

## THE GENDER VARIABLE IN THE MEANINGS ASSIGNED TO THREE ENGLISH ADDRESS TERMS BY TEACHERS IN KENYA

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This paper investigated the range of meanings assigned to the address terms *madam*, *boss* and *my dear* in English usage in Kenya, with gender as an independent variable. It started from three working hypotheses: a) both men and women will assign the same range of meanings to *madam*, b) the female teachers will assign more meanings to *boss* than their male counterparts, c) the female teachers will assign more meanings to *my dear* than their male counterparts. A questionnaire was used to elicit responses from 30 practising teachers: 15 females and 15 males. The respondents were first asked to assign meanings to the three terms by choosing from a list of proposed meanings (9 proposed for *madam*, 6 for *boss* and 6 for *my dear*) and then to add any other meanings they thought had not been included in the list. The results did not support hypothesis (a), since the female teachers assigned more meanings to *madam* than their male counterparts: a total of 93 choices for the former (i.e. 6.2 meanings on average) against 78 for the latter (i.e. 5.2 meanings on average). However, they supported hypothesis (b), since the female teachers assigned more meanings to *boss* than the male: 58 choices for the former (i.e. 3.9 meanings on average) against 47 for the latter (i.e. 3.1 meanings on average). Regarding *my dear*, the results did not support hypothesis (c), since it is in fact the male teachers who assigned (slightly) more meanings to the phrase than their female counterparts: 53 choices for the former (i.e. 3.5 meanings on average) against 51 for the latter (i.e. 3.4 meanings on average). But this difference seems too small to be significant. Beyond the mere range of meanings, the results further revealed that in English usage in Kenya the three address terms have undergone semantic broadening in some of their meanings and semantic narrowing in some others, with reference to their meanings given in international English dictionaries.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Eckert & McConnell-Ginnet (2003: 135) define address terms as “terms used to call people or get their attention or make explicit the identity of the person being spoken to or our relationship with that person”. For these authors, address terms include both “forms that refer to (i.e. talk about rather than call out) whoever is being addressed, the addressee, and those used in addressing an addressee” (p. 135). Address terms thus go beyond referring to a person who is present in a face -to -face exchange to talking about them when they are not physically present during a conversation.

For their part, Wardhaugh & Fuller (2015) analyse how people name or address others. According to them, some of the ways in which a person’s attention can be caught are the use of title (T), first name (FN), last name (LN) or nickname (2015: 266). They further observe that “[...] titles like *Sir* or *Madam* are generalized variants of the T(itle) category, that is, generic titles and forms like *Mack*, *Buddy*, *Jack* or *Mate* are generic first names (FN) [...]”. (p. 268). Based on this distinction, this paper will treat *Madam* and *Boss* as generic titles. Wardhaugh and Fuller (2015) add that “Address by title alone is the least intimate form of address in that titles usually designate ranks or occupations, as in *Colonel*, *Doctor*, or *Waiter*. They are devoid of ‘personal’ content”. [...] (while) using a nickname or pet name shows an even greater intimacy.” (p. 268). They give the use of *honey* as an example of a pet name. This paper will equally treat *my dear* as a variant of generic FN, that is, a pet name.

Some analysis of how titles (as forms of address) are used in English in Kenya appears in Buregeya (2018), who analyses a number of address terms used in professional/academic circles and those used in political ones. The professional titles that he analyses are *Sir*, *Madam*, *Ma’am*, *Miss*, *Mr.* (sometimes replaced by the Swahili term *Bwana*), *Mrs.*, *Teacher* (and its Kiswahili translation *mwalimu*), *doctor* (sometimes shortened to *doc*), its Kiswahili translation *Daktari*, *Professor* (usually shortened to *prof.*) and *Engineer*. The political address term that he discusses is *Honourable* (and its Kiswahili translation *Mheshimiwa*).

With regard to *madam*, the use of which is the subject of the present study, Buregeya (2018) makes two key observations: first *madam* (stressed on the first syllable, as in StdIntE) is used by juniors to address their superiors, especially when prefixed to their professional title; second, women lecturers do not like being addressed as *madam* presumably because they find it belittling, since, according to Buregeya's informants, it refers to lower-rank people in other professions, such as 'the [administrative] chief's wife', "the terrible, feared woman/wife", "the local female primary school teacher", and "the female prison warder". He points out that a term that refers to such professions "would be belittling to a university lecturer"<sup>1</sup>.

Inspired by Buregeya's observations above, the present study wanted to learn more about the meanings of *madam* from a larger and more systematically selected sample, and one which specifically uses gender as an independent variable. The study extended its scope to include the terms *boss* and *my dear* (neither of which was studied by Buregeya, or anybody else so far), which are very frequent in day-to-day conversations (whether face-to-face or over the phone) in English usage in Kenya. From the present author's impressionistic observations, women tend to use both *madam* and *boss* in more meanings than men, while men tend to use *boss* in more meanings than women. As for *my dear*, women tend to use it in more meanings than men.

## 2. METHODOLOGY

Thirty respondents, 15 males and 15 females, were selected through convenience sampling: 25 of them were teachers at various primary schools across 19 counties in Kenya, while 5 were tutors at teachers' training colleges. To collect data, the study used a questionnaire (which is in the appendix) comprising three sections, each of which dealt with a specific

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<sup>1</sup> Buregeya (2018) adds that in these "belittling" meanings, the word *madam* is pronounced with the stress being placed on the second syllable. But the present study found that this was not necessarily the case.

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address term. The respondents were asked to choose appropriate meanings from a list of given choices which had been obtained from a pre-test. However, the questionnaire also had provision for open-ended items. Section A investigated the meanings of *madam*. Section B those of *boss*, and section C those of *my dear*. The data was analysed in terms of frequencies of how often the female and the male informants chose the meanings assigned to each one of the three address terms, and in terms of which other meanings they assigned to them.

