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MATTERS

NEW LANGUAGE BEARINGS IN AFRICA

A Fresh Quest

Edited by Margaret Jepkirui Muthwii and
Angelina Nduku Kioko



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English Variety for the Public Domain in Kenya: Speakers' Attitudes and Views

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The study sought to establish the attitudes of Kenyan speakers ($n = 210$) towards three varieties of English: (1) ethnically marked Kenyan English, (2) standard Kenyan English and (3) native speaker English (British, American, Australian, etc). Of the three varieties, the most preferred by both rural and urban respondents for use in the media and education was standard Kenyan English. Most of the respondents also considered this as the variety used by successful professionals like lawyers, doctors, engineers and successful business people. Contrary to expectation, intelligence, ambition, expertness and confidence are attributed to speakers not when they use native varieties of English but when they use the non-ethnic-marked variety of Kenyan English. The study suggests that further research should be less concerned about the deviation of Kenyan English from native speaker norms and concentrate more on the formal description of the variety of English that Kenyan speakers overwhelmingly prefer.

Many studies have shown how the attitudes of people act as a powerful social force that determines the conduct of social life. People are attracted to or are indifferent to an object depending on their attitude towards it; the attitude being either cognitively based or 'feelings'-based reactions to an object (Cargile & Giles, 1997: 195). While this relationship between attitude and conduct is generally true of many aspects of life, it is one that has also been observed with respect to the linguistic codes used in a community (Cargile *et al.*, 1994; Ryan & Giles, 1982). The much research that has been done, especially on people's evaluative reactions to accents and languages, has shown that people have distinct feelings about codes. They:

find some accents 'unpleasant' others 'beautiful'; some registers 'stuffy' some styles 'pedantic', some languages or kinds of languages 'unacceptable' or the speakers 'less desirable'; and so on [...] Linguistic prejudice either for or against particular dialects or languages, is a fact of socio-linguistic life, a fact we must recognise (Wardhaugh, 1986: 110).

Certain varieties are deemed more appropriate for certain messages than other varieties. Code and message are inseparable (Muthwii, 1986). Moreover, this dynamic relationship between language attitudes, code and message makes language a powerful social force that 'does more than convey intended referential information; for better or worse, hearers may react to linguistic and paralinguistic variation in messages as though they indicate both personal and social characteristics of the speaker'. (Cargile & Giles, 1997: 195). Whether consciously or not, a member of a speech community is subject to these shared

norms. Indeed, a speaker's choice of code also reflects how the person wants to appear to others on a particular occasion. The code the individual chooses does have important consequences for how s/he is viewed by others (cf. Giles & Powesland, 1975).

Moreover, the sociolinguistic paradigm of variability distinguishes between individual variations and social variability. Social variability is regarded as an inherent property of linguistic systems that must be incorporated into grammatical rules. To the extent that linguistic variability is socially conditioned, its investigation depends on valid assumptions about the matrix in which it operates. Hence, it is argued that a speech community must form the starting point of linguistic analysis, not the individual speakers of a language or the linguistic competence of individuals (Labov, 1972). A speech community is defined in functional terms as a system of organised diversity held together by common norms and aspirations (Romaine, 1982). The notion can be applied to a small geographical area (Russell, 1982), or to a larger entity (Muthwii, 1994). Members of such communities typically vary with respect to certain beliefs and other aspects of behaviour and such variation shows systematic regularities at the statistical level of social facts.

