

**CHALLENGES FACED BY CLASS ONE CHILDREN IN LEARNING KISWAHILI IN NGONG  
DIVISION, KAJIADO NORTH DISTRICT**

**BY**

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## **DECLARATION**

This research is my original work and has not been submitted for an award in any other University.

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This research project has been submitted for examination with our approval as University supervisors.

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## **DEDICATION**

To my husband, Simon Nderitu, for his understanding and unwavering support while pursuing my studies. To my mother, Loise Nyambura and my late aunt, Felista Njoki without whom i could not have gone through secondary education.

Finally, to my daughters Gloria Wanjiku and Rejoice Nyambura. May this work be an inspiration for you to seek for more knowledge in the world, may it be a strong foundation to the family.

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

|               |   |
|---------------|---|
| <b>ECE</b>    | Early Childhood Education                     |
| <b>KCPE</b>   | Kenya Certificate of Primary Education        |
| <b>KCSE</b>   | Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education      |
| <b>KIE</b>    | Kenya Institute of Education                  |
| <b>KNEC</b>   | Kenya National Examination Council            |
| <b>NACECE</b> | National Centre for Early Childhood Education |
| <b>MOEST</b>  | Ministry of Education Science and Technology  |
| <b>TTC</b>    | Teacher Training College                      |

## **ABSTRACT**

This study looked into the challenges faced by class one children of public schools in learning Kiswahili in Ngong Division, Kajiado North District. Several researches in learning languages have been carried out in developed countries. Language is basic to all communication between one person and another world over. In Ngong Division Kiswahili is a second language thus there was a need for a research of this kind. The purpose of this study was to investigate the challenges faced by class one children in learning Kiswahili language in Ngong Division, Kajiado North District. Study objectives were to identify challenges, determine causes of the challenges and suggest solutions to the challenges faced. It was limited to selected primary schools in Ngong Division due to financial constraints and delimited to class one pupils in public schools, class one teachers and head teachers. The assumption was that there were challenges class one children faced in learning Kiswahili. Relevant literature on language learning was reviewed with Krashen's affective filter theory being the theoretical framework.. The design of the study was descriptive survey. Target population for the study was public primary schools in Ngong Division. A random sample of 17 primary schools was used. Class one children, their teachers and head teachers were used. Instruments used were a questionnaire, an interview guide and an observation schedule. Also used was the class one timetable and pupils daily diary. Piloting was done in eight primary schools not involved in the main research because they shared similar characteristics. Data were collected using the above instruments by the researcher and trained research assistants. Data analysis was performed using SPSS software for statistical analyses. The study found that many class one children did not learn Kiswahili in preschools. The instructional resources were inadequate, there was lack of competence in teaching Kiswahili amongst some teachers. Influence of mother tongue and 'Sheng' as well as media, had affected on class one Kiswahili learners. The study observed that class one learners imitated and modelled substantially from their teachers and the immediate environment. The study recommended research on categories such as urban primary schools and rural primary schools.

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Background to the Study

Language is basic to all communication between one person and another the world over (Awoniyi, 1982). Communication, according to Awoniyi, is the means by which we pass on from one person to another: ideas, our beliefs, our knowledge, our request; indeed every aspect of human life. According to Todd (1987), language comprises of a set of signals by which we communicate. It is an abstraction based on linguistic behaviour of its users. This abstract system of language can be primarily expressed in speech as the medium of language and in writing. Halliday (1977) asserts that the role of language in the education process is a special aspect of the relation between language and social structure since language is the principle means of culture transmission. Language is an important part of culture. (Banks and Banks ,1993). With culture, language is learned, it is shared, and it evolves and changes over time. Language is not only a good indicator of social change but also an important cause of it. A system of linguistic communication is a prerequisite for the existence of a human group (Gilglioli, 1972). Okombo (2001) views the relationship between language and society to be symbolic such that neither of them can flourish to a significant extent without the other.

Kiswahili is an East African language with the highest number of speakers in the region and belongs to a Bantu language family (Chiragdin and Mnyampala, 1977). Polome (1967) argues that Kiswahili has been the mother tongue of the local population for centuries. Mazrui and Mazrui (1995) place the language even earlier than 10th century as indicated by various sources of oral literature. Whiteley (1969) argues that written Kiswahili words appeared in the 10<sup>th</sup> century but the linguistic evidence place spoken Kiswahili on the coast even before the 10th century. However, Kiswahili language remained overwhelmingly confined to the coast until several years later when trade infiltrated the interior in the last quarter of the 18th century.

Immediately after independence, Kiswahili proved to be an important language in uniting people. Much effort has since been made by the government to improve Kiswahili especially in education system. The first education commission which was formed immediately after independence in 1964 (Republic of Kenya, 1964), chaired by Professor Ominde , placed emphasis on Kiswahili as a means of achieving national unity and communication with several African countries. The commission recommended teaching of Kiswahili as a compulsory subject at primary level of education. It also recommended establishment of Kiswahili department at the University of Nairobi. In August 1969, President Jomo Kenyatta declared Kiswahili a national language and predicted a time when all official matters would be carried out using Kiswahili (Mbaabu, 1988).

Kiswahili then continued to be stronger and by 1968 it was a compulsory subject in the Certificate of Primary Education (CPE) examination (Whiteley, 1974). Gachukia hinted that Kiswahili ought to be accorded a special compared to other African vernaculars, in teaching languages in Kenya's primary and secondary schools (Gorman, 1970). The Gachathi Report of 1976 (Republic of Kenya, 1976) gave Kiswahili a better place in education by recommending it to be taught at primary and secondary levels as a core subject and also to be used as a medium of communication and instruction. By 1987, the importance of Kiswahili as a national language and in building a strong Kenya could not be underestimated (KNEC, 1985). The Presidential Committee on Education and Manpower Training for the Next Decade and Beyond (1988), recommended teaching of Kiswahili as a compulsory subject both at primary and secondary level and examining it at both levels.

Currently, Kiswahili is one of the languages in the syllabus for primary and secondary education. The general objectives of teaching Kiswahili at primary level are to enable a learner to achieve mastery of language skills such as listening and speaking, reading and writing. It is not only compulsory but also an examinable subject (KNEC, 2000).

Despite all these achievements, Kiswahili language has many drawbacks. For instance, Mbaabu (1987) asserts that the language situation in Kenya, as in many countries, is complicated by the fact that there are many African and other languages of the former colonizers (which in Kenya is English). There is still the colonial mentality among people that English is the best language of official communication in Kenya, therefore it is given special attention (Nabea, 2009). This has made Kiswahili, our local language, to be used wrongly by everybody; students and teachers are no exception. Many people concentrate their efforts on English language. They assume that they know Kiswahili and therefore do not need to put much emphasis on it.

KIE through National Centre for Early Childhood Education (NACECE) introduced a language policy in ECE, which recommended the use of the language of the catchment area in ECE centers. Use of mother tongue is encouraged in homogeneous communities. Introduction of Kiswahili as a subject is done in class one. The researcher noted that many preschools introduce English language before Kiswahili depending on the type of curriculum they follow. In all the education commissions mentioned above concerning promotion of Kiswahili, none mentioned its importance in early childhood education. Learning of Kiswahili in preschool therefore is not given much emphasis. Because of this, children lack a good foundation in Kiswahili which would help them learn it with ease as they join class one.

Kiswahili is a second language to many class one children in Ngong Division. A second language is any language other than the learner's native language or mother tongue. Some of the first languages used in this area are Kimaasai and Kikuyu. Class one children would be expected to experience difficulties in learning Kiswahili because many don't have prior knowledge of the language unlike the classes that follow. Krashen (1987) asserts that an individual's prior knowledge and foundation are very important for further acquisition of new information. In Krashen's natural order theory of learning a second language, he says with constant and consistent exposure to the target language might make it a simple process for a learner.

According to Mitchell and Myles (2004), there are factors which affect second language acquisition. These include intelligence. They argue that above average children on formal intelligence or general academic attainment tend to do well in second language learning in a formal classroom setting. Another factor is language learning strategies by teachers and children at different levels. Language attitude by children and teachers affect learning of a second language. Motivation is another factor. It involves how teachers motivate children by using proper learning methods and identifying materials that need to be used in teaching and learning and which could motivate children in learning a second language (Mitchell and Myles, 2004).

