



The Use of English in Business Naming Practices in Mbeya, Tanzania: Motivations and Linguistic Implications for Kiswahili

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Abstract

This study examines the use of English in the naming practices of business enterprises in Mbeya, Tanzania. The study investigated the motivation behind business owners' preference for English names and to analyzed the linguistic implications for Kiswahili language. Data was collected using semi-structured interviews and observation. Interviews were conducted with business owners and their customers while observation assessed the linguistic correctness of business names as well as their relevance to the type of business. The findings indicate that the use of English in business naming is largely influenced by prevailing social ideologies that associate English with prestige, modernity and global identity. Consequently, some business owners adopted English names by imitating existing business labels without sufficient attention to spelling and grammatical accuracy. This practice has resulted in instances of inappropriate English language use. The growing use of English in commercial naming practices has both positive and negative linguistic implications for Kiswahili. The study recommends the use of widely understood local languages, particularly Kiswahili, in naming business enterprises because the main target of naming practice is to make customers identify the business and the type of business conducted. Therefore, using the common language, particularly local languages will make ease for customers to know and identify the businesses.

Keywords: Business; business naming practice; English language; Kiswahili; name

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Introduction

The use of language in everyday human communication is a universal practice that may take both verbal and non-verbal forms. Language functions as a fundamental tool that facilitates socialization and interaction among people (Schieffelin & Ochs, 1986; Zuengler & Cole, 2005). In naming practices, therefore, the choice of language, particularly in naming a business, is an important consideration. This is because the name of a business serves as the first point of identification through which business owners interact with their customers (Adejimola, 2008).

Language plays a crucial role in the naming of business enterprises within the business sector (Thitthongkam et al., 2011). In Tanzania, for

instance, engaging in business activities is one of the main ways through which people earn their livelihoods. Business enterprises exist at different levels, including large companies, medium-sized ventures and small-scale businesses (Korolev et al., 2017). In order for these businesses to be recognized and identified by customers, owners assign them specific names, such as Mirindimo Hotel, Bar and Guest House, Danger Scorpion Coach or Angels Beauty Salon.

Business experts argue that owners of business organizations should select names that can be easily understood by their customers. Davis (2005), Hoque (2016) and Bendell and Kristal (2023) outlined several mistakes to avoid when naming businesses. These include the use of overly simple or generic words that fail to attract attention, selecting names

that are too obscure for customers to understand, and using cliché names that are excessively common. According to these scholars, an effective business name should clearly communicate the nature of the business and the services it offers.

Despite these recommendations, there is a noticeable tendency in Tanzania for some business owners to use foreign languages, particularly English, when naming their businesses, even though most of their customers are Kiswahili speakers (Ilonga, 2025). Kiswahili is widely used and understood by the majority of Tanzanians in both urban and rural areas, who also constitute the primary customer base of many businesses (Moshi, 2006). Examples of English-based business names commonly found in Mbeya City and Kyela District include *City Pub*, *Friendship Lodge* and *Southern Highlands Hotel*. The use of English in business naming should not necessarily be interpreted as inappropriate. However, the key issue concerns the criteria used by business owners when selecting a language that is spoken by only about 5% of the population (Sewangi, 2004). According to Holmqvist (2011) and Holmqvist et al. (2017), the language used to identify a business or its services should ideally be one that is understood by customers in order to facilitate clear communication and recognition of the services offered.

Across different parts of the world, including the United States of America, the United Kingdom, Kenya and Tanzania, naming practices have been recognized as an important means of distinguishing individuals, places and entities (Völkel, 2023; de Pina-Cabral, 2015). Wamitila (1999) noted that names serve to identify persons, places, objects and even ideas or concepts. However, naming systems vary from one society to another (Lawson, 2016). Puzey and Kostanski (2016) identified several naming systems practiced globally, including patronymic, matronymic, mononymic, descriptive or circumstantial and theophoric naming systems. Despite these variations, it is generally recommended that names should be easy for users to spell and pronounce (Marx & Schmandt, 1994, November). Although language contact can influence naming systems (Rončević, 2002), effective naming practices should consider the language that is commonly used by members of a particular society.

