

**GIKUYU VERB REDUPLICATION: A MORPHOPHONOLOGICAL STUDY**

**BY**

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## **ABSTRACT**

Reduplication is a morphophonological process where the word, stem or base of a word or part of it is repeated. This process is very common in Bantu languages. Studies on Bantu languages in general and Gikuyu in particular reveal that not much has been done in Gikuyu verb reduplication especially on the area of morphophonology prior, to this study. In this regard, the current study set out to find out the forms of reduplication of Gikuyu verbs, morphophonological processes involved and to establish how verbal extensions are expressed in Gikuyu verb reduplication. The Natural Generative Phonology and Autosegmental Phonology were the theories that guided this study. The study employed descriptive research design. Data was generated from a random sample of twenty four respondents from the main Gikuyu speaking counties. Structured interview schedules and audio recording were pilot-tested, refined and used to elicit the data. The data was then grouped according to the objectives of the study and listed down for morphophonological analysis and also to determine the reduplication characteristics demonstrated by Gikuyu verbs. The results indicated that there are two forms of reduplication. These are total and partial reduplication. The following morphophonological processes were identified: vowel deletion, vowel lengthening, vowel harmony, syllable reduction and prefixation as characteristics of Gikuyu reduplicated verbs. There was also evidence of verbal extensions in all verbs that displayed partial reduplication. It is hoped that the findings of this study will be useful to scholars in pedagogy and applied linguistics.