Language anxiety due to incompetence affects learning of a second language. An anxious learner or a teacher is less willing to speak in second language in class or engage target language speakers in informal interaction. This has negative relationship with learning success (Mitchell and Myles, 2004).

The role of first language affects learning of a second language. Cross-linguistic influences from the first language affect second language acquisition. Some have positive transfer to second language while others have a negative transfer which affects success of learning that language.

According to KIE class one syllabus (2002), there are four Kiswahili skills to be taught. These are listening, speaking, reading and writing. The general aim is for children to have mastery of these skills at class one level. There are five Kiswahili lessons in a week. Each lesson takes 30 minutes. All the four skills should be taught every week according to the syllabus.

Many schools as aforementioned introduce Kiswahili as a subject in class one, while English is mostly introduced in preschool. subject at that early stage, yet we know that an early start to language learning is likely to lead to better long term results if early learning is maintained and reinforced as the child gets older. Long(1990) further says it is easier to motivate a young child to learn a language than an older child. Therefore

teaching of Kiswahili subject in preschool would appear, therefore, to have better outcomes than when introduced in class one.

The researcher observed that many public schools in Ngong Division in Kajiado North District are found in remote areas. The language of catchment area is Kimaasai. Many private schools are concentrated in peri urban areas. Public schools' children in this area are likely to experience more challenges in learning Kiswahili than private schools' children as observed by the researcher. One reason was because Kimaasai language structure is very different from

Kiswahili.(Kimaasai is a Nilotic language while Kiswahili is a Bantu language).

Against this backdrop, there was need to investigate the challenges faced by class one children of public schools in learning Kiswahili in Ngong Division, Kajiado North District.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

The language policy in early childhood education in Kenya recommends use of language of the catchment area as a medium of instruction. In many cases, mother tongue or the first language is used. Kiswahili language is used in areas with heterogeneous communities. English language is introduced early in pre schools. In many pre-schools, Kiswahili is used by teachers to explain some concepts. However, it is treated casually. No grammar rules are followed nor is there any conscious effort by the teachers to promote its use and mastery. Kiswahili competes with English language when introduced as a subject at that early stage. What's worse, English receives preferential treatment to the extent that it becomes a more familiar language to children before they join class one. In many cases, Kiswahili is introduced in class one. This denies class one children a prior knowledge of the language which would help them learn it with ease and enable them to have a good foundation of Kiswahili. The overall research problem of this study was the status of Kiswahili in Ngong Division and, consequently, mastery of the language seemed to be very low in lower levels of public schools



school in this area yet not much research attention was being given to it. There was need, therefore, to investigate and unearth reasons for this state of affairs, if mastery of Kiswahili language is to be attained at this and higher levels of education, especially in view of the New Constitution that recognizes and elevates Kiswahili as a national and official language in Kenya.

### **1.3 Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of the study was to investigate challenges faced by class one children of public schools in learning Kiswahili language in Ngong Division, Kajiado North District.

### **1.4 Research Objectives**

The objectives of this study were:

1. To identify challenges faced by class one children in learning Kiswahili in public schools in Ngong Division;
2. To determine the causes of the challenges faced by class one children in learning Kiswahili in public schools in Ngong Division, and
3. To suggest solutions to the challenges faced by class one children in learning Kiswahili in public schools in Ngong Division.

## **1.5 Research Questions**

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What challenges are faced by class one children in learning Kiswahili in public schools in Ngong Division?
2. What are causes of the challenges facing class one children in learning Kiswahili in public schools in Ngong Division, and
3. What are the possible solutions to challenges faced by class one children in learning Kiswahili in public schools in Ngong Division?

## **1.6 Significance of the Study**

The study aimed at giving information on language learning, which is vital to curriculum developers at Kenya Institute of Education and National Centre for Early Childhood Education (NACECE).

Study findings emphasized the need to have more resources for teaching and learning Kiswahili. This way, children will get a head- start in fluency in Kiswahili language.

The study may help Kiswahili teachers to re-examine and appraise their instructional approaches and make adjustments where necessary. The study highlighted the need to strengthen Kiswahili as a national and official language right from the lower levels of the education system. This might necessitate a policy change that emphasizes on fluency in Kiswahili by all Kenyans right from preschool.

### **1.7 Limitations of the Study**

Some of the respondents did not return the survey questionnaire. The researcher was able to receive back 12 out of 17 questionnaires. This minimized the amount of data collected for the study. Many public schools are located in remote areas far from the main road with unreliable public transport. The researcher and assistants walked for long distances. This was time-consuming. Due to financial and time constraints, data collection was limited to selected public primary schools in Ngong Division. The results of this research may thus not be generalized to the rest of the country.

### **1.8 Delimitation of the Study**

This study was delimited to public primary schools in Ngong Division. Specifically, it included: class one children, 17 class one teachers and head teachers in the respective schools in Ngong Division, Kajiado North District.

### **1.9 Basic Assumptions**

The researcher assumed that there were challenges class one children faced in learning Kiswahili. In addition, Kiswahili is a second language to all children and teachers in public schools in Ngong Division. Last but not least; it was assumed that there are preschools in all public schools in Ngong Division.

## 1.10 Definitions of Key Terms

**Challenges** - Refers to the problems that class one children encounter in learning Kiswahili language.

**Children** - Refers to class one pupils who attend school.

**Early Childhood Education** -Term encompassing developmentally appropriate programmes that serve children from three years to eight years of age.

**First language** - Learner's native language

**Instructional Materials**- Items that are designed, modified and prepared to assist in teaching and learning.

**Learning**- Refers to a process involving the mastery of the four Kiswahili skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing.

**National Language** - A language is widespread and currently used through a specific country. Kiswahili is the national language in Kenya.

**Official Language** - A language that has legal status in a country's constitution and it's one used as a medium of instruction in learning institutions such as schools. English is Kenya's official language. Kiswahili has become an official language in the new constitution.

**Preschool** - Refers to centres that children between the age of 3 and 6 go to for the purpose of learning.

**Second Language** - Refers to any language other than the learner's native language.

### **1.11 Organization of the Study**

This study comprises five chapters. Chapter one consists of background to the problem, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research objectives, research questions and significance of the study, limitations of the study, delimitations of the study, basic assumptions, definitions of key terms and organisation of the study.

Chapter two comprises of the literature review. It is divided into the following parts: Introduction, state of Kiswahili in language policy in early childhood education, instructional materials in teaching and learning of Kiswahili language, quality of Kiswahili teachers in class one, instructional methods, mother tongue interference in learning Kiswahili, summary and theoretical framework and conceptual framework.

Chapter three consists of research methodology, which comprises of the following areas; research design, population, sampling and sample size, instruments, validity, reliability, procedure for data collection and data analysis.

Chapter four comprises of the findings and discussions.

Chapter five consists of the summary, conclusions and recommendations.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

This section accounts for what has been credited by scholars on learning of a second language. It focuses on the challenges facing learners in learning Kiswahili language as a subject. This chapter also has theoretical framework and conceptual framework.

#### **2.2 Language Policy in Early Childhood Education in Kenya**

Early childhood education in Kenya covers experiences of young children from birth to eight years. Formal schooling starts at around age six. As documented by KIE (2007), the foundation of learning and basic attitudes is laid during the first six years of life. Early childhood education psychologists and sociologists, such as Maria Montessori and Bloom, did emphasize that the first six years of a child are very crucial and critical in the overall development and later stages of schooling. They further documented that it is within this time frame that a child experiences fastest physical and mental development. Basic skills and social values are developed within this time frame. According to UNICEF (1994), the significance of ECE lies in the fact that the curriculum provides a foundation upon which the mastery of formal learning skills is planned. The successful transition and completion of subsequent levels is dependent on the foundation laid in early schooling (Sifuna, Chege and Oanda, 2006).

KIE through National Centre for Early Childhood Education (NACECE) introduced a language policy in ECE which recommends the use of language of the catchment area. In ECE centres use of mother tongue is encouraged where one ethnic group is predominant especially in rural areas. The introduction of Kiswahili language as a subject is done in class one. Many pre schools introduce English language to children before

Kiswahili depending on the type of curriculum they follow especially in private pre schools. Learning of Kiswahili in preschool is therefore not given much emphasis. It is used casually when a teacher wants to explain some concepts. This is because no grammar rules are followed. As mentioned above the curriculum in Early Childhood Education provides a foundation upon which the mastery of formal learning skills is planted for successful transition and completion of subsequent levels, it is not so with Kiswahili. A child faces difficulty when introduced to a new subject in class one which was not being learnt in preschool. Transition from pre-school to primary school is one of the major transitions in the learner's life. If care and attention are not given to this transition period, it can be stressful for teachers, parents and learners (Pianta, 1999). Pianta further says that many children have problems in adjusting to lower primary programme that have different philosophy, teaching approaches and structure than those programmes they participated in while in pre school. This also involves subjects taught in pre-school. As much as possible, the subjects taught in class one should be the ones taught in pre-school. It is so with subjects such as Number work, English, Social Studies and Science. Nevertheless, it's not the case with Kiswahili subject.

