the source form. Adaptation has been attributed to the misperception of unfamiliar speech sound, mispronunciation of non-native forms or perceptual and phonological influence as the borrower attempts to maximize perceptual similarities between perceived source and the borrowed word (Yip, 2002).

Arlotto (1972:185) expresses the fact that a borrowed word has to fit in the phonology of the host language. He says that borrowed words are assimilated into the phonemic (or sound) system of a borrowing language since the words have been fully absorbed into a new language. Therefore, they sound like an ordinary words of that language and is subjected to its rules. This means, a borrowed word is modified in phonemic shape, paradigm and spelling according to the standard of the borrowing language. For instance, the Gi-kirinyaga word njakathi [ɲakaði] once borrowed by Kiambu changes to mūrīkathi [morikaði] while Gi-kirinyaga asha [aʃa] changes to aca [aʃ] so that words can phonologically and morphologically fit into Kiambu. Kiambu does not have 'sh' phoneme so it changes 'sh' to 'c' phoneme which fit Kiambu phonology. [ɲa] in Gi-kirinyaga changes to /mori/ in Kiambu, this is altered to fit Kiambu phonological and morphological structure.

Fromkin et al. (2003:115) view borrowing as an important factor in language change. They state that borrowing occurs when one language adds to its lexicon a word or a morpheme from another language often altering its own pronunciation to fit the phonological rules of a borrowing language. Langacker (1968:177) argues that it is easier to borrow an existing term from another language than make one.

People need to develop words for new and unfamiliar concepts arising from new technology, new plants, animals and even modern food. Speakers of a language borrow words from another language if they do not have readily available words for something. Antilla (1972:162) states that in a borrowing situation, a foreign upper class imports or imposes its way of life on speakers of other languages. This can be seen in Kiambu in the table below.

Table 30: Foreign words from other languages

<u>Borrowed word (Kiambu)</u>	<u>Proto-word (Kiswahili)</u>	<u>Gloss</u>
Metha [mɛða]	meza [mɛza]	‘table’
Mbaka [ˠbaka]	paka [paka]	‘cat’
ngari [ˠgari]	gari [gari]	‘car’
thimu [ðimu]	simu [simu]	‘phone’
thani [ðani]	sahani [sahani]	‘plate’

The Kiambu adds to its lexicon metha [mɛða], a word from Kiswahili meza [mɛza]. The phoneme /z/ from Kiswahili changes to /ð/ thereby altering the pronunciation to fit the phonology of the borrowing language. Also, as illustrated above,

paka [paka] changes to Mbaka [^mbaka], the /p/ sound from Kiswahili becomes /^mb/, and so on.

Adjoining and overlapping in languages is due to ‘give and take’ interaction, i.e. borrowing. In such areas of convergence, different languages may develop identical phonetics, similar phonological systems and similar lexical items. When the interaction between different linguistic groups is intense, the level of borrowing taking place will be high. When the contact is minimal, little borrowing takes place.

5.3.2 Accommodation

Accommodation which reflects a speaker’s willingness to speak more like his hearer lead to some of the apparent irregularity in the distribution of the lexical dialect features. Oduol (1990:196) says that if the sender in a dyadic situation wishes to gain the receiver, then he may engage in accent convergence and adapt his accent patterns towards that of this person, i.e. reduce pronunciation dissimilarities. If, on the other hand, the speaker wishes to dissociate himself or show disapproval of other speakers, he may engage in accent divergence.

In his study of linguistic situation in Marthas’s Vineyard (an island off the coast of New England), Labov discovered that the trend to pronounce English according to the accent of America tourists into the island was being severely checked by the native speakers who resent this invasion of their island, instead they were using exaggerated native accent. This was being done because those people who closely identified with the land way of life had begun to exaggerate the typical island pronunciation in order to signal their separate social and cultural identity and to underline their belief in old values (Trudgill 1983:23).

Accommodation among Kiambu dialects has led to the development of inter-dialect features that is situations where contact among dialects has led to the development of forms that originally occurred in neither dialect. Dialect geographers recognize this as characteristic of dialect contact areas having partial or imperfect accommodation. Trudgill (1986:60) defines mixed dialects as “varieties where accommodation is taking place but where it has not gone to completion... mixed dialects are lexically partially accommodated” Dialect differences are explained in terms of linguistic or social phenomena which can be associated with single or very small sets of words. Therefore, the Kiambu dialects have borrowed or have been influenced by neighbouring languages as is exemplified by the following data

Borrowing of lexical items comes through contact with speakers of other languages; such contact may be direct or indirect. When it is direct, the borrowing language gets the item in question from the speakers of the donor language. When it is indirect, the item comes through another borrower (Oduol, 1990). The phonetic shape of a borrowed word often depends on whether its borrowing was direct or indirect, the borrowing language attempts to indigenize the word by making it fit into its own sound system.

