Cultural Transfer from Europe and Asia to Africa:
Evidence from Borrowed Lexicon Adapted into Kiswahili

P. I. Iribemwangi, PhD

Department of Kiswahili,
University of Nairobi,
P. O. Box 30197 - 00100 – Nairobi, Kenya.
Email: iribe@uonbi.ac.ke; iribeh@gmail.com

Abstract

Language is used to pass on or transfer information from one group to another. The aspects that are passed on include people's beliefs, their behavior, their objects as well as other aspects that are common to a specific group or society. These aspects are the culture of that society and they are both tangible and intangible. Through culture, people and groups define themselves, conform to society's shared values, and contribute to society. Using *language in contact* approach, this paper argues that by studying lexical items borrowed and adapted into Kiswahili from foreign languages, it is possible to identify aspects of foreign cultures that have been transferred to Africa. It also argues that such aspects have become part of Kiswahili speakers' way of life. Using a corpus of borrowed lexicon, the paper concludes that there have been "unbroken ocean currents" that have transported distant cultures and connected them with Africa and the world of Kiswahili speakers.

Key words: Kiswahili, borrowing, adaptation, lexicon, culture, loanwords.

1.0   Introduction, definition of terms and literature review

It is possible to trace cultural exchanges that occurred years back by a close study of the morphology of a given language. Culture can only be described and understood through language; consequently, language is the vessel that transports all cultural practices. The vessel called language may carry culture from one generation to another or from one group to the other. The cultural practices that are passed on through language include, but are not limited to, people's beliefs, their behavior, their objects as well as other aspects that are common to a specific group or society. These and many other aspects may be said to be the culture of that given society. The cultural aspects that are connected either in temporal or geographic terms are both tangible and intangible. Culture is important to every social grouping for it is through culture that people and groups define themselves, conform to society's shared values, and contribute to their society. Given the above, it is obvious that culture includes many societal aspects like a society's customs, values, norms, mores, rules, tools, technologies, products, organizations, and institutions[1]. To a large extent then, the culture of a given society can easily be mapped from the lexicon of that society.

In language, borrowing is evidently a component of language growth and is thus a continuous process. Antilla (1972) rightly observes that it is one of the major factors that influence language

---

[1] http://www.cliffsnotes.com/study_guide/Culture-and-Society-Defined.topicArticleId-26957,articleId-26848.html,   (accessed on January 29,2013)

change. As a result, as Mberia (1993) observes, it is studied in the realm of historical and comparative linguistics since it is a diachronic study. This paper focuses on an inter-language description. As happens with all other languages, Kiswahili borrows words heavily in order to keep pace with new developments occurring in areas where the language is used. In so doing, the borrowings denote such new developments which include new cultures.

On his part, Campbell (1988) refers to borrowed words or foreign words as *loanwords* and the process through which such words are introduced into the recipient language as *linguistic borrowing*. Kenstowicz and Suchato[2] state that, "*Loanword adaptation* is constraints and repairs in "real time". In adapting a loan the speaker tries to remain faithful to the source word while still making the loan conform to the native language (L1) segmental inventory, phonotactic constraints, and prosodic structures." This indicates that the borrowed words are adjusted to acquire the structure of words in the recipient language (L2). The above terminologies are adopted in this paper and carry the meanings indicated.

The new words that get into a language are known as *borrowings*. Apart from languages borrowing many words, they are themselves great providers too. The question that linguists would thus ask is: why do speakers borrow words from other languages? People primarily borrow for the most obvious reasons; sheer necessity (need) and prestige. Borrowing is also done as a result of foreign influence. *A foreign culture sometimes imposes its way of life on speakers of another language.* Langacker (1968) states "… that invasion brought about a large group of words into English in the case of Norman Conquest of England in 1066." Most of the words that are borrowed are usually nouns. This is because noun class is open compared to other classes. Moravcsik (1978) observes that noun borrowing is a universal of language contact and languages can borrow further lexical material only if nouns are borrowed first.[3] Peperkamp & Dupoux (2001)[4] identify two types of borrowings. They use temporal parameters in their identification to state that:

> **…** it is important to distinguish two types of loanwords. First, *historical loanwords*, i.e. words that have entered the borrowing language and are commonly used by monolingual speakers, have been studied most often. Monolingual speakers who use these loanwords never hear their source forms, and there is thus no reason to postulate an underlying form that differs from the output form in their grammar. In other words, a phonological analysis of the modifications these words have undergone when entering the borrowing language has no direct psychological reality. Rather, it receives a diachronic interpretation, in that it accounts for the adaptations applied by those speakers who have originally introduced the loans. The second type of loanwords are *on-line adaptations*, i.e. foreign words that are borrowed 'here-and-now' (Shinohara 1997a, b, Kenstowicz and Sohn 2001).