Nevertheless, some individuals, including business owners, tend to overlook the use of local languages

when naming their enterprises. In Tanzania, for example, Kiswahili, the national language spoken by approximately 95% of the population (Sewangi, 2004), could effectively be used in naming business enterprises. For instance, instead of using the name Citizens Guest House, the business could be named Nyumba ya Kulala Wageni ya Wananchi. Such naming practices could enhance comprehension among customers who do not speak English and reduce potential confusion. Moreover, the use of Kiswahili could promote a sense of pride and appreciation for the local language.

In some cases, business owners combine elements from two or more languages when naming their enterprises, resulting in hybrid names such as Matatizo Workshop or Sikutegemea Barber Shop. In the researcher's view, such naming practices may make it difficult for customers to clearly identify the nature of the business activities conducted in those establishments.

Although some studies have examined naming practices in Tanzania, most have focused on the naming of business products rather than business establishments themselves. Furthermore, limited research has investigated the reasons behind the use of foreign languages, particularly English, in business names or examined the potential linguistic implications of this practice for Kiswahili. This study therefore seeks to address this gap.

Literature Review

This section presents the theoretical framework guiding the study, followed by a review of relevant literature and empirical studies. The purpose of this section is to examine previous scholarly work in order to provide an overview of research on business naming practices.

Theoretical Framework

This study was guided by the Ethnolinguistic Identity Theory proposed by Giles and Johnson (1987). The theory explains how language use, including naming practices, functions as a marker of group identity. According to this theory, individuals and communities use language to assert, maintain and negotiate their cultural identity. The theory helps explain why some businesses adopt English names in order to project a global or modern identity while others prefer local language names as a means of preserving cultural identity. In multilingual and postcolonial contexts, such as Tanzania, naming practices may reflect tensions between global

linguistic influences and local linguistic identities. It is therefore expected that when individuals name their business enterprises, they may consider these sociocultural factors, particularly the role of language in expressing cultural affiliation and identity.

Naming Practices and Social Meaning

Names constitute an important linguistic resource through which individuals and societies assign identity, meaning and social significance to persons, places and institutions (Allerton, 1987; Helleland, 2012). Scholars such as Dvořáková (2018), Mateos (2014) and Völkel, (2023) widely acknowledge that names carry valuable sociocultural information, including gender, birthplace, ethnicity, religion and social position. They add that, across societies, naming practices serve not only as mechanisms of identification but also as symbolic representations of cultural values and social relations.

Despite their universal function, naming practices vary considerably across cultures. According to Snae and Brueckner (2006), names remain essential in both traditional and technologically advanced societies, even in contexts where formal identification systems exist. Personal names, particularly surnames, play important roles in personal identification, genealogical tracing and administrative records.

From a linguistic perspective, names function as labels assigned to individuals, entities or categories. As noted by Searle (1971), personal names differ from appellative terms, such as occupational or institutional titles because they are intentionally assigned to specific individuals rather than referring to general categories. Ideally, a personal name uniquely identifies a particular individual.

Historically, naming practices are deeply embedded in human societies. Elliott (1997) contends that the origins of naming traditions are extremely ancient and cannot be precisely traced. Early names were largely descriptive, often derived from nouns or adjectives that reflected physical characteristics, environmental features, or symbolic meanings. For example, Irish Gaelic names such as Conan (hound or wolf) and Aed (fire) illustrate how names conveyed descriptive or symbolic significance. Likewise, compound names, such as the Frankish Sigibert (shining victory), demonstrate the semantic richness embedded in historical naming practices.

Within African linguistic contexts, names frequently reflect social experiences, emotions, beliefs and cultural values. In Kiswahili, for example, names may encode attitudes, life experiences or references to specific places and events (Wamitila, 1999). Such naming practices illustrate the broader sociolinguistic role of names as expressions of identity and cultural meaning. These principles extend beyond personal names to institutional and commercial naming practices, where names function as markers of identity and communicative tools within social and economic interactions.

Business and Trade Names

Business or trade names represent a specific category of institutional naming. A business name refers to the public identity under which a business operates, which may differ from the legal name of its owner or registered entity (Cameron, 2024; Pickering, 1968). Trade names are widely used by various types of organizations, including commercial enterprises, non-profit institutions, religious organizations and governmental bodies.

