LEXICAL BORROWING IN TIRIKI PLACE NAMES

Gillian Shiyenze & Henry Nandelenga
Department of Literature, Linguistics and Foreign Languages,
Kenyatta University, P.O. Box 43844-00100 Nairobi-Kenya
Corresponding author email: gillianshiyenze@gmail.com

ARTICLE INFO	Abstract

Many linguistic and social processes determine place names. This paper argues that lexical borrowing is one of the dominant processes used in selecting place names among the Tiriki people of western Kenya. Lexical borrowing refers to the adaptation of words or other vocabulary items from another language. It is one of the linguistic processes that account for language development. This article used a descriptive research design to underscore that prestige, among other sociolinguistic factors, is the main reason for borrowing during the selection of Tiriki place names. Based on the theoretical framework of the lexical-semantic model, this study decoded the underlying sociolinguistic factors that led to the borrowing of lexemes from the languages in contact with the Lutirichi speech community, mostly from the Nandi. The findings of this study were intended to assist in defining the understudied Lutirichi lexicon and differentiating it from other Luhya dialects to provide data for its documentation and to inspire future research on the Lutirichi lexeme.

Introduction

Before the process of mapping by colonial governments, boundaries were marked by concrete natural or man-made features. Examples of these natural features are brooks, valleys, ridges, or woods, while man-made features include dykes, walls, and man-made canals, as listed by Jepson (2011). With the British Colonial Administration's coming into East Africa, the Lulogooli lexeme was one of the Luhya dialects selected during the documentation of information about the Abaluhya people of western Kenya. This was because the Abalogooli were among the largest sub-tribes in the region; thus, Lulogooli was used by the British Government and religious groups like Friends Mission as the standard Luhya dialect (Lihraw, 2010). Consequently, the other seventeen Luhya dialects, including Lutirichi, were sidelined in this process.

It was, therefore, essential to investigate features of the Lutirichi lexicon that were omitted during this mapping. Despite the similarities between Lutirichi and Lulogooli, it is essential to document the difference between the two dialects since place names do not only label places, but they also document the history of a people (Helleland, 2002). Moreover, place names of

minority languages can be discriminated against in multilingual areas. This was the case in Tiriki place names among dominant languages like Nandi and Luhya dialects such as Lulogooli. The Tiriki place names, therefore, were documented using the Lulogooli lexeme.

Lexical borrowing dominated the naming systems of the Tiriki place names. Lexical borrowing, also referred to by Haspelmath (2009) as 'loanwords,' is the entry of a lexeme from the donor language into the recipient language. In this article, borrowing referred to the adaptation and integration of loanwords from languages in contact with Lutirichi during the selection of Tiriki place names. Other naming systems included naming places after prominent people, administrative activities, historical occurrences, and geographical features.

Issues and Universality in Borrowing

Despite the capacity of all languages to generate new words for new phenomena, lexical borrowing is common among languages in contact. Haspelmath (2009) attributes this to social and attitudinal factors as well as grammatical factors. These loanwords are then adapted from thedonor language and eventually integrated into the recipient language. Once integrated, the loanword belongs to both languages equally.

Apart from identifying the Tiriki place names and their origin, it was also important to determine which place names are borrowed, why these particular ones were borrowed and not others, and factors that led to their borrowing. Moreover, the importation of cultural activities from tribes in contact with the recipient language is often followed by lexical borrowing (Haspelmath, 2009). The article, therefore, determined whether there are such cultural practices and whether there were place names borrowed as a result of this importation. Revealing the attitudes of the Tiriki and the processes of adaptation of loanwords is vital to linguists as it helps to build on the understudied Lutirichi lexicon as well as assisting policymakers in determining boundaries in the western region of Kenya. This will also contribute to theinclusion of such marginalized groups during resource distribution in western Kenya.