Recently, there has been consensus that the key to effective services for young learners is through bridging the gap between types of programmes and more, through ensuring continuity in the curriculum (Lombardi, 1994). According to K.I.E (2006), a draft proposal on in-servicing primary teacher education lecturers on smooth transition, the issue of continuity and scope in preschool and class one curriculum was addressed. Kiswahili language in class one should therefore be a continuation from pre-school to allow easy transition. This is important because the extent to which the types and quality of the transition services received or not received may determine the learner's life in subsequent education in the future (Gatumu and Origa, 2001). Children who develop an interest in learning before they enter primary schools are likely to do well in school (Borrowman, 1979).

### **2.3 Instructional Materials in Teaching and Learning Kiswahili in Class One**

There are many studies that have explored the relationship between teaching materials and other related inputs and children's learning and achievement. Instructional materials play a vital role in the teaching and learning process and have proven to have several inherent advantages. They provide children with necessary concrete experiences. Dale (1969) observes that when abstractions have inadequate foundations, difficulties arise, if learners have very little enactive and iconic experiences in acquiring a particular idea, then the idea will probably have no real meaning for them. Orpwood (2001) concurs with this idea by saying that discovery learning is very important if learning materials are available. He further says that resources not only facilitate but sometimes even make learning possible, particularly when abstract concepts are being learnt. Whitich and Schuller (1973) assert that effective learning begins with concrete experiences and proceeds towards more abstract experiences. Thus, a learner who has the advantage of reacting to well selected materials can learn more effectively than one who is provided with large information.

Much of the knowledge children absorb is best acquired by exploration in the real world where they may freely, actively, construct their version of reality, rather than be passively instructed about it (Parke and Less, 1988). Young children learn by observing what happens when they interact with materials and people. Development of their skills is achieved through hands on learning (Piaget 1969). Visuals and relevant pictures should be used because they are generally understood and remembered easily. Children understand things they see more easily than abstract ideas presented just in words. Direct experience, involving learning through doing, leads to a deeper understanding of the subject and the issues involved. Piaget (1969) recommends the use of multi-sensory materials. Children receive experience through all five senses that is touch, seeing, taste, smell and hearing and thus understand better.



According to Whitish and Schuller (1962) motivation is very important in teaching and learning process. Instructional resources help heighten the learner's motivation to learn. Children pay attention towards what they like and they ignore or misinterpret what they dislike. Resources are valuable because teachers can use them to motivate children, structure learning experiences for slow learners and tailor learning materials to suit the needs of each learner's preferred way of learning. It also helps increase the teaching — learning efficiency leading to better results. Moreover, instructional resources stimulate problem solving among children. According to Erickson Curl (1972) Audio - Visual media offer rich opportunities for learners to develop communication skills while actively engaging in meaningful problem solving activities, in groups or in class projects. This therefore means that a learner can learn better and like it because it will appeal.

Learners cannot learn without sustaining their attention. Betz (1990) contends that visuals attract attention, which is paramount in learning. He observes that many natural distracters compete for learner's attention, making it important to employ attention catching devices to focus throughout the lesson. Teachers are required to plan activities in such a way that there is sufficient variety to meet the needs and interests of each child and to sustain the child's attention throughout the lesson.

Mogeni (2005) observes that resources help recollect and add variety to a language class. The use of pictures and graphics make language rooms better and attractive while at the same time doubling as material for learning. This adds life to the class and the lesson in general, although this material must be relevant. Just like any other subject, a multi-media approach is very important. Visual aids provide a variety of stimuli to the learners and hence assist children in learning about unfamiliar people, places and events. James and Peter (1993) point out that opening up a collection of multi-media materials means that a teacher becomes a guide, training children to retrieve and effectively use all resources. The process of learning a language involves sensory and physical activity. The resources used by teachers and the techniques employed together with them direct and determine learners' activity in the classroom. The more the learners are actively involved in learning

process, the better their communicative competence (Johnson 1985). If the Kiswahili teachers actively involve children in the learning process by using instructional resources that have been effectively selected, they will develop communicative competence. Maengwe (1985) observed that the use of class readers enable children to read. This is an effective method in teaching of Kiswahili language in young children. Andafu (1996) in the study of the factors affecting teaching and learning of Kiswahili in secondary schools in Lamu District indicated that most teachers do not make any efforts to make simple instructional materials such as charts. There was also an acute shortage of audio-visual resources such as radio, cassette and film. Mong'are (1996), in a study of the factors that influence the performance of Kiswahili in primary schools in Nyamira District using the questionnaire and observations found that teachers lacked sufficient resources and methods of teaching Kiswahili.

## **2.4 Instructional Methods**

Killen (2004), states that teaching methods provide a framework for orderly organization and presentation of instructional activities. A proper understanding of these methods and some of the factors related to their selection is a pre-requisite for good teaching. Teachers' methodology is a sufficient actor in facilitating the implementation of the intended aims and expressed objectives. Learning methods however represent two main approaches in teaching: Learner centred and teacher centred approaches (Killen, 2004).Learner centred approach appeals most since, apart from motivating the learners and teaching them how to learn, it also has the added advantage of helping them to remember easily what they have learned. This method also caters for individualized learning. Bishop (1986) observes that individual learn in different ways, at different rates and for different purposes. Learner centred methods of teaching therefore help teachers identify individual abilities and weaknesses and deals with each appropriately.

In whatever level teaching is being done in order for it to be effective, it must correspond to the stage of the mental development of the learner. The teacher has to motivate the learner by employing a method that links content to the experience of the learners.

Kahoya (1992) carried out a study on the teaching of Kiswahili in Kenyan schools using the questionnaire and interview schedules. His findings indicated that objectives, subject matter and the learner are the main factors that influence the choice and use of a particular method in teaching. The study recommended that the choice and use of teaching methods must correspond to the objectives, subject content and the nature of the learner.

## **2.5 Teachers' Attitude towards Kiswahili Language**

Attitude can be defined as positive or negative reactions to a person, object or idea (Brehm, 1996). It can also be defined as evaluation of ideas, events, objects or people (Sdorow, 1993). It is a learned predisposition towards certain people, issues or circumstances (Anonymous, 2008). Attitude is an important aspect in learning of any language; it can either hinder or enhance the learning of this language. How one feels about a certain language can determine to some extent how well one can teach that particular language. Getau (1983) carried out a study on the present situation regarding the teaching and learning of Kiswahili in primary schools of Kikuyu Division. His study revealed that language policies in education, which reflect the attitudes of policy makers, have been responsible for the attitudes teachers and learners have towards Kiswahili. His study found out that with those policies, English had been given a lot of emphasis as a medium of instruction from primary school onwards and an official language of the country as opposed to Kiswahili, which is the national language. Thus, pupils and teachers through this, develop a negative attitude towards Kiswahili. This attitude that many people have towards Kiswahili dates back to colonial times whereby British colonizers imposed their language, English, to Kenyans and made them think it is superior to their own (Mbaabu, 2003). Until recently, English that is barely understood by 25% of the more than 35 million Kenyans, remains the official language and is used in most of the official realm (Mugambe, 2005).

Okituma (1988), using the questionnaire, interview schedule and observations, carried out a study on instruction in primary schools in Kakamega District. This study found out that there had been a practice in Kenyan primary schools to force children to use English in their schools. Though intended to improve the medium of instruction, this ended up down playing languages known to the child where Kiswahili is included. The study further found that the policy relegated Kiswahili to a secondary position because teachers and pupils failed to accord it any importance. Ndegwa (2005) found that teachers' attitudes influence their choice and use of teaching approaches. Other studies showed that teacher's attitudes affect the way the teachers handled

children. These attitudes are expressed in their tones as they manage learners and the value they hold and in their actions (Arasa, 1995 and Mohammed, 1994).