---

[2] Kenstowicz and Suchato in an undated paper entitled "Issues in Loanword Adaptation: a Case Study from Thai" http://web.mit.edu/~linguistics/people/faculty/kenstowicz/loanword_adaptation.pdf (accessed on July 18,2013)

[3] For a greater exposition on this, see Iribemwangi and Karuru (2012:50)

[4] Peperkamp & Dupoux (2001) In their article: "Loanword adaptations: three problems for phonology (and a psycholinguistic solution)" at
  http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.24.3169&rep=rep1&type=pdf, (accessed on July 18,2013)

In this paper, as is the case with Peperkamp & Dupoux (2001), historical loanwords and on-line adaptations are treated as if they are at the same level with the assumption that the historical loanwords once reflected on-line adaptations to the speakers who introduced such borrowings.

This paper argues that by studying lexical items borrowed and adapted into Kiswahili from other languages, it is possible to indicate aspects of foreign cultures that have been adapted by Kiswahili speakers and to show that such aspects have become part of their way of life. The data used in this paper is drawn from languages spoken in Europe (Portuguese, Turkish, German and English) and Asia (Arabic, Persian and Indian). The corpus analysed in the paper is got from published works which mainly (but not exclusively) include Chiraghdin and Mnyampala (1977), Massamba (1987, 2004), Bosha (1993) and Tuki (2000, 2004). Although in discussing the borrowings historical and on-line perspectives will not be used as a variable, the divisions of tangible and intangible culture where words are adapted are deemed important and will be used in the discussion below.

2.0   Theoretical perspectives

Langacker (1968) commented that there is no language whose speakers have ever had contact with any other language may be said to be completely free of borrowed forms. The implication here is that borrowing is a result of language contact. As Kenstowicz and Suchato observed above, loanword adaptation occurs when borrowed lexicon is constrained and repaired to acquire the form of recipient language. According to Hoffer (2005), one of the most easily observable results of intercultural contact and communication is the set of loanwords that is imported into the vocabulary of each language involved.

Given the above views, and as has been alluded to in the introduction, this work is therefore justifiably guided by what Muhvić-Dimanovski[5] refers to as the *Theory of Language in Contact*. The origin of this theory is mainly associated with the works of Weinreich (1953) and Haugen (1953). The theory argues for the inclusion of social and psychological aspects of language contact in any research on language. While the former referred to the phenomenon that is the subject of this paper as *language contact*, Haugen referred to it as *linguistic borrowing*. Both terms have been used inter-changeably ever since. In a way, theirs is a departure from structural study of language which largely ignored the society. Muhvić-Dimanovski (Ibid) states that, "It became clear that without some extra-linguistic factors certain problems of language contacts could not be explained precisely enough; as a matter of fact, some phenomena could not be explained at all if these factors were not taken into account." For her, separate studies of linguistics and sociology could not adequately explain the intricate relationship surrounding language, nation, social setting and politics.

But even before then, Sapir (1921) had written to show how inseparable language and culture are. Sapir remarked that,

> LANGUAGES, like cultures, are rarely sufficient unto themselves. The necessities of intercourse bring the speakers of one language into direct or indirect contact with those of neighboring or culturally dominant languages. The intercourse may be friendly or hostile. It may move on the humdrum plane of business and trade relations or it may consist of a borrowing or interchange of spiritual goods—art,

---

[5] Vesna Muhvić-Dimanovski in an article entitled "Language in Contact" on http://www.eolss.net/Sample-Chapters/C04/E6-20B-05-01.pdf, (accessed on July21, 2013)

science, religion … Whatever the degree or nature of contact between neighboring peoples, it is generally sufficient to lead to some kind of linguistic interinfluencing. Frequently the influence runs heavily in one direction. The language of a people that is looked upon as a center of culture is naturally far more likely to exert an appreciable influence on other languages spoken in its vicinity than to be influenced by them.