From the social psychological perspective on language attitudes, a speaker's choice of code also reflects how s/he wants to appear to others. The code s/he chooses does have important consequences for how others view her/him as is apparent from various matched-guise experiments that social psychologists have done (cf. Giles & Powesland, 1975). If a person *A* is perfectly bidialectal in variety *X* and *Y* of the same language, how is s/he judged as a person when speaking variety *X*? How do the same judges evaluate *A* when *A* is speaking variety *Y*? In matched-guise experiments the judges are unaware that they are judging *A* twice and that the only variables that *A* is using are variety *X* on one occasion and variety *Y* on the other, and using each for the same purpose. Since the only factor that is varied is the language variety or dialect used, the responses and judgements provide group evaluations of speakers of those varieties and therefore tap social stereotypes. Experiments have shown that listeners partly judge what is said by the variety of the code the speaker chooses to use. Certain varieties are deemed more appropriate for certain messages than other varieties. Therefore, the sociolinguist working within the paradigm of variability and code choice considers social evaluations that draw on attitudes. These help linguists determine to a high degree of accuracy the power of conformity and value evoked by the use of each language used in a community. To a large extent, it is possible to point out the code that members of a community consider as possessing more prestige, more acceptability, more pleasantness and other characteristics of the speakers.

Language Varieties and Attitudes in Kenya

Language norms in Kenya are closely related to the social meanings that English, Kiswahili and the ethnic languages have acquired over time. Each of these languages has certain speech domains associated with it. While Kiswahili is the national language, English is designated the official language that is supposed to be used in education, administration, the media and in many

other formal and informal settings. The ethnic languages have no official role in the public domain. Nonetheless, an individual's knowledge and use of English, of necessity, interacts closely with the other two languages within his/her repertoire.

English is mainly learned in formal educational settings. Because it is an important language for participation in the public domain almost all Kenyans with some education have acquired English, albeit with certain variations. In studies on New Englishes, two main parameters have been shown to determine variations in English; these are the indigenous (ethnic) language(s) of the speakers and their level of education (Bamgbose, 1982; Bokamba, 1982; Zuengler, 1982). Abdulaziz (1982) also recognises as significant a rural vs. urban speaker distinction.

Given the powerful social force that attitudes have in determining conduct, there was a need first to establish the attitudes that Kenyan speakers of English have towards the English spoken at the place of work, in the education system and in the media in their country. These are considered the three most significant language domains that determine the acquisition and use of English in Kenya. Of interest in this study was not only the language used by the individuals in these contexts but also their attitudes towards the various codes within their repertoire, in particular, the variety of English used in public domains. Language in the media and education, in particular, is seen as a powerful tool in modelling language for language learners.

The views and attitudes of Kenyans toward the varieties of English have been used in this paper to argue for a recognisable variety of English that could justifiably be called standard Kenyan English. The persuasion in this paper is that when speakers' attitudes are known and well understood, language planning and implementation in education, for example, is better achieved, making it possible for most Kenyans to happily use the English language more constructively in public domains.

Study sample and method

Subjects were classified according to (1) education, (2) ethnic language, and (3) urban/rural setting. The sample was drawn from five ethnic groups: Gikuyu, Luo, Luhya, Kalenjin and Kikamba. These are representative of Kenyan English speakers in terms of numbers (they comprise more than 50% of the Kenyan total population) and secondly, in terms of language typology they represent the three main language types – Bantu, Nilotes and Para-nilotes. On the education parameter, we have considered speakers from the three levels of education; primary, secondary and university. Finally, our sample has equal representation of rural and urban speakers.

Two main methods were used for data collection for the general study; tape-recording and direct measurement (questionnaire). The issues discussed in this paper draw from the information collected using the questionnaire. The questionnaire directly sought the respondents' language evaluation, language preferences, desirability and reasons for using a particular language or variety; it analysed trends in evaluations of social groups who use a particular variety; and it observed patterns of self-reports concerning language use.

To ensure that we had a large enough sample for this direct measurement,

more than 300 questionnaires were distributed, of which 210 were used for this study (cf. Milroy, 1987). The questionnaires were distributed evenly among the three educational levels, the five ethnic groups and the urban/rural dichotomy. For the majority of the primary school graduates, we had to administer the questionnaire orally and record their responses. Their language proficiency was quite low in that they could hardly interact meaningfully with the questionnaires without help from the researchers. The responses to the general questionnaire were analysed statistically to establish the majority view concerning English as used in Kenya and to find out the variety that is preferred for use in the formal domains such as school, law courts, media and so on. Any variations among the various variables identified for this research were carefully noted.