In the business context, names serve both communicative and marketing functions. They help identify a business, differentiate it from competitors and convey information about the nature of its services or products. Swani et al. (2017) emphasize that effective business communication requires the use of language that customers can easily understand and respond to. In Tanzania, however, research on business naming practices remains limited, particularly from a linguistic perspective. Mwansoko (1994) conducted one of the few studies examining Kiswahili business names. The study identified several strategies used in naming businesses, including symbolic naming, where businesses adopt names associated with specific characteristics (e.g., *Simba* “lion” or *Tembo* “elephant”), borrowing or adaptation of foreign words, such as *konyagi* derived from the English word *cognac*, geographical naming, which incorporates place names such as *Amboni* or *Kibo* and arbitrary naming, where the name does not directly reveal its origin or meaning. These strategies illustrate the diversity of linguistic processes involved in business naming practices.

Linguistic Features of Business Names

Some literature proposes several characteristics that effective business names should possess. For instance, according to Bao et al. (2008) business or brand names should ideally be descriptive,

distinctive and memorable. A descriptive name reflects the nature or function of the business while a distinctive name helps differentiate the enterprise from competitors. Additionally, effective business names should be easy to pronounce, spell and remember. From a marketing perspective, a business name contributes to the perceived value of an enterprise. A well-chosen name can create a positive impression and strengthen brand identity whereas poorly constructed names may negatively affect customer perception (Wheeler, 2017; Falck, 2018).

Similarly, Eskiev (2021) argues that the process of naming a business should involve systematic planning and strategic decision-making. The author proposes a multi-stage process that includes market analysis, creative name generation, legal verification and testing with potential customers. These steps highlight the importance of aligning linguistic choices with marketing and communication objectives.

Business Naming Practices in Tanzania

Studies on business naming practices in Tanzania remain relatively scarce. The study of Mwansoko (1994) on Kiswahili business names provides important historical insights into the development of commercial naming practices in the country. The author has it that economic reforms implemented during the 1980s stimulated industrial production and commercial activities, which in turn increased the creation of business and trade names. During this period, many businesses adopted Kiswahili names because the language functioned as the main lingua franca used by the majority of Tanzanians. Mass media outlets, such as Radio Tanzania Dar es Salaam (currently TBC Taifa) and newspapers, including Uhuru, Mzalendo and Mfanyakazi, played an important role in promoting Kiswahili business names through advertisements. As a result, the widespread use of Kiswahili in commercial communication contributed to the expansion of Kiswahili vocabulary and strengthened its role as a language of economic activities.

Swahili Naming Practices in Kenya

In Kenya, King'ei (2002) examined the diffusion of Kiswahili names in non-coastal regions of Kenya, particularly in communities where Kiswahili was not historically the dominant language. The study observed an increasing adoption of Kiswahili names in urban and rural areas outside the traditional Swahili-speaking coastal region. Examples include

place names like Bondeni, Milimani, Majengo and Shauri Moyo as well as commercial names incorporating Kiswahili lexical items like Uhuru, Wananchi, and Maisha. The author further argues that the spread of Kiswahili names reflects broader processes of linguistic diffusion and intercultural communication. On the other hand, Okello (2021) on Luo naming pattern, posits that names are pointers to identities that have been used world over to create binaries of 'us' and 'them.' The author adds that the naming pattern in Luo is embedded in the development of Kenya's ethnopolitical landscape, which has placed ethnic Luo at an economically, socially and politically disadvantaged position.

Although previous studies examined naming practices in various contexts, limited research has focused specifically on the language choices used in naming business establishments in Tanzania, particularly the increasing use of English names in predominantly Kiswahili-speaking environments. Existing studies have largely focused on the naming of business products or general naming systems rather than examining the sociolinguistic motivations behind language selection in commercial naming. Moreover, little attention has been given to linguistic implications of using foreign languages, especially English, in business names within a multilingual society, where Kiswahili functions as the national lingua franca. In response, this study addressed this gap by investigating the reasons why business owners in Tanzania choose English names for their businesses and by examining potential linguistic implications of this practice for Kiswahili.

Methodology

This section outlines the methodology used in conducting the study. It describes the research design, population and sampling, data collection instruments, data analysis procedures, data quality control and ethical considerations.

Design

This study adopted a qualitative descriptive research design. As noted by Sandelowski (2000), qualitative descriptive research yields rich, low-inference accounts of phenomena and is particularly appropriate when the aim is to remain close to participants' experiences and everyday language. The design was therefore well suited to examining the use of English in business naming practices, including the motivations underlying its adoption

and its linguistic implications within specific social contexts. The qualitative descriptive approach facilitated the systematic documentation of business names while enabling an in-depth exploration of participants' perspectives and the sociocultural meanings embedded in such naming practices. Accordingly, the design provided an appropriate methodological framework for addressing the study objectives and for generating both linguistic and sociocultural insights into the phenomenon under investigation.

