



THESIS

2  
2004

56551352

LIBRARY  
Michigan State  
University

This is to certify that the

thesis entitled

Language Attitudes: Nairobi People and Sheng

presented by

Peter Githinji

has been accepted towards fulfillment  
of the requirements for

Masters degree in Linguistics



Major professor

Date September 13, 2002

PLACE IN RETURN BOX to remove this checkout from your record.  
TO AVOID FINES return on or before date due.  
MAY BE RECALLED with earlier due date if requested.

DATE DUE	DATE DUE	DATE DUE
<del>07 13 06</del> <del>OCT 23 2006</del>	OCT 02 2007 12 02 07	
JAN 11 2007		

**LANGUAGE ATTITUDES: NAIROBI PEOPLE AND SHENG'**

**By**

**Peter Githinji**

**A THESIS**

**Submitted to  
Michigan State University  
In partial fulfillment of the requirements  
For the degree of**

**MASTER OF ARTS**

**Department of Linguistics and Germanic, Slavic  
Asian and African Languages**

**2003**



## ABSTRACT

### LANGUAGE ATTITUDES: NAIROBI PEOPLE AND SHENG'

By

Peter Githinji

Previous work on Sheng' has tended to be descriptive in nature. This has resulted in claims that lack empirical support. In light of the changing dimensions pertaining to the use of Sheng' and the way it is viewed by different section of the population, some of the earlier issues need to be brought up to date. This study departs from previous studies on Sheng' by relying on empirical evidence to qualify the claims made therein.

The objective of this study is to investigate the attitudes of Nairobi people towards Sheng' and its speakers. This is geared towards enhancing our understanding of the changing pattern of people's attitudes which account for the persistence of Sheng' inspite if close to four decades of stigmatization.

This study combines traditional methods of attitudes research such as tables. However, it has also adopted the popular methods used in sociolinguistic research such as use of qualitative hand-drawn maps as well as semantic differential scales. The findings show that people's attitudes are not only influence by sociolinguistic variables of age, sex and status, but also the function that Sheng' serves within a status group depending on whether raters perceive themselves as speakers or non-speakers.

## **DEDICATION**

**I dedicate this work to my mother  
Margaret Nyambura Ciira  
For the gift of life, and priceless lessons  
That have been my guiding light.**

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This thesis could not have been completed without the support of the members of my guidance committee. I especially hail the cooperation I received from my two co-chairs, Dr. Deogratias Ngonyani and Dr. Dennis R. Preston, who by their excellent co-ordination enabled me overcome the various hurdles on the way. The two have not only offered me the necessary guidance from the first day I joined the department, they have also contributed greatly in nurturing my linguistic talent through enhancing my grasp of linguistic theory as well as building my sociolinguistic methods of investigation. I am also indebted to Dr. David Dwyer for his advice and valuable insight through his understanding of the language situation in Africa.

I am also grateful to chair and the entire Linguistics department staff, as well as other professors and the students for all the assistance and cooperation. They provided me with conducive environment for scholarly work and gave me the much-needed encouragement.

Other people outside the department also contributed to the success of this work. In this regard, I extend my gratitude to Professor Kimani Njogu of Kenyatta University for his encouragement and inspiration and Mr. John Gitau and his family, who offered me a place to stay while collecting data in Nairobi. Of course I would not forget my respondents whose input form the bulk of my research.

Lastly, I acknowledge the input of my family, especially my mother Nyambura, and my two sisters, Wambui and Wanjiku and their families. They have all shown great faith in me as well as motivating me to work hard. They will always remain part of me.

## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

List of Tables	viii
List of Figures	x
Chapter One:	
1.1 Introduction	1
1.2 Statement of the problem	4
1.3 Significance of the study	5
1.4 Hypotheses	6
1.5 Scope of the study	6
1.6 Organization of the thesis	7
Chapter 2 Background of the study	
2.1.0 Introduction:	8
2.1.1 Multilingualism and Language contact	8
2.2.0 Kenyan's Language Background	9
2.2.1 The language policy	9
2.3.0 Literature review on Language use in Kenya	11
2.3.1 Vernaculars	11
2.3.2 The status and use of Kiswahili	12
2.3.3 The status of English	14
2.4.0 Claims, and origins	15
2.4.1 Claims about Sheng'	15
2.4.2. The origin of Sheng'	17
2.4.3 Engsh?	17
2.5.0 Previous Perspectives used for looking at Sheng'	18
2.5.1 The Slang Perspective	18
2.5.2 The Argot Perspective	20
2.5.3 Pidgin and Creole Perspective	20
2.6.0 Theoretical Frameworks in Language attitudes studies.	21
2.6.1 Code-switching Framework	21

2.6.2 Markedness Framework	22
2.6.3 Accommodation Framework	22
2.7.0 Sheng' and gender	23
2.7.1 Sheng' and Age	24
2.8.0 Language attitudes	25
2.8.1 Attitudes towards Sheng'	26
Chapter 3 Methodology	
3.1 Introduction	27
3.2.0 Methods of data elicitation	27
3.2.1 Direct method	28
3.2.2 Indirect Method	29
3.3 The setting of the research	30
3.4.0 The respondents	30
3.4.1 Test Respondents in Michigan	30
3.4.2 Nairobi respondents	31
3.5.0 Instruments and procedure	33
3.5.1 Maps:	35
3.5.2 Percentage Scores	36
3.5.3 Factor analysis	36
Chapter 4: Results and Discussions	
4.1.0 Percentage Scores	38
4.1.1 Respondents awareness and use of Sheng'	38
4.1.2 Estimates on percentage of Sheng' speakers	43
4.1.3 Judgments Regarding use of Sheng'	45
4.2 Respondents identification of Sheng' areas	51
4.3.0 Factor Analysis: Respondents' Ratings	64
4.3.1 Factor loading Ratings of Sheng'' speakers	65
4.3.2 Factor interpretation for speakers	68
4.3.3 Factor loadings: The rating of Sheng'	73
4.3.4 Factor interpretation for Sheng'	76
Chapter 5 Conclusions	81

<b>APPENDIX I</b>	<b>85</b>
<b>APPENDIX II</b>	<b>89</b>
<b>APPENDIX III</b>	<b>92</b>
<b>APPENDIX IV</b>	<b>94</b>
<b>Bibliography</b>	<b>96</b>

## **LIST OF TABLES**

Table 1: Respondents knowledge of Sheng'	38
Table 2: Respondents use of Sheng' according to age	39
Table 3: Knowledge of Sheng' according to sex	41
Table 4: Use of Sheng' according to sex	41
Table 5: Knowledge of Sheng' according to role status	42
Table 6: Use of Sheng' according to role status	42
Table 7: Estimates of the overall percentage of Sheng' Speakers	43
Table 8: Estimates of Sheng' speakers according to status groups	44
Table 9: Belief on who should speak Sheng' according to role status.	46
Table 10: Reactions to older people speaking Sheng' according to sex	47
Table 11: Reactions to older people speaking Sheng' according to status.	48
Table 12: Respondents feelings towards innovations according to age	49
Table 13: Reactions to innovations according to status	50
Table 14: Reaction to innovations according to sex	51
Table 15: Factor loading: Students evaluation of Sheng' Speakers	65
Table 16 Teachers' evaluation of Sheng' speakers- Factor Loadings	66
Table 17: The Down market People's evaluation of Sheng' speakers	66
Table 18: Up market People's evaluation of Sheng' speakers	67
Table 19: Touts' evaluation of Sheng' speakers - Factor Loadings	67
Table 20: Factor 1	68

Table 21: Factor 2.	70
Table 22: Factor 3	72
Table 23: Students evaluation of Sheng'-Factor loadings	74
Table 24: Teachers evaluation of Sheng'	74
Table 25: Down market peoples' evaluation of Sheng'	75
Table 26: Up market people's evaluation of Sheng'	75
Table 27: Touts' evaluation of Sheng'	75
Table 28: Factor 1	76
Table 29: Factor 2	79



## **LIST OF FIGURES**

<b>Figure 1: The Life cycle of Slang'</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Figure 2 : Map of Nairobi used in the study</b>	<b>34</b>
<b>Figure 3: Drawn by a student</b>	<b>53</b>
<b>Figure 4: Drawn by a teacher</b>	<b>54</b>
<b>Figure 5: Drawn by a down market resident</b>	<b>56</b>
<b>Figure 6: Drawn by an Up market respondent</b>	<b>59</b>
<b>Figure 7: Drawn by a tout</b>	<b>61</b>

# **LANGUAGE ATTITUDES: NAIROBI PEOPLE AND SHENG'**

## **Chapter One**

### **1.1 Introduction**

A glaring deficiency in many language attitude studies conducted in Sub-Saharan Africa is the avoidance of urban hybrid language varieties, which are a direct offspring of language contact situations. More emphasis tends to be focused on mainstream languages such as regional vernaculars, national, and official languages. Urban languages are ignored, either because they are considered unimportant or an unwelcome problem in the complex multilingual situations that characterize many Sub-Saharan African countries. In Kenya for instance, the exact number of languages is a matter of some debate, based largely on the difficulty of drawing dividing lines between languages and dialects. Mbaabu (1996) and Abdulaziz and Osinde (1997) suggest the number is above 40. In such a situation of “dense multilingualism” (Adegbija, 1994), speakers of different languages will clearly have their opinions and beliefs about other languages as well as their own.

Some of these opinions and belief can be a source of social conflict because an emphasis on linguistic difference often functions as a guise for expressing the dislike of the speakers of that language. When people are evaluating a language, these dislikes manifest themselves in subjective judgments based on stereotypes associated with the speakers. These evaluative judgments about languages and their speakers are the target of language attitudes research.

Where the linguistic arena is already saturated, emergence of forms that further complicate the already fluid situation is not usually treated with sympathy because it is

seen as negating the national aspirations of the eradication of ignorance and promotion of national cohesion. In addition, the use of non-standard varieties of language is assumed to affect the learning of standard languages (Labov 1972, Halliday 1978, Mbaabu 1996). The controversy surrounding the Black English trial in Ann Arbor Michigan in 1979 (Milroy and Milroy 1985, Niedzielki and Preston, 2000, Baugh 1998, Macaulay, 1997) demonstrates that ignorance of people's attitudes and subsequent failure to take them into consideration in developing a country's language policy can turn out to be explosive. It is perhaps particularly important to note that nonstandard varieties are looked down upon, most probably because of the class of people they are associated with. Such issues revolve around ethno-racial bias, socio-economic status, age and sex.

In spite of this hostility, such languages continue to thrive, and they display a vitality that defies the stigmatization they receive from the language purists. This can be attributed to the "covert prestige" that speakers derive from them (Trudgill and Andersson 1990, Milroy and Milroy 1985), as well as their utilitarian functions. The antagonism between prescriptivists who advocate standard or mainstream languages and the users of these forms evokes different attitudes from both sides of the divide depending on the perspective one takes.

Sheng' is a hybrid language, defined by scholars as an acronym of 'Swahili English slang' (Mazrui 1995, Osinde 1986, Abdulaziz and Osinde 1997, Rocha 1998). Its widespread use among the Eastland youth of Nairobi in the 1960s and 1970s (Moga and Fee 1993, Mazrui, 1995, Osinde 1986) was initially seen as a threat to the development of Kiswahili as the national language (Mbaabu 1996, Ngesa 2002). Not only was it perceived as affecting the performance of Kiswahili in both primary and post-primary

levels of education, but also that its continued uses outside the school environment was at the expense of Kiswahili, mainly because it relied on Kiswahili for its structure (Abdulaziz and Osinde 1997, Mazrui 1995). The initial perception of Sheng' as a threat to national/official languages has continued to dominate the agenda of language planners as well as policy makers who have continually voiced their concerns in media forums. Despite various condemnations from language teachers, policy makers and parents, Sheng' has grown even stronger. Initially confined to teenagers in Nairobi's Eastland slums, it has now attracted users in other slum areas as well as many post teenage speakers. Presently a majority of Nairobi people at one time or another can be said to speak Sheng', depending on the parameters under which it is defined. In their introduction to the third edition of the Sheng' dictionary, Moga and Fee (1993) claimed that it is becoming a language for people of all ages, a claim which has not been adequately responded to by other linguists.

The spread and use of Sheng' among different age groups and in residential areas formerly considered hostile to Sheng', together with its incorporation into the mainstream media and popular culture, heralds a change or shift in the old stereotypes about Sheng' and its speakers. However, Sheng' has not been fully embraced by the entire population of Nairobi. Although it has attracted a significant number of users from the middle class, it continues to be widely associated with the low-class residential areas.

The major assumption made in this study is that Sheng' elicits different perceptions among different groups of users because each group associate it with a certain function. These functions are not uniform amongst all status-groups. Non-users are expected to perceive Sheng' harshly because to them it serves no function. It is through the study of

attitudes that these functions will be demonstrated in an attempt to account for the persistent use of Sheng' in spite of the hostility shown by the non-users. Oral interviews, questionnaires, maps and semantic differential scales will be used in this study to show that the attitudes of different cadres of Nairobi people towards Sheng' does not follow a universal pattern and that there are variation based on social hierarchies especially age, sex and status of the respondents.

## **1.2 Statement of the problem**

The major purpose of this study is to evaluate the pattern of language attitudes of the people of Nairobi towards Sheng' as a linguistic variety and its speakers as they view themselves and as they are viewed by others. It will adopt the language attitude approach, as summarized by Williams et al, (1976).

Urban language research has involved the linguistic study of social stratification primarily in the identification of speakers socioeconomic strata within city areas. Given this classification of the speaker, linguistic variables, which have predictable variations in the speaker's performance in specified situations are identified. The eventual combined description of speaker, linguistic variable, situations, and range of variation (linguistic continuum) comprise the product of a typical language study. (4)

The issues addressed revolve around how different people view Sheng' and its speakers, with an attempt to answer the following questions; 1) Why are some people hostile to Sheng' and its speakers? 2) Why do others continue using Sheng' in spite of its stigmatization? 3) What is the relationship between the use of Sheng' and peoples' judgments? 4) What is the influence of sex, age and the socioeconomic status on peoples' attitude towards Sheng'? 5) The extent to which traditional stereotypes on Sheng' and its speakers continue to influence the present attitudes and the impact of the widespread use

of Sheng' modifying those attitudes. Related to these issues will be the question of whether Sheng' is accepted generally or just tolerated.

### **1.3 Significance of the study**

The study of language attitudes is important because it gives us insight into the social psychology of human behavior (Baker 1992, Williams et al., 1976). Language is not only a carrier of culture but also a part of culture. The personality traits that people associate with certain linguistic behavior are indices of cultural stereotypes that people associate with users of that speech variety. Studies have shown that speech-stereotyping influences even the processing of messages (Street and Hooper 1982). For instance, perceivers can interpret messages in a biased manner or selectively retain the message that conforms to their stereotypes. Such attitudes are of further importance because they accomplish different functions: utilitarian or instrumental, ego defensive, value expressive or knowledge (Ciapopo and Petty 1982). The significance of knowing people's attitudes is underscored by the fact that by exposing the attitudes, especially those of detrimental nature, the functions those attitudes serve can be identified and addressed. Addressing the underlying functions of negative attitudes that are of linguistic nature minimizes the cultural conflicts that result from biased perspectives and stereotypes. Since as pointed out Sheng' elicit different attitudes to different people, the study of these people's attitude is of utmost importance.

The study of the underlying functions of attitudes towards Sheng' and its users is aimed at enhancing our understanding of the social psychology of Nairobi people. It focuses on an area of academic discourse that has not been given adequate attention. The study will, therefore, be a welcome contribution to the field of sociolinguistics, especially

in the methodology of studying attitudes towards a non-standard urban variety of language in a multilingual setting.

#### **1.4 Hypotheses**

Several hypotheses are developed, most based on characteristic findings from previous sociolinguistic work:

- i) Women and older people underreport on their use of Sheng' because they do not want to be associated with stigmatized speech, while men and younger people overreport because they derive covert prestige from the same speech.
- ii) Users of Sheng' will rate it more favorably than nonusers.
- iii) People from the higher social-economic class tend to draw a distinction between their variety of Sheng' and the one spoken by their counterparts in the lower social economic class.

#### **1.5 Scope of the study**

This study focuses on different categories of Nairobi People based on status differences. Since it seeks to measure the general perception of the people of Nairobi towards Sheng', both speakers and non-speakers are incorporated. The respondents are all adults above 18 years of age. The rationale for focusing on this group is that people have for a long time labeled Sheng' as a teenage phenomenon. This group is likely to display the polarities of attitudes because it includes the following groups;

- i) The current users of Sheng'
- ii) People in transition that earlier studies claimed are abandoning their use of Sheng'

- iii) People considered to be former users of Sheng' who have stopped using it altogether
- iv) Those who have never used Sheng'

One of the limitations of this study is the small number of respondents. It is possible that other status groups could have been identified. Overlapping of respondent's role status cannot be ruled out, for instance, some students might hail from certain residential areas but have been classified as a separate status group. While this is noted, it should be appreciated that , this is only an initial study of language attitudes towards Sheng' which should help form a good background for future research.

## **1.6 Organization of the thesis**

The rest of the thesis is organized as follows; Chapter 2 will be a review of the literature with the background of Kenya's language situation, and the studies conducted on Sheng'. This chapter will also include the theoretical background under which the attitudes towards Sheng' are addressed in this study. Chapter 3 will focus on the methods of data collection and analysis such as questionnaires, maps, semantic differential scales and factor analysis. In Chapter 4, I present the results and discussion, which amongst other findings shows that (a) attitudes towards Sheng' are influenced by the functions it serves amongst different speakers (b) Sheng' continue to be associated with the youths and people from the low social economic status (c) Popular culture plays a big role in shaping peoples attitudes towards Sheng'. Finally chapter five will conclude the thesis and suggest directions for future research



## **Chapter 2 Background of the study**

### **2.1.0 Introduction:**

This chapter provides an overview of Kenya's linguistic background and its implication on Sheng'. It provides the background of the language policy from the colonial period to the present, and the current norms of language use from section 2.1 through 2.3. Sections 2.4 and 2.5 provides claims and perspectives in Sheng' discourse. The theoretical models adopted in this study are discussed in section 2.6, while section 2.7 surveys sociolinguistic variables of sex and age which have had tremendous influence on Sheng'. The final section of the chapter looks at the language attitude studies from the general to those specific to Sheng'.