Sapir (Ibid) further adds that the simplest kind of influence that one language may exert on another is the "borrowing" of words. When there is cultural borrowing there is always the likelihood that the associated words may be borrowed too. It is the thesis of this paper that the inverse is also true; *when there is lexicon borrowing (resulting from language contact) there is always the likelihood that the associated cultural practices and values may be borrowed too.* This research is hinged on this thesis and anchored in the theory of language in contact.

3.0   Results and Discussion

In this section, this paper gives examples of borrowed lexicon in Kiswahili as well as the source words and languages. The paper first analyses words from tangible culture and explores lexicon from diverse fields of life. It then explores lexicon denoting intangible culture especially that dealing with faith and belief. Most of the lexicon explored deals with things, affairs and issue of every day life of Kiswahili speakers.

3.1   Borrowed lexicon signifying tangible culture

Cultural heritage items, products and objects form what is usually referred to as tangible culture. Tangible culture is one that can be stored and physically touched.

> (It) includes items produced by the cultural group such as traditional clothing, utensils (such as beadwork, water vessels), or vehicles (such as the ox wagon). Tangible heritages include great monuments such as temples, pyramids, and public monuments. Though a tangible heritage can perish, it is generally more obvious how it can be conserved than intangible heritages that are at greater risk and can be lost for all time. Historically, national policies have given more attention to conserving large public man-made structures as valuable heritage, than managing the conservation and use of intangible heritage.[6]

This paper holds the view that there are many items of tangible culture that came to Africa from Europe and Asia. These items have since formed part of the culture of Kiswahili speakers and thus that of Africa. The items are borrowed together with their uses and such use therefore signifies the transportation of culture hence forming unbroken cultural currents across the oceans. As has been mentioned, language is the vessel that transports and transfers culture.

3.1.0   *Travel technology*

There is a wide variety of lexicon signifying adoption of foreign tangible culture in Kiswahili. The first adopted cultural practice discussed here involves *travel* and the *technology* around it. In Africa, for a long time, the main mode of travel was on foot. Africans, and Waswahili for that matter, would travel long distances for various reasons which include trade (Vinsina 1962; Hartwig 1975) and pastrolism. However, as Ndege (2009) allude, the advent of newcomers from Asia and Europe

---

[6] http://www.sanculture.org.za/defn_tang%20cultural%20heritage.htm, (accessed on July 20, 2013)

brought with it new means of communication that include rail, water, air and road transport. It is worth noting that Waswahili, being a coastal people, always used water transport but this was limited to fishing along the shores and did not include deep sea travel. Data (1) below indicate that a new transport culture was introduced to Africa and to Kiswahili speakers in particular:

(1)

Kiswahili word	IPA	Source word	Source Language	Gloss
basi	basi	bʌs	English	bus
teknolojia	tɛknɒlɟia	teknɒlədʒi	English	technology
eropleni	ɛplɛni	`eərəpleɪn	English	aeroplane
skurubu	skurubu	skru:	English	screw
springi	spriŋgi	sprɪŋ	English	spring
gati	gati	ɋt	Indian	dock/wharf
gari	gari	ɋdi	Indian	vehicle
bandari	bandari	bandar	Persian	harbour, port
gurudumu	gurudumu	kʷurdun	Persian	tyre
parafujo	parafuɟ	parafus	Portuguese	screw
abiri	abiri	abra	Arabic	travel/sail

In data (1), *gari* (vehicle), *basi* (bus) and *eropleni* (aeroplane) are all means of transport. While the first item is a borrowing from Indian, the last two are borrowed from English. The import of this is that the culture of transportation using means developed through technology (*teknolojia*) denotes trans-cultural export from Asia and Europe to Africa. Apart from the means, parts of those means such as *gurudumu* (tyre), *skurubu*/*parafujo* (screw) and *springi* (spring) further strengthen the argument of borrowing. While many of the lexical items dealing with road and air transport are borrowed from Europe, most of the lexicon dealing with water transport is borrowed from Asia. Such lexicon includes *abiri* (travel/sail), *bandari* (harbour/port) and *gati* (dock/wharf). Such terms indicate water transport of big vessels, deep seas and long distances.

3.1.2   Education

Wosyanju[7] states that education may be defined as the process through which knowledge; skills, attitudes and values are imparted for the purpose of integrating the individual in a given society, or changing the values and norms of a society. He further states that for an individual, the process is usually life long; beginning at birth and ending at death. It is therefore obvious that every society has a certain form of education that integrates the different individuals to the society. While writing about education among indigenous Kenyan communities, Kinuthia (2009) comments that "in pre-colonial times, localized, relevant indigenous knowledge was very important in the organization and transmission of knowledge." This was the form of education that was common to Africans then and it is usually referred to as *informal education*.