Population and Sampling

The study population comprised business owners and customers of enterprises located in Mbeya City and Kyela District, Tanzania. From this population, a sample of 40 participants was selected, including 20 business owners and 20 customers. A convenience sampling technique, under non-probability sampling methods, was employed to select respondents based on their accessibility and availability during the data collection period. In instances where business owners were absent from their premises, employees managing the businesses were engaged as respondents. Similarly, customer participants were selected based on their presence at the business locations at the time of data collection.

The sample was evenly distributed across the two study areas. In Mbeya City, 10 business owners were selected, comprising 6 males and 4 females. In Kyela District, 10 business owners were also selected, all of whom were male. Overall, 16 of the business owners were male and 4 were female, reflecting the relatively lower participation of female entrepreneurs in the study areas. With regard to customer respondents, 10 were selected from each location, maintaining a balanced gender distribution of 5 males and 5 females in both Mbeya City and Kyela District.

Data Collection Instruments

The study employed two primary data collection instruments: semi-structured interviews and observation. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with both business owners and customers using open-ended questions to generate in-depth insights into business naming practices. The questions focused on the types of names used, the reasons underlying language choices, and the factors influencing the use of English or local languages in naming business establishments.

To ensure accuracy and completeness of data, a voice recorder was used to capture participants'

responses during the interviews. The use of open-ended questions allowed respondents to articulate their views freely, particularly regarding the use of foreign languages in business identification and their perceptions of English in business naming practices.

Observation was also employed as a complementary data collection method. An observation checklist was used to record aspects relevant to the study. The purpose of this method was to compare the number of business names written in English with those written in local languages, to examine the correctness and clarity of business names in terms of spelling and grammar, and to assess their relevance to the type of business conducted. In addition, observation helped identify instances of code-mixing and code-switching in business names, as well as the linguistic competence reflected in the use of both English and Kiswahili in commercial naming practices.

Data Analysis Procedures

Data collected through interviews was analyzed using thematic analysis, which involved a systematic review and synthesis of the data to identify recurring patterns and meanings. The researcher first transcribed and reviewed the interview recordings alongside field notes, then coded the data and grouped similar responses into coherent thematic categories. These themes were subsequently interpreted in relation to the study objectives to generate meaningful explanations of participants' perspectives. Data obtained through observation was analyzed qualitatively. Business names observed in the field were classified according to their linguistic type, structural composition, and semantic features. The analysis specifically examined word formation processes, syntactic patterns and semantic domains reflected in the names.

The findings were interpreted within broader sociolinguistic and postcolonial theoretical frameworks. This enabled a deeper understanding of the motivations underlying the use of English in business naming practices as well as an assessment of the implications of such practices for the status and development of Kiswahili.

Data Quality Control

To enhance the trustworthiness of the study, several rigor-oriented strategies were employed. Credibility was strengthened through data triangulation, whereby evidence was obtained from

two complementary sources: semi-structured interviews and observation. The interviews generated in-depth insights into participants' perceptions, motivations and language choices while observation enabled the researcher to examine actual business names and their linguistic characteristics.

Dependability was ensured by adhering consistently to the research procedures outlined for both data collection and analysis. A systematic and well-documented process was followed to maintain methodological consistency across all stages of the study. Furthermore, confirmability was enhanced by minimizing researcher bias through the maintenance of an audit trail and a reflexive journal throughout the research process. These tools facilitated transparency, allowing the research procedures, decisions and interpretations to be clearly documented and subjected to external scrutiny.

Ethical Considerations

This study adhered to established ethical standards for social and linguistic research. Participants were informed about the purpose of the study prior to their participation and informed consent was obtained from all respondents. Participation was entirely voluntary and participants were free to withdraw from the study at any time. To protect participants' privacy, pseudonyms were used and data was stored securely. Furthermore, particular attention was given to cultural and linguistic sensitivity when collecting and reporting data related to naming practices in order to respect participants' beliefs, identities and traditions.

Results and Discussion

This section presents and discusses the findings of the study. The analysis is organised according to two research objectives and their corresponding themes that emerged from the data.

Objective One: To establish reasons for the Use of English in Business Names

The first objective sought to explore the motivations for business owners to use English in naming their enterprises despite the fact that most of their customers are Kiswahili speakers. Several key themes emerged from the data.