#### **2.1.1. Multilingualism and Language contact**

Multilingualism is an important characteristic of many sub Saharan African countries. Communal solidarity as well as a pursuit for broader national aspirations determines the domain that each of these languages occupies. The convergence of peoples due to urbanization, education and integration into the national economy has led to language contact, which has yielded different linguistic phenomena unique to different countries. For example in South Africa, Flaaitaal, an urban vernacular amongst the black community, came to embody the spirit of the struggle against apartheid (Makhundu 1995). South Africa had also seen the emergence of other urban varieties like Iscamtho (Ntshangashe 1995) and before then, Fanakalo or Fanagalo (Mesthrie 1992, Bakker 1994), which was a hybrid of Zulu and Afrikaans. Fanakalo was not confined to South Africa alone but had spread as far north as Zambia and Zimbabwe. This South African

language contact situation is comparable to the Kenya one though motivated by different circumstances and occurring in different environments.

### **2.2.0 Kenyan's Language Background**

Language scholars have classified Kenyan indigenous languages into three broad language families — Bantu, Nilotic and Cushitic (Abdulaziz and Osinde 1997, Myers-Scotton 1993). Para-Nilotic languages, which fall between Nilotic and Cushitic languages, are assumed to be a distinct group and taken as the fourth language family (Kariuki 1986). Speakers of Bantu languages are the most dominant and comprise approximately two thirds of the entire Kenyan population (Whiteley 1971, Rhoads 1977); 30% of the population speak Nilotic languages while around 4.5% speak Cushitic languages (Fawcett 1970) In addition, there are other foreign languages spoken such as Hindi, Gujerati, Punjabi, and Urdu from the Indian sub-continent. These are restricted to the Asian community (Gorman 1974 b). While English is the most prominent European language because of the status it enjoys being the language of the former colonial power, others like German, French, Italian and Spanish are also popular mainly due to the opportunities they offer in the tourism industry. However, most of them cannot be considered significant in Kenya's language typology. Use of all these languages in an urban setting could be noted as forming a fertile ground for a hybrid language.

### **2.2.1 The language policy**

This context of “dense multilingualism” presents a big challenge to language planners when formulating policies. Unlike Tanzania, where the language policy is well defined due to aggressive promotion of Kiswahili by the government, Kenya's language

policy is not well defined and has been revised from time to time (Kariuki 1968, Myers-Scotton 1993). At the onset of colonialism, Kiswahili was already being used in the interior as a result of the long distance trade between the interior and the coast (Mbaabu 1996 Mazrui and Mazrui 1995). During the colonial period, language policy revolved around the medium of instruction in schools. Education was provided by missionaries whose primary purpose was evangelization. They influenced the choice of language in elementary school by advocating for the language most understood by the children. This later came to be entrenched in the recommendations by the second Phelps Stokes Commission on education of 1924 (Gorman 1970, Mbaabu 1996). Vernaculars were favored as the best languages of instruction in the lower education since they were considered to have emotional appeal to the learners (Rocha 1998), while English was to be used in higher levels of education, (similar arguments have been advocated by UNESCO from as early as 1950s). Eventually, twenty vernacular languages were chosen, and teaching materials were developed in them (Mbaabu 1996). In effect, some speakers were required to learn in other people's languages, an enterprise that had a negative effect on education among some people who thought they were being linguistically dominated. The choice of only twenty out of over forty languages contradicted the very goal of teaching people in their vernaculars.

Colonial language policy shifted against Kiswahili during the nationalist struggle in the late 1940s because it was seen as having a unifying effect among different ethnic communities, which was a threat to the colonial setup. English started to be emphasized in school curricula at the expense of Kiswahili following the recommendation of the Beecher report of 1942 on the teaching of languages in African schools (Gorman 1974 a).

The subsequent reports dwelling on the language of instruction at school continued to support the use of vernaculars in lower school with English at the higher levels. In secondary schools, English took over completely from Kiswahili in the 1950s (Bogonko 1988), and this trend continued up to the eve of Kenya's independence and after, with Kiswahili being reduced to a subject in the curriculum. Oddly perhaps, the independent African government inherited a policy that gave more prominence to English as opposed to Kiswahili. English thus continued to play a crucial role in government affairs and only the people who mastered it in the education process during colonial times inherited the jobs left by the departing European during the Africanization process. English thus assumed the elitist status it enjoys today.

In spite of the declaration of Kiswahili as the national language in 1974 (Mbaabu 1977, Rocha 1998, Fasold 1984, Harries 1975, Kariuki 1986), English continued to occupy a higher status than Kiswahili (Myers-Scotton 1993). Disregard for Kiswahili was illustrated by the fact that it was not an examinable subject in both primary and secondary school before 1985 (Bogonko 1988, Mbaabu 1996). This tug of war between Kiswahili and English, and the acceptance of the role of vernacular, present a picture of a language policy that is not well defined, a situation Mbaabu (1996) cites as one of the triggers for the development of Sheng'.

### **2.3.0 Literature review on Language use in Kenya**

#### **2.3.1 Vernaculars**

Vernacular languages continue to play an important role in the lives of most Kenyans, particularly in the rural areas where the majority of the population live. A leading scholar,

Ngugi wa Thiongo (1986), strongly advocated for the use of vernaculars as a way of “Decolonizing the mind”. He has argued that education sounds foreign when taught in a foreign language, which can be blamed for African’s educational and technological underdevelopment. The merits and demerits of vernaculars have always been a thorny issue; for instance, educational reports such as the Ominde report of 1964 (Rocha 1998) recommended reduction of the role of vernacular in the education system while pointing out to its importance out of school. The Gachathi report of 1976 recommended the re-introduction of vernacular languages in the school system in the lower grades of Primary school.

On the media scene, the Voice of Kenya (VOK), later Kenya Broadcasting Corporation (KBC)) continued to broadcast in sixteen different mother tongues (Mbaabu 1996). Today, other commercial stations like Rehema radio, East FM, Kameme FM and Coro FM compete for mother tongue audience with KBC. The change of political environment from single party to multiparty politics in the early 1990s heralded a new era in press freedom. Without government censorship, many vernacular monthly and bi-monthly issues of magazines and other publications found their way into the newsstands. With this type of scenario, the vernacular language in Kenya will continue to play an important role for a long time to come.

### **2.3.2 The status and use of Kiswahili**

At Independence, Kenya inherited a trifocal language policy that was shifting towards English to the disadvantage of Kiswahili (Mazrui and Mazrui 1985). The independent government made little effort to change the situation. It was not taken seriously and

teachers used its allocated time to teach other subjects that were examinable in national examinations (Mbaabu 1996, Gachukia 1970). It was argued that Kiswahili could be learnt without being taught in school (Wanjala 1970). Such logic continued to advance the status of English as opposed to other languages (Wanjala 1970, Bogonko 1988).

Following the adoption of the recommendations of the Mackay Commission of January 1981 where the 8-4-4 (8 years primary school, 4 years secondary school and 4 years university) system of education (Rocha 1998, Mbaabu 1977), Kiswahili became a compulsory subject in both primary school (KCPE) and secondary school (KCSE) levels. This move was matched by an increase in enrollment in the Swahili program at the national universities (Mukuria 1995)

Acceptance of Kiswahili by the majority in Kenya is attributed to the fact that it had very few native speakers, so its adoption was not viewed as linguistic domination by a big tribe, which could have fueled ethnic rivalry (Harries 1975, Mazrui and Mazrui 1995, Fasold 1984). Kiswahili in Nairobi and other urban areas of Kenya is the unmarked language in most situations because it is regarded as ethnically neutral (Myers-Scotton 1993). However, there is no strict observation of grammatical rules because speakers do not feel bound by the prescriptive power of standard Kiswahili (Myers-Scotton 1991), and since the majority of Kiswahili speakers are not native speakers, they are not bound by its traditions and cultural conventions (Harries 1975). For example, euphemisms clothed taboo words in Kiswahili, but such social norms were not respected amongst those who acquired Kiswahili as their second language. While many Kenyans are comfortable in Kiswahili, they still use it alongside their first languages, and intermixing is regarded as *Sheng'* in some cases. Since it is based on Kiswahili grammar, *Sheng'*

affects Kiswahili more than any other language. For those who see it as a corrupted variety of Kiswahili, they are bound to rate it with Standard Kiswahili in mind.

### **2.3.3 The status of English**

By the time Kenya achieved independence, English had already established itself as the language of upward mobility. The opposition to its replacement with Kiswahili mirrors the common trend in many countries in sub-Saharan Africa with regard to ex-colonial languages as pointed out by Adegbija:

...attempts to oust them from a position of dominance have met with little success and often, stiff resistance, because knowledge of them is now emblematic, in varying degrees, with power, prestige, status, 'making it', 'being up there', and being able to *achieve*. (Adegbija 1994:21)

English has played a crucial role in Kenya in education, administration, commerce and finance. English is needed for the “*international* model of cross cultural communication” and the “local model of *intranational* communication” (Kembo-Sure 1995). Use of English in the education process influences the attitudes of the school graduates to perceive it favorably thus perpetuating the trend. Today, the use of Kiswahili by the majority of the population in Kenya and preference of English by the upper class reflects the status difference of the speakers. Overall, English is indispensable: “It isn’t optional. In practice, it is obligatory” (Downes 1998 :43). The majority, some of whom are not competent in English in spite of their formal education, continue to intermix it with Kiswahili and other vernaculars. This has been the basis of the claim that Sheng’ is used to mask the speakers deficiency in English. Mixing Swahili and English enables

speakers to communicate with a wider group of people, while at the same time enhancing the status of the speaker by identifying with the language of power

#### **2.4.0 Claims, and origins**

##### **2.4.1 Claims about Sheng'**

Carol Eastman (1984) identified three-generation gaps in Swahili. The “traditional” or (old) generational Swahili that dealt with Swahili cultural things, “modern” or standard generational Swahili that dealt with modern international things, while mixed pidgin Swahili dealt with necessary things. Sheng' would apparently fall under the classification of ‘mixed pidgin’ Swahili in Carol Eastman’s definition. Sammy Wambua in *Kenya Times: December 21 1987* called it a linguistic crossbreed that has words from English and all other Kenyan languages. In this study Sheng' will be taken as a mixture of different Kenyan languages with Kiswahili and English being the most prominent. Scholars have agreed that the term Sheng' is an acronym of Swahili English slang (Mazrui, 1995, Osinde 1986, Abdulaziz and Osinde 1997, Rocha 1998). In spite of its incorporation of elements from many languages, monolinguals speakers of these languages who are outside Sheng's culture cannot understand it.

In 1990, Philip Ochieng', then managing editor of Kenya Times, sparked what came to be dubbed “the Sheng' debate” by calling for the establishment of a Sheng' institute as a step towards fighting tribalism and hailed the youth who had been at the center of its innovation; *Kenya Times: August 8 1990*. Ochieng blamed the Kenyan authorities for not promoting Kiswahili like their Tanzanian counterparts and said that Sheng' was a welcome phenomenon to fill the void. Ireri Mbaabu (1996) expressed



similar views and claimed that Sheng' was an outcome of poor language policy. In a follow up to Ochieng's proposal, Bobby Kiama, *Kenya Times: November 11 1990* estimated that Sheng' had millions of speakers especially among young people and had diffused into the whole society. He remarked thus:

The popularity of Sheng' can be attributed to schoolchildren who have influenced their parents, teachers, and many adults to marvel at its beauty and as a result many non-speakers have been recruited to speak it through innocent influence. (Kenya Times: 11/11/1990)

This argument supports Osinde's explanation of the diffusion of Sheng' to include the parents who had been excluded for a long time, which I quote below:

Initially, it was received with so much hostility that the youth found themselves in trouble with their parents. But as time went by and more and more words were created, with speakers becoming more expert in the creation and using the language constantly, the parents and adults in general became more tolerant towards it. So much so that a few of them can now be heard to utter a few Sheng' words especially to small children. (Osinde 1986: 33)

Moga and Fee's (1993) preface to the third edition of a Sheng' dictionary say nowadays it is not like the times when the young people used to confuse their parents with Sheng' because almost everybody now uses Sheng'. This claim is vague because it fails to clarify whether this happens in all estates of Nairobi or whether this change is restricted to the Downmarket areas where Sheng' has been spoken by youth for a long time. Investigation of attitudes of people from different estates can shed light on this claim.

#### **2.4.2. The origin of Sheng'**

Sheng' is an outcome of a language contact situation. Although there is consensus that it began to be used around the 1960s and 1970s, Mazrui (1995) collected data among the people in Kibera and hints at the possibility of the existence of what can be regarded as precursor of Sheng' as early as 1930s. Mr. Karanja, a one-time city criminal in the 1930s who admits that they were using a language that outsiders could not understand, confirms this in his book *Miaka 50 Jela* (50 years in Jail).

Sheng's origin can be attributed to code-switching as manifested through language games (Parkin 1974). Language tolerance and the desire for inter-ethnic communication has resulted in linguistic convergence. This is accommodation of others way of speaking, manifested through language mixing, which is the foundation of Sheng' (Osinde 1986). In most multilingual estates, speaking of use of one language without intermixing is marked.

The most important reason advanced for the origin of Sheng' is "the usual human yearning for belonging to a group with which one identifies, a group which in most cases excludes other groups" (Osinde 1986:8). The weakening of tribal affiliation as a result of urbanization created a void. The urban setting could not provide youth with a language of identity that catered to people from different language backgrounds; in short, Sheng' had to be formed to serve the needs of in-group solidarity.

#### **2.4.3 Engsh?**

Engsh is not a common term in Nairobi, but it must be mentioned when making reference to the different varieties of Sheng', or what its speakers call 'slang.' It is a variety

associated with the youth from Upmarket<sup>1</sup> or higher status estates and is characterized by a high concentration of English words with words from other languages thrown in here and there (Abdulaziz and Osinde 1997). Engsh emerged as a deliberate reaction to Sheng' to emphasize class distinctions between because the youths from these rich estates and their counterparts from the poor estates (Osinde 1990). An alternative explanation would be to invoke the dynamics of language in social network. Since there is low level of communication between residents from these areas and those from the core areas of Sheng's innovation, then the Engsh clusters can be considered as relic areas (Downes 1998) if spread of Sheng' follows the wave theory of linguistic change. The rating of Sheng' by residents from these areas vary, sometimes fluctuating to both extremes depending on whether they view themselves within the whole picture of Sheng' speakers or as a distinct group of Sheng' speakers.

## **2.5.0 Previous Perspectives used for looking at Sheng'**

### **2.5.1 The Slang Perspective**

Slang is racy, lively, vivid, current, hip, cool and in-group (Neidzielki and Preston, 2000). Hypothetically, the users of Sheng' might be expected to rate it high for these qualities. In-group slang is a technical language and seeks to isolate outsiders (Burling 1970) and does not necessarily arise out of the coinage of new lexical items, but from recreation of "antiquated materials from older strata" of an existing language (Sornig 1981). This is illustrated by the life cycle of slang shown in Figure 1.

---

<sup>1</sup> Throughout this study the term is used to refer to the affluent residential areas.

**Figure 1:** The Life cycle of Slang'

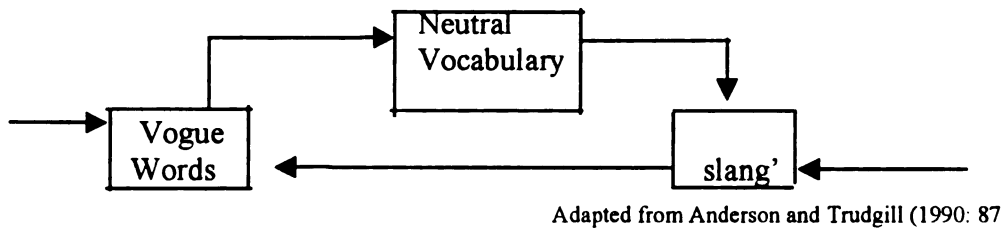


Figure 1 shows that slang results from extensive group innovation or simply from the lexicon. Its regular use reduces it to vogue words, although vogue words can also be created without necessarily coming from slang. Continued use drives vogue words into neutral vocabulary, which can be repackaged back into slang and the cycle continues. A good example in Sheng' is the current trend of pronouncing the ordinary Kiswahili and outdated Sheng' words backwards, among the matatu<sup>2</sup> touts<sup>3</sup> as shown below.

<u>Current word</u>	<u>derived from</u>	<u>'gloss'</u>	<u>origin</u>
Chukua	kwachu	'take'	Kiswahili
Wang'acha	chang'aa	'illicit local gin'	Kiswahili
Manyu	nyuma	'back'	Kiswahili
Ngife	fegi	'fag, cigarette'	Sheng'/English
Lembe	mbele	'before, in front'	Kiswahili

Source: "*Matatu Madness*" of May 15th June 15th and 15th June-15th July 2001.

In the above list, the older version of cigarette "fegi" has almost faded out since it had already become a vogue word. After it changed to neutral vocabulary, it was repackaged again by being pronounced backwards. Sheng's manipulation of lexical items from existing languages and its popularity amongst the group considered as wayward by the society, and its perceived elegance is what gives it a slangy identity, but one can see that it is more than a simple reformulation of vocabulary.

<sup>2</sup> Matatus are privately owned vehicles offering commuter services in Kenya.

<sup>3</sup> Touts are the Matatu Crew who duty includes ushering commuters and collecting fares.