This article purposively sampled forty Tiriki place names to determine their origin. Twenty-five out of the sampled forty place names had their origin in lexical borrowing. All of the sampled borrowed place names, except one, were borrowed from Nandi, a Nilotic speech community that is in contact with Lutirichi. This meant that sixty-three percent of the sampled place names had their origin from lexical borrowing, therefore, justifying their analysis in this paper. To shed light on why the Tiriki preferred borrowed place names to their native Lutirichi place names, the paper was guided by the following objectives:

    I.   Identify the loanwords used in Tiriki place names.
    II.   Describe factors leading to the borrowing of the place names in question
    III.   Examine the linguistic processes used during the nativization of the loanwords

The rationale of discussions in this article was to distinguish the Lutirichi lexicon from the previously used Lulogooli lexicon in naming Tiriki place names by outlining the distinctive features identified. The cultural activities shared by the languages in contact with Lutirichi were also described hence finding the reasons behind the lexical borrowing between them.

This article was limited to the analysis of the Tiriki place names borrowed from the languages in contact with the speakers of Lutirichi. The mechanisms used to adapt and integrate these loanwords into Lutirichi were also described. These included morphological changes like affixation and phonological changes like consonant substitution. Social-linguistic factors that ledto the borrowing were analyzed to determine the reason for lexical borrowing of the place namesrather than using lexemes of the native language Lutirichi. Reasons for dominance of the Nandi loanwords rather than loanwords from the other languages in contact were then analyzed to validate the argument by Haspelmath (2009) that prestige and puristic attitudes may be responsible for the lexical borrowing. The place names in question were forty and were sampled from Vihiga County of western Kenya.

Borrowing, Adaptation, and Integration of Loanwords

Borrowing to Hespelmath (2009) is to adopt, impose or retain a lexeme from a donor language. This does not suggest that the donor language loses the said word, but the recipient language gains a new one. Lexical borrowing, moreover, can include roots and affixes, collocations, sounds, and grammatical processes (Daulton, 2012). From this study, the prefixes **kap-** and **chep**- are adapted together with their roots during the formation of Tiriki place names like Ikabachi, Ichebutulu, and Ikambochi.

Hespelmath (2009) observed that these loanwords are unanalyzable units in the recipient language. He argued that the corresponding source word in the donor language might lose its complex or even phrasal nature when it enters the recipient language. The results of this study, especially in the analysis of Nandi loanwords, agree with this observation. The internal structure of the name 'Ikambochi,' for example, is borrowed from Nandi 'Kapmbogi' (home of Mbogi), the place name has the prefix kap- which means 'home of' in the Nandi dialect and the root 'Mbogi' which is a person's name. This is lost when the loanword is borrowed into Lutirichi. Moreover, current users of the place name may not perceive the more profound meaning but simply adopt it as one word with one meaning.

Karuru (2013) argued that adapted loanwords appear as similar as possible to the source words. This can be illustrated in some place names in Kenya borrowed from English such as '*Rumuruti'* from 'remote route,' 'Daka ini' from 'dark lane' and '*Narumoru'* from 'narrow mall.' However, some examples such as '*Ruaka'* from English 'lower camp' and '*kasarani'* from'Castle Leigh' differ considerably in pronunciation from their original forms. Hespelmath (2009) argued that borrowing refers to a Completed language change. This explains why Lutirichi substitutes the voiced velar plosive /g/ in place names such as 'kambogi' with the voiceless palatal plosive /c/ after borrowing it from the donor language, Nandi. It is further integrated into Lutirichi by adding the prefix i- to be realized as [ika^{m}boci]. Hespelmath (2009) gave the example of the Russian word '*buterbrod,'* meaning 'sandwich,' which was borrowed from the German '*butter-brot.'* From this example, it is evident that the compound aspect of the German form of the loanword was lost when it was borrowed into Russian in a monomorphemic form. This means the German compound word, '*butter-brot,'* was borrowed as a single lexeme '*buterbrod'* into the Russian linguistic inventory rather than a compound.

The adoption of loanwords is not a result of the inability of the native language to generate new words or lacking an equivalent form of the word. It is determined by the attitude of the recipient language speakers towards borrowing and change (Ottenheimer, 2008). For example, the name '*Ikapsasuri'* is borrowed from the Nandi lexeme '*kapsasur,'* whichrefers to a wild plantain. It is not surprising that the Lutirichi lexical inventory has an equivalent lexeme for this wild plantain: '*masitsi*.' The reason for preferring to borrow this loanword from Nandi could simply have been for prestige. According to Ottenheimer (2008), some languages borrow more than others because some languages have mental openness to supra-local norms while others value stability. English is given as one example of open language, while French is more rigid. This was due to the use of Latin in Christianity and as a means of expanding their vocabulary. From the findings of this research, the Tiriki place names are dominantly borrowed from Nandi lexemes. This means that Lutirichi can be classified as 'open' as it readily borrows from other languages in contact.