### **3. RESULTS PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION**

#### **3.1 The term *madam***

Table 1: The meanings assigned to *madam* from the choices proposed by the researcher

	<b>Meaning</b>	<b>Male respondents (N= 15)</b>	<b>Female respondents (N= 15)</b>	<b>Total (N= 30)</b>
1.	A female teacher	13 (86.7%)	14 (93.3%)	27 (90%)
2.	A married woman	6 (40%)	6 (40%)	12 (40%)
3.	The local chief's wife	3 (20%)	4 (26.7%)	5 (16.7%)
4.	A smartly dressed woman	12 (80%)	11 (73.3%)	23 (76.7%)
5.	A woman who holds an important position e.g. a cabinet secretary/ minister	12 (80%)	12 (80%)	24 (80%)
6.	A teacher trainee	6 (40%)	9 (60%)	15 (50%)
7.	A prison warder	5 (33.3%)	9 (60%)	14 (46.7%)
8.	A female police officer	8 (53.3%)	13 (86.7%)	21 (70%)
9.	One's own wife or somebody else's wife	4 (26.7%)	6 (40%)	10 (33.3%)

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Table 2: The meanings of *madam* suggested by the respondents themselves

	Meaning	Male respondents (N=15)	Female respondents (N=15)	Total (N=30)
1.	A/my female boss/a woman boss/ a woman who is in a senior position at the place of work/ a female supervisor	2 (13.3%)	3 (20%)	5 (16.7%)
2.	A senator	1 (6.7%)	0 (0%)	1 (3.3%)
3.	A polite way of addressing a lady you do not know by name	1 (6.7%)	2 (13.3%)	3 (10%)
4.	A respectable lady/ woman/female; used to show respect	1 (6.7%)	3 (20%)	4 (13.3%)
5.	Any woman/ lady, irrespective of designation	2 (13.3%)	2 (13.3%)	4 (13.3%)
6.	A formal address to a woman (often condescending)	1 (6.7%)	0 (0%)	1 (3.3%)
7.	A junior female worker when one needs favour/service from them	1 (6.7%)	0 (0%)	1 (3.3%)
8.	A young girl/woman	1 (6.7%)	0 (0%)	1 (3.3%)

9.	Any woman above 23 years	1 (6.7%)	0 (0%)	1 (3.3%)
10.	A rich woman	0 (0%)	1 (6.7%)	1 (3.3%)
11.	Church minister's wife	0 (0%)	1 (6.7%)	1 (3.3%)
12.	Working class lady [sic.] <sup>2</sup>	0 (0%)	1 (6.7%)	1 (3.3%)
13.	A female colleague	0 (0%)	1 (6.7%)	1 (3.3%)
14.	Any female above 18 years	0 (0%)	1 (6.7%)	1 (3.3%)

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<sup>2</sup> Possibly to mean 'a lady who is in formal employment/a professional lady'

The meanings reported in the table above, which will be referred to as the Kenyan English meanings, were compared with those given in two international English dictionaries: The *Oxford Dictionary of English*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edn (2010) - hereafter the *OED* (2010), and the *Collins English Dictionary*, 10<sup>th</sup> edn (2009) - hereafter the *CED* (2009). The *OED* (2010) gives the following three meanings for *madam*:

1. Used to refer to a woman in a polite or respectful way e.g. *Can I help you, madam?*
  - Used to address a woman at the start of a formal or business letter.
  - [...] Used before a title to address or refer to a female holder of that position e.g. *Madam president*
2. British (informal): A conceited or bossy girl or young woman e.g. *she's a proper little madam*
3. A woman who runs a brothel.

To the three meanings above, the *CED* (2009) adds the following two:

4. A polite term of address for a woman especially one considered to be relatively of high social status
5. The lady of the house (Note: this is the meaning of “the madam”, used in informal South African English)

The data in tables 1 and 2 show that all the possible meanings of the term *madam* that had been pointed out by Buregeya (2018) were acceptable by the respondents. However, the qualifiers that accompany the referents proposed by Buregeya such as ‘local [...] primary school’ and ‘feared, terrible woman [...]’ did not appear in the present study’s respondents’ answers. Table 1 shows that the most frequent meaning chosen by the respondents for *madam* is ‘a female teacher’ (86.7% by males and 93.3% by females). ‘A female teacher’ in the Kenyan context refers to a person teaching school children from the pre-school level/ pre-unit level/pre-primary level, the primary school level, the secondary school level and the post-secondary school level except for those teaching in the universities. The idea that *madam* refers to ‘a local primary school teacher’, does not



therefore seem to be its only meaning. Closely related to ‘a female teacher’ is the meaning of ‘a teacher trainee’ (40% by males and 60% by females) which comes fifth in the number of choices. The ‘teacher trainees’ are students in the teachers’ training colleges. To differentiate between them and their teachers, the term *tutor* is usually used to refer to the teachers but this is not a face-to-face address term. The *tutors* rarely use this term to refer to / introduce themselves, though the teacher trainees frequently use the term when talking about their teachers. Puzzlingly, the female *tutors* do not mind either being addressed as *madam* by their students or addressing/hearing their students addressed as *madam*. In this scenario the ‘junior’ and ‘senior’ ranks seem to be relaxed or collapsed. Although the majority of the participants who filled in the questionnaire were people in the education sector, it is important to point out that female teachers are addressed as *madam* by their students, by parents, by members of the community and by fellow teachers of either gender. This reference is so high that in conversations, people use the term *madam* to almost always talk about ‘a female teacher’. For example, one can remark that *she is a madam* to imply that the lady/woman in question is a teacher. This near synonymous use of *madam* and *a female teacher* may explain why the female teacher trainees are also referred to as *madam* by their male and female colleagues, by their *tutors* and by their pupils especially when they are on teaching practice which is equivalent to internship in some professions. However, in the UK, traditionally the term *miss* is used to address female teachers (including the married) but most schools currently encourage using first names. (Rodd Hicks p.c. June 2017). It is however notable that more female than male respondents consider the term to mean ‘female teachers’. This shows that the term is still highly acceptable in spite of a recent practice by schoolchildren, especially those in private primary schools, to address their teachers using *teacher* + first name (e.g. *Teacher Paul*, *Teacher Mercy*, etc.). Although such references are gaining acceptance possibly because, except for the names, they do not emphasize

the gender of the addressee, teachers still seem to appreciate the term *madam*.