Smith (2001) defines informal education to be "the truly lifelong process whereby every individual acquires attitudes, values, skills and knowledge from daily experience and the educative influences and resources in his or her environment – from family and neighbours, from work and play, from the market place, the library and the mass media." This is the type of education that Africans had in the pre-colonial times. On his part, Wosyanju (Ibid) comments that:

---

[7]Wosyanju in the article "The System of Education in Kenya" at http://international.iupui.edu/kenya/resources/Education-in-Kenya.pdf, (accessed on July 19, 2013.)

Before the coming of Europeans, Kenyan societies had their own systems of education. There were no classrooms and no special class of people called teachers. All members of the community were involved in the education of the children. Children learnt cultural traditions and customs of their ancestors from the community as well as specific skills from their families and other specialized individuals through apprenticeship programs. Localized, relevant indigenous knowledge was, therefore, very important in the organization and transmission of knowledge.

This system of education was to change with the advent of people from Europe and Asia to Africa. Their coming now clearly shows the inter-connection of circuits of different continents through ocean currents that transported (and still continue to transport) different cultures. There seems to be a general agreement that formal education was introduced in Kenya by the British and specifically by white missionaries (Ndege, 2009; Kinuthia, 2009; Wosyanju, Ibid). The later, for example, opines that, "the foundation of modern education was laid by missionaries who introduced reading to spread Christianity. They also taught practical subjects like carpentry and gardening which were useful around the missions. The Frazer report of 1909 recommended the establishment of separate educational systems for Europeans." This is the same opinion held by Ojiambo (2009) who comments that:

The aftermath of the First World War saw a number of government measures with regard to African education. During this period, the colonial government ended it's hitherto spectator status and initiated a system of grants-in-aid immediately after establishing the Department of Education in 1911 to help in the development of education provided by Christian missions. It also appointed East Africa Protectorate Education Commission in 1919 to review education provided in the colony for all races. According to Achola and Pillai, it was mandated ― to look into unsatisfactory status of education for all races in the protectorate. The commission made a vague recommendation to the effect that while the provision of education would remain a major responsibility of the missionaries, the government should increase its role in the provision of education.

The above write-up indicates that the culture of formal education was unknown to Africans and it is a practice that was brought to the continent by immigrants. Smith (2001) defines *formal education* as "the hierarchically structured, chronologically graded 'education system', running from primary school through the university and including, in addition to general academic studies, a variety of specialized programmes and institutions for full-time technical and professional training." The fact that formal education is a foreign culture to Africans as indicated above can be strengthened through an exploration of borrowed lexicon found in education as evident in (2) below.

(2)

Kiswahili word	IPA	Source word	Source Language	Gloss
jarida	ɟarida	®ɜːnᵊ[	English	journal
chaki	±aki	±]ːk	English	chalk
alfabeti	alfabei	`æləbet	English	alphabet
skuli	skuli	skuːl	English	school
shule	•ule	•ule(schule)	German	school

elimu	ɛlimu	ʕilm	Arabic	education
mwalimu	mwalimu	muʕallim	Arabic	teacher
kitabu	kitabu	kitaːb	Arabic	a book
daftari	daftari	daftar	Arabic	a notebook
herufi	hɛrufi	ħarf	Arabic	letter

The term education (*elimu*) in Kiswahili is an adaptation form Arabic. Since for the Africans every experience was education, the culture of formal education undertaken by a teacher (*mwalimu* – also from Arabic) did not exist. These two words originate from the same Arabic root. The concept of class (*darasa*) too is borrowed from Arabic. That which is written on is *kitabu* (book) and one who writes is *katibu* (secretary) both of which words emanate from the same Arabic root. In Kiswahili, the concept of a school (*skuli*) is borrowed from English while its synonym *shule* (*schule*) is an adaptation from German[8]. Items used in school such as *jarida* (journal), *chaki* (chalk) and *alfabeti* (alphabet) also denote borrowings from English. Another item is *daftari* (notebook) borrowed from Arabic.