5.4 Summary

The Embu community has had a long intimate history of social interaction with the Ambeere, Achuka and the Agikuyu from Kirinyaga. This interaction can be seen in the rise of common markets, intermarriages, common schools and churches. This has ensured that the results of divergence and variation are being minimized by the action of borrowing and therefore convergence.

The dialects therefore, cannot be demarcated on absolute boundaries as variables typical for one dialect area can still be found in the other dialect area. The dialects form a continuum and the features that distinguish one dialect from the next spills over to the other side of the boundary. Borrowing of lexical items comes through contact with speakers of other languages; such contact may be direct or indirect. When it is direct, the borrowing language gets the item in question from the speakers of the donor language. When it is indirect, the item comes through another borrower. Languages in geographical contact borrow words from one another quite freely, because words tend to travel across geographical and linguistic boundaries.

Resemblance in the vocabularies of different languages may be due to borrowing of words either from one another or from a third language. Thus, the boundaries are identified on the basis of statistical predominance. This is the general pattern of distinction that was observed from the dialectal situation in Kiambu. It was found that the delineation of the dialect is not based on what is present in only one dialect and absent in other, but on what is typical for a dialect

CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Introduction

In this study, we attempted to investigate the validity of the impression that Kiambu has dialectal variation. To achieve this, we set out to identify the phonological, morphological and lexical features that distinguish the Kiambu dialects and how these variables are distributed in each dialect region.

6.2 Summary of findings

Our findings show that Kiambu can broadly be seen to have three regional dialects: Kimbeti, Kiruguru and Kiveti, which differ at the lexical, morphological and phonological levels. The three dialects form a continuum since the majority of the dialect features of a region spill over to the other region therefore; there are no mutually exclusive features. The boundaries have however been identified on the basis of typicality of a particular feature in a region and not on the categorical presence or absence of a feature.

It was observed that, some of the dialect features were overlapping. This demonstrates the great interaction going on among speakers of these dialects. Also, the dialects reflect a continuum, a gentle gradient in the transition from one dialect to the next. It is for this reason that the demarcation of dialects has been based on typicality rather than on mutual exclusive dialect features. It should be noted however, that the dialect features discussed are not absolutely present in one dialect and absent in the next. To the contrary, the situation is fluid and it was said earlier, the variables are to be found in either dialect.

These forces operate under convergence due to the intimate interaction among speakers of the dialects. Thus Kimbeti, Kiruguru and Kiveti are mutually intelligible.

It was observed that the Kimbeti, Kiruguru and Kimbeti differ at the phonological, morphological and lexical levels. However, the dialects differences among the three dialects are realized more predominantly at the phonological and lexical levels than at the morphological level. That is, the dialects are distinguished from speakers' pronunciation and vocabularies more easily.

This study has also shown that other factors such as divergence and borrowing contribute to language variation. Therefore, speech of a community is never homogenous at any time. The Embu community has had a long intimate history of social interaction with the Ambeere, Achuka and the Agikuyu from Kirinyaga. This interaction can be seen in the rise of common markets, intermarriages, common schools and churches. Resemblance in the vocabularies of different languages may be due to borrowing of words either from one another or from a third language. Borrowing of lexical items comes through contact with speakers of other languages; such contact may be direct or indirect. Languages in geographical contact borrow words from one another quite freely, because words tend to travel across geographical and linguistic boundaries.

However, the traditional dialect boundaries provide a description of the non-mobile, older, rural male as depicting the dialect of a region is questionable. This is because it ignores the synchronic changes that takes place in a language thus ends up in describing an idealized and therefore unrealistic linguistic situation.

The language variation and change framework was appropriate for this study. It has shown that within Kiambu, there is a systematic variation as seen from the quantitative data. As the scope of this study is limited, this study did not employ the variable rules of correlating social factors and linguistic change. However, typicality concept employed in the analysis this study served to show the correlation of social and linguistic variables to language change hence dialectal variation.