Results of the Study

The place of work

The information in Tables 1 and 2 suggests that English is the unrivalled language at the place of work, both in urban and rural areas. While the use of English in the work place in the urban areas is very high as compared with that of Kiswahili, we observe that in both contexts, the use of ethnic languages (L1) in the place of work is minimal, irrespective of the ethnic language region.

On average, the use of English in the work place in the urban areas is quite high (73%) as compared with the rural areas (57%). Kiswahili generally trails behind English to the same extent in both contexts. Generally, the Luhya community reports no room for L1 at the place of work. The language prac-

Table 1 Language choice at work: Percentages according to ethnic group (rural respondents)

	<i>Luo</i>	<i>Luhya</i>	<i>Gikuyu</i>	<i>Kikamba</i>	<i>Kalenjin</i>	<i>Avg % score</i>
Eng.	75	79	50	37.5	41.7	56.6
Kisw.	4.2	16.7	29	12.3	37.5	20
L1	12.3	—	12.3	20.8	8.3	10.7
Eng/Kis	8.3	4.2	—	16.8	4.2	6.7
Kis./L1	—	—	—	4.2	4.2	1.7
L1/Eng.	—	—	8.3	4.2	—	2.5
No response	—	—	—	4.2	4.2	1.7

Table 2 Language choice at work: Percentages according to ethnic group (urban respondents)

	<i>Luo</i>	<i>Luhya</i>	<i>Gikuyu</i>	<i>Kikamba</i>	<i>Kalenjin</i>	<i>Avg % score</i>
Eng.	64.3	68.3	68.3	81.3	81.3	72.7
Kisw	7.1	25	25	6.3	12.5	15.1
L1	7.1	—	—	—	—	1.4
Eng./Kisw	21.4	—	6.3	12.5	—	8
Kis/L1	—	6.3	—	—	6.3	2.5

tices of a given ethnic group could show significant differences between urban and rural contexts. For example, Kikamba rural speakers report the lowest percentage of use of English at the place of work and the highest use of ethnic language in this domain in rural areas, while their urban counterparts not only have the highest proportion of English but no room for L1 at work. Indeed, the Kikamba rural respondents also reported the highest occurrence of code switching at the place of work. For the Kalenjin sample, the choice between English and Kiswahili is about the same in rural areas but is definitely in favour of English in urban contexts. The use of L1 in the place of work in urban contexts is negligible for all ethnic groups but clearly present in rural contexts for all the ethnic groups except the Luhya speakers.

Overall, there was not much difference in language choice depending on the education level of the speakers between rural and urban samples. The following observations sum up the choices given the level of education of the speakers:

- (1) The use of English at work increases with the increase of education at quite similar proportions in both samples. The rural sample, for example, showed 35% of primary school graduates use English, 50% of the secondary level graduates, and 85% of university graduates. Conversely, the use of Kiswahili at work decreases with the increase of education; the urban data showed a sharper decrease from one category to another.
- (2) While 15% of both primary and secondary level graduates in the rural sample reported using L1 at the place of work, there were hardly any cases at the university level.
- (3) Primary and especially secondary school graduates showed a greater range of choices in the language for work than university graduates who predominantly use English at the place of work in both rural and urban contexts. In general, there was more variation in the choice of language for work the lower the educational level of a speaker is.
- (4) The range of language choice by urban speakers is very limited. English is used by the majority (73%) while a few (15%) choose Kiswahili or a mixture of the two (7.6%).