## **2.6 Quality of Kiswahili Teachers**

According to Blumefield (1997), class one child is more or less the same as a pre-school child. The care needed by a preschool child especially in the final year in preschool is the same care needed to be given to class one child and even more. This is because during this time of transition children's self-esteem tends to be lower; they rate themselves as less smart, less good and less hardworking than how they were in preschool (Blumefield 1981). This happens because of the new environment and more responsibilities in class one. Therefore, class one teachers should be qualified to handle children during this delicate period of their life. A teacher at this level should be aware and understand the needs and behaviour of children in order to care for them properly. Teachers in class one should develop a variety of activities and methods to enable children of different ages and back-grounds to acquire proper knowledge, skills, behaviour and attitudes (Androga, 1997) child needs to be mentally and physically stimulated and helped to mix and live with others, as well as learning how to control his or her emotions. This is not an easy task and requires a highly devoted and enthusiastic teacher (Androga, 1997). MOE (1999) emphasizes that a teacher should note that children need to have a smooth transition from pre-school to primary school. A child at this level should be provided with learning opportunities that will enhance concentration, classroom control and identification of subject areas, perform advanced activities( such as writing simple words including their names) perform addition and subtraction problems and know their environment well.

Children are bound to admire and model their teachers. Teachers should therefore present the best image to them, for example, the teacher should be easy to approach, kind, fair, tolerant and happy. The teacher should be a keen observer of children's characteristics and behaviour. S/he must keep brief and accurate records of

children's interests, abilities and emotional aspects and use them for noting improvements (MOEST 1999). This is important

in teaching of Kiswahili language. This is because a teacher needs to keep a record of improvement in many areas involved in learning Kiswahili. A teacher should tell if a child is improving in speech, listening skills, writing skills and vocabulary.

A study by White book (2003) reveals that teachers with the most advanced education were the most effective overall. Eshiwani (1983) in his study found that poorly trained teachers were a serious handicap to a successful teaching and learning situation. According to Munyeki (1997), professional qualifications attained through training helped teachers develop professional attitudes, skills and knowledge. Kivuva (1997) agrees that professional training influences attitudes and teachers are able to take tasks positively and effectively. Mong'are (1996) in his study of the factors that influence the performance of Kiswahili in Nyamira District found out that teachers in primary schools were trained in Kiswahili but attained low grades in the subject. This happens because; as they are admitted to primary teachers colleges the emphasis is normally on the overall mean grade in form four examinations rather than performance in individual subjects.

## **2.7 Mother Tongue Influence in Learning Kiswahili**

Amisi (1997) observes that the prevalence of mother tongue affects learning of another language. Most learners experience problems associated with their mother tongue in learning of second language. Studies by Lumbasio (1989), Njoroge (1996) and Were (1996) point out that first language is a persistent problem in our schools. According to Were (1996), the situation is worsened by lack of instructional materials for teaching Kiswahili including textbooks. Given that learners' experience basic problems in second language acquisition (Amisi, 1997; Stern, 1983), a lot needs to be done to overcome such problems.

Children need to be encouraged to read, listen to and speak more of Kiswahili language to lay a good foundation for better performance in primary and secondary levels of education. This enables them to become familiar with the pitfalls of mother tongue interference. Stern (1983) also points out that a native second language ought to be learnt with much environmental support than foreign language miles away from its community speakers. According to Harding and Riley (1986), second language learning ought to be easy if the degree of correspondence with the first language is close. Kiswahili falls under the Bantu language family with word structure similar to that of the many Bantu languages in Kenya up to about 65%. It is the dominant language by which majority of Kenyans communicate and therefore majority of learners in Kenya ought to learn it with ease (Chiragdin and Mnyampala, 1997 and Mbaabu, 1989).

## **2.8 Summary of Literature Review**

The above reviewed literature shows that many scholars have found out that there are challenges that face learners in learning Kiswahili language. These challenges include language policy in education system, instructional methods, instructional materials, quality of Kiswahili teachers, teachers' attitude towards Kiswahili and mother tongue influence in learning Kiswahili. These findings are mainly from much research which has been done in relation to poor performance in Kiswahili subject in class eight, and in secondary schools. For children to develop fluency in Kiswahili language and perform well in the language in all education levels, they must have a good foundation of the same in ECE and class one hence the focus of the present study on challenges facing class one children in learning Kiswahili in Ngong division in Kajiado North District.

## **2.9 Theoretical Framework**

This research was guided by Krashen's Affective Filter Theory. According to Krashen (1987), not everyone is successful in learning second languages. In his view, one way would be to claim that learners had not received comprehensible input in sufficient quantities. Another would be to claim that an inappropriate affect was to blame. Affect here was intended to include variables that facilitated learning. These variables include motivation, attitudes, self confidence, anxiety and mere boredom. Krashen thus proposed an affective filter. If the filter is up, input is prevented from passing through. This means there can be mental block that prevents acquiring or fully utilizing the comprehensible input they receive for learning a language. If input was prevented from passing through, there could be no acquisition. If on the other hand, the filter was down, or low and if the input was comprehensible, the input will reach the acquisition device and acquisition will take place, which means the learner has been able to absorb the appropriate parts of the input.

This theory will be relevant to this study because if there was lack of variables such as motivation, instructional resources which motivate learners, lack of qualified teachers, if instructional methods are poor which can demotivate and bore children and also lack of positive attitude may block class one learners' mind and disable the capability of learning of Kiswahili language.



## 2.10 Conceptual Framework

Orodho (2005) defines a conceptual framework as a model of representation where a researcher conceptualizes or represents relationships between variables in the study and shows the relationship diagrammatically or graphically. The following therefore is a model identifying the variables under this study and outlining their relationships.

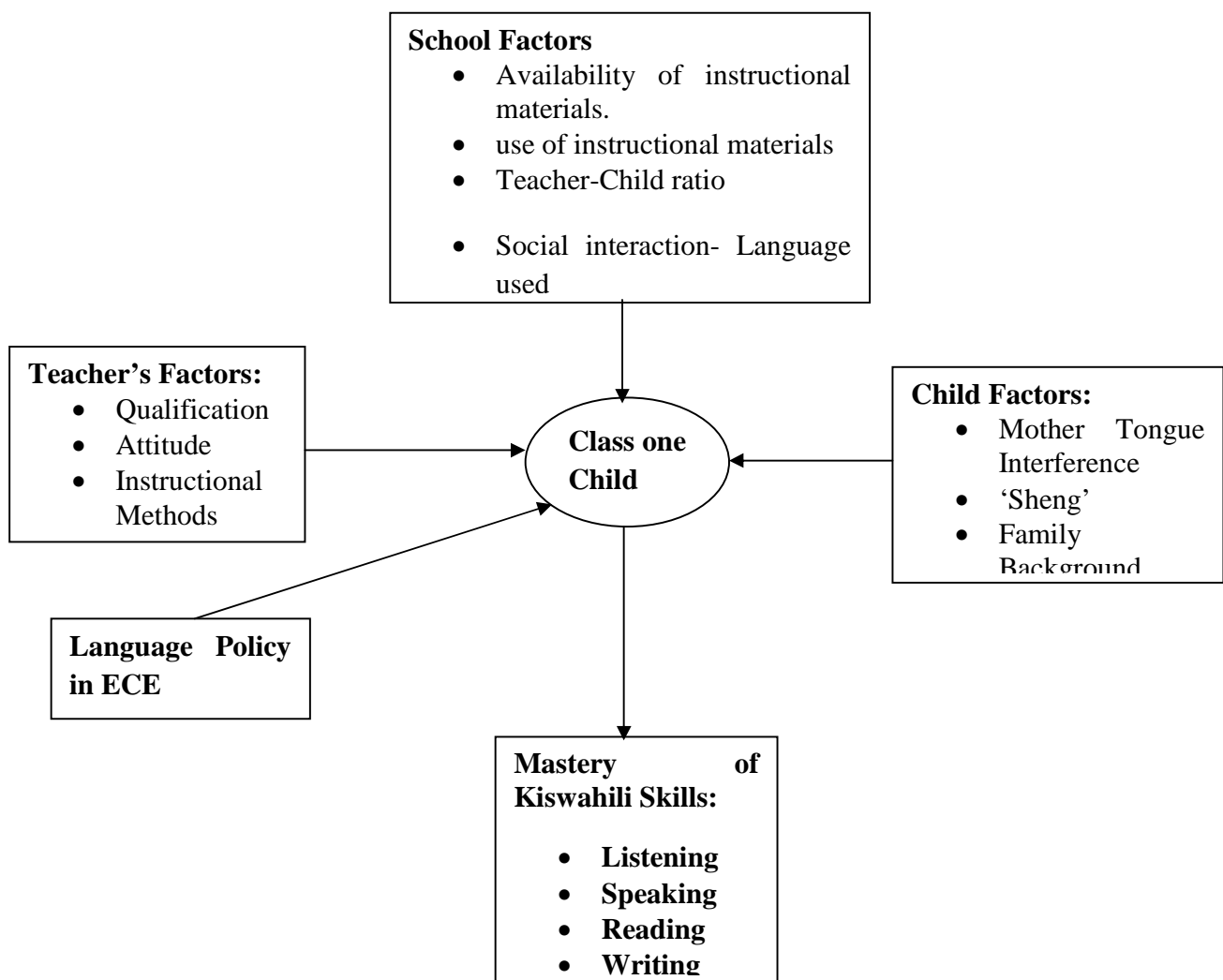


Figure 1. The Conceptual Framework on the challenges faced by class one children in learning Kiswahili in Ngong Division, Kajiado North District.