Kiveti dialect seems to be actively innovative, since it more dynamic in introducing phonological change and in the changes of the lexicon. This could as a result of borrowing and influence from the neighbouring languages; this is in comparison with Kiruguru which is too conservative and Kimbeti.

6.3 Recommendations

The scope of this study is limited as it only focused on phonological, morphological and lexical features. Other areas for instance discourse and semantic features were left out. A study should therefore be carried out in these two areas in order to get more variations that will make Kiambu dialects more fully defined.

There is also need for future researchers to give a comprehensive description of the tone system of Kiambu. This work would have benefited immensely from such a description since tone plays a role in distinguishing Kiambu dialects.

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APPENDIX 1: QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Name (Optional) _____

2. Age bracket

41-50	51-60	61 and above

3. Occupation _____

4. Level of Education

Primary	
Secondary	
College	
University	

5. Is your first language Kiambu?

Yes	No
-----	----

6. If your language is Kiambu?

a) Which part of Embu region do you come from?

b) Which variety of Kiambu do you speak?

7. Write the equivalents of the words below according to the region you come from?

	Kimbeti	Kiruguru	Kiveti
Sweep			
Donkey			
Coffee			
Climb			
Enter			
Drink			
Mangoes			

Sweet potato			
Beans			
Hunger			
Run			
Palm			
Mango tree			
Stand			
Sufuria/cooking pot			
Stop			
Give me			
Down the valley			
Corpse			
Repair			
Ask			
Win			
Read for			
No			
Change			
Stupid			
Small flower			
Short			
Investigate			
Pray			
Wait			
Pumpkin			
Look			
Bed			
Blow			
Praise			
Save			
'to be warn'			

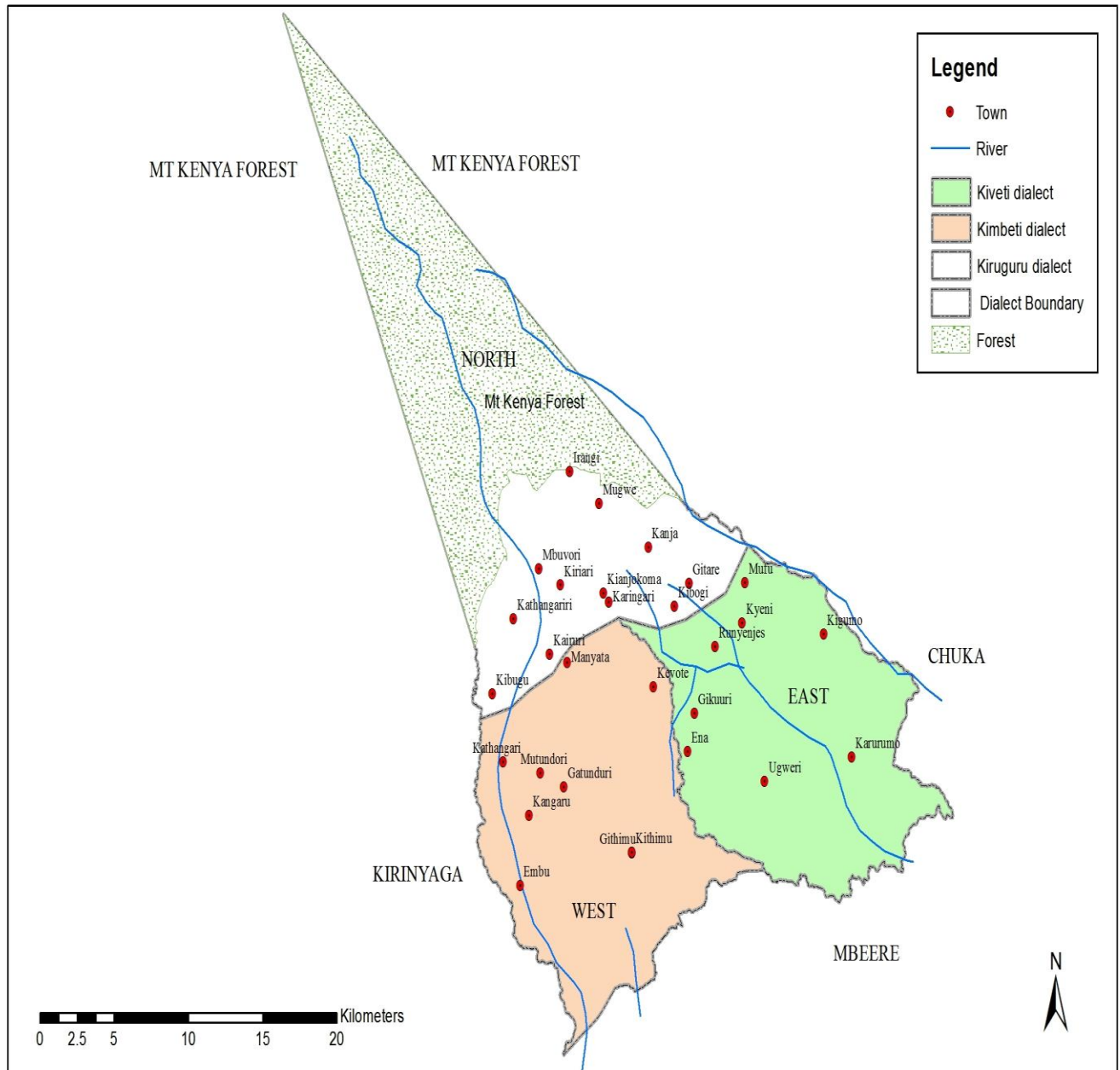
Nine Bring closer Rope Touch Spread Search Make for 'cultivate for someone' Cow Cup Door Lit			
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	Kimbeti	Kiruguru	Kiveti
Sweep	Nvata	Nvata	Mbata
Donkey	Nvuunda	Nvuunda	Mbuunda
Coffee	Kaũwa	Kaũwa	Kaũga
Climb	Kũambata	Kũnukia	Kũthang'ata
Enter	Tonya	Gukuma	Tonyi
Drink	Kũnywa	Kũnywa	Kũnwa
Maonges	Maembe	Maembe	Magembe
Sweet potato	Gwaciĩ	Gwaciĩ	Mĩriĩco
Beans	Mboco	Ndumu	Mboco/ndumu
Hunger	Nvota	Ng'aragu/nvota	Mbota
Run	Tengera	Vinyũra	Ng'ari
Palm	Nvĩ	Nvĩ	Mbĩ
Maongo tree	Mũembe	Mũembe	Mũgembe
Stand	Rugama	Rugama	Rugami
Sufuria/cooking pot	Thavuria	Thavuria	Thavuri
Stop	Tiga	Tiga	Tigi
Give me	Nva	Nva	Mba
Down the valley	Ngurumo	Ngurumo	ĩtherero
Corpse	Cimba	Cimba	Cimba
Repair	Thinga	Thiinga	Thiinga
Ask	ũria	ũria	ũri

