

Vol 16 No 3 (2007): Nordic Journal of African Studies

BACK ISSUES

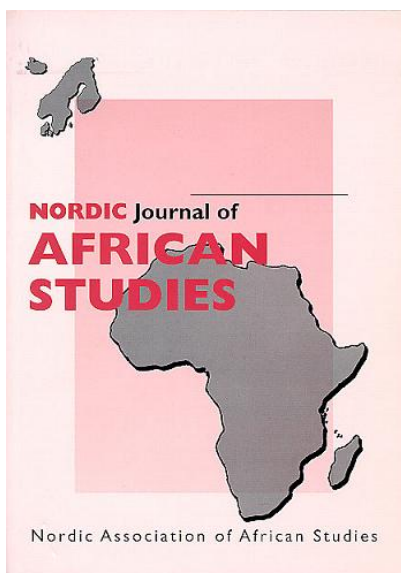
## Lugha Kama Kitambulisho: Changamoto ya Sheng Nchini Kenya

PDF

Kitula King'ei,

John Kobia

[More Info](#)



Published December 31, 2007

### Abstract

The paper takes a critical look at the fast developing and spreading Kenyan street slang, popularly known as “Sheng”, which basically is a youth code that makes use of coined or borrowed words from Kiswahili, English and other local languages. Sheng adopts the structure of Kiswahili syntax. After tracing the historical origins of the urban youth code which now has speakers in the country side and as far afield as Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, the discussion shifts to the assessment of the negative impacts of sheng on the learning and teaching of standard Kiswahili and especially, English in Kenya. It concludes by raising crucial questions and issues that need to be considered in an attempt to contain usage of sheng and mitigate its negative effects on the national and official languages which are the medium of formal education and business.

PDF

[Make a Submission](#)

## Information

[For Readers](#)

[For Authors](#)

[For Librarians](#)

---

Platform &  
workflow by  
**OJS / PKP**

Sheng is based on the morphosyntactic structure of Kiswahili, which is akin to those of other Bantu languages. On the one hand, Sheng can be seen as a contestation of the standard co-official languages in Kenya, English and Kiswahili. It breaks the rules of these languages by thriving on what would be deemed as non-standard by some educationalists. For example, Kingei & Kobia (2007) and Momanyi (2009) state that Sheng is impacting negatively on the teaching of languages in Kenyan schools. Lugha Kama Kitambulisho: Changamoto ya Sheng Nchini Kenya.” *Nordic Journal of African Studies* 16(3): 320-332. Mazrui, A.A. & Mazrui, A.M (1998).