From the above model, various factors would be expected to influence the learning of Kiswahili by class one children.

There are teacher factors that include his/her academic and professional qualifications, his or her attitude towards Kiswahili and instructional methods used in teaching and learning Kiswahili. School factors include instructional materials available in school while there are learners' factors include mother tongue influence in the learning of Kiswahili. There is also language policy in early childhood education which is an important factor in language learning in schools. There are also intervening variables such as teacher-child ratio, children's background that involve parents' attitude towards Kiswahili language. Also during social interaction, children use 'sheng'. This is more so used in the urban and peri-urban areas.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents research methodology. It comprises research design, population, sampling and sample size, instruments of data collection, validity and reliability of the data collection instruments, procedure for data collection and data analysis.

#### **3.2 Research Design**

The research design for this study was descriptive survey research design. Orodho (2005) observes that a survey is a method of collecting information by interviewing or administering a questionnaire to a sample of individuals. Lokesh (1984) notes that descriptive research studies are designed to obtain information concerning the current situation and other phenomena and whatever possible to draw valid conclusion from facts discussed.

The researcher found descriptive survey appropriate in this study for it enabled the researcher explore the challenges faced by class one children in learning Kiswahili and also draw possible solutions on the challenges identified.

#### **3.3 Population of the Study**

Borg and Gall (1989) define population as all members of a real or hypothetical set of people, events or objects to which an investigator wishes to generalize the results of a study. This study was carried out in Ngong Division, Kajiado North District. There are fifty eight public primary schools in Ngong Division. The target population in this study was class one children, class one Kiswahili teachers and head teachers of the public primary schools in Ngong Division.

### **3.4 Sampling Procedures and Sample Size**

According to Kombo (2006), sampling is the act, process or technique of selecting a suitable part of a population for the purpose of determining parameters or characteristics of the whole population. For descriptive studies 30% of the population is enough (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2003). The researcher therefore randomly selected 30% of fifty eight public primary schools in Ngong Division. For the purpose of this study the researcher used simple random sampling technique. According to Frankel and Wallen (1993) simple random sampling ensures that each element within a population has equal and independent chance of being selected. To select the sample randomly, the researcher wrote the names of all the primary schools on similar pieces of paper. The papers were evenly folded, put in a container and shuffled. The researcher then picked the papers at random. A random sample of seventeen schools was obtained. All the principals of the sampled schools were purposefully included in the study. One class one Kiswahili teacher from each of the sampled schools was selected by use of simple random sampling technique in schools with more than one stream.

### **3.5 Research Instruments**

The researcher used a questionnaire, interview guide and an observation schedule.

#### **3.5.1 Questionnaire for Teachers**

The questionnaire was preferred in this study because all the teachers who participated in the study were literate and therefore were capable of answering questionnaire items adequately. The questionnaire was divided into three sections. Section A had demographic information of the teachers. Section B sought to identify challenges faced by class one children in learning Kiswahili. Section C sought to determine possible solutions to challenges identified in section B.

### **3.5.2 Interview Guide for Head Teachers**

The researcher used open-ended interview questions on challenges faced by class one children in learning Kiswahili. The researcher used probes to investigate each challenge identified. The researcher also asked head teachers to suggest solutions to challenges and give reasons for the solutions suggested.

### **3.5.3 Observation Schedule**

The observation schedule consisted of a checklist which had items that sought information of learners' involvement in class as they learnt some skills in Kiswahili such as listening and speaking, reading and writing skills). It also included teaching activities (such as availability and use of instructional materials, instructional methods and teacher's level of Kiswahili competence.

## **3.6 Validity**

Validity is the accuracy and meaningfulness of inferences based on research results (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2003). According to Borg and Gall (1989) validity is the degree to which an instrument measures well what it purports to measure. To test for content validity, the researcher conducted a pilot study of the questionnaire, interview guide and observation schedule which were carried out in eight schools in Ngong North Division that were not involved in the main research. The eight schools share the same characteristics with the sampled schools. The selection of the sample for piloting was based on assertion by Mulusa (1999) that about ten respondents which represent the target population in all the major respects be used. The researcher found out that most items in teachers' questionnaire were clear and yielded relevant data apart from two questions which were not clear and were found to cause confusion. One of them was paraphrased and made clearer and the other one discarded as it was found that what it sought had been captured in another question.

### **3.7 Reliability of the Instruments**

Macmillan and Schumacher (2001) define reliability as the consistency of measurements thus the extent to which measures is free from errors. Kothari (2004) and Kerlinger (1976) observed that for data to be reliable it must have the ability to consistently field the same results when repeated measurements are taken under the same conditions to test reliability of the instruments. During piloting, correction and modification of the instruments was done. Additional test items in questionnaire and observation schedule were included to capture information that would have been left out. This ensured that the instruments were comprehensive and detailed enough to collect the required information. This supported the view of Best and Khan (1989) who stressed that the longer a test is the more internal consistency it has.

### **3.8 Procedure for Data Collection**

The researcher obtained a research permit and research authorization from the Ministry of Education Science and Technology. The researcher then reported to the District Commissioner (DC) and the District Education Officer (DEO) both Kajiado North giving each a copy of the research permit and letter of authorization before embarking on the research. With the help of trained research assistants in data collection the researcher visited sampled schools, introduced herself with the letter to respondents, administered the questionnaire to class one teachers and classroom observations. The researcher was able to visit 15 schools out of 17 sampled schools. Information got through observation schedule was recorded as observed.

The researcher conducted interviews with head teachers on the same day their respective schools were visited. The questionnaires were then collected after four days.

### **3.9 Data Analysis**

The researcher collected instruments, validated, edited and then coded. The Statistical Package for the Social sciences (SPSS) program was used as a tool for processing and analyzing data. SPSS package was chosen as

the most applied statistical package in social sciences and because it offers the possibilities of wide range of statistical analyses. The data obtained from the instruments was subjected to various statistical analyses using frequencies and percentages. The data were then presented in tables.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

This Chapter presents and analyses data from respondents. It also interprets findings of the survey. Data obtained using the tools were verified, coded, tallied and thereafter quantitatively and qualitatively analyzed. Both components complemented each other. Twelve duly filled questionnaires were returned. The study was conducted with a view of finding out challenges faced by class one children in learning Kiswahili in Ngong Division, Kajiado North District. The data obtained from respondents was analyzed as presented below.

#### **4.2 Analysis of data from questionnaire for class one Kiswahili teachers.**

This questionnaire was largely relied upon. It was administered to class one teachers.

##### **4.2.1 Teachers' general information**

The questionnaire was administered to 17 Kiswahili teachers in 17 schools in Ngong Division, Kajiado North District. The schools were spread in the entire division. A total of 12 questionnaires out of 17 were collected back and analyzed.

Using the questionnaire the researcher solicited information on the background of class one Kiswahili teachers based on gender, age, academic qualifications, professional qualifications, teaching experience, and number of pupils in class.



**(A) Teacher – Child Ratio**

Table 4.1 presents the number of class one children each respondent was handling.