### **2.5.2 The Argot Perspective**

Most urban varieties of language like Sheng' in Kenya and Iscamtho in South Africa (Ntshangashe 1995) are associated with criminal elements. Their classification as argots stems from this. Testimony by Karanja (1993) justifies classification of Sheng' as an argot. One oft cited piece of evidence is that there are various synonyms related to criminal activities like reference to police, stealing, violence and drugs. These characteristics that have influenced peoples' stereotypes of these languages and their speakers are expected to play a crucial role in non-speakers' evaluation of Sheng'.

Argots thrive on secrecy in order to isolate the uninitiated. Its use is conscious and deliberate (Anderson and Trudgill 1990) and function as an identity marker (Abdulaziz and Osinde 1997) while strengthening bonds of solidarity. Slang and argot make the speech more vivid and interesting, and are aimed at precision as opposed to content. Since they are constantly changing, they betray the users age (Anderson and Trudgill 1990) and locality. Older users of Sheng' would be out of touch with the current trend because most of the vocabulary which were in use in their time have been outdated or gone into neutral use, creating room for new innovation. Raters who are excluded from Sheng' are likely to be influenced by the slang and argot qualities in their dismissal of Sheng' as the language of the youth and criminals.

### **2.5.3 Pidgin and Creole Perspective**

Though some people tend to take Sheng' as a pidgin (Eastman 1984, Rocha 1998), the linguistic definition of a pidgin is not borne out. Pidgins arise to satisfy a communication need in language contact situation where there is no lingua franca or mechanism for

second language acquisition (Burling 1970, Romaine 1988, Arends et al., 1994). The evolution of Sheng' was not prompted by such a need because English and Kiswahili already existed as lingua francas (Osinde 1986, Abdulaziz and Osinde 1997, Mazrui 1995). Moreover, if Creoles are pidgins that have acquired native speakers (Appel and Muysken 1987), then Sheng' cannot fit into the Creole category. For now, there is little evidence or parental input though such views are sometimes expressed (Osinde 1986: 35). In most cases, the opposite is true, as pointed out by Kiama (Kenya Times: November 11 1990). Attitudes of Nairobi people will confirm that Sheng' is neither a pidgin nor a Creole.

## **2.6.0 Theoretical Frameworks in Language attitudes studies.**

### **2.6.1 Code-switching Framework**

Code switching is the use of two or more languages in the same conversation (Osinde 1986, Myers-Scotton 1992, Mazrui 1995). One language (matrix language) provides the system morphemes while others (embedded language(s)) provide the content morphemes (Myers-Scotton 1993). Code-switching presupposes the existence of minimal bilingualism between both interlocutors (Beatens 1982) and the switched elements must remain completely unassimilated (Choros 1991). Under the social perspective, what is true of code switching can be extended to Sheng'. It takes place when the participants want to project two identities. It involves making choices, either marked or unmarked, and these choices are determined by the costs and rewards to be reaped. However, code switching can occur for purely aesthetic reasons just like Sheng'. Code choices are an index to the rights and obligation set in a given interaction which defines the kind of people you can communicate to in Sheng'. These rights and obligations could be gender

based, age influenced, ethically influenced or status influenced (Myers-Scotton 1993). The adoption of code-switching in this study is because some elements of code-switching are regarded as Sheng' (Mazrui 1995, Abdulaziz and Osinde 1997).

### **2.6.2 Markedness Framework**

Although the code-switching perspective subsumes the markedness model, it is crucial to view markedness on its own when evaluating attitudes especially since Sheng' involved more than just code-switching. To some people Sheng' is itself a marked code because it is a deliberate effort to switch language. However, it can also be unmarked especially amongst those who use it intensively. Myers-Scotton (1993) predicted that people tended to maintain unmarked choices in order to retain the status quo. If Sheng' is a marked choice, then the negative attitudes of non-users can be interpreted as defense of the status quo by the non-users. At the same time, the positive attitudes of users can be interpreted as maintenance of the status quo since to them it is unmarked.

### **2.6.3 Accommodation Framework**

People in a multilingual environment accommodate each other by finding a common ground in their speech where their differences are reduced. The two accommodation strategies are linguistic convergence and linguistic divergence. In linguistic convergence, speakers increase perceived similarities with their addressees in order to become more attractive or to gain social approval (Kariuki 1986, Giles et al., 1973, Giles and Powesland 1997). Linguistic divergence on the other hand is when speakers enhance perceived dissimilarities with their addressees in an endeavor to maintain their freedom.

These two strategies will prove crucial in interpreting attitude pattern of different status groups.

Accommodation results in speakers adopting different versions of Sheng' or registers. For instance, there is Sheng' for speaking to casual acquaintance, Sheng' for speaking to older people as well as Sheng' for speaking to the in-group. By speaking a rather diluted version of Sheng' to those who are not so comfortable with the deep Sheng', dissimilarities are reduced, paving the way for others to acquire some few new words, and this process may result in reducing the social tensions that used to exist between the interlocutors. This however means that Sheng' can be under threat of losing its function in the in-group. In order for Sheng' to preserve its relevance in the in-group, perceived dissimilarities are increased to keep off and isolate the out-group. A good example is the touts who immediately create new words when old vocabulary becomes neutral (Section 2.5.1). Convergence hence opens Sheng' to the vast majority of speakers who would otherwise be excluded if there were no accommodation. Sometimes even people who can only speak little Sheng' as a result of such accommodation can "over-report" and claim constant use. This affects attitudes because even people who only speak some few words of Sheng' will claim knowledge of it.

## **2.7 Sheng' and gender**

Women tend to be more conservative (resistant to new forms) in their language use though there have been reported cases of women being initiators of linguistic change (Milroy 1980). If the change serve an empowering function, then women would very easily abandon the conservative linguistic behavior. As far as Sheng' is concerned, girls are not great participants in the Sheng' culture, though current trends show young women



in slum areas becoming regular users of Sheng' (Mazrui 1995). Their ratings of the variety are most likely to be influenced by the prescribed social norms rather than what they really believe. Favorable attitudes on the other hand would mean that there are rewards in Sheng', which they seek to reap, and this would generally point to some prestige status of Sheng' or general acceptance.

### **2.7.1 Sheng' and Age**

Like much slang, Sheng' has always been associated with the young people. Older people who attempt to use it are regarded with suspicion because they are seen as intruding into the private lives of the youths. Lack of seriousness in life has often been cited as one of the factors responsible for Sheng's popularity among the youth. The youth form strong network with their peers, which is broken as they progress further in age with maturity and employment. Schools are regarded as important institutions for the learning and spread of Sheng', though it depends on their location and patrons. Schools with high concentrations of people from lower class areas are more likely to be the hubs of Sheng' while those with children from Upmarket estates are expected to have very little Sheng'. This status difference is enhanced in schools patronized by both Downmarket and Upmarket children as highlighted by Osinde (1986).

Parents from high-class estates do not encourage their children to mix with those from the Eastlands who speak Sheng'. Moreover, they are viewed as belonging to different class. They blame it on the parents of those children who speak to their children in Sheng'"  
(Osinde 1986:35)

Osinde points out that there is a high concentration of schools in the Eastlands areas of Nairobi, which are considered to be the cradle of Sheng'. From this it can be

concluded that school plays a very crucial role in the acquisition of Sheng'. People who have already passed through school in Nairobi where they were in contact with the speakers of Sheng' are most likely to have mixed evaluations stemming from their contact with Sheng' speakers.

### **2.8.0 Language attitudes**

Dittmar and Schlobinski (1988) point out that attitudes towards a language determine the status it enjoys and consequently the kind of people likely to use it. Baker (1992:12) gave three components of language attitudes:

- i) Affective component that deals with feelings
- ii) Cognitive component that deals with thoughts and beliefs and
- iii) Conative or readiness for action component that is concerned with intentions to act in a certain way in given circumstances.

These components, as Baker points out, may not always be in harmony, but they are crucial because they encompass both the behaviorist (response to social situations) and mentalist (stimulus affecting a person's response) viewpoints (Fasold 1984:147). Research on language attitudes does not rely only on observation of external behavior since it can be misleading as pointed out by Baker (1992:15)

“Observation of external behavior may produce mis-categorisation and wrongful explanation. Such behavior may be consciously or unconsciously designed to disguise or conceal inner attitudes”.

Language attitudes research “avoids a report of the attitude itself, preferring to infer it from responses to samples” (Preston 2000) because once people know that their

attitudes are being investigated, they consciously or unconsciously invoke the social norms of usage such as the proscription, prescriptions and standardness.

### **2.8.1 Attitudes towards Sheng'**

Considering the affective component of Sheng', it is expected that, since the speakers are the stigmatized group, they are likely to rate Sheng' highly in affective dimensions such as friendliness and pleasantness. This was confirmed by studies of attitudes towards stigmatized speech among its speakers (e.g., Preston 1996). Non-speakers may exhibit opposite tendencies because they disapprove of the different values that speakers of Sheng' express. The cognitive component manifests itself in the invocation of standardness and conformity to social norms that govern language behavior. Both speakers and non-speakers of Sheng' know that women and old people are not supposed to speak 'bad' language. Therefore conformity to social stereotypes may exert a huge influence on attitudes towards Sheng'.

The discussions in this chapter have shown that Kenya's language situation has contributed to the development of Sheng' and the attitudes people hold towards it. We have looked at the Sheng' debate from various perspectives and hinted at the theoretical frameworks that motivate the use and perceptions on Sheng'. These frameworks determine the sociolinguistic variables that are used in evaluation of attitudes. Finally, there has been a brief review of language attitude studies from the specifics to those relevant to Sheng'. The next chapter demonstrates how these attitudes can be evaluated

## **Chapter 3 Methodology**

### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter will focus on the methodology used in the collection of and analysis of data in this study. It opens with the discussion of the methods commonly used in various sociolinguistic researches and then proceeds to the setting and the choice of the respondents, the instruments and the procedure. The chapter ends with an elaboration of the methodology adopted in this study.

Decrying the few language attitude researches carried out in sub-Saharan Africa, Adegbija (1994) observed that deficiency in methodology, both in collection and analysis of data, was the major weakness. Mutonya's work (1997) on attitudes of educated Africans towards varieties of African English was a major improvement in language attitudes research in sub-Saharan Africa.

The methodology adopted in data collection and/or analysis bears a direct relation to the findings. As such, it is important, while identifying the sample of respondents to ensure that it is representative of a population (Williams et al., 1976). Apart from considering social stratification as pointers to variables, appropriate methodology and good analytical skills are needed in the study of language attitudes (Adegbija 1994, Mutonya 1997), especially when dealing with cases of self-report. That is why indirect methods are preferred in the measurement of language attitudes.

### **3.2 Methods of data elicitation**

Both direct and indirect methods of determining language attitudes have been used with varying degree of success. There are arguments for and against each of the methods.

### 3.2.1 Direct method

The direct method of investigation relies on self-reporting and observation. “A totally direct method would require subjects to respond to questionnaire or interview questions that simply ask their opinions about one or another language” (Fasold 1984:149). Observation is also included in the direct method of investigation. Since questionnaires and interviews involve self-report, Mutonya (1997) sums up the direct methods as “self-report and observation.” One advantage of this method is that it is specific. Its main disadvantage is that it can be time consuming especially when transcribing tape-recorded information. Moreover, the researcher is confronted with the problem of dealing with the “observer’s paradox” (Labov 1972). This is more serious in recorded interviews, which are not ordinary speech events. Recording instruments intimidate the respondent, especially if the topic under discussion is controversial. This was put more succinctly by Preston (2000)

When people are aware their speech is being investigated, their self-monitoring devices are turned up. The resulting performances are a combination of their conscious most systematic nonvernacular language rules and superposed models of schooling, proscription, prescription, erudition, deference, defensiveness, formality...

One consequence of this could be reaching wrong inferences and conclusions when generalizing on people’s attitudes.

In observation, inner feelings and opinions of the people are completely disregarded and only the external behavior is represented, yet, as Baker (1992:11) observed, “A person’s thought, processing system and feelings are hidden” and can therefore not be directly observed. The linguist can be relying on the wrong inferences to certain traits, which could result in mis-representation of attitudes.

Drawing of maps and giving them qualitative labels is one of the direct methods of attitudes elicitation, which has been used in various studies (Preston 1988, 1996, Hartley and Preston 1999, Preston 1999). This method is adopted in this study to investigate the mental maps of the Nairobi people regarding the distribution of Sheng' and whether this correlates with the demographic patterns and the stereotypes associated with those areas.

### **3.2.2 Indirect Method**

The indirect method has dominated the field of modern language attitude research simply because the subjects are not aware that their attitudes are under investigation. It is a good strategy of dealing with the observer's paradox. The most widely used indirect methods are the matched guise technique of Wallace Lambert, where respondents rate voices of a single person in different guises, and the semantic differential scales of Charles Osgood, where respondents rate a variable using bipolar adjectives drawn on a scale. These techniques are very often combined, but only the latter is used in this study.

The strength of indirect method is that subjects are not overtly aware that their attitudes are under investigation. This reduces self-monitoring which is a way of overcoming the observer's paradox. This study has utilized both direct and indirect method of attitudes elicitation. However, the focus will be on the indirect method while the direct method acts as support. The direct method in the study is when the respondents are asked for the stereotypes that dominate the collective reasoning of Nairobi people and which are crucial in attitude measurement.

### **3.3 The setting of the research**

This study was conducted in Nairobi, Kenya's capital city, which also serves as the administrative and commercial capital. In the first post independence national census Nairobi had slightly over half a million inhabitants. Today, the population has grown to over 2 million people according the 1999 national census. The Central Business District (CBD) will be taken as the dividing line between the eastern and western sides of Nairobi. Most of the higher status population lives on the Westside, while most of the low-income earners and the unemployed live in the Eastlands. Although the economic disparity correlates with place, invoking geographical distribution is not completely accurate because there are poor neighborhoods like Kangemi, Kawangware, Dagoretti and Uthiru in the Westside. Likewise, there are estates like Imara Daima, South C, South B, Nairobi West in the Eastside which are upper middle class areas, which, by Kenyan standards, can be considered affluent. This kind of socio-economic stratification is crucial because it reflects the pattern of language use, which consequently may influence language attitudes.

### **3.4.0 The respondents**

#### **3.4.1 Test Respondents in Michigan**

A sample of 18 people was taken from Kenyans living in Lansing, Michigan. The purpose of this sample was to test the methodology to be used in the final reasearch. The bipolar adjectives that have been used in earlier research were proved ineffective in the elicitation of attitudes among African respondents (Mutonya 1997). As such, Mutonya recommended that future language attitude research should ensure that the adjectives

came from African respondents. My respondents were asked to come up with adjectives that could apply in Nairobi setting. This test sample was also important in identifying other details relevant to Nairobi. These respondents do not constitute any part of data analysis and were not stratified in terms of gender or age, but one crucial factor is that most had come from Nairobi and all were conversant with the Sheng' phenomenon.

### **3.4.2 Nairobi respondents**

The collection of data in Nairobi was done on a stratified basis to ensure that people from different categories, as well as different areas of Nairobi were represented. Although a stratified method was used to determine the status groups and sex, the respondents themselves were selected at random. The method therefore allowed striking of a balance in gender representation as well as getting people from different localities. The stratification of the respondents was as follows:

#### **The university students**

This is the age group that is currently using Sheng'. They are also the group believed to be abandoning or extending the use Sheng'. Most are leaving the teenage years and shaking off peer influence. They have defined their future expectations and they can analyze the benefits of the traits they adopt. This group's favorable ratings would reflect the continuity of Sheng'.

#### **The language teachers**

Since this is a study of people who have had no formal study in linguistics (or "folk linguists," Preston 1994), secondary school teachers were avoided because, irrespective



of whether they teach English or Kiswahili, they take introductory courses in linguistics at the university. Their attitudes are likely to be clothed in that garb. Primary school teachers, however, have no formal linguistic knowledge and their attitudes are influenced by the society's expectation that they teach pupils the standard languages.

### **Down-market Residents**

These are respondents from the low social economic group who live in the poor neighborhoods in Nairobi characterized by shanty structures, broken sewers, heaps of garbage and a sense of helplessness (Ngesa 2002). Historically, these neighborhoods are considered to be the cradle of Sheng'. Do the residents rate their language favorably or do they suffer from linguistic insecurity as a result of the stigmatization of Sheng'?

### **Upmarket Residents**

This group of respondents comprise of the affluent people in Nairobi and is historically considered hostile to Sheng'. Is it because they despise it or is it because they don't know it? What makes some of them crave for a stigmatized language? Their favorable rating would point to endorsement of Sheng' and rising acceptance.

### **The Touts.**

This group represents "institutional" use of Sheng' in the context of popular culture. They are today considered the greatest innovators and creators of new vocabulary. They are also an important group in the dissemination of Sheng' because of the mobile nature of their work, and their group behavior is subject to stereotypes, which have characterized the non-speaker's view of Sheng'.

### **3.5 Instruments and procedure**

A questionnaire for gathering demographic information with 8-closed questions (appendix) was first administered. We suspected that some of the subjects might have problems with the English questionnaires, hence all were translated into Swahili so that subjects could choose whichever language they preferred. This questionnaire asked for their personal details: sex, age, languages used, languages preferred, length of residence in Nairobi, and neighborhood(s) lived in.

The respondents were then presented with maps of Nairobi with the names of the major residential areas written in (Figure 2) and told to identify areas where they thought Sheng' is spoken. The main purpose was to see whether the respondents associated Sheng' with certain estates and whether they would mark their residential areas as Sheng' areas. Since the respondents had diverse educational backgrounds, qualitative labels were not solicited. If respondents could not write, the names of the estates were read to them and then they were asked whether they thought Sheng' was spoken there.



the speakers. This was intended to confirm or refute the claim that people rate the speakers rather than the language.

Williams's research design (William and associates, 1976, Fasold 1984) was utilized in the development of the two semantic differential scales. The test respondents in Michigan were asked to give all the negative and positive labels they associated with Sheng' and its speakers. These labels were later developed into the bipolar adjectives that were to be used in the Nairobi research. A seven-point scale was adopted.

	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	
Easy	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	not easy
Inclusive	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	exclusive
Intimidating	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	friendly
etc...								