3.1.3　Titles and Careers

Some of the titles used in Kiswahili denote that some careers may not have existed amoung the Waswahili in the manner that they are today. This may be as a result of the socio-political-economic of most African states then. However, as is evident in data (3) below, the currents from Asia and Europe introduced new careers that previously only existed in the (lexicon) donor communities. When these careers were introduced to the recipients, they had no lexicon to refer to them and as a result they borrowed and adapted new lexicon from donor languages.

(3)

Kiswahili word	IPA	Source word	Source Language	Gloss
afendi	afɛndi	efɛndj	Turkish	soldiers to superiors
balozi	balɔzi	baljus	Turkish	ambassador
soli	sɔli	sɔl	Turkish	sergeant major
waziri	waziri	waziːr	Arabic	minister
tabibu	tabibu	ṭːabiːb	Arabic	doctor
rais	rais	raʔiːs	Arabic	President
daktari	daktari	dɒktə	English	doctor
inspekta	inspɛkta	ɪnspektər	English	inspector
ajenti	aʤɛnti	eɪʤənt	English	agent
polisi	police	pəliːs	English	police
jenerali	ʤɛnɛrali	ʤenrəl	English	general

On the political/diplomatic arena, representation in alien lands was not within the cultural practices of these communities, hence when this culture found its way to Africa, Kiswahili speakers borrowed the word *balozi* (ambassador) from Turkish. Similarly, the phenomenon of democratic

---

[8] *Shule* has been used in Tanzania for a long time but its use in Kenya gained root only recently. In Kenya, *skuli* was previously the preferred word. It is worth noting that Germany once colonized Tanzania while Kenya was colonized by Britain.

elections is foreign and hence the borrowing of words such as *Rais* (President) and *waziri* (cabinet minister) from Arabic. Due to a new culture of military organization, one finds lexical items such as *jenerali* (general) borrowed from English as well as *afendi* (title of honour by junior soldiers to their superiors) and *soli* (sergeant major) both borrowed from Turkish. In terms of careers, borrowed lexicon easily indicates the new careers that were introduced to African culture. Some of the terms like *polisi* (police), *ajenti* (agent) and *inspekta* (inspector) obviously indicate new cultural practices that may have been previously non-existent in Africa. However, words like *daktari* (doctor) do not necessarily imply a new profession but rather a new way of doing the same thing; a new culture to offering treatment.

3.1.4   Counting and numbers

It seems that Africans did not have the tradition of counting numbers greater than ten. However, with the advent of new cultures, counting in large quantities entered the African culture. Kiswahili lexicon shows that the speakers of the language embraced new forms of counting and numbering and these are still in use today. Data (4) exemplifies this.

(5)

Kiswahili word	IPA	Source word	Source Language	Gloss
wahedi	wahedi	waːhid	Arabic	one
hamsini	hamsini	xamsiːn	Arabic	fifty
elfu	elfu	alf	Arabic	thousand
laki	laki	lax	Indian	hundred thousand
milioni	miliɔni	mɪljən	English	million

Of all these borrowings, the most used are *elfu* (thousand) and *laki* borrowed from Arabic and Indian respectively. *Hamsini* (fifty) and *milioni* are also used widely. By adding other digits to these figures, a multiplicity of count is achieved. For example, *laki mbili* implies two hundred thousand as *mbili* translates to two. *Wahedi* (one) is rarely used and the original Kiswahili word *moja* is usually used to imply one. It is worth noting that one is a low value numeral.

3.1.5   Games and sports

It is obvious that Africans had their games and sports even before the advent of Europeans and Asians, however, Kiswahili borrowed lexicon indicates that some new games and sports did get into the culture of Kiswahili speakers. Such games and sports never existed in their world before. Data (6) just gives a few examples of such games and sports.

(6)

Kiswahili word	IPA	Source word	Source Language	Gloss
ree	ˋree	reː	Portuguese	ace (in playing cards)
seti	seti	seːe	Portuguese	seven (in playing cards)
karata	karata	karta	Portuguese	playing cards
uru	uru	ɔuru	Portuguese	diamond (in playing cards)
soka	sɔka	sɒkər	English	soccer
voliboli	vɔlibɔli	vɒlibɔːl	English	volleyball
gofu	gɔfu	gɒlf	English	golf

One thing that is clear from this data is that *karata* (the game of cards) was not amoung the games played by Africans. The data indicates that most of the lexicon associated with the game is borrowed from Portuguese. Such lexicon includes *ree* (ace in playing cards), *seti* (seven in playing cards) and *uru* (diamond in playing cards). This then is indicative of a Portuguese culture being transported from Europe Africa. Other lexical items that represent borrowed culture include *soka* (soccer), *gofu* (golf) and *voliboli* (volleyball). All these games represent a spread of cultures due to ocean currents.