**Table 4.1: Teacher – Child Ratio**

| Primary School | Number of Class One Children |
|----------------|------------------------------|
| Enoomatasiani  | 52                           |
| Enkereyian     | 35                           |
| Embul bul      | 60                           |
| Oltepesi       | 55                           |
| Kibiko         | 51                           |
| Eremit         | 53                           |
| Olooseos       | 51                           |
| Esonorua       | 53                           |
| Kiserian       | 58                           |
| Nakeel         | 55                           |
| Ngong township | 62                           |
| Loodariak      | 60                           |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>645</b>                   |

On teacher – child ratio, the researcher noted that 11 (92%) had large classes, that is, more than 50 pupils per class whereas only 1 (8%) reported that she had less than 40 pupils in her class.

The number of children a teacher handles in a class determines the extent to which a teacher caters for individual differences in that class.

### **Gender of Respondents**

The researcher sought to establish the number of male and female teachers in sampled schools. Table 4.2 below presents the gender of the respondents.

**Table 4.2: Gender of Respondents**

| Gender | Frequency | Percent (%) |
|--------|-----------|-------------|
| Male   | 3         | 25          |
| Female | 9         | 75          |

As indicated in Table 4.2 above, 9 teachers (75%) were female while 3 teachers (25%) were male teachers. There are more female than male teachers handling class one children. This is consistent with the general observation where there are more female than male teachers in lower primary school in Kenya.

### **(B) Age of Respondents**

The researcher sought to establish the age of the respondents. The Table 4.3 below shows the age of respondents.

**Table 4.3: Age of Respondents**

| Age in years | Frequency | Percent (%) |
|--------------|-----------|-------------|
| Below 25     | 0         | 0           |
| 25- 30       | 1         | 8.3         |
| 31- 35       | 6         | 50          |
| 36-40        | 4         | 33.3        |
| Above 41     | 1         | 8.3         |

The researcher therefore noted that 10 (83%) out of 12 teachers were aged between 31 and 40 years old. Only 2(17%) were aged outside this age bracket. Age is an important factor to consider in teaching. There is an argument that older teachers are more unwilling to accept change than younger teachers who in most cases come up with new approaches to old problems. For example use of Information Communication Technology in teaching and learning.

**(C) Kiswahili Teaching Experience**

Table 4.4 presents the teaching experience of the respondents.

**Table 4.4: Kiswahili Teaching Experience**

| <b>Duration</b> | <b>Frequency</b> | <b>Percent (%)</b> |
|-----------------|------------------|--------------------|
| 5-9             | 2                | 16.7               |
| 10-15           | 8                | 66.6               |
| Above 15        | 2                | 16.7               |

The researcher noted that 8 (66.6%) teachers had taught continuously for more than 10 years while 2(16.7%) had taught for less than 10 years while 2(16.7%) teachers had taught for more than 15 years.

Experience of teachers is an important aspect in teaching and especially in the foundation classes. An experienced teacher is in a position to guide and to act as a facilitator in teaching and learning process in classroom. Such a teacher is in a position to utilize the best of the teaching strategies and adopt the right instructional media to enhance the learning process.

#### (D) Professional Qualification

Table 4.5 presents the professional qualification possessed by the respondents.

**Table 4.5: Professional Qualification**

| Qualification | Class One Teachers |             | Head Teachers |             |
|---------------|--------------------|-------------|---------------|-------------|
|               | Frequency          | Percent (%) | Frequency     | Percent (%) |
| B.ED          | 1                  | 8           | 2             | 20          |
| Diploma       | 2                  | 17          | 1             | 10          |
| P1            | 7                  | 58          | 7             | 70          |
| P2            | 2                  | 17          | 0             | 0           |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>12</b>          | <b>100</b>  | <b>10</b>     | <b>100</b>  |

On class one teachers' qualification the researcher found out that the respondent had been trained as expected for a primary school teacher. The researcher noted that 1 (8%) of the respondents had bachelor of education. Two of the respondent (17%) had a Diploma in Education. Most the respondents 7(58%) had P1 qualification and 2(17%) had P2 qualification. The teachers who participated in the study all (100%) had 'O' level qualifications and all the teachers, that is, 12 (100%) scored Grade D+ and above at KCSE. Of these, 10 (83%) passed Kiswahili at Teachers' Training College while the remaining 2 (17%) were none committal.

On the part of the qualification of the head teachers, two (20%) of the Head teachers had Bachelor of Education degrees. One Head teacher (10%) had a Diploma in Education. The rest of respondents seven (70%) had P1 qualification.

Quality of a teacher is one of the most important factors affecting learning. As such it is vital to the achievement of learning objectives. Learning effectiveness to a large extent depends on the training of the teacher who in this case is the facilitator of learning and transmitter of knowledge. Thus teacher’s training is crucial point indeed in effecting or implementing any curriculum. Although it is not always the case, Kiswahili teachers who are adequately trained on how to implement it, will always be receptive and flexible regarding implementation of the subject in classroom situation.

**(E) Perception of Class One Teachers on Teaching Kiswahili**

Table 4.6 presents the responses given by the respondents.

**Table 4.6: Perception of Class One Teachers on Teaching Kiswahili**

| <b>Are Teachers comfortable in teaching Kiswahili</b> |                    |                  |                    |
|---|--------------------|------------------|--------------------|
| <b>Yes</b>  |                    | <b>No</b>        |                    |
| <b>Frequency</b>                                      | <b>Percent (%)</b> | <b>Frequency</b> | <b>Percent (%)</b> |
| 3   | 25                 | 9                | 75                 |

The researcher noted that 3 out of the 12 teachers, (25%) were comfortable teaching Kiswahili. The reasons given by majority of the teachers were that it is the Head teacher who appoints Kiswahili teachers without set criteria. Other teachers lack interest in the teaching of Kiswahili. Lack of interest was interpreted by the research as an indicator of negative attitude towards Kiswahili.

On whether the respondents were comfortable in teaching Kiswahili in class one the researcher wanted to establish the circumstance that led the teacher to end up teaching Kiswahili and at the same time the researcher wanted to establish the teachers' attitude towards the teaching of Kiswahili.

#### 4.2.2. Challenges Faced by Class One Children in Learning Kiswahili

Table 4.7 presents challenges faced by children in learning Kiswahili.

**Table 4.7: Challenges Faced by Class One Children in Learning Kiswahili**

| <b>Category</b>  | <b>Frequency</b> | <b>Percentage</b> |
|--|------------------|-------------------|
| Lack of prior knowledge in Kiswahili   | 10               | 83                |
| Lack of exposure to a variety of learning resources                                | 12               | 100               |
| Code mixing and code switching – Maasai, Kikuyu, Kiswahili, English                | 9                | 75                |
| Use of sheng using words like finje, mbao, album, ticho                            | 8                | 67                |
| Mass media influence-radio, television, newspapers, election and religious posters | 8                | 67                |

Of the twelve responses received the researcher noted that 10 (83%) cited this to lack of Kiswahili lessons in preschool as a major challenge class one children faced in learning Kiswahili. Children in class one therefore lack Kiswahili basics to build upon.

All the respondents, that is, 12 (100%) noted that learners were not exposed to adequate and a variety of instructional materials and resources such as books and realia and had inadequate contact time with their teachers.

Nine (75%) respondents noted that a major challenge has to do with the language learners use in socialisation in the home environment. There was extensive code-mixing and code switching mainly in Maasai, Kikuyu, Kiswahili and English languages. It was noted that their parents and guardians used the same in their homes.

The sheng phenomenon has also taken root. Eight (67%) of the respondents noted that most class ones modelled use of words like “finje” for fifty shillings, “mbao” for twenty shillings and “ameingia” box for accepting or agreeing to a suggestion. This is typical to language used by matatu touts in the public transport sector, street families and adolescent siblings.

Exposure to uncontrolled mass media by class one children is a major challenge. Eight(67%) of respondents noted that many FM radio stations use celebrities or actors who, apart from entertaining, use a language that appeals to the masses. Newspapers, election advertising and other posters don't stick to known dialects of Kiswahili (Lahaja za Kiswahili). Our class one children model this.

#### **4.2.3 Possible Causes of the Challenges Identified**

Table 4.8 below shows the possible causes of the challenges faced by class one children in learning Kiswahili.

**Table 4.8: Possible causes of the challenges**

| Category  | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|-----------|------------|
| Lack of Kiswahili lessons in Preschool.   | 9         | 75%        |
| Lack of adequate instructional resources in ECDE and in class one.                                    | 10        | 83%        |
| The sheng and mother tongue in various domains – home, school, religions, institutions, social places | 8         | 67         |
| Mass media – Radio, television, newspapers, advertising posters, billboards                           | 8         | 67         |
| Other causes – songs  | 7         | 58         |

The respondents identified a variety of possible causes.