This study however deviated from William's model in that it did not use the matched guise technique and relied heavily on the Nairobi people's latent stereotypes and perceptions.

### **3.5.1 Maps:**

Map drawing has been used widely in the study of dialects. Preston (1988, 1996) and Preston and Hartley (1999) employed this method in the study of American regional varieties. Preston's model involved asking the respondents to give qualitative labels to different regional speech areas in the US. The respondents were also asked to rate the kind of speech spoken in those regions using qualitative adjectives similar to those used

in semantic differential scales. In both cases, it was possible to elicit judgments of the respondents, mostly arising from social stereotypes and caricatures.

In this study, the respondents were asked to identify and mark the areas where they thought Sheng' was spoken. During debriefing, they were asked why they marked certain areas and left out others. The reasons they gave in most cases depicted their attitudes towards those areas. It was expected that the respondents who did not want to be associated with Sheng' would exclude their areas while those who wanted to be associated with Sheng' would include their areas.

### **3.5.2 Percentage Scores**

In the analyses, the respondents are identified in terms of status groups, sex, and age. The way the respondents react to key issues in the research is calculated in percentage scores and then represented in form of tables.

### **3.5.3 Factor analysis**

A factor analysis involves grouping together of features that co-occur with high frequency. In some studies a factor is given a cover label, but this is not adopted here. Factors are simply clusters that represent areas of high-shared variance in the data (Biber 1998) or the "relatedness among a set of several items" (Fasold 1984). For example, if several adjectives in a semantic differential scale express the same or closely related idea, they cluster together under one factor. For instance, adjectives such as "law abiding," "humble," and "disciplined" might cluster together because these features express a closely related idea.

The adjectives used in the semantic differential scales were studied using the Systat statistical program. Two scales were under review, one dealing with the attitudes of the people towards Sheng' speakers, while the other dealt with the attitudes towards Sheng' as a language. The number of factors in either scale was determined by rotation of the factors using the Varimax Rotation Pattern that showed the factor loadings and then plotted the eigenvalues and factors in a scree plot. Only the factors with .30 and above were taken as significant loading in a factor group.

This chapter has presented the methodology used in this study from the collection of data to their analysis. The methods discussed includes the well known methods of percentages and tables to the least used methods of qualitatively hand drawn maps and factor analysis. This combination is expected to give credible generalization.

## Chapter 4: Results and Discussions

Although the interviews provided crucial information in this study, they are only used to authenticate the data that the respondent gave in order to avoid misinterpretation. The discussion in this chapter will therefore focus on the data from questionnaires, maps and semantic differential scales as presented in this chapter, however, most of the claims and conclusion drawn relied on information provided in those interviews.

### 4.1.0 Percentage Scores

#### 4.1.1 Respondents awareness and use of Sheng'

There is a difference between awareness of Sheng' and its knowledge. At least everyone in Nairobi is aware of Sheng', but not everybody knows or use it. The majority associates it with the youth, reaching the optimum during teenage years and then beginning to decline to almost negligible levels by the time the speakers attain the age of 40. Tables 1 and 2 show this overall decline in Sheng' knowledge and use by age.

**Table 1:** Respondents knowledge of Sheng' according to age (N=29)

	Know Sheng'		Don't Know	
18-24	14	100%	0	
25-34	6	75	2	25
35-40	5	100%	0	
Over 40	1	50%	1	50%
Total	29	90%	3	10%

**Table 2:** Respondents use of Sheng' according to age

	Marginal use		Intense use		No use	
<b>18-24</b>	29%	4	57%	8	14%	2
<b>25-34</b>	0	0	75%	6	25%	2
<b>35-40</b>	20%	1	0	0	80%	4
<b>Over40</b>	50%	1	0	0	50%	1
<b>Total No:</b>	21%	6	48%	14	24%	7

Table 1 shows that 90% of all respondents know Sheng'. All the 14 respondents between 18-24 years category know Sheng'. The 25-34 age group as compared to 35-40 age group challenges the expected pattern of diminishing knowledge. Perhaps this inconsistency can be attributed to the difference in the number of respondents in the two groups. Other reasons such as sex and status cannot be ruled out as will be demonstrated later. Nevertheless, the 35-40 data does not constitute sufficient ground to challenge earlier claims that use of Sheng' diminishes as speakers advance with age (Mazrui 1995, Abdulaziz and Osinde 1997 and Osinde 1986). If this sample mirrors the overall situation in Nairobi, then it can be concluded that majority of Nairobi people know Sheng', the difference only being in the degree of knowledge. (See appendix III for a sample of language used by respondents)

Table 2 illustrates that knowledge of Sheng' does not reflect its use. Although 100% of the respondents in the 18-24-age bracket know Sheng', only 86% admit using it, and 29% are only marginal users. Again the age group between 25-34 years does not offer any significant variation since the only respondent that doesn't know Sheng' does not use it. There is no significant difference with the 35-39 years age group since it is only one respondent who claimed marginal use. The respondents over 40 years either do



not use it or use it marginally. If instances of code-switching were regarded as Sheng', then those who don't use it would be the minority

Perhaps young speakers are likely to rate Sheng' favorably because they are speakers themselves. Variation should start to be noticed from the age of 25-34, the group affected by a weakening of their social network. There is high mobility and constant relocation in search of employment, resulting in the break-up of social bonds. If this is true, then it can be said that Sheng' is not an overall phenomenon. If it were, then these people would not find it hard to integrate into new networks. Other factors must therefore be at play.

Perhaps these people fail to integrate because they encounter different varieties of Sheng' from the one they are accustomed to and this excludes them from the new networks (Ngesa 2002). Furthermore, their goals in life become more important than preoccupying themselves with adaptation of current language norms. Respondents claim that Sheng' is a way of growing up and speakers outgrow it in maturity. A commonly cited case is that even within single languages, the youth have the tendency to manipulate the language (such as talking backwards and nose talking) for their in-group use, which they stop on reaching adulthood. Although this study concentrates on late teenage raters, it is consistent with Labov's (1972) observation that adolescents are the most consistent users of the vernacular. Viewing Sheng' as a language of the young people is partly responsible for its lack of universal use. Adults are perceived as immature if they continue using Sheng'. Reduced use of Sheng' amongst former users can thus be attributed to social conformity.

Women lag behind in the use of Sheng'. Various studies have demonstrated that women associate more with the prestige as opposed to stigmatized forms (Downes 1998, Milroy 1980) and generally underreport on their use of non-prestige forms. Table 3 illustrates the disparity between knowledge and use of Sheng' according to different sexes.

**Table 3: Knowledge of Sheng' according to sex (N=12 Females, 17 Males)**

	Know Sheng'		Don't Know	
Males	16	94%	1	6%
Females	10	83	2	17%
Totals	26	90%	3	10)

**Table 4: Use of Sheng' according to sex**

	Intense use		Marginal use		No use	
Male	11	65%	1	6%	5	33%
Female	3	25%	5	42%	4	29%
Totals	14	48%	6	21%	9	31%

From table 3, there is roughly only a 10% difference between the percentage of men who know Sheng' and the women who know Sheng', but in table 4, two thirds of the men claim intense usage compared to a quarter for the women. The majority of the women claim marginal use, but there is no significant difference between the sexes of those who reported no use of Sheng' at all (see also in appendix III). Many previous sociolinguistic studies have shown that women tend to shy away from speech varieties that violate established norms. They approximate more closely to the prestige pattern (Downes 1984, Milroy 1980) and tend to under-report on their use of non-standard forms, which can be attributed to bowing to social pressure. For instance, female speakers of

Iscamtho in South Africa were regarded as prostitutes, nymphomaniacs and social outcasts. Even when Iscamtho ceased to be specifically criminal, female speakers were still looked down upon (Ntshangashe 1995). It is possible that males over report on the use of Sheng' because of its covert prestige while women underreport because of its deviation from norms. This will surely have an impact on the attitudes of the two sexes.

Is there any correlation between knowledge of Sheng' and its use among different status groups? The prediction is that knowledge go hand in hand with the use, hence the people who know Sheng' will use it more widely than those who do not know it. The relationship between knowledge and use of Sheng' amongst various status groups is presented in tables 5 & 6.

**Table 5: Knowledge of Sheng' according to role status**

	D/market	Touts	Students	Teachers	U/market	Totals
Know	3	6	6	6	5	26
Don't know	3	0	0	0	0	3

**Table 6: Use of Sheng' according to role status**

	Intense use		Marginal use		No use	
Down-market	50%	3	0	0	50%	3
Touts	83%	5	0	0	17%	1
Students	50%	3	33%	2	17%	1
Teachers	17%	1	33%	2	50%	3
Up-market	40%	2	40%	2	20%	1

As illustrated in table 5, all the status groups apart from the Downmarket residents report 100% knowledge of Sheng'. This is a major paradox because the Downmarket areas are places stereotyped as its home and birthplace. From Tables 3 & 4 above, it can

be seen that most women claim no use and it is possible that all women in the Downmarket estates reported no use. This is not surprising because women have been shown in previous studies to underreport in their use of non-prestige forms. This underreporting is a clear indicator of linguistic insecurity. The data from the Downmarket raters present another interesting piece of information. It is the only place where all respondents who know Sheng' use it intensively. The touts continue to report high use, and the only respondent who doesn't use Sheng' confessed unapologetically that he was restrained by his religious faith and age. Very few teachers use Sheng' even if they know it, probably picking up it from their children, students and speakers in their residential areas.

#### 4.1.2 Estimates on percentage of Sheng' speakers

Constant users of a language might take it for granted that it is the general trend, while marginal participants might hold the opposite view. I examine this by looking at respondents' percentage estimation of Sheng' speakers according to sex in table 7.

**Table 7:** Estimates of the overall percentage of Sheng' Speakers

	30%	40%	50%	55%	60%	65%	70%	75%	80%	90%
F	1	1	3	0	3	1	2	0	1	0
M	1	1	3	1	2	0	5	3	0	1
Total	2	2	6	1	5	1	7	3	1	1

All respondents estimate that the number of Sheng' speakers is very high. According to most of them, at least two thirds or 60% of Nairobi people speak Sheng'.

Majority of the women estimate the overall speakers of Sheng' in Nairobi to be below 65%. In contrast, male respondents give a higher estimates of Sheng' users in Nairobi, the majority projecting over 70% of the overall Nairobi population. There are two explanations for this; women might deliberately report low use of Sheng' as a show of their dislike for the stigmatized speech. On the other hand, there is correlation between women's use of Sheng' and the way they report about its use. It is possible that women's low participation prevents them from acknowledging the wide use of Sheng' for lack of information. Table 8 presents the estimates of different status groups to examine whether the above conclusion has any merit.

**Table 8:** Estimates of Sheng' speakers in Nairobi according to status groups

	30%	40%	50%	55%	60%	65%	70%	75%	80%	90%
Tout	-	1	2	-	-	-	1	1	1	-
DM	2	-	-	-	-	-	1	2	1	-
ST	-	-	2	1	3	-	-	-	-	-
TE	-	1	1	-	1	-	3	-	-	-
UM	-	-	1	-	1	1	2	-	-	-
Total	2	2	6	1	5	1	7	3	2	-

Table 8 shows that overall there is a correlation between use and estimates of speakers as concluded in women's data in table 7. Only four out of twenty nine respondents think that less than 50% of Nairobi population are Sheng' speakers. These are one tout who reported no use of Sheng', and who believes that it should be banned, a teacher who doesn't speak Sheng' and believes that it should be discouraged for corrupting the standard languages, and two Downmarket resident who as pointed out earlier suffer from linguistic insecurity and could be actually underreporting. Generally, most respondents apart from the students think that Sheng' is spoken by over 65% of the

Nairobi people. Different status groups believe that Sheng' is used by the majority in Nairobi.

The respondents also estimate (data not shown) that majority of the speakers are in the 16-24 age group, followed by the 7-15 age group. This again confirms Labov's (1972) assertion that the adolescents are most persistent users of the vernacular. The 25-29 age group forms a significant chunk while the number of speakers reduces with advancement in age. The respondents have their explanation for this state of affairs. For instance, the teachers claim that the 7-15 age group does not use Sheng' alot because its members are still under parental care and guidance and they are still in school. At home, their parents prevent them from using Sheng', while at school they are prevented from speaking Sheng' by the teachers. It is only when they move from primary school that they acquire freedom to speak any language they like because of diminishing influence of their parents and teachers. This argument can account for the perceived high use by the 16-24 age group by the teachers.

#### **4.1.2 The Respondents' Judgments Regarding use of Sheng'**

When the respondents are making their judgments, they are guided by their adherence to social conventions that govern language use. These social conventions prescribe the norms of language use. In the case of Sheng' for instance, they believe there are certain categories of people who should not speak it. This is illustrated in table 9 by their responses to the question of who they thought should speak Sheng'. There was interesting reaction from the respondents of different status groups.

**Table 9:** Belief on who should speak Sheng' according to role status.

	Depends	Nobody	Everybody	Youth
Touts	-	1	-	5
Downmarket	-	1	2	3
Students	-	-	3	3
Teachers	1	1	-	4
Upmarket	1	1	1	2

This table shows that more than half of the respondents would prefer Sheng' to be restricted to the youth with the most notable group being the touts followed by the teachers. The matatu touts, most of whom are youths, would not like everybody to speak Sheng'. They fear it might become a neutral language if used by everybody, denying them an instrument of group solidarity. The Downmarket people are not hostile to Sheng' and wish it were universally used so that it will be shorn of the negative labels that put them at a disadvantage. It is also possible that Sheng' is used by the majority in their neighborhoods so much so that the respondents do not see anything wrong with everybody using it. Unlike the touts, these people do not take Sheng' as an in-group language, but as an ordinary language just like English, Swahili and the vernaculars. It is not a language of solidarity but a tool of wider communication. The Upmarket people avoid overall condemnation of Sheng' contrary to expectations. Although they are generally perceived to prefer English as compared to other local languages, their unexpected use of the "non-standard" language defies the stereotypical pattern. Perhaps they can defy the norms of language use because they know that there is no penalty (Myers-Scotton 1993). Their liberal views might therefore not point to a change of

attitude towards Sheng'. This favorable reporting by the Upmarket raters can be attributed to their definition of Sheng'. For instance, many people consider all cases of code switching, which is common amongst many Kenyans, to be Sheng'. If this is assumed to be the case, then this favorable reporting can naturally be explained.

The respondents' report on the use of Sheng' is related to complex understandings of their demographic features, but they usually report what they believe should happen rather than what actually happens. There are certain norms and expectations that govern language behavior. If use of non-standard speech is taken as wayward, then older people are not expected to participate since they have passed that stage in life. This was confirmed by asking the respondents how they would react if they found older people, especially their parents speaking in Sheng'. Their reactions are presented in table 10.

**Table 10:** Reactions to older people speaking Sheng' according to sex

	<b>Bad</b>	<b>Depends</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>OK</b>	<b>Surprised</b>
<b>Females</b>	6	-	1	-	5
<b>Males</b>	8	1	2	1	5

It is evident that both sexes consider it odd for older people to communicate in Sheng'. Only one male respondent thought it was OK while another thought that it depended on who they were speaking to. It would be tolerable if elder people spoke Sheng' to their age mates, but Sheng' between adults and youth is not acceptable. It can be argued that accommodation of the older people to Sheng' is not valued since it is regarded as a language of young people. While the youth uses it for group identity, it has no function among the older people. The data in table 11 seeks to establish whether these reactions have any peculiarity that can be attributed to any status group.



**Table 11:** Respondents reactions to older people speaking Sheng' according to role status.

	<b>Bad</b>	<b>Depends</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>OK</b>	<b>Surprised</b>
<b>Touts</b>	4	1	1	-	-
<b>D/Market</b>	3	-	-	1	2
<b>Students</b>	1	-	-	-	5
<b>Teachers</b>	2	-	2	-	2
<b>U/Market</b>	4	-	-	-	1
	14	1	3	1	10

It is only among the Downmarket raters where there is a respondent who claim it is OK for parents or older people to use Sheng'. Although this is not sufficient to form any generalization, it is crucial that this respondent is from the Downmarket estate. Since Sheng' has been used in these areas for a long time, it is not surprising to find parents, especially the younger ones, speaking in Sheng'. These residents can be reporting the reality, as it exists in their estates, where the degree of markedness of Sheng' has reduced as a result of being used there for a long time. Almost all the Upmarket respondents disapprove of their parents using Sheng'. Again this can be attributed to the linguistic pattern of their estates where parents are known to prefer English. As such a parent talking in any other language, especially a marked, non-standard one, would look odd. The element of surprise is not interpreted here as disapproval. And the students seem to be the most liberal status group in this aspect. To the students, the parents can be motivated to use Sheng', perhaps as an accommodation strategy in an effort to understand their children more. All the respondents, especially the touts, are not happy with this mode of accommodation, hence the continuous modification of Sheng' in order to increase the perceived dissimilarities and maintain it as their in-group code.

If Sheng' is a marked code among a specific status group, then norms of language use will prevent older people using it, but where Sheng' is unmarked, like in the Downmarket areas, then use by parents would be tolerated. The teachers, touts and Upmarket raters perceive Sheng' as a marked code only fit for the youth. There is therefore very little motivation for the choice of a marked code amongst the parents and older people. This view is more in line with the traditional stereotypes on Sheng' and its users.

One of the reasons cited for abandonment of Sheng' when speakers advance in age is that they are unable to keep up with new innovations. This is due to the fact that there are other pursuits in life the take priority to Sheng'. It was expected that inability to understand what Sheng' speakers are saying could be the foundation of negative attitudes towards it. This was investigated by asking respondent how they would feel if people used unfamiliar Sheng' vocabulary. There were varied responses depending on the age and status groups of the raters.