3.1.6   Assorted borrowed items, products and objects

It is noted that there is a large corpus of borrowed lexicon that denote tangible cultural items, products and objects in Kiswahili. Since the aim of this paper is to just show that there have been *trans-cultural currents from Europe and Asia to Africa* by giving *evidence from borrowed lexicon adapted into Kiswahili,* it is not possible to give the entire lexicon involved. The assumption is that the lexicon given validates our aim. Data (4) below explores some assorted items that were foreign to Kiswahili speakers but which items now form part of their culture.

(4)

Kiswahili word	IPA	Source word	Source Language	Gloss
tabakelo	tabakel]	tabaquera	Persian	snuff box
dirisha	diri∙a	diri±a	Persian	window
randa	randa	randah	Persian	plane
pilau	pilau	pila]	Persian	pilaf
sukari	sukari	sukkar	Arabic	sugar
bahshishi	baha∙i∙i	baq∙i∙	Arabic	tip/gratuity
bahasha	baha∙a	bu♦a	Turkish	envelop
leso	le]	lens]	Portuguese	a piece of cloth
meza	meza	mea	Portuguese	table
mvinyo	„vi.ʃ	vi.ʃ	Portuguese	wine
hundi	hundi	hundir	Indian	cheque
bajia	baɟia	baɟija	Indian	cake of
afisi/ofisi	afisi/]fisi	ʒfis	English	office
tarumbeta	tarumbea	trʌmpIt	English	trumpet
glasi	glasi	glæs	English	glass
soksi	s]ksi	s]ks	English	socks
shati	∙ati	∙ɜːt	English	Shirt

If we start with things consumed by human beings, it is evident that Africans received food and liquid items from different cultures. For example, while Kiswahili users had their own alcohol known as *mnazi* (alcoholic drink made from coconut), they never had wine as is packed and sold in contemporary time. Thus, the culture of drinking *mvinyo* (wine) was introduced by the Portuguese to the dwellers of the East Coast of Africa. Another product used in beverages, *sukari* (sugar) was introduced by the Arabs while *bajia* (cake of lentils and pepper) was introduced by Indians. *Pilau* (pilaf) seems to have got to Waswahili culture from the Persians. It is worth noting that *pilau* is

presently one of the main dishes eaten by the Waswahili. *Bajia* are also very popular. These conclusions arte reached owing to the origin of the Italicized borrowed words.

From Europe, Africans adopted the culture of formal white colour jobs and hence the borrowing of *afisi*/*ofisi* (office). The drinking implement used by most African societies was half calabash, thus when the British introduced a different implement, a new word, *glasi* (glass) was also introduced to Kiswahili. A different mode of clothing was also introduced and this includes *shati* (shirt), *soksi* (socks), *koti* (coat) and *leso* (a piece of cloth), the last one being a borrowing from Portuguese with all the others being borrowings from English.

3.2   Borrowed lexicon signifying intangible culture

Intangible culture is that which exists *intellectually* in the culture. It is not a physical or tangible item. Intangible cultural heritage includes songs, myths, beliefs, superstitions, oral poetry, as well as various forms of traditional knowledge such as ethno-botanical knowledge.[9] It is the intangible culture that denotes a society's mores, customs, beliefs, values, norms, traditions and customs. Since they are intellectual, they exist only in the minds of members of the society and they cannot bee seen, tasted or felt. As noted earlier, intangible cultural heritage is at a greater risk of being lost than tangible cultural heritage and can, therefore, be lost for all time. However, it seems that historically, national policies have given more attention to conserving tangible heritage than in managing the conservation and use of intangible heritage.[10]

(7)

Kiswahili word	IPA	Source word	Source Language	Gloss
dhaifu	ðaifu	daːif	Arabic	weak
nadra	nadra	naːdir	Arabic	rare
daima	daima	daːiman	Arabic	perpetually
salamu	salamu	salaːm	Arabic	greeting
tafakari	tafakari	tafakkara	Arabic	ponder
iktisadi	iktisadi	iqtisaːd	Arabic	economy
kiyama	kijama	qijaːma	Arabic	doomsday
imani	imani	iːmaːn	Arabic	faith
aibu	aibu	ʕajb	Arabic	shame
misa	misa	mɪsl	English	mass
Ekaristi	ekaristi	juːkərɪst	English	Eucharist
Sabatu	sabatu	sæbəθ	English	Sabbath