Nine respondents (75%) noted that most class one children did not learn Kiswahili in preschool.

Of the 12 respondents, 10 (83%) noted that instructional resources such as text books and Kiswahili story books in class one were inadequate. This means learners were not fully exposed or participated in the learning process.

Use of sheng in various language domains is taking root. Of the 12 teachers, eight (67%) attributed this challenge language used by public sector transport sector, elder siblings or other members of society language and modelling the same. This was rampant in the schools within the towns and its surroundings in the Division.

It was noted that mass media has negatively influenced learning of Kiswahili in Ngong Division of Kajiado North District. Out of the 12 respondents, 8 (67%) attributed these challenges in learning of Kiswahili to the mass media. Most FM radio stations don't stick to standard Kiswahili hence, in a bid to attract and retain listeners, extensively break the rules. This was also noted during the recent radio stations' road shows and this division was not an exception.

From the table it was noted that there are other causes that included both secular and religious music.



#### 4.2.4 Problematic Areas in Learning Kiswahili

Seven respondents, (58%) claimed writing skills was the most affected of the four areas of Kiswahili to have much problems in learning Kiswahili.

Table 4.9 shows problematic areas in learning Kiswahili.

**Table 4.9: Problematic Areas in Learning Kiswahili**

| <b>Category</b>               | <b>Frequency</b> | <b>Percentage</b> |
|-------------------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Listening and Speaking Skills | 2                | 17                |
| Reading Skills                | 3                | 25                |
| Writing Skills                | 7                | 58                |
| <b>Totals</b>                 | <b>12</b>        | <b>100</b>        |

Reasons advanced for poor writing skills were that in learning a language one had to fully develop the skills of listening, speaking then reading before s/he is ready to write.

#### 4.2.5. Problematic Areas in Teaching Kiswahili

Table 4.10 shows the problematic areas in teaching Kiswahili.

**Table 4.10: Problematic areas in teaching Kiswahili**

| <b>Category</b>               | <b>Frequency</b> | <b>Percentage</b> |
|-------------------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Listening and Speaking Skills | 7                | 58                |
| Reading Skills                | 1                | 8                 |
| Writing Skills                | 4                | 34                |
| <b>Totals</b>                 | <b>12</b>        | <b>100</b>        |

Respondents unanimously noted that listening and speaking skills posed the main problematic areas in teaching:

Out of the 12 respondents, 7 (58%) noted this.

The teachers noted that listening and speaking pose the main challenge for it entails a lot of oral work and repetition for learners used to language one and have to be taught a 30 minute lesson per day for 5 days in Kiswahili.

#### 4.2.6. Suggested Solutions to the Challenges Faced by Class One Children in Learning Kiswahili

Table 4 .11 below shows suggested solutions to challenges faced by class one children in learning Kiswahili.

**Table 4.11: Suggested Solutions to the Challenges Faced by Class One Children in Learning Kiswahili**

| Category  | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|-----------|------------|
| Introduction of Kiswahili as a subject in preschool                           | 12        | 100        |
| Provision of a variety of adequate instructional resources                    | 12        | 100        |
| Employment of adequate number of appropriately trained and qualified teachers | 10        | 83         |
| Everyone's concern in provision of adequate literature that is relevant       | 9         | 75         |
| Policy to enhance Kiswahili proficiency at all levels                         | 9         | 75         |
| Others – teaching in Kiswahili across the curriculum                          | 6         | 50         |

All the 12 respondents unanimously suggested that Kiswahili should be introduced in preschool.

All the 12 respondents noted that instructional resources in public institutions are inadequate. They recommended that the government and parents should provide adequate resources. Ten respondents (83%) noted the importance of having adequate trained and qualified professional teachers. In addition these teachers should be dedicated and adequate internal and external quality assurance and standards are maintained.

Seven (75%) of the respondents noted use of Sheng poses a challenge and it should be everyone's concern that Kiswahili has to succeed. We should stick to the norm, do a lot of corrections and always make deliberate

efforts to enhance Kiswahili. Children should be provided with a lot of relevant literature in Kiswahili and an appropriate environment as far as is possible.

Controlling mass media is a gigantic task. However nine (75%) suggested that there should be appropriate legislation that can control or put measures in place given that in the new constitution Kiswahili is also an official language. Appropriate measures should be put in place.

There were other suggestions that included banning all other languages in educational institutions and concentrating on Kiswahili in all subjects of the curriculum the Tanzanian way.

#### **4.3 Analysis of Data from Observation Schedule of Selected Kiswahili Activities for Class One.**

The observation guide formed the basis for analysis. The observations were done in a lesson of 30 minutes. Table 4.12 present the observations made. It should be noted that the frequency denotes the number of schools where there was mastery or lack of mastery in the skills stated in the schedule.

**Table 4.12: Learning activities from Observation Schedule**

| Skill                         |                               | Mastery   |             |           |             |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------|-------------|-----------|-------------|
|                               |                               | Yes       |             | No        |             |
|                               |                               | Frequency | Percent (%) | Frequency | Percent (%) |
| <b>Listening and Speaking</b> | Following verbal instructions | 8         | 53          | 7         | 47          |
|                               | Answering questions properly  | 7         | 47          | 8         | 53          |
|                               | use of mother tongue          | 10        | 67          | 5         | 33          |
|                               | use of 'sheng'                | 3         | 20          | 12        | 80          |
| <b>Reading</b>                | Sorting Matching Grouping     | 9         | 60          | 6         | 40          |
|                               | Reading short sentences.      | 5         | 33          | 10        | 67          |
| <b>Writing</b>                | Writing his/her name          | 4         | 27          | 11        | 73          |
|                               | Writing short sentences       | 2         | 13          | 13        | 87          |
|                               | use of Mother tongue          | 11        | 73          | 4         | 27          |

Listening and speaking skills was not properly mastered by children. About half 8(53%) of the children who participated in the study followed verbal instructions. Seven children (47 %) of the children answered verbal questions while 8(53%) could not answer such questions. However those that could not answer modelled what the earlier ones had done.

There was some mastery of the reading skills. Children participated in sorting, matching and grouping and read short sentences. It was noted that most class one children in 10 schools (67%) out of the 15 could not read properly what the teachers had written on the chalk board. A majority could not read similar language items on

pages ahead of what the teachers had taught. The researcher noted that some children imitated what others had read including their idiosyncrasies.

Writing skills were the most challenging. It was noted that children in 11 schools (73%) could not write their names properly. The researcher noted that teachers had written children’s names on each child’s exercise books.

However, this being Term Two, many of the children could not correctly copy their own names.

There were more problems in writing short sentences including copying from their daily diary. In 13 schools (87%) involved in this research children could not write short sentences.

Some children could write answers using mother tongue. This was noted in 11 schools (73%) visited.

Children were able to fill letter blanks. However there was an element of guess work using the choices given.

Table 4.13 presents teaching activities observed in class one.

**Table 4.13: Teaching Activities from Observation Schedule**

|     | Instructional materials |    |           |    | Languages used |    |           |    |               |    |
|-----|-------------------------|----|-----------|----|----------------|----|-----------|----|---------------|----|
|     | Available               |    | Use       |    | Kiswahili      |    | English   |    | Mother tongue |    |
|     | Frequency               | %  | Frequency | %  | Frequency      | %  | Frequency | %  | Frequency     | %  |
| Yes | 13                      | 87 | 5         | 33 | 9              | 60 | 4         | 27 | 2             | 13 |
| No  | 2                       | 13 | 10        | 67 | 6              | 40 | 11        | 83 | 13            | 87 |

On teaching activities the researcher noted that in 13 schools (87%) instructional materials were available. such materials were charts, chalk board, textbooks and story books. Only five (33%) class one teachers used instructional materials. However, of who used, they had instructional materials previously used by former standard one classes as they looked old, repaired and faded.

The researcher also noted that some course books used are above class one children's ability. For example, there is a book which required a child to fill a gap in a word 'hundi' which is hard for a class one child to fill any letter when one doesn't know the meaning of the word. Instructional methods used were above the level of class ones. Such methods were; Lecture question and answer and role play.