Win	Tuĩria	Tuĩria	Tori
Read for	Mũthomere	Muthomere	Muthomere
No	Ici/aca	Narĩ	ika
Change	Cenjia	Cenjia	Cenji
Stupid	Cenji	Cenji/uthao	uthao
Small flower	Kauwa	Kauwa	Kauwa
Short	Thuruarĩ/kĩvandĩ	Thuruarĩ	Thuruarĩ
Investigate	Tuĩria	Tuĩria	Tuĩri
Pray	Voithia	Voithia	Voithi
Wait	Eterera	Eterera	Etereri
Pumpkin	ĩrengē	ĩrengē	ĩrengē
Look	Roria	Roria	Rori
Bed	Gĩtanda	Gĩtanda	Gĩtaanda
Blow	Vuva	Vuva	Vuvi
Praise	Goca	Goca	Goci
Save	Vonokia	Vonokia	Vonoki
'to be warn'	Kanwa	Kanwa	Kanywa
Nine	Kenda	Keenda	Keenda
Bring closer	Nengereria	Nengereria	Nengereri
Rope	Mũkanda	Mũkaanda	Mũkaanda
Touch	Vutia	Vutia	Vuti
Spread	Tandĩka	Tandĩka	Tandĩki
Search	Caria	Caria	Cari

Make for	Mũthodekere	Mũthondekere	Mũthondekee
‘cultivate for someone’	Mũremire	Mũremire	mũremire
Cow	Ng’ombe	Ng’ombe	Ng’ombe
Cup	Gikombe	Gikoombe	Gikoombe
Door	Mũrango	Mũrango	Mũraango
Lit	Akia	Akia/mundia	Aki

Appendix II: Kiambu Dialectal Map



Source: Author 2014