This paper revealed that the Nandi considered themselves more prestigious than the surrounding tribes: Dholuo, Abalogooli, Abagusi, and Abaluhya. They viewed themselves as superior to the other people they came into contact with, and with the advantage of their warlike nature, they easily subdued their neighbours (KLB's, 2018, p. 38). This could explain why sixty percent of the place names studied were borrowed from the Nandi lexicon. Naturally, the dominant language is expected to influence the less dominant one.

In another view, Treffers-Deller (2007) found that borrowing can be derogatory, as in the case of the English lexeme 'assassin.' This lexeme was borrowed from the Arabic lexeme '*haschischin'* which is translated as 'hashish eater.' This was the name of the eleventh-century Muslim sect thatwould intoxicate themselves with 'hashish' before killing a prominent person in public. The sect mentioned comprised the followers of Hassan Ibn Sabbah (Labov, 2010), whose activities the English disapproved of. Daulton (2012) found that bilingual speakers also encourage borrowing by habitually code-switching, which is, alternating between two languages in the same discourse, sentence, or even the same word. This article found that a significant percentage of Lutirichi speakers are bilingual, speaking both Lutirichi and Nandi. This accounts for the prevalence of Nandi loanwords in the Tiriki place name inventory. However, Daulton (2012) pointed out that lexical borrowing is not in any way dependent on code-switching. This is evident in some monolinguistic interactions that have loanwords integrated into their languages.

Loanwords often have orthographic, morphological, syntactic, and phonological properties in the donor language that do not fit into the recipient language. They are therefore reconstructed to fit into the recipient language's internal structure. Examples are place names: '*Rumurut'i* from the English 'remote route, '*Daka ini'* from 'dark lane and '*Kileleshwa'* from 'Clay land swamp.' These loanwords have had their phonology, morphology, and semanticsaltered by the recipient language, Gikuyu. Hespelmath (2009) gives the example of Russian lacking the front rounded vowels and therefore would have a problem with the French word '*résumé'* meaning 'summary,' which is realized as [rezyme] in Russian. English too has aproblem with French because English is inanimate, unlike French, whose nouns are either masculine or feminine.

In the same way, Nandi loanwords borrowed into Lutirichi were problematic since their syllable structures vary. Nandi has the CVC, CCVC syllable structure, while Lutirichi has theCV, V, and CCV syllable structure. The Nandi loanwords were, therefore, modified during nativization. One such mechanism is 'vowel insertion' after the last consonant, as is illustrated by the Lutirichi place name [iseremi] borrowed from the Nandi lexeme '*serem.'* Another mechanism is 'consonant substitution' where, for example, the phoneme /p/ substituted with /β/ in the Lutirichi lexicon in loanwords like [iceβuteci] from the Nandi 'kaptich.'

Methodology

The lexical semantics model is appropriate for this study since it is concerned with the meaning of words, why they mean what they mean and how they are represented in the speakers' minds. Taking an etymological approach, the paper examined the patterns of the Tiriki place names revealing a high preference for lexical borrowing in the place naming selection process. This is described by Hespelmath (2009) as therapeutic and cultural borrowing. Therapeutic borrowing isborrowing for reasons of prestige, while cultural borrowing involves borrowing new words and new concepts. The importing of the culture of male and female circumcision from the Nandi led to the borrowing of the Nandi lexemes as well. This is illustrated by place names like 'Isenende,' whose origin is a Nandi loanword 'senendet,' a sacred shrub used during the circumcision ceremony by initiates. The therapeutic borrowing described by Hespelmath (2009) is exemplified in Nandi loanwords borrowed because the Lutirichi speech community found it prestigious to use Nandi lexemes. This resulted from the Nandi dominance in the western region having subdued the other neighbouring tribes of Abaluhya, Dholuo, and Abagusi (KLB's, 2018, p. 38).