**Table 12:** Respondents feelings towards innovations according to age

	<b>Bad</b>	<b>Depends</b>	<b>OK</b>
<b>18-24</b>	8	1	5
<b>25-29</b>	2	1	5
<b>30-35</b>	1	-	-
<b>35-39</b>	3	2	-
<b>40 and above</b>	-	2	-

**Table 13:** Reactions to innovations according to status

	Bad	Depends	OK
Touts	-	1	5
Downmarket	2	2	2
Students	4	1	1
Teachers	5	1	-
Upmarket	3	-	2

Table 13 shows that the 25-29 age bracket is more receptive to innovation as compared to the 18-24 age bracket, contrary to expectation, but the rest confirms the prediction that, as people grow older, they become less receptive to innovation and hence cut off from the Sheng' culture. The unexpected inconsistency with the 18-24 age group can be accounted by the fact that there are many women in that age category and as pointed out elsewhere, women try to isolate themselves from the Sheng' culture. The prediction that innovators are the most receptive group is confirmed in table 14 because the touts do not conceive of innovations as outside their reach. They take it upon themselves to learn new vocabulary by virtue of Sheng' being their professional jargon. Nairobi people isolate matatu crew as crucial in the dissemination of Sheng'. In this study, one of the respondents, a tout, claimed, "matatus are the factory of Sheng'" which shows that the touts are aware of their input in the Sheng' culture. Unlike touts the Downmarket residents are evenly distributed because their language does not serve an in-group function, and they are no longer important innovators. Although they still master new vocabulary, they are sometimes left out. Underreporting cannot be ruled out due to linguistic insecurity. Looking at the Upmarket residents, it is possible that their

receptiveness is due to the fact that they conceive of a different version of Sheng', the Engsh (Abdulaziz and Osinde 1997) which they are the innovators of and hence not left out. When these results are analyzed according to sex, there is a remarkable difference as shown in table 14.

**Table 14:** Reaction to innovations according to sex (N=12 Female, 17 males)

	Bad	Depends	OK
Females	83%	17%	0
Males	24%	18%	68%

Women are not receptive to innovation in Sheng' and they feel alienated. Even those who speak it distinguish between deep Sheng' and common Sheng'. Deep Sheng' is an in-group language which excludes outsiders while anybody can use common Sheng'. While 83% of the women feel bad when confronted with innovations, only 24% of the men feel that way. Men are more receptive to innovations in Sheng'; 68% are comfortable when people speak to them using new vocabulary. It can be inferred that women's negative attitudes result from their exclusion from Sheng's in-group, which cuts them off from new innovation. Lack of rewards in Sheng' makes women see no incentives for accommodating with Sheng' speakers. If women tend to favor prestige norms, then their negative attitudes indicates that Sheng' has yet to acquire prestige status.

#### **4.2 Respondents identification of Sheng' areas**

I will not discuss every map drawn by the respondents but will take some as representative and explain the salient features in them that can be generalized. A clear

division of Nairobi (figure 2) into two stereotypical linguistic areas is evident. The city center is the dividing line between the Westside and the Eastside parts of Nairobi. The Eastside is comprised of estates such as Kariobangi, Kayole, Dandora, Komarock, Buruburu, Pumwani, Huruma, Industrial area, Mariakani, South B, South C, Nairobi West. Other estates in the Eastland not included in the maps are Muthurwa, Ziwani, Shauri Moyo, Mbotela, Bahati, Kaloleni, Uhuru, Makongeni, Harambee, Outering, Ofafa Jericho, Maringo, Makandara, Hamza and Umoja. This study assumes that the respondents who label the Eastlands as a Sheng' area have most of these estates excluded in the maps in mind.

The Westside is comprised of estates such as State House, The Hill, Kilimani, Golf Course, Kileleshwa, Woodley, Kibera, Hurlingham, Langata, Lavington, Loresho, Gigiri, Kitisuru, Muthaiga, Parklands, Ngara, Spring Valley, Kangemi, Kawangware and Dagoretti. The status of the CBD was mixed. Some respondents who invoked proximity to the downmarket areas associated CBD more with the Eastlands while others mainly associated it with the Westlands.

Figure 3 represents a typical map. Apart from Kangemi and Kawangware in the Westside, no other areas are identified as Sheng' clusters by most respondents.

A hand-drawn map of Nairobi and its surrounding regions. The map is enclosed in a rectangular border. At the top center, the word "NAIROBI" is written in large, bold, capital letters. Below it, various locations and features are labeled. To the west of Nairobi, there is a large oval labeled "KANGEMI" with "SAWANGWASH" written below it. Further west, "DAGORETTI" is labeled. To the south of Kangemi, "KAREN" is written. To the east of Nairobi, there is a large oval labeled "NARARA" with "CBD" written below it. Further east, "EASTLEIS" is labeled. To the south of Eastleis, "INDUSTRIAL AREA" is written. To the east of the Industrial Area, "MAELAKAHI" and "HARDEIS" are written. To the south of the Industrial Area, "KIBERA" is written. To the west of Nairobi, "WESTLANDS" is labeled. To the south of Westlands, "KILEleshwa STREET" is written. To the west of Kileleshwa, "HUELINGHAM" and "KILIMAN" are written. To the south of Kileleshwa, "WOODLEY" is written. To the west of Woodley, "KIBERA" is written. To the north of Nairobi, "GIGIRI" is labeled. To the south of Gigiri, "KARUA FOREST" is written. To the west of Karua Forest, "KITISUEU" is written. To the south of Kitisueu, "SPRING VALLEY" is written. To the west of Spring Valley, "LAVINGTON" is written. To the south of Lavington, "NGONG FOREST" is written. To the west of Ngong Forest, "LANGATA" is written. To the south of Langata, "ONGATA KONGAI" is written. To the north of Nairobi, "RIDGEWAYS" and "GARDEN" are written. To the east of Ridgeways, "KASARANI" is written. To the south of Ridgeways, "BUABAKA" is written. To the east of Buabaka, "KARIBONGI" is written. To the south of Karibongi, "OAHODER" is written. To the east of Oahoder, "KOMARECO" is written. To the south of Oahoder, "KAYOLE" is written. To the east of Kayole, "SUKU KURU" is written. To the north of Nairobi, "KAHANA" is written. To the south of Kahana, "GITHURAI" is written. To the west of Githurai, "ROYSAMBU" is written. To the south of Roysambu, "KASARANI" is written. To the east of Kasarani, "ATHI" is written. To the south of Athi, "KITENGELA" is written.

It is strange that Kibera, the largest slum in Kenya is excluded in Figure 3. Most respondents only included it during debriefing after I asked them to give reasons why there is no Sheng' in Kibera. Three explanations are possible in this case; 1) It is likely that the respondents only figured the periphery of the slums, mostly occupied by the



The most striking thing about this map is that apart from two estates, Gigiri and Ruaraka, all the rest of Nairobi areas are circled as having Sheng'. Ruaraka houses the national headquarters of the National Youth Service (NYS) and the headquarters of the paramilitary General Service Unit (GSU). In these two institutions, Kiswahili is the dominant language of instruction and general communication, just like in the police and the army. Gigiri houses the Headquarters of the United Nations Environmental Program (UNEP). The folk belief is that UNEP HQs, being an international institution, would have nothing to do with Sheng'. Instead these areas are hubs of international languages, more specifically English. The respondent might even be guided by the consideration that Gigiri and Ruaraka are not residential areas but rather occupational areas where people from different linguistic backgrounds meet on strictly business terms. The domains of Sheng' can thus not fall into these two areas. This would be wrong because there are some residential sections in Ruaraka and Gigiri. However, what is striking is the way this map generalizes the idea that Sheng' is an overall phenomenon in Nairobi by the marking of all the other areas.

Interestingly, this map was drawn by a teacher in a primary school though this cannot be generalized for all the teachers. Teachers mark their school location as well as their residential areas as Sheng' clusters. Although their maps follow the traditional trend of associating Sheng' with the Eastlands, following the common stereotype, they do not feel any attachment to it. They are daily witnesses of the effects of Sheng' in school performance, especially in languages like English and Kiswahili. Moreover, they are charged with the responsibility of teaching the schoolchildren standard languages. The inclusion of their respective schools as Sheng' areas point to their knowledge that it is





Reliance on cues like a salient phenomenon also explain why some respondents exclude the industrial area where they attribute lack of Sheng' to the fact that only industries are found there. Others think that convergence of people of diverse linguistic backgrounds at industrial areas in search of menial jobs makes the use of Sheng' inevitable. These two opposing views are present in most maps and other respondents' responses. For instance, schools to some are the enclaves of Sheng' because of the high percentage of the youth; to others, school are not important Sheng' areas because these are the places where standard languages are taught. In the CBD, some respondents think Sheng' is absent because official businesses that takes place there are carried out in official the languages. To others, the CBD is the meeting place of many people from the estates where Sheng' is prevalent, yet another group claim there are pockets of residential areas in the capital city. The students from the University of Nairobi for instance considered themselves as part of the CBD.

The Downmarket residents mark their residential areas as Sheng' estates and exclude most of the Upmarket estates, which they associate with English. They are conscious of the stereotypes associated with the local norms but maintain their loyalty to them. They are also aware of the association of Sheng' with the low classes, hence their identification of the Downmarket areas as Sheng' clusters on both sides of the divide. In densely populated multilingual environments such as the Downmarket estates, linguistic convergence is usually achieved through accommodation to other people's ways of speaking in order to gain social acceptance as noted in Nairobi's Eastlands by Burja (1974) and Parkin (1974). This environment is conducive for Sheng' within the

framework of the accommodation theory of Giles, Taylor and Bourhis (1973) and Giles and Powesland (1997).

Most respondent in the Downmarket estates isolate the newer estates like Dandora, Komarock, Kahawa, Githurai and Roysambu. These newer estates are perceived not to have evolved their typical linguistic patterns. That the Downmarket residents mark their residential areas as Sheng' clusters provides evidence that they are comfortable with it. Their loyalty can be understood as serving an ego-defensive function. Vulnerable or insecure people hold ego defensive attitudes in their endeavor to protect themselves from embarrassing or unfaltering fact about themselves (Ciapopo and Petty 1982). This can also be viewed as a face saving strategy (Brown and Levinson 1987) if stigmatization of the downmarket speakers is regarded as a face-threatening act. In order to save their face, the downmarket respondents avoid antagonizing anybody by claiming that it is the general trend as an excuse for their use of Sheng'. They also bring out its more positive aspects like friendliness to show that there is nothing wrong with the language and can even be preferred to the standard languages in some cases. For instance, an Eastlands respondent claims that people from the Eastlands talk a lot (thanks to Sheng') while in the Upmarket areas, one can stay mum from morning to evening (probably due to the coldness they associate with the standard languages or their speakers, or the notion that higher status speakers are less friendly). This conforms to earlier studies, which show that local speech is affectively preferred regardless of its correctness (Preston 1996). This is not true for the Downmarket respondents as shown in figure 6 below.

[illegible]

59

areas because it is not used at home at all, a claim supported by the Downmarket respondent “O”.

As I said before ...Sheng’ is security... you find the children from the wealthy areas over there try to ensure their security. They want to look like locals when they visit these sides, but they dare not speak to people from their residential areas in Sheng’. (My own translation. Original in Sheng’)

The use of Sheng’ in the Upmarket residences is a marked phenomenon, which even the Downmarket residents understands. Indeed, most of the Upmarket residents confessed to not knowing deep Sheng’ and distrust those who speak it. They regard these people as the embodiment of all that goes against the aspirations of the higher status class, such as poverty, poor education, drugs and violence. Most preferred to use the term “slang” rather than Sheng’ which can partly explain the failure to identify their areas as Sheng’ clusters. In Abdulaziz and Osinde (1997), the up-market areas are identified as English clusters.

We have pointed out in several sections that the matatu touts do not shy away from associating themselves with Sheng’. In fact they consider themselves as the most important people in creation of new vocabulary. This is reflected in figure (7) below.

[illegible]

Matatus are privately owned commuter service vehicles, which ply different routes in Nairobi. They are popular among the youth because of their elegance and loud

music, mostly American pop music and reggae although recently Sheng' rap and hip-hop music has made its presence felt. Older people detest matatus because of the noise and the recklessness of the drivers who often disobey traffic rules. The mental picture that the Nairobi people have for the matatu touts is that of drug addicts, alcoholics, uneducated, and crude. They are often accused of luring innocent schoolgirls into sex with gifts and free rides while acting as supply chains for drugs to the schoolboys. The touts are themselves rude and abusive, with no respect for their commuters. They overload the passengers and raise fares at the slightest excuse. This group is very mobile due to the nature of their occupation and has adopted Sheng' as their professional language. This puts them at the vantage point in its dissemination on top of being its active innovators. They are aware of the role they play on its spread and it is no coincidence that all the areas excluded in most of their maps are either not plied by matatus or are not important transit points because the residents have their private means of transportation. The touts reflect the use of Sheng' as an in-group language within their profession. Moreover, they also hail from these low class residential areas where it is used widely, hence the inclusion of the Downmarket area in their maps.

From most of the maps, the status difference has been seen to play an important part in the respondents identification of estates where Sheng' is spoken. Moreover, the common stereotypes play a major role in the identification. As a generalization for all the maps, it is evident that most respondents leave out Parklands and Ngara due to the high number of Asian residents, even though there are many African residents in the two estates. Asians are not known to use Sheng'. They do not form social networks with their African counterparts who use Sheng' and are therefore excluded from the Sheng' culture.

When people indicate that in Ngara and Parklands there is very little Sheng' because those who stay there are Asians, they are more or less commenting about that aspect of the stereotypical Asians exclusiveness and ethnicity.

This aspect of exclusiveness and ethnicity would also explain why in the affluent residential areas there is little Sheng' since the homesteads are excluded with little or no interaction among the neighbors preventing the formation of Sheng' networks. Moreover the Westside estates in the periphery of Nairobi are perceived as relying much on English and mother tongues, specifically Kikuyu, because they border Kiambu District, a predominantly Kikuyu speaking region. Once more, the stereotypes come into play since the preference of Kikuyu in the periphery areas has not been attested. In any case, Kiambu is only some few minutes' drive from Nairobi and cannot escape the Sheng's influence from the city as a result of daily movements of workers.

Moreover, the dynamics of Sheng' in popular culture as was the case with the touts is also expected to have an influence on its perception in these estates especially in music, broadcast and the print media. For instance, in recent years, local artists have begun to use Sheng' vocabulary in their music. This music is played in matatus and commercial radio stations that have come up after the liberalization of the airwaves. The DJs and announcers in Kiss 100 FM and Capital 98.4 FM are very liberal in their language use. These stations do not have nationwide coverage and are limited to Nairobi and its environs, or some few urban areas. The effect of these stations is that Sheng' is now accessible to those sections of the population which were formerly isolated. However, their content only targets listeners from a specific category, especially the



youth. The whole impact of these stations on Sheng' and the way it is perceived is yet to be assessed and should be an interesting topic for future research.

In the print media David Maillu's 'Without Kiinua Mgongo' (1989) was the first publication in Sheng', however, the most fruitful work has been in magazines and newsletters. The "Slum news", "akalashoes.com" have been in operation for sometimes and have used Sheng' extensively. The entry of "Matatu madness" into the field (mentioned in page 3) is likely to overshadow these magazines because of its financial base and integrity of its staff. Its chief editor is a widely published author and a respected journalist in the mainstream media. His popularity as a leading humorist is likely to make the paper attract a lot of readership both inside and outside Sheng's domains. Since one of the reasons advanced for the abandonment of Sheng' is that former speakers can no longer keep up with the innovation, the paper's efforts in keeping readers updated with new vocabulary is likely to ensure continuity and enhance their retention of Sheng'. Continued rejection of Sheng' will hence be attributed to other reasons such as the persistent stereotypes.

This section's drawings illustrate that even a simple exercise like drawing of maps cannot avoid reference to social class differences and ethnicity, which continue to influence the language attitudes of the Nairobi residents.

#### **4.3.0 Factor analysis: The Respondents' rating**

In section 3.5.3, we saw that factor extraction involve arbitrary grouping of related features that co-occur with high frequency. This section presents factor loading of the two scales used in this study to extract speaker-oriented and language-oriented

factors. One goal is to develop a correlation between the more qualitatively interpreted hand-drawn maps and the percentage scores in the previous sections. The two scales use different adjectives to define perceived traits attributed to Sheng' and its speakers. Is there any correlation between the positive or negative evaluation of the language and its speakers? What are the peculiarities in the evaluations of different status groups?

In the following section, I first analyze the speaker-oriented factors of all raters and later the language oriented factors. I will then proceed to discuss the correlation between the two and attempt to make a general conclusion.

Interpretation of the factors depends on the highest loaded features and might therefore not generalize on all the features that cluster under one factor group. A high loading negative feature will indicate the opposite tendency to the rest of the traits (denoted by different adjectives) in that factor group. Only the traits that have a loading of .30 and above are considered significant. Although more factors were extracted from some status groups, only three were taken from every status group in order to maintain uniformity in generalization. Taking three factors also had the advantage of avoiding overfactoring (Biber 1988).

In this study, the traits with high loadings are interpreted as those with the value of .60 and above. Tables 15 to 19 below show how the features (traits) under survey loaded under different factors for each of the status group.

#### **4.3.1 Factor loading Ratings of Sheng' speakers**

Table 15: Factor loading: Students evaluation of Sheng' Speakers

	<u>Factor 1</u>	<u>Factor 2</u>	<u>Factor 3</u>
Creative	<u>.60</u>	.08	.77

Friendly	<b><u>.50</u></b>	.36	<b>.71</b>
Polite	<b><u>-.95</u></b>	.02	.27
Respectful	.23	.18	<b>.95</b>
Trustworthy	.14	<b>.94</b>	.19
Educated	<b>.91</b>	.06	-.12
Well behaved	.23	<b><u>.82</u></b>	-.52
Serious	<b>.91</b>	.17	.40
Rough	-.27	<b><u>.88</u></b>	.41
Law abiding	-.26	-.26	<b><u>.99</u></b>
Less tribalistic	.13	.08	<b><u>.92</u></b>

All significant positive features are in bold. High positive features are underlined. Significant negative features are in italics

Table 16 Teachers' evaluation of Sheng' speakers- Factor Loadings

	<u>Factor 1</u>	<u>Factor 2</u>	<u>Factor 3</u>
Trustworthy	<b>.37</b>	<b><u>.54</u></b>	<b><u>.61</u></b>
Law abiding	<b>.46</b>	<b>.30</b>	<b>.37</b>
Serious	<b><u>.78</u></b>	-.14	<b>.33</b>
Less tribalistic	.07	.10	<b><u>.93</u></b>
Respectful	<b>.54</b>	<b><u>.82</u></b>	.04
Educated	<b><u>.82</u></b>	.14	<b>.45</b>
Polite	-.15	<b><u>.99</u></b>	.15
Rough	<b><u>.79</u></b>	-.20	<b>.36</b>
Well behaved	<b>.54</b>	<b>.35</b>	<b><u>.69</u></b>
Friendly	<b><u>.95</u></b>	.02	.11
Creative	<b><u>.77</u></b>	<b>.44</b>	<b>.44</b>

All significant positive features are in bold. High loading features are underlined.