Most of the data in (7) above is about faith and belief. The data from Arabic indicates the extent to which the new Islamic faith penetrated and permiated the Waswahili culture. Most of the original speakers of Kiswahili acquired and internalized the new faith and as a result borrowed and adapted a wide variety of lexicon used in faith and berief. This lexicon now shows the new culture that found its way from Asia. There are also lexical items from Europe which indicate that the western

---

[9] http://www.sanculture.org.za/defn_tang%20cultural%20heritage.htm, (accessed on July 21, 2013)
[10] http://www.sanculture.org.za/defn_tang%20cultural%20heritage.htm, (accessed on July 20, 2013)

religious culture has also found its place in the practices of African and Kiswahili speakers. Such lexicon include *imani* (faith) to a Superior being, *kiyama* (doomsday) and *daima* (perpetually) which are borrowings from Arabic. Borrowings from English include *misa* (mass), *Ekaristi* (eucharist) and *Sabatu* (sabbath). All these items signify new types of faiths that never existed in Waswahili culture. As is evident from the data, there are lexical items borrowed in other shades of intangible culture but the example we have given suffice for our purpose.

4.0   Conclusion
The aim of this paper was to show that there have been *cultural transfer from Europe and Asia to Africa* by giving *evidence from borrowed lexicon adapted into Kiswahili.* This has been shown by studying words borrowed and adapted form European and Asian languages into Kiswahili. By doing so, the paper has indicated some aspects of European and Asian cultures that have been adapted by Africa through Kiswahili speakers and shown that such aspects have become part of African way of life since the lexicon analysed is in every day use. This research therefore clearly denotes that circuits have been open insofar as both tangible and intangible cultures are concerned. By use of data, the paper has argued that there have been unbroken currents that have transported distant cultures and connected them to the world of Kiswahili speakers, and by extension to Africa, through what has been described as languages in contact.

References

Akidah, M. A. (2013). "Phonological And Semantic Change In Language Borrowing: The Case of Arabic words Borrowed into Kiswahili" *International Journal of Education and Research Vol. 1 No. 4 April 2013* pp 159-178.

Antilla, R. (1972). *An introduction to historical and comparative linguistics*. New York: Macmillan.

Bosha, I.A. (1993). *Taathira za Kiarabu Katika Kiswahili Pamoja na Kamusi Thulathiya (Kiswahili-Kiarabu-Kingereza)*, Dar es Salaam: Dar es Salaam University Press.

Campbell, L. (1998) *Historical Linguistics: An Introduction*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Chiraghdin, S. & M. Myampala (1977) *Historia ya Kiswahili*, 2nd Ed, Nairobi: OUP.

Hartwig, G.W. (1975). "Economic Consequences of Long-Distance Trade in East Africa: The Disease Factor." *African Studies Review*   Vol. 18, No. 2, Sep., 1975   pp 63-73.

Haugen, E. (1953). The *Norwegian Language in America*: *A Study in Bilingual Behavior.* Vol. I: The Bilingual Community, Philadelphia University of Pennsylvania Press.

Hoffer, B. L. (2005). "Language Borrowing and the Indices of Adaptability and Receptivity" *Intercultural Communication Studies* XIV: 2. http://www.learningace.com/doc/836709/eeb8b6559f56fdd27759bc14a32d3555/05-bates-l-hoffer (Accessed on July 22, 2013)

Iribemwangi, P. I. (2012). "Phonology of Borrowed Lexicon in Standard Kiswahili" in *Reyono Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies*. St. Thomas College, Kozhencherry, India. Vol.1 No. 2. pp 59-74.

Iribemwangi, P. (2010). *The Structure of Kiswahili: Sounds, Sound Changes and Words*, Saarbrucken: VDM Verlag,

Iribemwangi, P. I. & D. W. Karuru (2012). "Phonological Adaptation of Kiswahili Loanwords in Gĩ-Gĩchũgũ Dialect of Gĩkũyũ Language: An Application of Source - Similarity Model" in *Baraton Interdisciplinary Research Journal (BIRJ).* Eldoret: Baraton University Press. Vol. 2 No. 2. pp. 49-62

Karuru, D. W. (2013). *Borrowing and Adaptation of Loanwords: from English and Kiswahili to Gikuyu*. Saarbrucken: Lambert Academic Publishing.