This paper used a descriptive research design to investigate the factors determining the extensive borrowing of place names from predominantly Nandi lexemes by Lutirichi speakers of Vihiga County in Kenya. Purposive sampling of forty Tiriki place names uncovered twenty-four place names borrowed from Nandi. The meanings of the borrowed place names were analyzed to account for their selection. This was done by relating the meaning of the loanwords to social activities like circumcision or economic activities like pastoralism.

Twelve subjects were interviewed using a semi-structured interview schedule. The subjects were reached through snowball sampling where existing study subjects apprenticed future subjects from among their acquaintances. Both male and female subjects who were born and bred in Vihiga County were sampled. This was done because most of the data existed in oral form since there is very little documentation of the Lutirichi lexicon. The place names were then analyzed in terms of phonological, morphological, and semantic adaptation mechanisms applied to fit into the Lutirichi lexicon. Vowel insertion and consonant substitution were identified as prevalent mechanisms in these loanwords. This data was then summarized in tables showing the loanwords before and after adaptation alongside their meanings. Conclusions were then drawn from this data about the reasons for lexical borrowing dominating the selection of Tiriki place names. The area of study was the Hamisi constituency of Vihiga County in western Kenya, where thespeakers of Lutirichi are in contact with the Nandi, Dholuo, Abagusi, and other settlers on administrative appointment by the Kenyan government or attracted to the area for economic

reasons. The area is easily accessible by road, and it comprises bilingual and multilingual inhabitants. This eased the data collection and verification activities.

Results and Discussion

Lutirichi Borrowings and Place Names
Jepson (2011) argued that the main reason for naming places is to mark boundaries and that the political, cultural, and local history of a people is mirrored in place names. Territorial boundaries are formed as a result of an inborn instinct to control one's area. From the data in this paper, the Tiriki place names mark their boundaries, whether they are borrowed or native Tiriki names. TheLutirichi signature is found in the phonology and morphological of these place names. Lutirichi place names, for example, have specific affixes for place names such as the nominalizing prefix *i-* in place names like Igoibei, Ikapsasuru, and Iseremi. The Prefix i- can be translated as 'where we find,' 'in' and 'at.' Lutirichi moreover lacks the voiceless bilabial plosive /p/ and replaces it with

/β/ in place names such as [ikβαutunyi] and [iβaαⁿdʒα].

From the data analyses, the terrain of places such as 'Ichebulongo' is revealed in the Nandi loanword, 'chebrongo,' translated as 'a sloppy area.' 'Kipchekwen,' which is pronounced [iceβukokweni], described the character trait of its inhabitants as 'cunning.' This shows that the character of the inhabitants of a place, its terrain, and social activities of a community are entrenched in their place names. The following table gives the meaning of the sampled place names in this article.

The Semantics of Tiriki Place Names Borrowed from Nandi

S.NO.	Tiriki place name	Nandi Loanword	Meaning
1.	Ikamnono	Kapnono	Home of Nono
2.	Isahani	Kapsean	Home of Sean
3.	Ikabachi	Kapchi	People's home
4.	Isenende	Senendet	Dombeya tree
5.	Ikaimosi	Kapkimose	Home of Kimose
6.	Ikamande	Kapmande	Home of Mande
7.	Ichebutechi	Kaptich	Home of cattle
8.	Iseremi	Serem	Home of Serem
9.	Ikambochi	Gaambogi	Home of Mbogi
10	Ichemukoyi	Kapchelugut	Home of the python
11	Ibanja	Banja	Home of Banja
12	Ikabusasuri	kapsasuriet	Where wild plantains grow
13	Ikamukiywa	Kamukuyo	Elgon teak
14	Igoigei	Goibei	A rock with water
15	Ichebulongo	chebrongo	A steep/ slopy place
16	Ichebutulu	Cheptul	An explosion
17	Ichebukokweni	Kipchekwen	A place in cunning people
18	Ikamalenga	Kapmalenga	Home of Malenga

19	Igavinjari	Kapinjari	Home of Injari
20	Ichisambayi	Kapsambai	Home of Sambayi
21	Ichitinda	Ke til da	Jump when you get there
22	Ikapsoywa	Soiyet	Parasol tree
23	Isirwa	Sirwo	A fenced area

A dominant characteristic about the sampled place names is that most of them are named afterthe owner of a particular homestead. The data collected revealed that these places were forest areas primarily associated with circumcision ceremonies. These included 'Isahani,' 'Ikamande,' and 'Ichebutechi,' which later became shopping centres.