The meaning that received the second highest number of responses is 'a woman who holds an important position e.g. a cabinet secretary/minister' (80% males and 80% females). This meaning is related to Buregeya's analysis which points out a positive reference for *madam* as a 'professional woman'. The phrase *professional woman* may be what one female respondent referred to as 'a working class woman' (the respondent's meaning of this must have meant a professional woman or a woman who is formal employment). Such responses reflect the definition of *madam* as a woman of '[...] relatively [...] high social status' contained in the *CED*. The other references that are related to this meaning are 'a woman (female) boss/a woman who is in a senior position in the work place' (2 males i.e. 13.3%; 3 females i.e. 20%). One male respondent (i.e. 6.7%) also suggested '[a] senator' as one of its meanings. A *senator* is a political position, which is gained through an election process, although political parties are allowed to nominate a few senators. The 2013-2017 Kenyan government had 5 female cabinet secretaries (i.e. ministers) out of a total of 20. At the same time, 5 political parties had 19 females nominated to the senate. What is surprising is that not a single respondent suggested 'governor' as a possible meaning although in the Kenyan politics the governor position is perceived to be more prestigious than that of a senator.<sup>3</sup> Another meaning which can be semantically related to 'relatively [...] high social status', and which came third in the number of responses, is that of 'a smartly dressed woman' (80% males; 73.3% females). It is however surprising that more males, who may be presumed not to pay much attention to dressing, suggest such a reference. Although, the dictionaries do not mention a woman's dressing in relation to being addressed as *madam*, the fact that a woman who enjoys '[...] relatively high social status', may have her economic status improved so that she can dress

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<sup>3</sup> A possible explanation for the zero suggestion for the meaning 'a governor' is that not a single woman was elected to this position in the 2013 general elections.

elegantly. Such a view may explain the other suggestions of 'a rich woman' given by a female respondent and 'a respectable woman/lady' which was suggested by one male (6.7%) and three women (20%). The high number of responses that were given for 'a smartly dressed woman' show one overt criterion that is used to denote high social status.

The response that came fourth from the given choices is that of 'a female police officer' (53.3% males; 86.7% females). This meaning received more responses than that of 'a prison warder' (33.3% males; 60% females) which had been suggested by Buregeya (2018). A possible explanation for this, is that many Kenyans are not keen on the differences that exist in the different units of the uniformed forces such as the traffic police, the administrative police, the army, the navy or the prison wardens. The uniformed forces are usually lumped together and generally perceived as 'police officers or soldiers'. This reference may thus be assumed to mean any female police officer. In addition, the police officers that many average Kenyans are likely to interact with more often are the traffic police who man various road blocks across the country. All the uniformed female police officers are generally addressed as *madam* while their male counterparts are usually addressed by the Kiswahili term *afande*. Muthengi Muthui (p.c., June 2017) noted that *afande* is 'a term of respect for only those in uniformed forces, used by junior officers to refer to senior officers although it can also be used to refer to someone who is in the same rank but has been given some supervisory appointment'.

The meaning that came seventh but with less than half of the responses (40% males; 40% females) is that of 'a married woman'. This reference may have a relationship with the age of the woman in question since it may not be obvious to a stranger whether she is married or not. Such a context may thus include the description of 'any respectable woman/lady' which was suggested by one male respondent and one female respondent. This meaning is also related to the reference of 'one's own wife or another person's wife' which received the second least number of responses among the choices that were given (26.7% males; 40% females). These two related

meanings seem to mirror the South-African English meaning of ‘the lady of the house’, assuming that this can be interpreted to mean a *wife*. This meaning relates to Buregeya’s observation of *wife* as a meaning but without the connotations of ‘terrible’ and ‘feared’ that he suggests. Men use *madam* to introduce their wives, though it can also be used by other people, both men and women, to mean ‘somebody else’s wife’. For instance, in a conversation, it is common to hear men being asked, *how is madam?* when inquiring about the addressee’s wife. A request to a man to pass regards to *madam* will be understood to mean ‘his wife’ and not ‘his female supervisor’. This reference does not take into account the woman’s occupation or social status and may not be viewed negatively even in cases where the referent is a university lecturer. However, *madam* is not used to call out one’s wife but rather as a descriptive term. A suggested meaning that relates to ‘wife’ is that of ‘a church minister’s wife’ which was proposed by only one female respondent. The other reference of *madam* to ‘the local chief’s wife’ has the least responses (20% males; 26.7% females). The low frequency for this term is probably because chiefs are not as many as the teachers, for whom *madam* has the highest number of references. Another reason would be that just like the meaning of the ‘a church minister’s wife’, the term seems to discriminate against women since it disqualifies them from professions such as being ‘church ministers’ and ‘chiefs’. Although there is no gender equality yet in the number of men and women who take up these professions, these are fields that women are now getting into. This notwithstanding, more females than males (4 females, and 3 males) agreed that the term means ‘the local chief’s wife’. Similarly, it is a female respondent who gave the meaning of ‘a church minister’s wife’.

The other meanings that were suggested for *madam* do not seem to follow a pattern that can be described easily. For instance, while both male and female respondents attach *madam* to a certain age, the age suggestions given are dissimilar. One male respondent proposed that *madam* can describe ‘any woman above 23 years’, while one female respondent

suggests ‘any female above 18 years’. The female’s criterion is in agreement with the age at which one is considered an adult as contained in the Kenyan constitution whereas, the male’s criterion cannot be easily explained. However, one man suggested ‘young girl/woman’ as a reference which either contradicts or supports the earlier suggestions depending on one’s interpretation of *young*. Two males and two females also seem to agree on a related meaning of women in general. The males suggested ‘any woman’ whereas the females suggested ‘any woman/ lady irrespective of designation’. Two females and one male further suggest that the term can be used as ‘a polite way of addressing a lady you do not know by name’. The other proposition made by one female of ‘a female colleague’ seems to relate to some form of profession, possibly, a teacher since the respondents were teachers. One male also suggested that the term can be used when referring to ‘a junior female worker when one needs a favour/service from them’. This suggestion is contrary to dictionary entries since it does not reflect the junior to seniority rank use of *madam*. Such a use, alongside the “unsystematic” ones, may be a result of a deliberate effort to avoid any kind of antagonism in face-to-face exchanges and thus “make nice” as suggested by Eckert & McConnel-Ginnet (2003: 136).

Swan (2005: 339), writing on address terms in British English, observes that “*Sir* and *madam* are used in Britain mostly by people in service occupations (e.g. shop assistants) *Dear Sir* and *Dear Madam* are common ways of beginning letters to strangers [...]. In other situations *sir* and *madam* are unusual in British English”. With reference to Swan’s observation and the dictionary meanings of *madam*, there are variations in its use in Kenya. Firstly, *Madam* is not used mostly by people in service occupations and is not unusual in many situations. For instance, it is used by people such as students to address their female teachers and also to refer to people in other professions, e.g. in the uniformed forces. It also refers to people who are not in a profession such ‘the local chief’s wife’, and ‘a married woman’. In addition, two out of the five definitions suggested in the dictionary for