Table 17: The Downmarket People's evaluation of Sheng' speakers

Adjectives	<u>Factor1</u>	<u>Factor 2</u>	<u>Factor 3</u>
Serious	<b><u>.91</u></b>	-.10	.02
Trustworthy	.11	<b><u>.65</u></b>	.25

Less tribalistic	<b>.83</b>	.21	<b>.40</b>
Friendly	<b>.91</b>	.04	.14
Respectful	.25	<b>.98</b>	.04
Polite	<b>.46</b>	.20	<b>.84</b>
Law abiding	.25	.07	.20
Well behaved	<b>.36</b>	.12	<b>.93</b>
Educated	.21	<b>.70</b>	.13
Rough	<b>.93</b>	.16	<b>.32</b>
Creative	<b>.58</b>	<b>.35</b>	<b>.34</b>

All significant positive features are in bold. High loading features are underlined.

Table 18: Upmarket People's evaluation of Sheng' speakers

	<u>Factor 1</u>	<u>Factor 2</u>	<u>Factor 3</u>
Polite	.09	<b>.94</b>	-.03
Well behaved	<b>.42</b>	<b>.30</b>	<b>.80</b>
Law abiding	.24	<b>.89</b>	-.24
Rough	.17	.26	-.52
Creative	-.01	<b>.89</b>	<b>.95</b>
Trustworthy	-.89	.01	-.15
Serious	<b>.34</b>	-.25	.22
Respectful	<b>.90</b>	<b>.30</b>	.15
Educated	<b>.66</b>	.07	<b>.46</b>
Friendly	<b>.45</b>	-.88	.22
Less tribalistic	<b>.34</b>	.24	.26

Significant positive features in bold. High-loading positive features underlined. Significant negative features are in italics

Table 19: Touts' evaluation of Sheng' speakers - Factor Loadings

	<u>Factor 1</u>	<u>Factor 2</u>	<u>Factor 3</u>
Less tribalistic	.01	-.92	.05
Rough	<b>.64</b>	<b>.40</b>	-.33
Trustworthy	-.16	.21	.26
Serious	-.96	.13	-.04

Respectful	.03	<b><u>.93</u></b>	<b>.30</b>
Polite	<b><u>.92</u></b>	.06	-.13
Friendly	-.79	-.27	.17
Creative	.03	<b><u>.88</u></b>	-.11
Educated	<b>.33</b>	<b>.32</b>	.26
Well behaved	.27	.19	<b><u>.89</u></b>
Law abiding	<b>.42</b>	.23	-.58

Significant positive features in bold. High-loading positive features underlined. Significant negative features are in italics

#### 4.3.2 Factor interpretation for speakers

The method of interpretation adopted in this study is comparison of all the features that load together under each factor group for the different groups of raters. Generalizations are drawn based on the similarities or peculiarities that can be observed. Only the significant loadings above .30 are listed in the interpretation while The asterisk in front of a number indicates its high loading (i.e., .60) and above.

**Table 20: Factor 1**

	Students	Teachers	Downmarket	Upmarket	Touts
Creative	*.60	*.77	.58		
Friendly	.50	*.95	*.91	.45	*-.79
Polite	*-.95		.46		*.92
Respectful		.54		*.90	
L. Abiding		.46			.42
Educated	*.91	*.82		*.66	.33
Serious	*.91	*.78	*.87	.34	*-.96
L. Tribalistic			*.83	.34	
W. Behaved		.54	.36	.42	
Trustworthy		.37		*-.89	
Rough		*.79	*.93		*.64

From table 20, it is evident that each status group has a unique pattern of the attributes that load on Factor 1 on the rating of Sheng' speakers. "Creativity" is assumed to refer to Sheng' speakers' innovative capability. It is interesting that this attribute is only perceived as significant by the students, teachers, and the Downmarket respondents. Both Upmarket residents and touts do not associate Sheng' speakers with innovative ability. While the Upmarket residents' behavior may be interpreted as their attempt to downplay any positive ability of those they look down upon, the touts behavior is strange. They are probably aware that their use of Sheng' places them at a disadvantage. Therefore its creativity is perceived negatively because it negates their aspiration for socio-economic mobility. "Friendly" attribute loads highly on all factor groups, but strangely it loads negatively on the part of the touts. The students and the Downmarket residents value Sheng' as an instrument for solidarity among the speakers. The popularity of Sheng' among the university students dismisses the myth that it is spoken by people with a deficiency in mastering standard languages.

Strangely, touts do not find Sheng' speakers friendly in spite of the fact they are considered to be the most consistent group in the use of Sheng'. Perhaps they rate the speakers negatively because to them, the importance of Sheng' is only restricted to the function it serves within their occupation group. They use it to identify themselves as a distinct social category, but not for solidarity purpose. It is also possible that they are not linguistically insecure and hence don't need to emphasize its affective qualities. They also rate Sheng' speakers as tribalistic, badly behaved, rough, untrustworthy, not serious, but polite and educated. In the percentage score, it was observed that the touts do not like the language to move from their in-group, because it defines them, negative connotations

notwithstanding. Since the touts give a semblance of “organized labour” then the institutional use of Sheng’ in the matatu industry by the touts functions like a jargon in other professions. Perhaps the touts reject some positive qualities that can make them appear “soft” because they derive cover prestige from using Sheng. Under factor one, the touts seem to be evaluating Sheng’ speakers according to their norms.

According to the Upmarket raters, “trustworthy” forms a negative correlate with other traits in factor group 1. This is rather odd because the factor contains other positive attributes like "respectful", "well behaved" and "friendly". This mixed evaluation shows a group torn between the underlying stereotypes and accommodation. Other raters like students, teachers and the Downmarket residents prefer to point out the positive evaluation. Generally, respondents give Sheng' speakers both positive and negative evaluation. This points to the amelioration of prior harsh attitudes towards Sheng' which is an indicator of growing acceptance or accommodation.

**Table 21: Factor 2.**

	Students	Teachers	Downmarket	Upmarket	Touts
Creative		.44	.35		*.88
Friendly	.36			*-.88	
Polite		*.99		*.94	
Respectful		*.82	*.98	.30	*.93
L. Abiding		.30		*.89	
Educated			*.70		.32
Serious					
L. Tribalistic					*-.92
W. Behaved	*.82	.35		.30	
Trustworthy	*.94	.54	*.65		
Rough	*.88			*.66	.40

Under Factor 2, students continue to rate Sheng' speakers as "friendly" They also rate them as "well behaved" and "trustworthy and strangely "rough." Apart from "rough", these other traits do not conform to the traditional stereotypes associated with Sheng' speakers. This is an indication that students recognize the solidarity role that Sheng' plays amongst its speakers. Note that "rough" might not be a negative attribute after all, but this is difficult to establish at the moment. It is interesting that only the Downmarket people and the touts perceive Sheng' speakers as educated. These respondents seems to be adopting a defensive stance as a way of rejecting the stereotype that Sheng' is for the poor uneducated people. As pointed out earlier, touts are mostly stereotyped as school dropouts or those who could not proceed with their education. On the other hand, poverty in the Downmarket areas prevents the residents from having quality education.

On their part, the teachers have little to report about the education aspect since majority of them do not speak Sheng', unless they are commenting on the general speakers of Sheng' or their pupils, mostly because their pupils are at a lower level of education. It is not clear why "rough" should cluster together with other positive traits under the students, upmarket people raters and the touts. It is possible that these two status groups are rating two different categories of speakers or that the trait "rough" does not bear a negative connotation according to them.

The Downmarket respondents and the touts point out the affective properties of Sheng' speakers because they know the stigma their language carries. As pointed out in the earlier discussion, this is common for people who suffer from linguistic insecurity. In Factor 2, the touts now rate the Sheng' speakers as "creative" and "respectful," but rejects



that they are "less tribalistic." They also persist in rating the speakers as rough which emphasizes the role of Sheng' in giving the speakers covert prestige.

The clustering of both the positive and negative traits shows how torn the Upmarket respondents are. The negative traits can have two interpretations; 1) stereotypical traits they attribute to the people who speak deep Sheng', 2) the covert prestige they want to be associated with when speaking Sheng' such as toughness and mischief. Under the first interpretation, then this factor group will be seen to sum up two classes of speakers of Sheng', which is very possible with the high status groups. The mixed evaluation by the teachers can also be taken to refer to two categories of speakers. Alternatively, the whole cluster can be interpreted negatively to mean that teachers perceive Sheng' speakers as manipulative and pretentious. However, there is no sufficient evidence to lead to this conclusion since the percentage score and the map drawing indicated the teachers are the most liberal in their evaluation.

**Table 22: Factor 3**

	Students	Teachers	Downmarket	Upmarket	Touts
Creative	*.77	.44	.34	*.95	
Friendly	*.71				
Polite			*.84		
Respectful	*.95				.30
L. Abiding	*.99	.37			-.58
Educated		.45		.46	
Serious	.40	.33			
L. Tribalistic	*.92	*.93	.40		
W. Behaved	-.52	*.69	*.93	*.80	*.89
Trustworthy		*.61			
Rough	.41	.36	.32	-.52	-.33

Just like they did under Factors 1 & 2, the students continue to generally rate the Sheng' speakers positively, though there are some inconsistencies with negative loading of "well behaved" and positive loading of "rough". As for the teachers, Factor one and factor 3 are almost similar, although attributes highly load on Factor 1 than they do under factor three. Negative loading of "rough" by the touts is an indication to what I have pointed out in Factors 1 and 2. At least for the touts, "rough" is negative, but deliberate so that they it can serve the group function. Note that the negative loading of law abiding on touts is a reference to the old stereotype of associating Sheng' speakers with wayward behavior like drugs, sex and petty crime.

Interestingly, "rough" and "Well behaved" have significant loading for all status groups under factor 3. Strangely, students seem to associate Sheng' speakers with mischief, hence the negative loading of well behaved. On the other hand, the Upmarket and touts, rate Sheng' speakers as not rough, while all the other groups rate Sheng' speakers as "rough". I have this feature can either be positively interpreted or negatively interpreted relative to the referent group.

Unlike other factor groups, there is no mixed evaluation for the Upmarket raters under Factor group 3. This shows that the Upmarket raters are not totally hostile to Sheng' as is often assumed. Under the percentage rating (table 6), they reported favorably on their use of Sheng'. If this is the case, then their use of Sheng' would be taken as having an influence on their positive evaluation under Factor group 3.

#### **4.3.3 Factor loadings: The rating of Sheng'**

Evaluation of respondents' rating of Sheng' was interpreted separately from that of the speakers in order to ascertain whether there is a distinction between the speakers

and the language. It is possible that raters detest the speakers but like the language or vice versa. Although Systat analysis extracted more than two factors for some status groups, only two from each status group were considered in order to maintain uniformity in generalizations. Tables 23 through 27 show the loading of feature under different factors.

Table 23: Students evaluation of Sheng' -Factor loadings

	<u>Factor 1</u>	<u>Factor 2</u>
Interesting	<b><u>.62</u></b>	-.11
Good	-.01	-.83
Attractive	<b><u>.94</u></b>	.08
Respectful	<b><u>.87</u></b>	.10
Pleasant	<b><u>.44</u></b>	<b><u>.82</u></b>
Important	<b><u>.75</u></b>	<b><u>.49</u></b>
Inclusive	.21	.28
Easy	.16	.29
Intimidating	<b><u>.61</u></b>	.47

Table 24: Teachers evaluation of Sheng'

	<u>Factor 1</u>	<u>Factor 2</u>
Easy	<b><u>.88</u></b>	.28
Attractive	.07	<b><u>.96</u></b>
Pleasant	<b><u>.58</u></b>	.25
Respectful	.27	<b><u>.44</u></b>
Interesting	<b><u>.49</u></b>	.22
Important	.05	<b><u>.81</u></b>
Intimidating	<b><u>.93</u></b>	.07
Inclusive	<b><u>.97</u></b>	-.01
Good	<b><u>.49</u></b>	.19

Table 25: Downmarket peoples' evaluation of Sheng'

	<u>Factor 1</u>	<u>Factor 2</u>
Respectful	<b><u>.71</u></b>	.16
Interesting	.18	<b><u>.96</u></b>
Good	.24	.23
Easy	<b><u>.88</u></b>	.23
Pleasant	<b>.41</b>	.12
Important	.16	<b><u>.91</u></b>
Intimidating	<b>.51</b>	<b>.53</b>
Inclusive	.24	.27
Attractive	<b><u>.79</u></b>	.15

Table 26: Upmarket people's evaluation of Sheng'

	<u>Factor 1</u>	<u>Factor 2</u>
Important	-.16	-.44
Attractive	.03	<b><u>.93</u></b>
Interesting	-.32	-.95
Easy	<b><u>.89</u></b>	.17
Intimidating	.21	<b><u>.97</u></b>
Good	<b>.30</b>	<b>.51</b>
Pleasant	<b><u>.89</u></b>	.04
Respectful	<b>.54</b>	.20
Inclusive	-.96	-.24

Table 27: Touts' evaluation of Sheng'

	<u>Factor 1</u>	<u>Factor 2</u>
Intimidating	<b><u>.72</u></b>	.23
Inclusive	<b><u>.66</u></b>	.21
Easy	-.12	<b><u>.98</u></b>
Attractive	.29	<b><u>.91</u></b>
Respectful	<b><u>.48</u></b>	-.70

Important	.41	-.21
Good	-.19	.02
Pleasant	-.95	.06
Interesting	.23	-.38

#### 4.3.4 Factor interpretation for Sheng'

We have observed above in the rating of speakers, that the raters gave Sheng' speakers a more positive rating. This might be due to the desire to display fairness by avoiding open negative evaluation. We hypothesized that this trend will change when it comes evaluating the language because the raters will be evaluating the language and not the people. This is because people usually mask the stereotypes they hold towards others by stereotyping the language those people use. Tables 28 and 29 show that this is hardly the case.

Table 28: Factor 1

	Students	Teachers	Downmarket	Upmarket	Touts
Inclusive		*.97		*-.96	*.66
Easy			*.88	*.89	
Important	*.75				.41
Pleasant	.44	.58	.41	*.89	*-.95
Attractive	*.94		*.79		
Good		.49		.30	
Intimidating	*.61	*.93	.51		*.72
Interesting	*.62	.49		-.32	
Respectful	*.87		*.71	.54	.48

A look at the traits that cluster in Factor group 1 in table 28 shows that respondents give Sheng' a middle-of-the-scale rating. There is no negative rating

especially among the students, teachers and the downmarket respondents. It is rather strange "intimidating" fail to load only among the upmarket raters, contrary to expectation, considering that the middle class is usually hostile to no-standard varieties. To the students and the touts, Sheng' is important because it is a tool for group solidarity, but this is not the case for the teachers, the Downmarket raters and the upmarket raters. This is expected.

The downmarket raters do not consider Sheng' as important because it puts them at a disadvantage by always betraying their poor residential areas. Moreover, it counters their efforts of ensuring that their children learn standard language in order to climb up the socioeconomic ladder. For the Upmarket raters, Sheng' does not serve any useful purpose apart from indicating that they are at par with other young people when it comes to linguistic trends. Although they appreciate Sheng's social importance, they understand its limitations when it comes to other more important pursuits in life.

The teachers' case is more interesting. They teachers always complain that it complicates their work of teaching standard languages. Their attitudes reflect the concerns expressed by the Ministry of Education at the end of every year when releasing the Primary Schools' National Exam results. For instance, in 2001 Kenya Certificate of Primary Education (KCPE) results, English composition and Kiswahili insha (composition) had a nationwide mean score of 33% and 42% respectively, a poor performance blamed on the encroachment of Sheng' (The East African Standard Editorial, December 29, 2001). Their failure to rate Sheng as "important should be viewed along these lines.

Another feature that merit some discussion is the rating of "easy." Perception of Sheng' as "easy would rationalize its adoption by so many people thus perpetuating the stereotype that it is a language of lazy unambitious people who cannot master standard languages. Only the upmarket and the downmarket respondents rate Sheng' as easy, though they are motivated by different motivations. The Upmarket raters, probably perceive Sheng' as easy relative to the standard languages. It is also possible that they rate it as easy in conformity to the stereotype that Sheng' is a corrupted, simplified language that has no laid down rules (Ngesa 2002). Linguistically, this might be hard to conceive, unless we are only referring to morphology and word formation but there must be a grammatical pattern, otherwise, it would be hard for the speakers to understand each other. As things stand, most of the deviance is attributed to vocabulary and not the SVO order of the sentences like in both English and Kiswahili.

It is not surprising that the downmarket raters will find it easy because it has been spoken there for a long time. In fact, Sheng' is mostly assumed to have been invented in the downmarket areas. As for the touts, "easy" does not load because to them, it is not easy. They adopt it because circumstances force them to. It is the tool of trade. They actually try to keep Sheng' out of reach of the other people because they want to set themselves aside. If it became easy, then it would lose its function in their in-group, thus denying them a crucial tool for their identity. Overall, we observe that under factor 1, the touts rate Sheng' negatively in conformity with social stigma associated with it.