When the respondents were asked to give the reasons for their choice of code at the place of work, they enumerated them as indicated below:

- (1) English: English is the official language of the workplace, therefore, the expected language. Its use creates integration among people from different ethnic groups. Where English was not chosen it was either because the respondent was not fluent in the language or because his/her work involved dealing with subordinate staff whose proficiency in English was claimed to be lower.
- (2) Kiswahili: Those who chose to use Kiswahili as the language of work said that their work involved dealing with subordinate staff or directly with the public and claimed that Kiswahili was the expected language in these domains. The choice of Kiswahili was also linked to the multi-ethnic nature of the workplace; Kiswahili has a unifying effect.
- (3) Mother tongue: In the few cases where an ethnic language was used at the workplace, it was in rural contexts and/or the respondent dealt with

the general public directly. A good example of such a case was a graduate agricultural officer at Wamunyu market in Machakos district.

At school

Respondents were asked to identify the variety of English used in the schools attended by members of their families and to give their views on the same. From Table 3 overleaf we observe that there is a great deal of divergence in the views of respondents as to the variety of English used in their local schools. However, apart from both rural and urban Luo communities and urban Gikuyu speakers, the majority of speakers identified the ethnically marked (E-Marked) variety as the one used in their schools. This is the variety of English that exhibits salient linguistic features associated with the ethnic language of a speaker. While the majority of rural Luo and urban Gikuyu speakers felt that the native English variety is the one used in their schools, urban Luo speakers considered the non-ethnically marked (non-E-marked) English as the variety used. This is English that does not identify its speaker as hailing from any of Kenya's ethnic languages.

Going by the perceptions of the respondents, we also note from the above that even urban areas have E-marked varieties of English, probably because most urban residents are immigrants from rural contexts. We also noted that the choice does not necessarily have much to do with the level of education of the speaker.

Respondents were also asked how happy they were with the variety of English used in the schools attended by members of their families. The responses from urban respondents were more or less the same across language groups; there were equal numbers of speakers happy as those unhappy. There were significant differences, however, between rural speakers across the language groups as seen in Table 4.

Interestingly, those who indicated dissatisfaction were mainly the same people that had thought that the E-marked variety of English was the one used in their local schools. This explains why the Luo speakers have a high percentage of satisfied users of English due to what they perceive as the variety used in their schools. It is noteworthy too that in all the language groups, the dissatisfied respondents preferred the non-E-marked and not the native English variety. Only in a few cases was the native English variety preferred.

The language of the teacher

Both rural and urban respondents from all the language groups predominantly preferred a teacher who uses the non-E-marked variety as shown in Table 5. The table also indicates the common reasons for the choice of that variety of English.

Some of the commonest reasons for preferring the non-E-marked variety included concerns for ease and effectiveness in communication, the possession of a neutral identity and independent philosophy, the indication of proficiency and naturalness in one's speech (see Table 5 for details). In the rural context, the slight deviation from the dominant preference was mainly observed among respondents with only primary education of whom a few preferred the E-marked English variety. When native English was preferred among urban

Table 3 Respondents' identification of the English used in Kenyan schools

Variety of English	Rural					Urban				
	Kalenjin	Kikamba	Gikuyu	Luo	Luhya	Kalenjin	Kikamba	Gikuyu	Luo	Luhya
(a) E-marked	61%	71%	54%	4%	44%	56%	68%	0%	29%	56%
(b) Non-E-marked	26%	25%	21%	38%	40%	38%	25%	38%	57%	25%
(c) Native English	4%	4%	21%	58%	4%	6%	0%	56%	14%	13%
(d) Mixture (a, b)	7%	—	4%	—	8%	—	6%	6%	—	6%
(e) Other	—	—	—	—	4%	—	—	—	—	—

Table 4 Contentment with the existing variety in schools (rural respondents)

Responses	Kalenjin	Gikuyu	Kamba	Luyha	Luo
Yes	32%	62%	26%	46%	71%
No	68%	38%	74%	54%	29%

respondents it was more often by respondents with a university education. The main reasons had to do with a striving to communicate with and like people from without Kenya.