*madam* were not suggested in Kenyan English.<sup>4</sup> The term does not reflect the informal meaning of ‘a conceited or bossy girl or young woman’ and of ‘a woman who is in charge of prostitutes in a brothel’. However, the meaning of a ‘woman especially one considered to be relatively of high social status’ seems to have expanded in meaning since it encompasses other conceptually related meanings like ‘a rich woman’, ‘a smartly dressed woman’ and ‘a respectable woman’. The term *madam* can also be used in a reciprocal manner since a person who is of a high social status can use it to address a female of a lower social status. This happens among *tutors* and *teacher trainees* or when ‘one is seeking for a favour from a junior’ person. Wardhaugh & Fuller (2015: 271) observe about Chinese comrades that, “[...] a superior may use a *tongzhi*, (comrade), rather than an inferior’s title before offering a rebuke”. Although this scenario was not suggested in the meaning of *madam* in English use in Kenya, it could be conceivable. In such a case *madam* would be used ironically to communicate that the addressee does not qualify for the title. The overall results on *madam* show that, contrary to what had been hypothesized, the female teachers assigned more meanings to *madam* than their male counterparts. Table 1 shows a total of 84 choices from females against 69 choices from males. It had also been hypothesized that both men and women will assign the same range of meanings to *madam*, but this was not the case. Although there was a total of 9 other meanings suggested by the males and 9 other meanings suggested by the females, there were differences in the meanings given by each gender. For instance, the males suggested ‘a senator’ as a possible meaning, while the females suggested ‘a rich woman’. The other range of meanings proposed by males and females were not exact equivalents.

### 3.2 The term *boss*

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<sup>4</sup> Although some informants suggested more than one other meaning for *madam*, 13 respondents (8 males and 5 females), did not give any other for *madam*.

Table 3: The meanings assigned to *boss* from the choices proposed by the researcher

	<b>Meaning</b>	<b>Male Respondents (N=15)</b>	<b>Female respondents (N=15)</b>	<b>Total (N=30)</b>
1.	Hierarchical male boss	12 (80%)	13 (86.7%)	25 (83.3%)
2.	Somebody's husband	0 (0%)	5 (33.3%)	5 (16.7%)
3.	A stranger who is smartly dressed	8 (53.3%)	5 (33.3%)	13 (43.3%)
4.	A big bodied man	7 (46.7%)	5 (33.3%)	12 (40%)
5.	A male police officer	5 (33.3%)	9 (60%)	14 (46.7%)
6.	A male customer e.g. at a hotel	6 (40%)	5 (33.3%)	11 (36.7%)

Table 4: The meanings of *boss* suggested by the respondents themselves

	<b>Meaning</b>	<b>Male respondents (N=15)</b>	<b>Female respondents (N=15)</b>	<b>Total (N=30)</b>
1.	Immediate supervisor	1 (6.7%)	3 (20%)	4 (13.3%)
2.	A supervisor who is overbearing	1 (6.7%)	0 (0%)	1 (3.3%)
3.	Owner of business / company/CEO	1 (6.7%)	0 (0%)	1 (3.3%)
4.	An employer/ my employer / person who employs	1 (6.7%)	1 (6.7%)	2 (6.7%)
5.	Head of institution / organization / manager	2 (13.3%)	2 (13.3%)	4 (13.3%)

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6.	Rich man	1 (6.7%)	1 (6.7%)	2 (6.7%)
7.	Man/woman who holds a position or rank	1 (6.7%)	0 (0%)	1 (3.3%)
8.	Head of criminal gang	1 (6.7%)	0 (0%)	1 (3.3%)
9.	Used by junior when seeking favours from male supervisors	1 (6.7%)	0 (0%)	1 (3.3%)
10.	One's male supervisor	0 (0%)	1 (6.7%)	1 (3.3%)
11.	A hierarchical female boss	0 (0%)	1 (6.7%)	1 (3.3%)
12.	A male person in command	0 (0%)	1 (6.7%)	1 (3.3%)
13.	A male person you depend upon	0 (0%)	1 (6.7%)	1 (3.3%)
14.	Any male above 18 years	0 (0%)	1 (6.7%)	1 (3.3%)
15.	Used casually by males when addressing one another	0 (0%)	1 (6.7%)	1 (3.3%)
16.	A 'sheng' term used to refer to a leader within an informal group setting e.g. university friend's group	0 (0%)	1 (6.7%)	1 (3.3%)
17.	A man who may not be in high hierarchy but influential position e.g. watchman, clerk	0 (%)	1 (6.7%)	1 (3.3%)
18.	A leader	0 (0%)	1 (6.7%)	1 (3.3%)



19.	One who is senior in employment	0 (0%)	1 (6.7%)	1 (3.3%)
20.	A male holding high office	0 (0%)	1 (6.7%)	1 (3.3%)
21.	Male teacher	0 (0%)	1 (6.7%)	1 (3.3%)

The meanings reported in tables 3 and 4 above, which will be assumed to be reflective of Kenyan English meanings, were compared with those given in three international English dictionaries: the *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary*, 9th edn (2015) - hereafter the *OALD* (2015); the *CED* (2009), and the *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English*, 5th edn (2009) - hereafter the *LCDE* (2009)

The *OALD* (2015) gives the following definitions for *boss*:

[as a noun]<sup>5</sup>

1. A person who is in charge of other people at work and tells them what to do.
2. A person who is in charge of a large organization (informal)

The *CED* (2009) defines *boss* as follows:

(informal) [as a noun]

1. A person in charge of or employing others
2. (chiefly US) A professional politician who controls a party machine or political organization, often using devious or illegal methods

The *LCDE* (2009) defines it as follows:

[as a noun]

1. The person who employs you or who is in charge of you at work
2. (informal) someone with an important position in a company or other organization
3. The person who is the strongest in a relationship, who controls a situation etc. [as in] *You've got to show the kids who's boss.*

It is notable that the gender of *boss* is not specified from the definition, which means that both males and females can qualify as *boss*. However, in English usage in Kenya, it appears that the term *boss* has almost been limited to males only. The shared definition from the three dictionaries is

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<sup>5</sup> Although this paper focuses on the nominal meanings of *boss*, the word also has other meanings as an adjective and as a verb.