Kinuthia, W. (2009). "Educational Development in Kenya and the Role of Information and Communication Technology." *International Journal of Education and Development Information and Communication Technology (IJEDICT),* 2009, Vol. 5, Issue 2, pp. 6-20.

Langacker, R. W. (1968). *Language and its Structure: Some Fundamental Linguistic Concepts.* New York: Harcourt, Brace & Harcourt.

Massamba, D. P (1987). "The Effects of Language Modernization on the Phonological System of Kiswahili Language" in *Kiswahili,* Vol. 54/1, Journal of The Institute of Kiswahili Research, pp 142-151.

Massamba, D. P. (2004). *Kamusi ya Isimu na Falsafa ya Lugha,* Dar es Salaam: TUKI.

Mberia, K. (1993). "Kitharaka segmental morphology with special reference to the noun and the verb". Unpublished Ph.D Thesis: University of Nairobi.

Moravcsik, E. (1978) "Language contact." In: Greenberg, Joseph (ed.), Charles A. Ferguson, and Edith A. Moravcsik (ass. eds.), *Universals of Human Language 1*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, pp 93-122.

Ndege, P. (2009). *Colonialism and its legacies in Kenya*. Paper presented at the Fulbright – Hays Group project abroad program. Moi University Main Campus.

Ojiambo, P. O. (2009). "Quality of Education and its Role in National Development: A Case Study of Kenya's Educational Reforms." *Kenya Studies Review*: 1, 1, 133-149.

OUP & TUK (2004) *Kamusi ya Kiswahili Sanifu,* Nairobi: OUP.

Rendon J.A.G. (2008). *Typological and Social Constraints on Language Contact: Amerindian Languages in Contact with Spanish.* Amsterdam: ACLC: LOT

Sapir, E (1921). *Language: An introduction to the study of speech.* New York: Harcourt, Brace and company.

Smith, M. K. (2001). "What is non-formal education?" *The Encyclopaedia of Informal Education.* [http://infed.org/mobi/what-is-non-formal-education/.Retrieved: July 20, 2013].

TUKI (2000) *English – Swahili Dictionary,* 2nd Ed, Dar es Salaam: TUKI.

Vansina, J. (1962). "Long-Distance Trade-Routes in Central Africa." *The Journal of African History*. Volume 3 / Issue 03 / of Nov. pp 375-390

Weinreich, U. (1953). *Languages in Contact*: *Findings and Problems*. New York: Linguistic Circle of New York.

http://www.cliffsnotes.com/study_guide/Culture-and-Society-Defined.topicArticleId-26957,articleId-26848.html, (accessed on January 29, 2013)

 http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.24.3169&rep=rep1&type=pdf, (accessed on July18, 2013)

http://international.iupui.edu/kenya/resources/Education-in-Kenya.pdf, (accessed on July 19, 2013)

http://www.sanculture.org.za/defn_tang%20cultural%20heritage.htm,(accessed on July 20, 2013)

http://www.sanculture.org.za/defn_tang%20cultural%20heritage.htm, (accessed on July 20, 2013)

http://www.eolss.net/Sample-Chapters/C04/E6-20B-05-01.pdf, (accessed on July21, 2013.)

P. I. Iribemwangi is a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Kiswahili at the University of Nairobi, Kenya. He holds B.Ed, M.A and PhD degrees in Kiswahili, languages and linguistics. Dr. Iribemwangi is a linguist who specializes in Kiswahili phonology and morphology and has written about forty books, book chapters and journal articles in these and other areas of language and linguistics. Among his other works; he has published *The Structure of Kiswahili: Sounds, Sound Changes and Words* (VDM Verlag, Germany), *Isimujamii* (Focus), *Alidhani Kapata na Hadithi Nyingine* (EAEP), *Kunani Marekani na Hadithi Nyingine* (Target), *Othello* (Kiswahili translation; Oxford), *Miali ya Ushairi* (EAEP) and *Human Rights, African Values and Traditions: An Inter-disciplinary Approach* (Focus). Dr. Iribemwangi has a lot of interest in translation, lexical borrowing as well as the phonology of Kenyan Bantu languages. His email addresses are iribe@uonbi.ac.ke; iribeh@gmail.com