Colonial Mindset and Linguistic Prestige

Several respondents attributed the use of English in business names to lingering colonial ideologies that

associate English with prestige, superiority and global relevance. Both business owners and customers frequently expressed the view that English is an international language spoken worldwide and therefore carries a higher status than Kiswahili. According to this perception, using Kiswahili in business identification might reduce the perceived status of the business. One respondent had this to say:

“Nimetumia Kiingereza kwani ni lugha ya kimataifa na inatumika duniani kote. Hata uende wapi ukitaka kuwasiliana lazima ujue Kiingereza.” (I used English because it is an international language used all over the world. Wherever you go, if you want to communicate with others, you must know English). Such reasoning reflects the perceived communicative value of English rather than its practical usefulness in identifying businesses for local customers. This implies that English functions symbolically rather than communicatively.

Some respondents further indicated that English names are aesthetically appealing and attract customers because they appear “modern” and “beautiful.” Customers are sometimes drawn to the visual and phonological appeal of English names rather than their meanings. While attractiveness is often considered an important feature of brand names (Roche et al., 2015), this perception reflects broader sociolinguistic attitudes toward English. The findings support Higgins (2009), who reported that English in East African advertising often symbolizes modernity, sophistication and global orientation. Thus, the use of English in business naming practices may be understood as a symbolic strategy for projecting modern identities rather than fulfilling communicative needs.

Economy of Expression

Another factor influencing the use of English is the perceived economy of expression. Some respondents explained that certain English terms are shorter and more concise than their Kiswahili equivalents. For example, Hardware instead of Duka la Vifaa vya Ujenzi; Guest House instead of Nyumba ya Kulala Wageni and Kiosk instead of Duka Dogo.

Business owners noted that shorter English terms reduced the space required on signboards and lowered the cost of signage. One respondent had this to say:

“Nilishindwa kupata neno moja la Kiswahili kueleza aina ya biashara ninayofanya. Kwa mfano, badala ya kuandika ‘Tall Hardware’, ungelazimika kuandika

‘Duka la Kuuza Bidhaa za Ujenzi la Tall’, jambo ambalo linachukua nafasi kubwa sana.” (I could not find a single Kiswahili word to describe my business. For example, instead of writing ‘Tall Hardware’, one would have to write ‘Tall shop selling construction materials,’ which occupies a lot of space).

This perception may partly reflect lexical gaps or differences in morphological structure between the two languages. While Kiswahili possesses rich descriptive expressions, English often provides compact lexical items that function effectively in commercial contexts.

Foreign Customers and Cross-Border Trade

In Kyela District, another commonly cited reason was the presence of foreign customers, particularly from neighboring Malawi. Respondents reported that English names facilitate easier recognition of business activities for non-Swahili speakers.

Nevertheless, some respondents acknowledged that foreign customers represent only a small proportion of their clientele. Most customers are local Kiswahili speakers. Interestingly, customers themselves reported that they rarely rely on business names to identify services. Instead, they observe the products sold or inquire directly. One customer explained: “Ukitegemea sana majina ya biashara kujua bidhaa unayotaka, unaweza kuhangaika kwa muda mrefu bila mafanikio.” (If you rely on business names to identify what you need, you may struggle for a long time without success). This suggests that the communicative function of business names may be limited, particularly when names do not accurately reflect the services provided.

English - Language of Education and Modernity

Some respondents associated English with education and social prestige. In this view, using English in business names signals that the owner is educated and modern. For instance, one owner of business space argued, “Unajua Kiingereza ni lugha ya wasomi, kwahiyo unapoitumia kwenye biashara na wewe unaonekana ni msomi na unaenda na wakati” (Actually, English is seen as a language used by educated people, so whenever you use it in your business name it shows that you are also educated and modern). Consequently, English names may function as markers of social identity and status.

This observation aligns with Baker’s (2006) argument that individuals often adopt particular languages to gain social acceptance or identify with

specific social groups. In the Tanzanian context, English is frequently perceived as the language of formal education and upward mobility. As a result, business owners may adopt English names as a strategy for symbolically positioning themselves within a modern and educated social category.