the idea of a person who is 'in charge' at a place of work or in an organization. This perception is the dominant one held by Kenyan English users since out of the five choices given, the meaning of 'hierarchical male boss' received the highest number of choices at (80% males; 86.7% females). It can be assumed that 'a hierarchical male boss' is in charge at the place of work or in an organization. Such a response incorporates the other suggested meanings such as 'one's male employer' (6.7% males; 6.7% females), 'head of institution/ manager' (13.3% males; 13.3 % females), 'a male holding a high office' (0% males; 6.7% females) and 'owner of a business/or a company' (6.7% males; 0% females). However, the term seems to have broadened its meaning to include not just the person who is in charge overall but anyone whom one is directly accountable to. This explains why responses such as 'immediate supervisor (male or female)' (6.7% males; 20% females), 'a man or woman who holds a position/rank' (6.7% males; 0% females), [anyone who is] 'senior in employment' (0% males; 6.7% females), and 'a male person in command' (0% males; 6.7% females) were given. This is in spite of the fact that such people may be answerable to others above them. This reference seems to correspond to the *LCDE* informal usage of, 'someone with an important position in a company or organization'. Any supervisory role, including holding a position can be regarded as important. It can however be noted that it is only in two references that the female gender is incorporated in the references. These references are: 'immediate supervisor (male or female)' and 'a man or woman who holds a position/rank'. However, more female respondents view *boss* as 'an immediate supervisor' while none views women as 'one who holds a position'. It is not clear why they should suggest 'a supervisor' as *boss* but do not relate that to the possibility of 'one holding a position or rank'. Although, the responses from males are relatively low on these two meanings, the males view women as *boss* both in an 'immediate supervisory role' and as '[...] holding a position or rank'.

A male respondent suggested that boss can also mean 'a supervisor who is overbearing'.<sup>6</sup> The notable difference however is that this meaning takes on a noun class and not a verb as given in the *LCDE*. While this meaning does not appear to be frequently implied, we can speculate that in the Kenyan context the use of the term to mean 'a male police officer' (33.3% males; 60% females) has to do with their characteristic nature of being aggressive. This is especially in reference to the traffic police officers with whom many people, especially drivers, interact with almost on a daily basis. The officers are usually perceived as being aggressive in the manner in which they deal with anyone who is guilty of traffic offences.

The choice that came third is 'a stranger who is smartly dressed', receiving 53.3% and 33.3% responses from men from women respectively. The speculation is that *boss* has a connection with a person who is 'in charge' at a place of work or in an organization. Such a person is expected to dress officially and smartly. The Kenyan English users therefore seem to assume that any stranger who is well dressed may be in some managerial position and should be addressed as such. The disparity between the responses of the males and the females would be that females exercise caution probably for fear of being misconstrued. A man who is referred to as *boss* by a woman may think that she has a motive of getting a favour, especially financial, from him. It was indeed, reported to the researcher, by one man that a woman addressed him as *boss* because she wanted him to buy a certain product that she was selling. This was interpreted as a persuasive strategy by the man since a *boss* should have money to buy an item without haggling over the price. Another suggestion given that is related to this meaning is 'a rich man' (6.7 % males; 6.7 % females). This perception may be due to an assumption that one is rich because of the salary that they earn due to their rank at their place of work.

The meaning that came fourth is that of 'a big bodied man' (46.7% males; 33.3% females). More males than females, however, seem to

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<sup>6</sup> This suggestion may correspond to its verbal category meaning 'to be aggressive or domineering towards (others)'.

appreciate ‘big bodied men’, since *boss* is positive in this reference. The idea of being big bodied does not necessarily imply overweight or obesity and it therefore does not have negative connotations. It may relate to a person who is able to feed well as a result of having money. This perception would be cultural since many communities in Kenya associate being ‘big bodied’ with earning or having a lot of money. A big bodied person is thus a fat cat but with an approving meaning.

Another meaning for *boss* that comes fifth is that of ‘a male customer, e.g. at a hotel’ (40% males; 33.3% females). This reference can be considered as a means of trying to ‘make nice’ as suggested by Eckert & McConnel-Ginnet (2003: 135). The ‘male customer’ may not necessarily be smartly dressed or rich but he is ‘in charge’ in that given circumstantial exchange. Due to competition from other service providers who may be offering the same services, business people make an effort to keep their customers. Addressing them as *boss*, especially by male waiters, is probably a way of showing them that they are ‘in charge’ and therefore important to the business. Such an address relates to another suggested meaning of ‘a male person that you depend upon’ (0% males; 6.7% females). This suggestion was given by a female, probably because women look up to men as the breadwinners. While some men depend on others for various benefits such as money, it emerges that they may not want to view them as people they ‘[...] depend upon’. The response that was given by one male respondent, which relates loosely to depending upon, is that of ‘a junior [employee] when seeking favours from male supervisors’. This use appears insincere and possibly one that is likely to be dropped as soon as it achieves its objective. The “making nice” can therefore be very temporary to an extent that address terms can be considered much more like a persuasive variety of a language.

The meaning that received the least number of responses from the given choices and proposed by females only is that of ‘somebody’s husband’ (16.7%). Women do not use *boss* to call out their husbands or to get their attention but rather to show the person they are talking about. There is an

asymmetrical reference because while women refer to somebody's wife as *madam*, the men do not refer to somebody's husband as *boss*. The reference of husbands as *boss* stems from the leadership role of men/husbands. This relates to the *LCDE* view of 'The person who is the strongest in a relationship or who controls a situation etc.' Such a meaning could be said to emanate from the patriarchal nature of most Kenyan family set-ups where men are the leaders. This view ties up with two other responses suggested by females, which are: 'a leader' (6.7%) and 'a male person that one depends upon' (6.7%). Since the majority of the respondents were teachers, the leadership role of men in the suggestion of, 'a male teacher' (6.7%), by one female can be inferred. While the 'male teacher' is a colleague at work, he assumes a leadership role at home. The leadership role of men is extended to include other responses given by females, which are: 'a man who may not be in high hierarchy but [is] in [an] influential position such as a clerk or a watchman' (6.7%) and 'a leader within an informal group setting such as university friends' group' (6.7%). For the former reference, 'a watchman or clerk' is in a lower rank when compared with a teacher, but surprisingly females perceive them as *boss*, perhaps because such jobs are usually held by men. The other reference that relates to 'strength/leadership', as suggested by one male respondent (6.7%), is that of 'a head of a criminal gang'.

From the suggested meanings of *boss* in the dictionaries, the *CED* one of '(chiefly US) A professional politician who controls a party machine or political organization, often using devious or illegal methods', does not seem to apply in Kenyan English usage. However, other references such as 'any male who is above eighteen years' (0% males; 6.7% females), 'a casual term used by males when addressing one another' (0% males; 6.7% females), 'used by a junior when seeking favours from male supervisors' (6.7% males; 0% females) are not given in any dictionary. In addition, the term is much broadened in Kenyan English to include the following meanings which are not in dictionaries: 'somebody's husband', 'a stranger who is smartly dressed', 'a big bodied man', 'a police officer', and 'a customer, e.g. at a

hotel'. Out of the total respondents, 6 males and 5 females did not indicate any other additional meanings of *boss*, implying that almost half of the respondents did not think that *boss* has any other meanings other than those which were given in the questionnaire. The results in Table 3 confirm what had been hypothesized that female teachers would assign more meanings to *boss* than male teachers: a total of 38 responses from the males and of 42 from the females. This disparity seems to be due to the fact that none of the males selected the meaning of 'somebody's husband', probably because it is they who are husbands. Whatever the reason, the hypothesis that more men than women would use *boss* with more meanings was disproved because from the meanings suggested by the respondents themselves there were more suggestions (16) from women than those from men (9).