The media

When the respondents were asked to indicate the variety of English they would like to hear or see used in the media, they overwhelmingly chose the non-E-marked variety for more or less similar reasons as those observed in relation to English in education. As can be noted in Table 6, there is only a slight difference in the preferences of rural speakers as compared with urban ones.

English that exhibits intelligence and confidence

Sociolinguists' analysis of discourse based on speech of multilingual speakers (cf. Muthwii, 1986; Myers-Scotton, 1993; Scotton, 1983) demonstrate that intelligence, ambition, expertness and confidence in many formerly colonised parts of the world are attributes that have been associated with the use of the English language *vis-à-vis* the use of ethnic languages. Over the years, as English was used as a language of power in these regions, these attributes became part of the social meaning of the English language. With the varieties of English that have emerged in these regions, it was the objective of this research to establish which variety of English in the Kenyan speech community carried these attributes. Respondents' choices of the variety that carries these attributes are as shown in Tables 7 and 8. Table 7 deals with the variety the respondents perceive to be used by successful professionals.

Both rural and urban speakers mainly consider the non-E-marked variety as the one used by successful professionals like lawyers, doctors, engineers and successful business people. For each language group, however, the research showed that the opinions of urban speakers on this question are not as divergent from one another as those exhibited by rural speakers. Moreover, the bulk of the divergent views by rural speakers and to a lesser extent those of urban speakers are observable at the lower levels of education. The higher the level of education of a speaker the more convergent his/her assessment is of language use issues with those of other members of that group. This may be an indication that either the speakers with less education are ill-informed on the identity and characteristics of the variety of English used by the professionals or that the professionals who live among these people exhibit a wide repertoire of the varieties of English. Could it be, for instance, that professionals who operate in rural contexts use all three major varieties in their speech than do their urban counterparts? We also note that the Non E-Marked variety significantly features in the respondents' responses when we consider also the views of the speakers shown in (d), (e) and (f) in Table 7.

Table 5 The variety of language admired in a teacher

Variety of English	Rural	Urban	Reasons for choice
(a) E-marked	4%	3%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It identifies speaker with one's African roots. • The child will better understand and interact with the teacher. It is most readily learnt.
(b) Non-E-marked	83%	78%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is clearly understood by all, while the native English variety is not understandable by Kenyans. It is too 'deep' and is impossible to attain because of mother tongue interference. • The non-E-marked is easy to use when expressing oneself and does not embarrass one. It does not give away the tribe of the speaker; hence, one can feel comfortable in carrying on conversation with people from other tribes and cultures; no cultural biases, no nepotism, no misunderstandings by other ethnic groups. It brings unity. • The ethnic-marked variety is difficult to follow and is not good for a child. • The non-E-marked variety enables the child to develop his own philosophy devoid of tribal or racial considerations. It is a variety that increases teacher's efficiency. • It has correct pronunciation and grammar. It shows proper mastery of the language, while the ethnic variety shows a lack of knowledge of English. • It is a tool for communication with all people beyond Kenya. It is understood by majority of Kenyans. • It appears (sounds) natural; it is better than foreign accents and is not an imitation of white man's speech. It is African and with good, clearer pronunciation. Those who use the native English variety are pretenders.
(c) Native English	10%	16%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The native variety will help in communication with foreigners. It is fluent. • It is the best, the original and understandable. We should strive to speak the native speaker's standard. I want my child to speak like the English. • It is used worldwide. • It is good for teaching.
(d) Combination of (b) and (c)	3%	1%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is real and still close to native English.
(e) Other	0%	2%	