All the raters apart from the touts seem to emphasize on Sheng's eloquence that appeals to speakers under Factor 1, a common characteristic for slang (section 2.5.1). When rating the Sheng' speakers, we saw that the touts attach more importance to the

covert prestige that they derive from Sheng'. For instance, they do not use Sheng' because it is "interesting," "easy" or "attractive," but because it is intimidating and inclusive, a clear indication of its in-group value. This is enforced in the loading of features under factor 2.

**Table 29: Factor 2**

	Students	Teachers	Downmarket	Upmarket	Touts
Inclusive					
Easy					*.98
Important	.49	*.81	*.91	-.44	
Pleasant	*.82				
Attractive		*.96		*.93	*.91
Good	*-.83			.51	
Intimidating	.47		.53	*.97	
Interesting			*.96	*-.95	-.38
Respectful		.44			*-.70

Generally, the upmarket raters give Sheng' a very negative rating under factor 2, probably because they are rating the Sheng' spoken by outsiders as indicated by the rating of "intimidating", not "interesting" and not "important." The student give a mixed evaluation of Sheng' as "pleasant" and "important" but also not "good" and "intimidating." The same can be said of the downmarket raters and the touts. It is only the teachers who give Sheng' a positive rating under factor 2, which is again strange because they do not use it

While most respondents appreciate that Sheng' 'bring people together', "inclusive" does not load for any status group. Does this contradict the fact that it has lost its in-group value? Hardly. The feature "intimidating" takes over as an indicator of in-group rating of Sheng. "Intimidating" loads under the students, downmarket and the upmarket raters.



However, this should be interpreted as the outsiders' comment of the kind of Sheng' spoken by others. A good illustration is the upmarket raters drawing a distinction between deep Sheng and common Sheng' since the majority only master common Sheng'. Deep Sheng' is for the 'initiated' and certainly intended to intimidate. The high loading of "easy" on tous now shows that they are considering themselves as speakers, since they are presently the most important innovators, Sheng' is easy to them, and they cannot conceive of any kind of Sheng they cannot master. Since they are highly mobile nature in the course of their duties, they can keep up to date with the most recent innovations.

To sum up, we see that the two scales both isolate the function of Sheng' as well as who the raters are rating. We observe the in-group characteristics being emphasized in factor 1, though they persist in factor two. We also observe that the raters did not rate the speakers positively and the language negatively as expected, but instead opted for mixed rating. While this mixed rating might seem as a contradiction, we can conclude that it is a strategy for giving a fair judgment, rating others from existing stereotypes as well as their own subjective judgment while at the same time rating themselves without contradicting themselves. This mixed rating of Sheng' speakers and Sheng' also show that judges have three categories of speakers in mind. These are everybody in general, the other speakers or the out-group and the in-group. For the raters who do not speak Sheng' especially the teacher, their judgment is more general, though it mostly tends towards the social stereotyped variety, but they are willing to give the positive rating of Sheng' on a general level. For the in-group, they rate Sheng' according to their norms, being more fair in their judgment while rating themselves, but somehow harsh when rating the others. We have seen for instance that upmarket people will rate Sheng' positively only when considering

the kind of Sheng they speak, that is English or the common Sheng' while distrust speakers of the deep Sheng' while intimidate them. The same can be said of students. For the downmarket raters, it has to do with the various 'dialects' of Sheng' that are spoken in different city estates. The touts' negative rating for instance is a matter of personal choice. They make the choice of using a language they know is not approved by the society because it serves a value expressive function such as enhancing their freedom and identity (Ciapopo and Petty, 1982). Another interpretation of this rating would be that the touts appreciate the importance of standard languages like English which we pointed out earlier that it is the language of the powerful class and the symbol of upward mobility while Sheng' has none of these qualities. In spite of the function it serves in defining their in-group, they would not like their children to communicate in it because it would stand in the way of their upward mobility.

The discussions in this chapter have come out with interesting observations. All the three methods used in data collection and analysis complementing each other and finally converge on the same results although some were better in representation of certain aspects of the discussion. The summary of the major findings will be summed in the conclusion.

## **5 Conclusions**

This study evaluated the different pattern of Nairobi people's attitudes towards Sheng' and the underlying factors influencing those attitudes. The evaluative judgments have been analyzed with the background of the general language situation in the Kenya in mind. This has been done within the theoretical frameworks of network structure (Milroy 1980), code-switching and markedness (Myers-Scotton 1993 b, 1992a), accommodation (Giles and associates 1973), linguistic insecurity (Labov 1972) and their manifestation on sex, age and status. My three hypotheses are restated below:

- i) Women underreport on their use of Sheng' because they do not want to be associated with stigmatized speech.
- ii) Users of Sheng' will rate it more favorably than nonusers.
- iii) People from the higher social-economic class will tend draw a distinction between their variety of Sheng' and the one spoken by their counterparts in the lower social economic class.

Direct and indirect methods were employed in the study. These included questionnaires, map drawing, oral interviews and semantic differential scales. Data were then presented in form of percentage score tables, map figures and factor analysis. The major finding of this study can be summed up as follows:

Firstly, the downmarket raters exhibit a high degree of linguistic insecurity. Following hypothesis (ii) we find that they rate Sheng' and its speakers favorably in affective dimensions especially in the semantic differential scales and the percentage scores because they are aware that it is stigmatized. The other raters like the touts and the students also exhibit minimal insecurity, but the case of the touts must be interpreted with

caution because they mask their insecurity by rating Sheng' negatively. The teachers are not users of Sheng' and indeed proscribe its use while the Upmarket raters are torn between identifying with Sheng' or maintaining their social distance from the stigmatized speech.

Secondly, Sheng' has not yet attained universal acceptance. Nairobi people's attitudes towards it continue to be dominated by traditional stereotypes, especially those of the categories of people mostly associated with its use such as the touts, youth, males and the Downmarket areas. Hypothesis (iii) highlights the drawing of status difference between the wealthy and the poor and this has been well illustrated through continued association of the Downmarket estates as the hubs of Sheng', especially in hand drawn maps.

Thirdly, women under-participation in Sheng' is the basis of their negative attitudes. While it is possible that this is due to pressure from the society, it can also be attributed to hypothesis (i) where they might be significant participators, but underreport because they do not want to be associated with the "bad languages". Overall most of the respondents still regard the late teens as the most consistent users of Sheng'

Fourthly, there is a high correlation between the raters use of Sheng' and their judgments. Raters who use Sheng' exhibit loyalty in different ways. The Downmarket raters, who are linguistically insecure are loyal to the language they speak often in their daily communications and regard it warmly as per hypothesis (ii). They would like it to be adopted by the majority in order to lose its stigma. The touts on the other hand negate hypothesis (ii) and exhibit their loyalty by attempting to keep their language away from the outsiders.

In the same context the popular culture has been shown to play an important role in influencing peoples attitudes especially amongst the touts. Since the touts engage in a conscious effort to set themselves apart, the matatu culture can be regarded as an antisociety which generates Sheng' as its antilanguage (Halliday 1978). The touts' behavior seems to contradict my hypothesis that the users of a language would be loyal to their language and therefore rate it more favorably. Loyalty to one's language is therefore not always a measure of linguistic insecurity. Moreover, positive ratings do not always indicate linguistic loyalty as data from the touts illustrate.

In conclusion, the attitude patterns of the five status groups used in this study can be accounted for within the model of the sociology of deviance that identifies four types of social behavior (St. Clair 1982).

- (i) the pure deviant: perceived deviant by everyone.
- (ii) the conformist: conforms to social norms and is not perceived as deviant.
- (iii) the secret deviant: Usually in the power group. He breaks the rule with impunity knowing because he can't be penalized.
- (iv) the falsely accused: tries to respect the law still regarded as deviant.

Under these categories, the non-apologetic matatu touts fall under the first category. Instead of the seeking to alter traditional stereotypes about themselves, they emphasize those stereotypes and rate Sheng' negatively and thus wish to cultivate a rebellious image of themselves. They know that accommodation would improve their social acceptance, but still want to maintain their identity. The teachers are the conformists who are charged with the responsibility of teaching children the standard languages. Some of them speak Sheng', but they must subvert their preferences in order to conform to the popular attitudes as per the requirements of their profession (see poem

in appendix iv). The Upmarket raters, though liable to underreport as a result of the negative caricatures attributed to Sheng' and its speakers are the secret deviants. They can use the stigmatized forms at will because they are in the privileged class and nobody would consider them as deviant. On the other hand, the Downmarket raters are falsely accused. While they are being rated, they are branded with all the negative stereotypes associated with their neighborhoods. The language they use is only a victim of the people' biases towards where they hail from. The students fall in most of these categories.

This study combines the traditional and current methods in the analysis of language attitudes and speech variation and will make its contribution to a linguistic field that has not been given adequate attention. Although the study will add to the growing interest in the study of Sheng', the size of the respondents might not be sufficient to draw explicit generalization. This being only an initial study of attitudes towards Sheng', future research should vet the respondents to minimize cases of overlap in respondents' role status. A larger size of the respondents and careful classification of the status groups would greatly overcome some of these limitations. More study also needs to focus on the aspects of youth and popular culture and the pattern of peoples attitudes towards different versions of Sheng', both in Nairobi and other Urban areas. This study has only laid a good background for future research on language attitudes towards Sheng'.

## APPENDIX I

### Nairobi Peoples Perception of Sheng'

#### Personal Information.

1. Please circle you age bracket.

- (a) 18-24    (b) 25-29    (c) 30-34    (d) 35-39    (e) 40 and above.

2. Sex: Male                      Female

3. Please state the regions (district/province) where;

- (i) You were born .....  
(ii) You went to Primary School .....  
(iii) You attended secondary school .....  
(iv) You attended post-secondary .....

4. Give the names of neighborhoods you have resided in Nairobi starting with the most recent.

- (a) .....  
(b) .....  
(c) .....  
(d) .....  
(e) .....

5. Write down the languages that you use beginning with the one you use most to the one you use least.

- 1 .....  
2 .....  
3 .....  
4 .....  
5 .....

6. Which language(s) do you use in the following situations? Please fill those that apply

- (a) speaking to your parents .....  
(b) speaking to your children .....  
(c) speaking to your age mates .....  
(d) addressing your brothers and sisters .....  
(e) talking to the store man, grocery owners etc .....

7. Do you know Sheng'?      Yes      No

8. If Yes, do you speak it?

Thank you for your responses.

I will now give you a sketch of Nairobi and want you to identify clusters of areas where you know or think Sheng' is spoken and draw circles around those areas.

### **People's perceptions**

This section will be tape recorded and will take place after identifying where Sheng' is spoken on the sketches of Nairobi maps. This questionnaire will only be with the interviewer.

1. According to you what are the languages that make up Sheng'?
2. Why do you think Sheng' is spoken in these areas?
3. Why have you not identified these areas as places where Sheng' is spoken.
4. Which percentage of Nairobi People do you think actively speak Sheng'?
5. Out of all speakers of Sheng' in Nairobi, give the percentage of  
males  
females
6. What percentage of Sheng' speakers do you think are in the following age-groups:

7-15	.....%
16-20	.....%
21-25	.....%
26-35	.....%
above 35	.....%
Total	100%
7. Why do you think people speak Sheng' instead of the official languages or other indigenous languages?
8. Who do you think should use Sheng'?
9. What would you say is the reason people who were using Sheng' suppress/stop using it?
10. Do you accept that using Sheng' affect performance in Swahili and English among School going children?
11. How would you take it if your parents used Sheng' constantly? Do they complain of using Sheng'?  
or
12. Do you consider it OK for your children to speak Sheng'? Why?
13. What do you feel if people speak a language that you cannot understand?
14. Is there any comment you would like to make about Sheng'?



1. If you were asked to rate the speakers of Sheng' in these qualities how would you rate them

	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	
Respectful	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	unrespectful
Trustworthy	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	untrustworthy
Rough	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	gentle
Polite	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	impolite
Creative	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Uncreative
Law-abiding	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Law-breakers
Less tribalistic	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Tribalistic
Friendly	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	unfriendly
Educated	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	uneducated.
Well-behaved	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	badly behaved.
Serious	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Not serious
Admirable	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Not admirable.

2. Now rate Sheng' as a Language

	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	
Interesting	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	boring
Good	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	bad
pleasant	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	unpleasant
Easy	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	difficult
Intimidating	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	friendly
Inclusive	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	exclusive
Respectful	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	disrespectful
Attractive	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Unattractive
Important	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Not Important

3. In the following statements, say whether, you agree, you disagree or don't know..

- (a) Sheng' should only be spoke by people who are under twenty one .....
- (b) Parents should generally not use Sheng' .....
- (c) Children shouldn't speak Sheng' with their parents or elders .....
- (d) After English and Swahili, I would rate Sheng' third .....
- (e) Sheng' should be banned completely .....
- (f) Sheng' deserves to be promoted. ....
- (g) Within some few years Sheng' will replace indigenous languages .....
- (h) Within some few years, Sheng' will have died out .....

Thank you very much for you participation.

## APPENDIX II

Maoni Ya Watu wa Nairobi Kuhusu Sheng'

### Habari za Mhojiwa.

1. Tafadhali chora duara katika kiwango cha umri wako.  
(a) 18-24    25-29    (c) 30-35    (d) 35-39    (e) 40, na kuendelea.
2. Uwana:      Mwanaume              Mwanamke
3. Tafadhali taja sehemu (wilaya ama mkoa) ambapo:  
(i) Ulizaliwa .....  
(ii) Ulisomea shule ya msingi .....  
(iii) Ulisomea shule ya upili .....  
(iv) Ulisomea baada ya sekondari .....
4. Andika majina ya mitaa ambayo umeishi mjini Nairobi ukianza na wa hivi karibuni au unapoishi sasa hivi.  
(a) .....  
(b) .....  
(c) .....  
(d) .....  
(e) .....
5. Andika Lugha ambazo unazungumza ukianza na ile unayotumia sana na umalizie na ile ambayo hauitumii sana.  
(1) .....  
(2) .....  
(3) .....  
(4) .....  
(5) .....
6. Unatumia lugha gani katika mazingira haya. Jaza zile ambazo zinakuhusu.  
(a) Kuzungumza na wazazi wako .....  
(b) Kuzungumza na watoto wako .....  
(c) Kuzungumza na watani wako .....  
(d) Kuzungumza na ndugu zako .....  
(e) Kuzungumza na mwenye duka, mama wa soko. nk .....
7. Je wewe Unaielwa Sheng'?                      Ndiyo              Hapana
8. Kama unaiielewa, Unaizungumza? Ndiyo              Hapana

Asante kwa majibu yako

Sasa Nitakupa Ramani ya mitaa ya Nairobi. Nataka utambue sehemu Sheng' Inakozungumzwa, halafu uchore duara kwenye sehemu hizo

### **Maoni Ya Watu**

Sehemu hii itanaswa katika kinasa sauti. Itanza baada ya sehemu hizo mbili za hapo awali. Nakala ya maswali itakuwa ma mhojaji pekee.

1. Kulingana nawe, lugha zinazojumulisha Sheng' ni zipi?
2. Unaweza kutoa sababu gani za Sheng' kuzungumzwa sehemu ulizotambua
3. Kwa nini ulisema baadhi ya sehemu hizi Sheng'; haizungumzwi?
4. Unafikiri ni asilimia gani ya watu wa Nairobi inayozungumza Sheng'
5. Kwa wazungumzaji wote wa Sheng', Ni asilimia gani:  
    Wanawake  
    Wanaume
6. Kati ya wazungumzaji wa Sheng' ni asilimia gani iliyoko kwenye viwango hivi vya umri?

7-15	.....%
16-20	.....%
21-25	.....%
26-35	.....%
Zaidi ya 35	.....%
Jumla	100%
7. Unafikiria ni kwa nini watu wanatumia Sheng' badala ya lugha za Kiswahili na Kiingereza au lugha za kiasili?
8. Kulingana nawe, ni akina nani ambao wanastahili kutumia Sheng'
9. Kwa nini watu waliokuwa wakizungumza Sheng' huacha kuizungumza?
10. Je, unakubaliana na dai kwamba utumiaji wa Sheng' huathiri matokeo ya mitihani ya Kiswahili na Kiingereza shuleni?
11. Kama wazazi wako wakitumia Sheng', kwa mawasiliano yao ya kila siku utaichuliaje? Je wazazi wako huteta ukitumia Sheng'?
12. Je huona ikiwa sawa watoto wako wakitumia Sheng' Kwa nini?
13. Je unaona ikiwa vibaya kwa watu kuzungumza lugha ambayo huielewi?
14. Je ungependa kutoa moni mengine yoyote kuhusu swala la Sheng'

Tafadhali wape alama wazungumzaji wa Sheng' kutokana na sifa ulizopewa.

	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	
Wenye heshima	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	wasio heshima
Wanaaminika	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	hawaheshiki
Wapole	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	wakorofi
Wanyenyekevu	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	wasonyenyekea
Wabunifu	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	si wabunifu
Watii Sheria	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	wasiotii sheria
Wasio ukabila	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	wenye ukabila
Wenye urafiki	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	wasio urafiki
Walioelimika	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	wasioelimika
Wenye nidhamu	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	wasio nidhamu
Wamakinifu	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Wasio maakini

Sasa ipe alama Lugha ya Sheng'

	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	
Inafurahisha	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	inakera/inaudhi
Nzuri	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	mbaya
Inapendeza	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	isiyopendei
Nyepesi	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	ngumu
Ina urafiki	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	inatisha
Inaunganisha	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	inatengenisha
Ina heshima	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	haina heshima
Inavutia	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	haivutii.
Muhimu	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Siyo muhimu.