### 3.3 The term *my dear*

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Table 5: The meanings assigned to *my dear* from the choices proposed by the researcher

	Meaning	Male respondents (N=15)	Female respondents (N=15)	Total (N=30)
1.	Somebody's wife/ a man referring to his wife	11 (73.3%)	9 (60%)	20 (66.7%)
2.	A young lady/woman	7 (46.7%)	6 (40%)	13 (43.3%)
3.	A female friend	9 (60%)	13 (86.7%)	22 (73.3%)
4.	A middle-aged lady	2 (13.3%)	4 (26.7%)	6 (20%)
5.	A colleague (irrespective of gender)	6 (40%)	11 (73.3%)	17 (56.7%)
6.	Any lady or woman	5 (33.3%)	4 (26.7%)	9 (30%)

Table 6: The meanings of *my dear* suggested by the respondents themselves

	Meaning	Male respondents (N=15)	Female respondents (N=15)	Total (N=30)
1.	It can serve as a greeting e.g. Dear Mary	1 (6.7%)	0 (0%)	1 (3.3%)
2.	Used in a patronizing way to put down a female colleague	1 (6.7%)	0 (0%)	1 (3.3%)



3.	To show surprise or perplexity	1 (6.7%)	0 (0%)	1 (3.3%)
4.	A lady relative whom you respect	1(6.7%)	0 (0%)	1 (3.3%)
5.	A member of the opposite sex	1 (6.7%)	0 (0%)	1 (3.3%)
6.	A concubine	1 (6.7%)	0 (0%)	1 (3.3%)
7.	A passionate friend irrespective of gender/ Any friend/ Pals/ Close friend of either gender/ A sign of friendship	3 (20%)	2 (13.3%)	5 (16.7%)
8.	Shows level of closeness i.e. non-formal	1 (6.7%)	0 (0%)	1 (3.3%)
9.	A way of addressing a person, male or female, that you are dear to/a loved person/ highly valued	1 (6.7%)	2 (13.3%)	3 (10%)
10.	A close family member	1 (6.7%)	0 (0%)	1 (3.3%)
11.	Someone who needs help and whom you have pity on	1 (6.7%)	0 (0%)	1 (3.3%)
12.	One that you have a lot of regard for e.g. son, daughter, mom or dad etc./One's child irrespective of gender/ A child (e.g. a parent referring to his child)	2 (13.3%)	2 (13.3%)	4 (13.3%)
13.	Lovers (used to refer to one of opposite sex)	1 (6.7%)	0 (0%)	1 (3.3%)

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14.	A male friend	0 (0%)	1 (6.7%)	1 (3.3%)
15.	Shows courtesy/Shows kindness or humility before the concerned	0 (0%)	1 (6.7%)	1 (3.3%)
16.	Anybody, male or female, whom one is in 'close' contact to [sic] e.g. a friend or colleague, a seminar mate even to someone in the opposition during a debate	0 (0%)	1 (6.7%)	1 (3.3%)

The meanings in tables 5 and 6 above, which will be considered as Kenyan English usage, were compared to those given in two international English dictionaries: the *OALD* (2015) and the *CED* (2009). Although the reference term under study is *my dear*, the meanings of *dear* was checked up in the dictionaries since it is the head-word.

The *OALD* (2015) gives the following definitions of *dear*:

As a [noun]<sup>7</sup>

1. A kind person (informal)
2. Used when speaking to someone you love
3. Used when speaking to someone in a friendly way, for example an older person to a young person or a child

The *CED* (2010) gives the following meanings of *dear*:

As a [noun]

4. (often used in direct address) someone regarded with affection and tenderness; darling

As an [interjection]

5. used in exclamations of surprise or dismay, such as *Oh dear!* and *dear me!*

From the responses that were proposed by the researcher and tabulated in 5 above, the highest frequency of *my dear* by both males and females is for 'a female friend' (60% males; 86.7% females). This was also the meaning with the highest number of responses from the female informants. If this was to be mapped onto the dictionary meanings of *dear*, it would probably correspond to its meaning of 'used when speaking to someone you love' (*OALD*) and '[...] someone regarded with affection and tenderness; darling' (*CED*). While it is difficult to determine how 'loved' or 'affectionate' the friends are to the respondents, it can be assumed that they were special enough to be referred to as *my dear* and not by their name or title.

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<sup>7</sup> Although this paper focuses more on the nominal meanings of *my dear*, *dear* can also be used as an adjective, as an adverb and as an interjection.

However, it is important to note that *my dear* seems to have been popularized by the media, particularly, a morning radio programme on a local station, Classic FM. One of the two male presenters, Maina wa Kageni, addresses any lady caller as *my dear* or *darling*. His listeners have not picked up 'darling' as an address term though. The fact that the presenter does not personally know the callers, shows that the women cannot be described as people who are 'loved' by him. Possibly, his address confirms what Kramsch (1998) writes that "Speech tends to be **people-centred**, writing tends to be **topic-centred** [...], speakers not only focus on their topic, but try to engage their listeners as well, and appeal to their senses and emotions". The use of such an endearing term may be a way of appealing to the emotions of his listeners, particularly the women.

The second most frequent meaning proposed for *my dear* is that of 'somebody's wife' or 'a man referring to his wife' (73.3% males; 60% females). The male responses are higher for this meaning possibly because it is them that are likely to refer to or call out using *my dear*. The responses from the females are assumed to be from either hearing it used in such contexts or from their husbands use of it. Again, this can be likened to its dictionary use for '[...] someone regarded with affection and tenderness (and love)'. The pre-test results had shown that *my dear* is likely to be addressed more to the females and responses from the males such as 'a member of the opposite sex' (6.7% males; 0% females) and 'lovers (used to refer to one of opposite sex' (6.7% males; 0% females), 'a lady relative whom you respect' (6.7% males; 0% females) strengthen this view. However, there are responses which refute this interpretation. These are suggestions by two females as someone 'close to one's heart (man or woman)' (0% males; 6.7% females), 'a male friend' (0% males; 6.7% females) and one male's suggestion that it is 'a way of addressing a person, a male or female, that you are dear to' (6.7% males; 0% females). The latter suggestions show that females too would refer to males as *my dear* and males would also expect to be addressed as *my dear*.