Table 6 Respondents choice on the best language for media

Variety of English	Rural	Urban	Reasons for choice
(a) E-marked	13%	7%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One can understand everything because it is closer to mine. The ethnic influence makes it 'Kenyanised'.
(b) Non-E-marked	71%	71%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All users easily understand it. It is clear and straightforward not as exaggerated as native English. If the native English or the E-marked variety is used, one may not understand some words. The non-E-marked variety disadvantages no Kenyan. It is fluent and sounds Kenyan and it shows sincerity. It is English that has no modification. It does not ape British English. • The non-E-marked variety is more realistic and it is comfortable and is the midway. It teaches correct pronunciation and grammar. It assists the mastery of language because broadcasters are the models of Kenya. • It brings national consciousness and unity. It is standard English that has no mother tongue influence. TV and radio should have a national outlook not ethnic outlook. The non-E-marked variety is neutral, accent free and does not arouse tribal sentiments, biases or hatred. Ethnicity is not highlighted. • It shows eloquence and professionalism. It reflects international commonness and social balance while the E-marked shows backwardness and lack of progress. It is articulate. It does not bore the listeners.
(c) Native English	12%	20%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is the best variety that can draw the attention of listeners, irrespective of where they come from in the world. There are many types of people listening to TV or radio. It sounds more entertaining, livelier. • It is well spoken and listeners can imitate it, it has no mistakes since it is from the native speakers. Native speakers taught most of the scholars who use it so the scholars can act as models. One sounds more learned. It uplifts Kenyan standards in language use. • The accent is clear and most people understand it. It has better expressive power. It is authentic, the original. • So that foreigners can understand and know that the speaker has the right English.
(d) Combination of (b) and (c)	3%	—	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is real and still close to native English. It appeals to both the local and wider world.
(e) Other	1%	2%	

Table 7 The identity of the English variety used by successful professionals

<i>Variety of English</i>	<i>Urban</i>	<i>Rural</i>
(a) E-marked	5%	4%
(b) Non-E-marked	62%	68%
(c) Native English	29%	24%
(d) Combination of (a), (b) and (c)	—	2%
(e) Combination of (b) and (c)	3%	1%
(f) Combination of (a) and (b)	1%	1%

Table 8 English that best marks intelligence, confidence, ambition and expertness

<i>The language of intelligent speakers</i>	<i>Rural %</i>	<i>Urban %</i>
(a) E-Marked	6	1
(b) Non-E-marked	73	67
(c) Native English	18	24
(d) Combination of (a), (b) and (c)	2	3
(e) Combination of (a) and (b)	—	3
(f) None of the above varieties	1	2

On the specific question of the best language they consider to exhibit intelligence and confidence, most respondents in both social settings see the non-E-marked variety, rather than the native English variety, as the best variety that marks these social traits. While we note the few that considered the native English variety as the best choice, it is also observed that the core of divergence in the opinions of both urban and rural populations on this issue lay with the lowly educated respondents, a situation very similar to that already observed on the language of education and successful professionals.

Prestige

Generally, the majority of urban speakers in all language groups believed that Kenyans admired or thought prestigious the native English variety. Likewise, most Luo rural respondents and to a lesser extent the Gikuyu and Kamba respondents held this belief too. In contrast, the majority of Kalenjin and Luhya rural speakers believed that it was the non-E-marked variety that was most admired by Kenyans. Table 9 shows this polarisation in the beliefs of rural and urban speakers. It also shows the degree of difference in opinion between people with secondary education and those with university education.

Table 9 Variety of English admired by Kenyans/the most beautiful variety of English to speak

<i>The English variety admired by most Kenyans</i>	<i>Rural %</i>	<i>Urban %</i>	<i>Secondary %</i>	<i>University %</i>
(a) E-marked	6	1	4	3
(b) Non-E-marked	53	35	41	48
(c) Native English	37	62	55	47
(d) Combination of (b) and (c)	1	1	—	2
(e) Combination of (a) and (b)	—	—	—	—
(f) None of the above varieties	3	1	—	—

We see that in Kenya there is not a significant difference brought about by educational differences of respondents on this issue, rather, differences are seen more when the urban/rural dichotomy is used. However, when there is any difference, the tendency in many cases is for the respondents with secondary education to move toward the native English variety more than their university counterparts.

