

**AN ANALYSIS OF MORPHOPHONOLOGICAL PROCESSES OF LOAN
WORDS FROM ENGLISH TO GIKUYU**

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**A Thesis Submitted to the Graduate School in Partial Fulfilment of the
Requirements for the Conferment of the Degree of Master of Arts in Applied
Linguistics.**

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November, 2015

ABSTRACT

When contact occurs between two or more languages, there is bound to be some sort of language influence which can affect either of the languages concerned. In Kenya, English has had extensive contact with the Kenyan speaking communities for nearly a century. Due to this contact there has been a considerable influence of English on Kenyan ethnic languages. Lexical borrowing between English and Gikuyu is quite prevalent. Usually, English is the donor language while Gikuyu is the recipient. This study was motivated by the fact that morphophonological processes that English words borrowed by Gikuyu undergo in order to fit into the latter's system has not been accorded much scholarly attention. The study is an analysis of morphophonological processes English loan words undergo to fit into Gikuyu sound system. The study set out to investigate the morphophonological processes that Gikuyu loan words from English undergo to fit in the Gikuyu system. In particular the Processes that Gikuyu nouns borrowed from English undergo to be accepted in Gikuyu sound structure were analyzed. The study was guided by the theory of Natural Generative Phonology by J.B.Hooper. A descriptive research design was used for the study. Judgmental sampling procedure obtained data from a random sample of fifty respondents drawn from selected professions in Kiharu Division of Murang'a County. The data incorporated an assortment of words from the following fields of interest: Health, Transport, Education, Business/Trade, Religion, Police Service, Government and Law, Domesticity, Auto-motive mechanics and Building and Construction. Two research instruments namely interview schedule and audio recording were used to generate the data. Results indicate that Gikuyu replaces English segments with Gikuyu sounds at initial, medial or final word position. The study further noted that Gikuyu employs several processes to nativize the loan words borrowed from English. These processes were consonant deletion, consonant substitution/alteration, stop sound prenasalization, vowel insertion, epenthesis, vowel lengthening, vowel monophthongization, fore clipping, apocope, adoption of clipped words, calque and lexicalization of acronyms and letter words. The findings of this study will be useful to researchers in applied linguistics and educationists in the area of language pedagogy.