The meaning that received the third highest number of the responses is that of ‘a colleague (irrespective of gender)’ (40% males; 73.3% females). Indeed, these responses show that *my dear* can be considered as an address form that is not restricted to one gender. A male teacher pointed out to the researcher that he would readily give in to a female colleague’s request if she referred to him as *dear* instead of using his name or the term *Sir*. He however added that he would not prefer the use of *my* prefixed to *dear* since this shows ownership. According to him, the phrase *my dear*, would be improper if the colleagues are married since it is only one’s spouse who is supposed to “own” them. In this context, the use of the term may correspond to its *OALD* meaning of ‘Used when speaking to someone in a friendly way, for example an older person to a young person.’ Colleagues may speak to each other in a friendly way so as to maintain a collegial relationship at the workplace. Such a view strengthens the meaning of ‘anybody, male or female, whom one is in ‘close’ contact to [sic] e.g. a friend or colleague, a seminar mate, even to someone in the opposition during a debate’, which was suggested by a female (0 % males; 6.7%). The fact that more females than males (73.3% vs 40 %) use the term to refer to ‘a colleague’ emphasizes Wardhaugh’s (2010) observation that “Women tend to use linguistic devices that stress solidarity more often than men do” (p. 342). It is a female respondent who suggested that *my dear* can mean ‘[...] a seminar mate [...]’. Such a person would be considered almost a stranger since these people are likely to have only met for an official function. Similarly, a suggestion of ‘[...] someone in the opposition during a debate’ as a referent shows that women would be more tolerant even to a person who has an opposing idea. A suggestion by one male that it is ‘used in a patronizing way to put down a female colleague’ (6.7% males; 0% females), further supports Wardhaugh’s view that “[...] men tend to interact in ways which will maintain and increase their power and status” (p. 342). The example from the *OALD* of ‘[...] an older person talking to a young person or a child’ does not however seem to be relevant in this context because colleagues may either have age variations or be age mates.

The response that came fourth in the list is that of ‘a young lady/woman’ (46.7 % males; 40% females). This meaning may relate to that of ‘[...] an older person talking to a young person [...]’ given by the *OALD*. The departure from the dictionary for this meaning is that the gender of the person is specified instead of an unspecified gender reference to “a young person”. Contrary to Wardhaugh’s suggestion that “Women tend to use linguistic devices that stress solidarity more often than men do” (2010: 342), more males than females chose this meaning. This is probably because the gender of the addressee was made explicit and men may want to be more friendly to women. This notwithstanding, the researcher is yet to hear a man address another young man as *dear*, that is, a young man who is not a son or close relative to the addressor. Although it has been pointed out that the responses of ‘a young lady/woman’ correspond to the dictionary example, other responses such as ‘a middle-aged woman’ (13.3% males; 26.7% females) which came sixth and ‘any lady or woman’ (33.3% males; 26.7% females) which came fifth in the choices contradict the earlier conclusion. The meaning of ‘a middle-aged woman’ would relate to the idiom of ‘dear old / little [...]’ which is however not used in exactly the same way probably for fear of the connotations that “old” and “little” may carry. While *dear* carries the meaning of affectionate, *old* and *little* do carry a negative shade of meaning especially when used in reference to women. *Old* is usually interpreted in relation to one’s age while *little* is interpreted in relation to body size. Nevertheless, since the idiomatic expression does not appear to refer to age, probably the users of *my dear* to mean “any lady or woman” may be using it more or less like the idiom.

The male respondents had more responses on who else *my dear* would refer to. Some of the responses correspond to what is detailed in the *OALD*<sup>8</sup>. A response such, ‘It can serve as a greeting e.g. *Dear Mary*’ (6.7% males; 0% females) relates to its use at the beginning of a letter before the name or title of the person. Although this does not call out a person, it draws the

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<sup>8</sup> This is its use as an adjective.

attention of the addressee. There are other responses which correspond to the dictionaries' definition of a person who is loved, or regarded with affection and tenderness. These are: 'a passionate friend irrespective of gender' (6.7% males; 0% females), 'any friend' (6.7% males; 6.7% females), 'pals' (6.7% males; 0% females), 'shows level of closeness i.e. non-formal' (6.7% males; 0% females), 'a way of addressing a person, male or female, that you are dear to' (6.7% males; 0% females), 'a close family member' (6.7% males; 0% females), 'one that you have a lot of regard for e.g. son, daughter, mom or dad etc.' (13.3% males; 0% females), and 'a child (e.g. a parent referring to his child)' (0% males; 6.7% females). The emotions associated with love, affection and tenderness, though not explicitly expressed can be deduced from words such as 'passionate', 'ear to', 'non-formal', 'close', 'friend' and 'regard for'. The other response given by a male is that it is used 'to show surprise or perplexity' (6.7% males; 0% females). This response relates to the use of *dear* as an exclamation. The variation, however, is in the pre-modifier of *dear*. The expression of the same meaning in English usage in Kenya, is preceded by the possessive pronoun *my* and not the interjection *oh*, which is what is exemplified in the *OALD*. In addition, the expression shows 'perplexity' in Kenyan English, which is not one of the emotions that it expresses in other varieties of English.

There are other meanings that were suggested by males and that describe or relate to women but which are not reflected in the dictionaries. These are: 'used in a patronizing way to put down a female colleague' (6.7% males; 0% females), 'a concubine' (6.7% males; 0% females) and 'a lady relative whom you respect' (6.7% males; 0% females). The first meaning is derogatory and does not match any of the dictionary definitions. 'A concubine', is a woman who is supposed to be "less important than a wife" but use of *my dear* to refer to such a woman appears to have elevated her status. The phrase may thus be either 'endearing' in this reference or it may have acquired an ironic meaning. The meaning of *concubine* may relate to the suggestion of 'lovers (used to refer to one of opposite sex)' (6.7%

males; 0% females) since ordinarily, it is not a common Kenyan culture to keep concubines. The existence of clandestine lovers, who may have taken the place of concubines, is however evident. The distinction between ‘a concubine’ and ‘a lover’ (usually referring to people who are not legally married) may not thus be clear and these terms may be used synonymously with clandestine relations. One meaning of ‘someone who needs help and whom you have pity on’ (6.7% males; 0% females) does not also easily fit in the suggested dictionary meanings. Perhaps, it falls in the category of ‘[...] exclamations of surprise or dismay, such as *Oh dear!* and *dear me!*’. The observable difference however is that the *OALD*’s examples of its use are “directed” at the speaker himself/herself and not at another person. Its use in Kenya as suggested by the respondent shows that it is directed at another person. This might be due to the adjectival meaning of *dear* and one therefore possibly feels that they can’t be *dear* to themselves.