The majority of the speakers from all the language groups considered the non-E-marked variety to be the most beautiful English to speak. Whenever rural respondents named the E-marked variety as the most beautiful it was because they thought it was closer to their accent, a response similar to that of some rural Kamba speakers who said they preferred the same variety for media.

Speakers' assessment of their own speech

The respondents were given a chance to evaluate their own speech when asked if ever they used English that could lead listeners to guess the ethnic language group that they (the respondents) came from. Although speakers' perceptions of the language they believe they speak are not foolproof (Milroy, 1987), presumably their responses can still be used to get an idea of what speakers do or do not accept to be associated with. Speakers' perceptions of self can create a force that enables the individuals to move linguistically in a given direction in the acquisition and use of language. Hence in this research we observe that there is such a marked difference in the evaluations of self between one group and another (Table 10).

While many members of some communities clearly perceive themselves as using the E-marked variety of English some like the rural and urban Luo speakers think otherwise.

Table 10 Speakers' perceptions of whether they use E-marked variety or not

<i>Response</i>	<i>Kalenjin</i>	<i>Gikuyu</i>	<i>Kamba</i>	<i>Luhya</i>	<i>Luo</i>
Yes	71%	65%	63%	43%	23%
No	29%	35%	37%	57%	77%

Table 11 Places and times when E-marked English is used

<i>Type of environment reason</i>	<i>Respondents' remarks</i>
Social gatherings	In meetings in my home area. At home. When making fun and imitating others, especially those who speak with mother tongue influence. When with friends. In drinking places when tongues slip in relaxed moments. When addressing my ethnic group. With age mates. Outside office.
Linguistic ineptness	I can't help it. It is the natural English I know. Certain words betray one's tongue.
Customer orientation	When serving customers. In class to 'connect' with students. During political campaigns. Places with lowly educated people.
Emotionally charged	When annoyed in private or in public.

For some speakers, examples of times and places where they thought they used E-marked English included such settings as 'at all places and times', 'every time I use English', 'in class and also in the office'. Categories and details of respondents' responses are further indicated in Table 11.

From these divergent views, it is only enough to indicate that the places and times when respondents use E-marked English were numerous. They covered non-formal contexts mainly but many indicated that it occurred even in domains that would otherwise be designated as contexts for formal language use.

Discussion

Although in a general way the language used in the public domain in Kenya is a product of the historical language policies, much of the actual identity of the language(s) used is a product of the interaction of the ethnicity factor, the rural-urban dichotomy, and the attitudes that Kenyans have toward the languages within their repertoire. The use of some languages or their varieties makes them feel 'comfortable' or 'uncomfortable', 'secure and confident' or threatened, able to follow and participate in conversations/interactions or disadvantaged or cut off altogether. While such reactions to languages and accents are common to all communities they are especially important to recognise in language contact situations, more so in communities where individuals still identify themselves in terms of their ethnicity. As Scherer and Giles (1979) argue, attitudes and views significantly contribute to the socio-psychological processes that ultimately determine what a people accept and strive to possess or what 'puts them off'. These are aspects of attitude that could be exploited by education systems to enhance language learning and use.

As seen from respondents' attitudes, English is still seen as an important language for participation in the public domain in Kenya. Together with Kiswahili, the two languages form the languages used in the media, education and places of work. Earlier research on language use in Kenya showed the two languages functioning in a non-ideal diglossic relationship whereby their functional roles overlapped considerably (Abdulaziz, 1982). While this is still true to some extent, the findings of this research differ from those of Abdulaziz in that there is no significant overlap between Kiswahili and English in the place of work. Tables 1 and 2 show that English is predominantly the language of the workplace both in the rural and the urban areas; the language policy that designates English as the official language was quoted as the main factor determining the choice of language to be used in the workplace.