Kwa kauli hizi, sema iwapo unakubali, inakataa au hujui

- (a) Sheng' inastahili kuzungumzwa na watu walio chini ya miaka 21 .....
- (b) Wazazi hawastahili kuzungumza Sheng' .....
- (c) Vijana hawastahili kuzunguzia wazazi wao na wazee kwa Sheng' .....
- (d) Baada ya Kiingereza na Kiswahili, Sheng' ni ya tatu .....
- (e) Sheng' inastahili kupigwa marufuku .....
- (f) Sheng' inastahili kuendelezwa .....
- (g) Miaka michache ijayo Sheng' itachukua nafasi ya lugha za kienyeji .....
- (h) Baada ya miaka michache, Sheng' itaangamia kabisa. ....

Asante sana kwa Kuhudhuria Kwako.

## APPENDIX III

### USE OF LANGUAGES AMONGST THE RESPONDENTS

Respondent's Index & sex		Languages Spoken			
		English	Kiswahili	Sheng'	Others
A	M	YES	YES	YES	KIKUYU, SLANG
B	M	YES	YES	NO	KIKAMBA, SABAOT
C	M	YES	YES	YES	---
D	F	YES	YES	YES	KIKUYU, SLANG
E	F	YES	YES	YES	KIKUYU
F	F	YES	YES	YES	KIKUYU
G	F	YES	YES	NO	DHOLUO
H	F	YES	YES	YES	KIKUYU
I	M	YES	YES	NO	KIKUYU
J	M	YES	YES	YES	KIKUYU
K	M	YES	YES	NO	KIKUYU
L	F	YES	YES	YES	KIKUYU
M	F	YES	YES	NO	KIMERU, KIEMBU, KIKUYU
N	M	YES	YES	YES	DHOLUO
O	M	YES	YES	YES	KIBUKUSU, KIMERU
P	F	YES	YES	YES	KIKUYU
Q	M	NO	YES	NO	KIMARAGOLI
R	F	YES	YES	NO	KIMERU
S	M	YES	YES	YES	LUHYA, ITALIAN
T	M	YES	YES	YES	DHOLUO
U	F	YES	YES	YES	KIKUYU
V	F	YES	YES	YES	KISOMALI
W	F	YES	YES	NO	---
X	M	YES	YES	YES	KIKUYU
Y	M	YES	YES	YES	KILUHYA, KIKUYU

Z	M	YES	YES	NO	KIKISII
AA	M	YES	YES	YES	KILUHYA, KIKUYU, KIKAMBA
BB	M	NO	YES	YES	KIKAMBA, KIKUYU
CC	M	YES	YES	YES	KIKUYU

Key: The embolden italic “*YES*” on the column of Sheng’ means that the respondents speak Sheng’ marginally

## **APPENDIX IV**

### **KISWAHILI NAIROBI**

Nilifika Nairobi, jiji bora na mufti  
Palipojaa shabahi, wazee na mabenati  
Nikasalimu kibibi, kanijibu eti **fiti!**  
Vijana na mabenati, kipi Kiswahili hiki?

Kibibi kasonga kwangu, nimpe kiti **asiti**  
Nikaona mbele yangu, kwa **mapozi kajiseti**  
Sikupatwa na uchungu, wala chembe kibuhuti  
Vijana na mabenati, kipi Kiswahili hiki?

Kumuliza wenda wapi, kanijibu **marikiti**  
Kwenye kazi au vipi, jibu lake nina **deti**  
Ana majibu mafupi, **taimu hawesti**  
Vijana na mabenati, kipi Kiswahili hiki?

Mtu huyu hushangaza, lugha yake **sijageti**  
Hataki kunisikiza, ati mimi sina **senti**  
Bila **doo** aeleza, yu tayari **kunibuti**  
Vijana na mabenati, kipi Kiswahili hiki?

Punde dakika kidogo, nikaanza utafiti  
Naona ana mikogo, na haogopi umati  
Hawataki wa **ushago**, wenye **koti** bila **noti**  
Vijana na mabenati, kipi Kiswahili hiki?

Ni kibibi maridadi, ila mambo tofauti  
Asema mboga si **fudi**, bwana kunipa **donti**  
**Chuma mobu** sina budi, kujaza langu **poketi**  
Vijana na mabenati, kipi Kiswahili hiki?

Ana fujo hatulii, sijaonapo laiti  
**Arifu hunibaii**, kamsosi hata **switi**  
Ebu acha **uchalii**, uchi **homu** kwa **kufuti**  
Vijana na mabenati, kipi Kiswahili hiki?

Na kutaka **kualee**, akwasha **sigareti**  
Hamuogopi **madhee**, asije **kumripoti**  
**Pegi** mbele ya **fadhee**, mkali kama **ghosti**  
Vijana na mabenati, kipi Kiswahili hiki?

Alipozidi udhia, nikaanza **kumsweti**  
Naye **akaniwevia**, kuniona simfati  
**Sistee** kaingia, kwa **motii kalosti**  
Vijana na mabenati, kipi Kiswahili hiki?

Nikabaki kudangana la kusema silipati  
Lugha zetu kulingana, hakuna japo katiti  
Ndipo hatukwelewana, hadi kuenda benati  
Vijana na mabenati, kipi Kiswahili hiki?

Kudadisi kwa makini, tabia na harakati  
Za vijana wa mjini, zina nyingi atati  
Tafadhali jikanyeni, ni huu ndio wakati  
Vijana na mabenati, kipi Kiswahili hiki?

Hunishangaza jamani, tuelezana kwa dhati  
Nairobi mitaani, pa watu watanashati  
Panasemwa lugha gani, na kanuni haifati!  
Vijana na mabenati, Kipi Kiswahili hiki?

**Walla bin Walla      Malenga wa ziwa kuu**



## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Abdulaziz, M and K. Osinde. 1997. "Sheng' and English: Development of mixed code among the urban youth in Kenya". *International Journal of the sociology of Language*. Walter de Gruyter: 43-63
- Adegbija, E. 1994. *Language Attitudes in Sub-Saharan Africa*. Multilingual Matters limited. Clevedon Philadelphia
- Appel Rene and P. Muysken. 1987. *Language Contact and Bilingualism*. Edward Arnold London
- Andersson, L and P. Trudgill. 1990. *Bad language*. Basil Blackwell Limited, Oxford.
- Baetens, P. 1982. *Bilingualism: Basic Principles*. Tieto Limited, England. Clevedon Avon
- Baker, Collins. 1992. *Attitudes to Language*. Multilingual Matters limited. Clevedon Philadelphia.
- Bakker, P. 1994. "Pidgins" in Arends, Pieter J. Muysken and N. Smith (eds.) *Pidgins And Creoles: An introduction*. John Benjamins Publishing Company. Amsterdam Philadelphia.
- Bakker P and P. Muysken. 1994. "Mixed Language and Language Intertwining" in J. Arends, Pieter Muysken and N. Smith (eds.) *Pidgins and Creoles: An Introduction*. John Benjamins. Amsterdam Philadelphia.
- Baugh, B. 1998. "Language, Education, and the Law: Educational reform for African-American Language Minority Students" in Mufwene S. S. John R. Rickford, Guy Bailey and John Baugh. Ed. *African-American English: Structure, History and Use*. Routledge: London: 282-301
- Biber, D. 1988. *Variation Across Speech and Writing*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge
- Bogonko, S.N. 1988. "Kiswahili and Independence in East Africa". In Jude J. Ongong'a and Kenneth R. Gray Eds. *Bottlenecks to National Identity: Ethnic Co-operation Towards nation Building: 17-32*. Proceedings of the third PWWA eastern African Regional Conference Held in Mombasa Kenya Sept. 15-18, 1988. Masaki Publishers. Nairobi.
- Brown P. and S.C Levinson. 1978. *Politeness: Some Universals in Language Usage*. Cambridge University Press. Cambridge.

- Burja, J. 1974. "Pumwani: Language usage in an urban Muslim community". In *Language in Kenya*: Eds. Oxford University Press. Nairobi.
- Burke, P and R. 1995. *Languages and Jargon: Contributions to a Social History of Languages*. Polity Press. Cambridge.
- Burling, R. 1970. *Man's Many Voices: Language and its Cultural Context*. Holt Reinhart and Wilson, New York.
- Ciapopo, J.T and R. E. Petty. 1982. "Language variables, attitudes, and persuasion". In Ryan E.B. and Howard Giles (eds.) *Attitudes Towards Language Variation: Social and Applied Contexts: 189-207*. Edward Arnold, London.
- Gardner-Chloros, P. 1991. *Language Selection and Switching In Strasbourg*. Claredon Press, Oxford.
- Downes, W. 1998. *Language and Society* (Second edition). Cambridge University Press. Cambridge.
- Eastman, C. 1984. "Modern Swahili: Is there a generation gap?" in J. Maw and Parkin D. (eds.) *Swahili Language and Society: Papers From The workshop held at the school of Oriental and African studies* (1982) Afro-Pub. Wien.
- Fasold, R. 1984. *The Sociolinguistics of Society: Introduction to Sociolinguistics Vol.* Basil Blackwell inc. Cambridge, Massachusetts.
- Fawcett, R.P. 1970. "The medium of education in the lower primary school in Africa with special reference to Kenya" in *Language in Education in Eastern Africa: 51-69*. Papers from the first eastern African conference on language and linguistics. Oxford University Press. Nairobi.
- Gachukia E. 1970. "The teaching of vernacular languages in Kenya" in T.P. Gorman (ed.) *Language in Education in East Africa: 18-24*
- Giles, H., D.M. Taylor and R.Y Bourhis. 1973. "Towards a Theory of Interpersonal accommodation through language: Some Canadian data. *Language in Society: 2* 199-192
- Giles, H. and P. Powesland. 1975. "Accommodation Theory" in Coupland N. and Adam Jaworski 1997 (eds.) *Sociolinguistics: A Reader* 232-239. St. Martin's Press, New York.
- Gorman T.P. 1970. "Education Implications of Multilingualism in Eastern Africa" in T.P Gorman, (ed.) *Language in Education in East Africa: 1-12*.
- Gorman, T.P. 1974a. "Patterns of language use among the school children and their parents" in W.H. Whiteley (ed.) *Language in Kenya: 351-396*. OUP Nairobi.

- Gorman, T.P. 1974b. "The development of language policy in Kenya with particular reference to the educational system" in W.H. Whiteley (ed.) *Language in Kenya*: 397-455.
- Halliday M.A.K. 1978. *Language as a Social semiotic: The social interpretation of Language and Meaning*. University park Press: Baltimore
- Harries, L. 1975. "The nationalization of Swahili in Kenya". Papers presented at the African Studies Conference at New York University on Feb 17-18
- Hartley, L. and D. Preston. 1999. "The names of US English" in Tony Bex and Richard J Watts (eds.), *Standard English*, London: Routledge 207-238.
- Hewstone, M. and H. Giles. 1986. "Social groups and social stereotypes" in Coupland N. and Adam Jaworski 1997 (eds.) *Sociolinguistics: A Reader* 270-283. St. Martin's Press, New York.
- Ileri Mbaabu 1977. *New Horizons In Kiswahili: A Synthesis in Developments, Research and Literature*. Kenya Literature Bureau, Nairobi
- \_\_\_\_\_. 1996. *Language Policy in east Africa: A Dependency Theory Perspective*. Education Research and Publications, Nairobi.
- Karanja, M.N. 1993. *Miaka 50 Jela*. Heinemann Nairobi.
- Kiama Boby. 1990. 'Sheng': Monstrosity or tool of unity?' *Kenya Times* 11.11.1990 Nairobi
- Kembo-Sure. 1995. "Survey of the cross-cultural problems of English use in Kenya" in Kwadzo Senanu and Drid Williams (eds.), *Creative Use of Language in Kenya*. Jomo Kenyatta Foundation: Nairobi. 69-83.
- Labov, W. 1972. *Language in The inner City: studies in Black English Vernacular*. University of Pennsylvania Press: Philadelphia.
- Macaulay, R.K.S. 1997. *Standards and Variation in Urban Speech*. John Benjamins Publishing Company, Amsterdam, Philadelphia.
- Maillu, D. 1989. *Without Kiimua Mgongo*. Maillu Publishing House Limited, Nairobi.
- Makhundu, K.D. 1995. "An introduction to Flaaitaal' in R. Mesthrie (ed.), *Language and the Social History: Studies in South African Sociolinguistics*. David Philips Publishers (Pty) limited, Claremont
- Mazrui, A. A and A. M. Mazrui. 1995. *Swahili State and society: The political economy of an African Language*, East African Educational Publishers, Nairobi.

- Mazrui, Alamin. 1995. "Slang and code switching: the case of Sheng' in Kenya". *Afrikanische Arbeitspapiere*, Koln. Pp
- Mesthrie, R. 1992. "Fanagalo in colonial Natal" in R.K. Herbert (ed.), *Language and Society in Africa: Theory and Practice of Sociolinguistics*. Witwatersland University Press, Witwatersland.
- Milroy, J and Leslie Milroy. 1985. *Authority in Language: Investigating Language Prescription and Standardization*. Routledge and Keegan Paul, London.
- Milroy, L. 1980. *Language and Social Network*. Basil Blackwell Publisher, London.
- Moga, J and D. Fee. 2000. *Sheng' Dictionary*, Third Edition. Ginseng Publishers, Nairobi.
- Mungai Mutonya. 1997. *Language Attitudes of Educated African Towards Varieties of African English*. M.A. Thesis. Michigan State University.
- Mwangi wa Kariuki. 1986. *Determinants of Language Choice by Middle Level Managers in the Kenyan Public Sector*. M.A Thesis. Michigan State University.
- Myers-Scotton. 1993a. *Duelling Languages: Grammatical Structure in Code Switching*. Claredon Press, Oxford.
- Myers-Scotton. 1993b. *Social Motivations For Code Switching: Evidence from Africa*. Oxford University Press, New York.
- Myers-Scotton. 1992a. "Code Switching in Africa: A model of the social functions of code relation" in Herbert K.R (ed.) *Language and Society in Africa*. Witwatersland University Press, Witwatersland.
- Myers-Scotton 1992b. "Code switching as a mechanism of deep borrowing: Language shift and language death" in M. Brenzinger (ed.), *Language Death: Factual and Theoretical Exploration with Special Reference to East Africa*. Mouton de Gruyter, Berlin.
- Myers-Scotton. 1991. Simplification: Not the best explanation for two Language changes in Nairobi Swahili" in J. Blommaert (ed.), *Swahili Studies: Essays in honor of Marcel Van Spaanndonck*. Academia Press: Ghent.
- Ngesa, Mildred. 2002. 'And Sheng' lives on....' **Life** magazine Feruary 11-february 17 2002 issue of *The East African Standard*. Nairobi.
- Ngugi wa Thiong'o. 1986. *Decolonizing the Mind: The Politics of Language*. James Curney Publishers: London.

- Niedzielski, N and D. Preston. 2000. *Folk Linguistics*. Mouton de Gruyter; Berlin.
- Ntshangashe, D.K. 1995. "Indaba yami i-straight: Language and Language practices in Soweto" in R. Mesthrie (ed.) *Language and the social History: The study in the South African Sociolinguistics*. David Philips Publishers (Pty) Limited. Claremont.
- Ochieng, Philip. 1990. Build a Sheng' institute, wage war on tribalism. ' *Kenya Times* 10/08/1990. Nairobi
- Osinde Ken. 1986. *Sheng': An Investigation into the Social and Structural aspects of an evolving Language*" B.A. Thesis, University of Nairobi.
- Osinde Ken. 1990. In John Rogoiyo's article 'After Sheng', here comes Engsh Craze'. Daily Nation, August 11, 1990. Nairobi
- Parkin, J.D.1974. "Language Switching in Nairobi" in W.H. Whiteley (ed.) *Language in Kenya*, Oxford University Press: Nairobi.
- Preston, D.R. 1988. "Change in the perception of language varieties" in J. Fisiak (ed) *Historical Dialectology: Regional and Social*. Mouton de Gruyter: Berlin 475-504.
- Preston D.R. 1993. "Folk dialectology" in Dennis R. Preston (ed), *American Dialect Research*. John Benjamins Publishing House: Philadelphia. 332-377.
- Preston, D.R. 1996. "Where the worst English is spoken" in E. Schneider (ed), *Focus on the USA*. John Benjamins: Amsterdam
- Preston D.R. 2000. "A renewed proposal for the study of folk linguistics" in J.K. Peyton, P. Griffen, W.Wolfram and R.Fasold (eds.), *Language in Action: New Studies in society*. Papers presented to Roger W. Shuy), Hampton Press, Cresskill: NY. 113-139.
- Rhoads, J. 1977. *Linguistic Diversity and Language Belief in Kenya. The Special Position of Kiswahili*. Syracuse University, New York.
- Rocha Chimera. 1998. *Kiswahili: Past, Present and Future Horizons*. Nairobi University Press: Nairobi.
- Sornig, K. 1981. *Lexical innovation: A Study of Slang, Colloquialism and Casual Speech*. John Benjamins: Amsterdam.
- St Clair R.N.1982. "From social history to language attitudes" in E. B Ryan and Howard Giles. *Attitudes Towards Language Variations: Social and applied Contexts*. 164-

- Street R.L. and R. Hopper Jr. 1982. "A model of speech style evaluation" in E.B. Ryan and Howard Giles. *Attitudes Towards Language Variation: Social and applied Contexts*. 175-188.
- Wallah Bin Wallah. 1988. *Malenga wa Ziwa Kuu: Maswali na Istillahi za Kifasihi*. Heinemann, Nairobi.
- Wambua Sammy. 1987. 'Is Sheng' culturally acceptable?' *Kenya Times* 12/12/1987. Nairobi
- Wanjala C.L. 1988. "Culture and the nation state" in Jude J Ongong'a and Kenneth R. Gray (eds.), *Bottlenecks to National Identity: Ethnic Co-operation Towards Nation Building*. Masaki Publishers: Nairobi.
- Williams, F, N. Hewett, R. Hopper, L. Miller, R. Naremore and J. Whitehead. 1976 *Explorations of the Linguistic Attitudes of Teachers*. Newbury House Publishers Inc., Rowley, Massachusetts.
- Whiteley W.H. 1969. *Swahili: The rise of a national Language*. Methuen and Co. London

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES



3 1293 02504 8814