From the female respondents, three answers relate to a loved/important person which relate to the adjectival meaning of *dear*. These are: ‘a loved person’ (0% males; 6.7% females), ‘highly valued’ (0% males; 6.7% females), ‘close to one’s heart (man or woman)’ (0% males; 6.7% females) and ‘one’s child, that is, a parent referring to a child, irrespective of gender’ (0% males; 6.7% females). These responses provide evidence that the adjectival meaning of *dear* does not deviate much from the standard use of the term. The others that relate loosely to ‘a loved person’ are ‘a close friend of either gender’ (0% males; 6.7% females) and ‘a sign of friendship’ (0% males; 6.7% females). While one respondent thinks that the term can refer to friends of either gender, another suggested that it can only refer to ‘a male friend’ (0% males; 6.7% females). Two other responses relate to it as a noun when it is “Used when speaking to someone in a friendly way, for example an older person to a young person or a child”. These are ‘as a way of showing kindness or humility before the concerned’ (0% males; 6.7% females), and as ‘a sign of courtesy’ (0% males; 6.7% females).



The responses for *my dear* did not denote the nominal meaning of ‘a kind person (informal)’ showing that this meaning does not appear to be conceptualized in Kenyan English. Other meanings of the word that were suggested show the meanings of *dear* as an adjective and as an interjection although the emphasis of the paper was on its nominal meanings. Such responses clearly show that the respondents are aware of the other syntactic categories of this term. The omission of the other adjectival meanings, such as ‘appealing or pretty’ and ‘highly priced’, which were not suggested at all may thus be a pointer that these are not common meanings of *dear*. In addition, the fact that no respondent proposed its adverbial meaning of ‘at a high cost’ shows that this meaning is absent from or rare in Kenyan English usage. The same reasoning can be extended to the absence of its idiomatic use of ‘[...] dear old/little [...]’. The predominant use of the term seems to refer to people, more specifically, to their love and friendship and not to their material possessions. It is also important to point out that 3 males and 7 females made no other suggestions, which is a third of the total sample. The working hypothesis was that the female teachers would assign more meanings to *my dear* than their male counterparts. The results in Table 5 bear out this hypothesis: the former made 47 choices against 40 made by the latter. However, more meanings for *my dear* were proposed by the male teachers than by the female ones (i.e. 13 vs. 4). So, the overall figures disprove the hypothesis since the total choices (from both the proposed meanings and the other suggested meanings) is 53 made by the males against 51 by the females, the difference between is clearly statistically insignificant.

## 6. CONCLUSION

This paper analysed the meanings of *madam*, *boss* and *my dear* as address terms among teachers in Kenya. The results were obtained from a three-part questionnaire that had a number of proposed meanings to choose from and an additional question eliciting more possible meanings from the

respondents. The working hypotheses were (a) that both men and women would assign the same range of meanings to *madam*, (b) that the female teachers would assign more meanings to *boss* than their male counterparts, and (c) that the female teachers would assign more meanings to *my dear* than their male counterparts. Hypothesis (a) was not supported by the results since the female teachers assigned more meanings to *madam* than the males (93 vs 78). However, the results supported hypothesis (b) since females made 58 choices against 47 choices that were made by the males. Regarding *my dear*, hypothesis (c), was not supported since the male teachers assigned a few more meanings (53) to the phrase than their female counterparts (51).

The general observation from the study is that the meanings of the three address terms in Kenyan English usage are by and large in agreement with those given in international English dictionaries. However, each one of those address terms has undergone semantic broadening and semantic narrowing. For instance, in Kenyan English usage the term *madam* does not mean ‘a woman who is in charge of prostitutes in a brothel’, which is an indication of semantic narrowing. However, the same term has been semantically broadened to mean ‘female teachers’ and ‘smartly dressed women’, meanings that are not available in international English dictionaries. Similarly, the semantic range of the term *boss* has been broadened to refer to ‘somebody’s husband’ and ‘a stranger who is smartly dressed’, among other meanings which are not recorded in international dictionaries. However, the term *boss* seems to have undergone semantic narrowing in Kenyan English usage where it does not seem to include the meaning ‘a professional politician who controls a party machine or political organization, often using devious or illegal methods’, which the *CED* (2009) assigns to American English. On the other hand, *my dear* seems to have undergone both semantic broadening and narrowing: in relation to broadening, its semantic range includes ‘a concubine’, while in relation to narrowing it does not seem to be used to refer to ‘a kind person’. However, it would be necessary to investigate the actual use of all three terms in

order to validate the observations made in this study. Such a further study could be extended to the use of other frequent address terms, such as *sister, brother/bro, auntie/aunty, uncle, mom and daddy.*

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## APPENDIX: THE QUESTIONNAIRE

The purpose of this questionnaire is to collect information for study purposes.

Please indicate:

Your gender [M] [F]

The county where you work:

### SECTION A

1. Whom do you think the term “Madam” refers to in English usage in Kenya? (please tick as many meanings as you have heard)
  - a married woman
  - a female teacher
  - a female police officer
  - the local chief’s wife
  - a prison warder
  - somebody’s wife
  - a woman who holds an important position e.g. a cabinet secretary
  - a smartly dressed woman
  - a teacher trainee
2. If there is/are any other meaning(s) of the term “madam” could you please give it/them here?
3. Do you think that the word “madam” whose possible meanings appear above, is pronounced as Madam or madam (with the capital letters corresponding to the louder syllable)?

### SECTION B

1. Whom do you think the term “boss” refers to in English usage in Kenya? (please tick as many meanings as you think are appropriate)
  - hierarchical male boss
  - a stranger who is smartly dressed
  - a big bodied man
  - a male police officer
  - a male customer e.g. at a hotel
2. Please specify any other meaning(s) you think the word “boss” has

SECTION C

1. Whom do you think the expression “my dear” refers to? (Please tick as many meanings as you think are appropriate)
  - somebody’s wife/a man referring to his wife
  - a young lady/woman
  - a female friend
  - a middle aged lady
  - a colleague (irrespective of gender)
  - any lady/woman
  
2. Please specify any other meaning(s) you think the expression has