Respondents could clearly distinguish between E-marked and non-E-marked varieties of English taking note of what they considered to be 'good' characteristics of the English they prefer. A majority of speakers do not appreciate being identified with their ethnic languages when speaking English; they desire to fit in or be associated with a wider world than their own ethnic ones. With regard to the non-E-marked varieties of English, we note that the reasons for choosing the various varieties of English either for education or for media are closely related and signal certain factors that are important to the majority of Kenyan speakers of English. For example, many of them indicated that to be able to understand messages/information in

English is important. Obstacles to such understanding may arise because of pronunciations or grammars that are foreign to the speaker of English. The non-E-marked English is seen as correct in both these parameters. Accents that cannot be understood or grammatical structures that cannot communicate meaning are a hindrance to language learning and usage. The non-E-marked English (and not native English), therefore, apart from being seen to have the correct pronunciation and grammar is also seen to symbolise a 'wider world identity'.

It is also noted from respondents' views that the use of a given language gives a user a sense of security and confidence. Since there is still a significant place for English in Kenya today, prudence suggests that varieties of English whose usage embarrass a speaker may not be the appropriate English to propagate for the public domain. When peoples' attitudes are at variance with the norms that a given education system expects of the learners, trouble occurs. No wonder a trait associated with many children in Kenyan schools is passiveness and silence in class (Rockefeller Foundation, 2001). It is possible that many such learners find the norms too unattainable. They either do not have the liberty or ability to express themselves or are uncomfortable with the expectations of using an English that has little resemblance to the variety they are acquainted with, that of the models around them. With regard to a learner's fundamental right to feel secure and confident while learning and using a given language in education and the public domain, norms such as those propagated in the teaching, learning and use of native English appear to leave most Kenya learners and potential users feeling unsure of themselves. They are not confident to participate in the world of English.

As already observed above, many Kenyans prefer linguistic neutrality when using the English language. A Kenyan image, and not an ethnic one or foreign one, is most appreciated; respondents saw this as being positive because it is difficult to practice nepotism or tribalism on an interlocutor whose tribal affiliations are not obvious from his/her speech. An English variety that enhances this factor brings about more unity than the other varieties.

For language planning and implementation in education, it is significant to take note of the fact that respondents not only identified the variety of English used in the media as a tool to aid in the learning of English but also thought highly of the English used by successful professionals. If a people's attitudes have any force in molding behaviour, then users of English in the media and successful professionals must be seen as powerful models whose English set the norms for users of English in Kenya. In terms of the direction of aspirations in Kenya, the results from this research clearly show that they are definitely not in the direction of E-marked varieties of English but significantly toward the non-E-marked variety and to a lesser extent the native English varieties. The English used by Kenyan 'stars' in the media and successful professionals needs to be studied, documented and used for teaching in the school system. Since the pronunciation and grammar of the non-E-marked English is clearly rated favourably by the majority of speakers, this recognisable variety could justifiably be considered as the standard Kenyan English, the variety which, in fact, is the model that speakers/learners of English approximate to when

using or learning English, the kind of model that the majority consider to be appropriate for use in public domains of language use.

Conclusion

This study has shown the attitudes and views of users of English in Kenya towards the various varieties of English and the other languages in their repertoire. From their views we have constructed a general impression of the features of the psychological and social forces that operate in the choice of language, if indeed peoples' attitudes are a major influence on language norms and choices. The attitudes of speakers have also been used in this paper to identify a standard variety of English in Kenya. The non-E-marked English, and not the native variety appears to be the main standard that respondents approximate to when using English. Since English is learned at school, the language of the teacher and the role of the media cannot be ignored. Neither can that of other successful professionals. They are the norm setters, the models that speakers of English in Kenya approximate to. When the specific standards of correctness and appropriateness of these key models are studied and incorporated in the education process, the use of the English language in the public domain will be made more relevant and dynamic not only for a few Kenyans, as the case is now, but for the many others who wish to participate in the world of English.

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