According to Bahumaid (2015), only one meaning of the loanword is maintained during adaptation. This he refers to as 'narrowing.' From the data tabulated above, the only meaning that remained was the labeling trading centres and administrative offices. The initial value of designating sacred groves for prayers and circumcision was forgotten over time. This is illustrated in loanwords such as   'kapchelugut' (pronounced [Icemukuyi]), which was so named to commemorate someone who a python swallowed at this place, and 'kaptul' (pronounced [ikαβutulu]), which denotes an explosion that could portend an area with military history.

Adaptation and Nativization of Loanwords
Analysis of the nativization of these borrowed place names revealed that consonant substitution during adaptation and integration of these loanwords into the Lutirichi lexicon. This is illustrated below.

Consonant Substitution in Lutirichi

NANDI		Pronunciation	LUTIRICHI	Pronunciation
/p/	kapchi	[kαpci]	/β/ ikabachi	[ikaβαci]
/k/	kapchelugui	[kαpcelugui]	/c/ ichemukuji	[icemukuji]
/ɣ/	gaambogi	[ɣαᵐboɣi]	/k/ ikambochi	[ikamboci]
/r/	chebrongo	[cebroⁿgo]	/l/ ichebulongo	[iceβuloŋgo]
/β/	Kapinjari	[kαβiriⁿdʒα]	/v/ ikavinjari	[ikαvirindʒαri]
/pn/	Kapnono	[kapnono]	/m/ ikamnono	[ikamnono]

Lutirichi inserts glides in words with two vowel sounds in Nandi; for example, /j/ is inserted before /i/ as in Ichisambayi, which is a nativization of 'kipsambai' in Nandi. Another example is 'Ichemukuyi' from 'Kapchelugu.'

The two languages have nominalizing affixes (Kibet, 2016), and some words have opaque morphemes as in 'Banja' in Nandi, which should normally have the prefix kap-. Lutirichi also hasopaque morphemes in the place names 'Muhudu', 'Makuchi,' 'Lwandoni,' and 'Tigoi.' The table below shows these prefixes.

Lutirichi and Nandi prefixes

	Nominalization affixes	Examples
Nandi	Kap-, ga-, Chep-, -et, -at, -ot, -it, -t(kibet, 2016)	Chebrongo, sasuriet, kapsambai
Lutirichi	i-, mu-, xu-, tsi-, βu-	Iseremi, mungavo, xuluvanda

The loanwords sampled mainly added the prepositional prefix i- meaning *in, at*, or *where* to fit into the syllable structure of Lutirichi, which is CV V CCV, as seen in table 4.1.

Conclusion

Lexical borrowing in Tiriki place names is mainly from the Nandi donor language. It is triggered by cultural and therapeutic reasons due to borrowing some Nandi cultural practices like circumcision and due to the Nandi dominance over the neighbouring tribes. Other reasonsfor Lexical borrowing are prestige and puristic value. The loanwords are adapted by reconstructing the words phonologically using mechanisms such as vowel insertion and consonant substitution. Morphologically, they are adopted by the affixation of the Nandi loanwords to fit into the Lutirichi morpheme. The semantic mechanism of adaptation was narrowing. The original meaning of the loanwords and their internal structure are not retained after integration into Lutirichi. Thus, the compound words are adopted as monomorphemic words, and eventually, the sociolinguistic aspects of the loanwords are soon forgotten.

The findings of this research come as a boost towards the preservation of the history of Tiriki place names, paving the way for further research on the understudied Lutirichi lexicon. This will also contribute to the documentation of data to be used as a resource in teaching mother tongue in schools in western Kenya. Understanding a people's history enables policymakers to make informed decisions during the allocation of resources in the country to foster equity in development.

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