Globalization and Market Aspirations

A small number of respondents linked their naming choices to globalization and future business expansion. One business owner explained that using English could enable the business to reach international markets and attract customers from different countries, particularly through media and digital advertising. Rubagumya (2004) argues that globalization has intensified competition by opening national markets to global economic forces. However, market success depends primarily on product quality and market access rather than the language used in business names. Thus, although English may symbolize global orientation, its practical contribution to market expansion may remain limited.

Linguistic Competence of Business Owners

The study also examined the linguistic competence of business owners. Although many businesses used English names, most owners and customers communicated primarily in Kiswahili. Among the twenty business owners interviewed, eleven had completed ordinary secondary education while others had only primary education.

Despite the widespread use of English in business names, conversational interactions between sellers and customers were overwhelmingly conducted in Kiswahili. This observation supports Higgins (2009), who noted that English often appears in public texts such as advertisements while local languages dominate everyday communication.

Field observations provided further insights into linguistic practices in business naming.

Spelling and Grammatical Errors

Several business names contained spelling or syntactic errors, suggesting limited proficiency in English. Examples include: Kedde Library Video instead of Kedde Video Library and Pacha Tatu Aouto Spares instead of Pacha Tatu Auto Spares.

In many cases, business owners were unaware of these errors. One respondent commented: “...hii lugha sio yetu... inawezekana kuna makosa madogo madogo lakini cha muhimu ujumbe unawafikia

wateja.” (This is not our language... there may be some small mistakes, but what matters is that the message reaches customers). This response indicates that symbolic value often outweighs linguistic accuracy in the use of English.

Code Mixing and Code Switching

The study found frequent instances of code mixing between English and local languages. Examples include Sikutegemea Express, Royal Mbinguni Guest House, Syosa Amenye Kyala Bus Service and Numbula Shop. In such cases, local languages provide identity and familiarity while English conveys modernity or commercial appeal. This phenomenon reflects what Bhatia (2000) describes as “glocalization,” the blending of global and local linguistic resources.

Another pattern involved bilingual signage, where English names were accompanied by Kiswahili explanations: Nzunya Hardware (Duka la Vifaa vya Ujenzi); Ayub Gift Barber (Kinyozi). This approach allows businesses to communicate with both local and foreign customers.

Language of Interaction

Observations revealed that interactions between business owners and customers were conducted primarily in Kiswahili. English-derived terms were occasionally adapted phonologically into Kiswahili forms, such as: boliti (bolt), nati (nut), skruu (screw) and sementi (cement). In Kyela District, limited communication in English occurred with foreign traders from Malawi, though interactions often involved Nyanja or mixed linguistic forms.

Names and Business Activities

The study identified cases where business names did not correspond to the services provided. For instance, a business named Simbaulanga Soft Drinks sold alcoholic beverages and provided mobile money services. Such inconsistencies weaken the communicative function of business names.

Overall, observations indicate that although English is widely used in business names, many owners lack sufficient proficiency in the language. In addition, English names often function more as symbolic markers of prestige and modernity than as practical tools for customer communication.

Objective Two: To establish linguistic Implications for Kiswahili.

The study examined the linguistic implications of English-based business names for Kiswahili.

Positive Impact

One positive effect is lexical borrowing. Some English words have been adapted into Kiswahili and are widely used in everyday communication. Examples include: saluni (salon), grosari (grocery) and gesti (guest house). Such borrowings illustrate the dynamic nature of language contact and lexical expansion. Over time, some borrowed terms become fully integrated into the Kiswahili lexicon, similar to earlier loanwords like shule (from German Schule) and shati (from English shirt).

Negative Impacts

Participants expressed concern that the growing dominance of English in commercial naming practices may undermine Kiswahili by reducing its use in certain domains. If English terms increasingly replace Kiswahili equivalents, some indigenous vocabulary may gradually fall out of use. Although this concern reflects broader anxieties about language shift, evidence shows that Kiswahili remains a dominant language of everyday communication in the study areas.

Conclusions and Recommendation

The study concludes that English is widely used in business naming in Tanzania for symbolic reasons, including perceptions of prestige, modernity and global orientation. However, the majority of business interactions occur in Kiswahili. Many customers do not rely on business names to identify services. English contributes to lexical borrowing in Kiswahili. However, its use in business names raises concerns about the marginalization of Kiswahili.

To enhance effective communication with customers, it is recommended that business owners prioritize the use of languages understood by the majority of their clientele, particularly Kiswahili. This will enable the language to continue growing and spreading everywhere within and outside the country. Additionally, using Kiswahili promotes Tanzanian culture and identity.

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