Most teachers were competent as per their level of training. Six (40%) Kiswahili teachers did not use Kiswahili throughout the lesson. Four (27%) of these six teachers used English at some point during the lesson while two (13%) used Mother tongue to clarify some concepts. This showed a certain level of incompetence by using English and Mother tongue when teaching Kiswahili.

#### **4.4. Analysis of Data from Interview Guide for Head Teachers**

One (10%) had served as a head teacher for less than five years. The rest nine (90%) had served for more than five years as head teachers.

The researcher noted that Kiswahili had been allocated five lessons in the lower primary timetable with duration of 30 minutes each. Most head teachers confessed that Kiswahili as a language has been denied attention in preschools as compared to English. The researcher noted that very few head teachers supported use of Kiswahili during morning and any other assembly or setting aside a Kiswahili speaking day within a week.

In most cases teachers who taught standard one moved with them up to standard 4 meaning they taught them for their entire lower primary. Sometimes teachers were picked on a willing basis, on experience basis or as per rotation. However most head teachers concurred that all primary school teachers were qualified to teach any primary subject in any primary class.

Primary schools have a syllabus developed by Kenya Institute of Education. These are uniform nationally. The researcher noted that the level of understanding was rather high meaning that lower primary teachers took some lessons in upper primary in the afternoons making it difficult for them to arrange afternoon remedial classes. This could be sorted out by the government employing more teachers and staffing them appropriately.



## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.1 Introduction

This section provides a summary of significant findings from the study. It gives a conclusion to the findings and recommendations on challenges faced by class one children of public schools in learning Kiswahili in Ngong Division, Kajiado North District.

#### 5.2 Summary of significant findings of the study

This research on challenges faced by class one children in learning Kiswahili in Ngong Division, Kajiado North District was to identify challenges faced by class one children in learning Kiswahili. This research also was to determine the causes of the challenges faced by class one children in learning Kiswahili. It also was to suggest solutions to the challenges faced by class one children in learning Kiswahili. The study used survey design with the population being randomly chosen.

The results of this study have been discussed in chapter four. Here is a summary of the findings as they relate to the objectives.

#### **On the objective to determine challenges faced by class one children in learning Kiswahili;**

- It was found that class one children faced many challenges. Not all of them were introduced to Kiswahili in preschool. This posed a problem in learning it in class one
- Instructional materials for teaching Kiswahili were inadequate. These include text books and other teaching resources.

- A major challenge is the languages used by the learner in out side school environment. The sheng phenomenon has its own toll on class one children. Code-switched and code-mixed Kiswahili, English, Kikuyu and Maasai languages was noted.
- The researcher noted that mass media especially the mushrooming FM radio stations was a major challenge. It also included television, newspapers and magazines and posters.
- It was found teachers' attitude has contributed to challenges in the learning of Kiswahili in class one. This could have been contributed by the fact that some of the teachers felt that they were not competent in the subject.

**On the objective of determining the causes of the challenges faced by class one children in learning Kiswahili;**

- Not all class one children were introduced to Kiswahili in preschool.
- Instructional materials were inadequate.
- Code-switched and code-mixed Kiswahili, English, Kikuyu and Maasai languages was also a cause.
- Mushrooming mass media in form of FM radio presenters and programs and the gutter press and posters.
- Teachers' incompetence was noted.
- There were no established language policies which can enhance learning of Kiswahili.

**On the objective of suggesting solutions to the challenges faced by class one children in learning Kiswahili;**

- It was found that Kiswahili should be introduced in preschool to lay foundation for children to learn it with ease in class one.

- Parents and government should provide adequate instructional and human resources.
- Teachers should be given a chance to choose subjects to teach depending on their competence and teachers' interest other than a subject being pushed to them by head teachers.
- There should be appropriate legislation that will protect the mass media from excessive use of cliches and sheng language at the expense of standard Kiswahili.

### **5.3 Conclusion**

In Kenya Kiswahili is a national language and is the official language. Academic performance is important for students' career progress. Also Kiswahili is important as means of communication. It is therefore the responsibility of all Kenyan citizens and the government to find causes and solutions to problems facing learning of Kiswahili in class one and subsequent classes.

### **5.4. Recommendations of the Study**

The following are recommendations of the study based on study findings:

- The government should formulate a policy on the appropriate use of Kiswahili in all spheres of life so as cultivate Kiswahili language proficiency for it to achieve the status of an official language as stipulated in the new constitution. Education is a vehicle through which this can be achieved. Therefore, the ministry of education, through KIE, should come up with a policy and legislation to enforce it to ensure Kiswahili is taught at all levels of education including preschool. This would help children to have a good Kiswahili foundation in class one and the subsequent classes.
- Government and parents should provide variety of instructional materials for teaching Kiswahili.

- In appointing class one Kiswahili teachers head teachers should be considering the qualification of a teacher and teacher's interest in Kiswahili language.
- KIE should properly evaluate text books before recommending them to ensure the content is in tandem with class one children's ability.
- Code-mixing, code-switching and use of sheng' should be avoided by both the learners and the teacher. This should be enforced by the administration and Kiswahili teachers.
- There should be legislation to control the influence of mass media on language especially established Kiswahili. This involves controlling newspapers, radio and television editors on use of proper Kiswahili.

### **5.5 Recommendations for Further Research**

- This research is on challenges faced by class one children of public schools in learning Kiswahili in Ngong Division, Kajiado North District. Additional research concerning other areas in Kenya is recommended.
- Other research could determine the challenges faced by class one in learning Kiswahili in private schools and academies; given present study focused in public primary schools
- There is need for a specific study to bring to light the challenges faced by class one children in categories such as urban schools and rural schools.
- It would be also appropriate to conduct a study on challenges faced by learners in learning Kiswahili in other classes.

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## APPENDIX A

### LETTER TO THE RESPONDENT

University of Nairobi  
Department of Educational  
Communication and Technology  
P.O Box 92 Kikuyu.  
26/1/2011

Dear respondent,

**REF: QUESTIONNAIRE ON THE CHALLENGES FACED BY CLASS ONE CHILDREN IN  
LEARNING KISWAHILI IN NGONG DIVISION OF KAJIADO NORTH DISTRICT**

I am a post graduate student pursuing a Masters degree in Early Childhood Education and carrying out a study on the above subject. Your school has been sampled for this study.

Kindly co-operate and assist in filling the questionnaire as correctly and honestly as possible. The information you will give will be treated with great confidentiality and will not be used for any other purpose other than this research.

Your response will be highly appreciated.

Please do not write your name in the questionnaire.

Thank you

Yours faithfully,

**Bernice Wangechi**

**APPENDIX B**

**QUESTIONNAIRE FOR CLASS ONE KISWAHILI TEACHERS**

**INSTRUCTIONS:**

This questionnaire has two parts. Please, indicate the correct option as correctly and honestly as possible by putting a tick (✓) on the options. For the questions that require your own option use the provided spaces.

Kindly respond to all items.

**SECTION A**

Name of school.....number of children.....

1. Indicate your gender

Male ( )                  Female ( )

2. Indicate your age

(a) Below 25 years ( )

(b) 25 - 30 years ( )

(c) 31-35 years ( )

(d) 36 - 40 years ( )

(e) Above 41 years ( )

3. State your highest academic qualification

(a) 'O' Level ( )

(b) 'A' Level ( )

(c) Degree ( )

(d) Others (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

4. State your highest professional qualification

|      |  |         |  |             |  |
|------|--|---------|--|-------------|--|
| B.ED |  | DIPLOMA |  | CERTIFICATE |  |
|------|--|---------|--|-------------|--|

5. What is your teaching experience? \_\_\_\_\_ years.

6. How long have you been teaching Kiswahili? \_\_\_\_\_ years.

7. What grade did you score in Kiswahili in:-

K.C.S.E            T.T.C     

'A' LEVEL            DEGREE     

8. (a) Do you feel comfortable teaching Kiswahili in Class one?

YES            NO     

(b) Give reasons for the response in (a) above

(i).....

.....

(ii).....

.....

(iii).....

.....

**SECTION B.**

1. According to you, what are the challenges faced by class one children in learning Kiswahili?

(a).....

.....

(b).....

.....

(c).....

.....

(d).....

.....

(e).....

.....

(f).....  
.....

2. For each of the identified challenge above, suggest the possible cause.

(a) .....  
.....

(b) .....  
.....

(c) .....  
.....

(d) .....  
.....

(e) .....  
.....

3. According to you, which area(s) do you find children having much problems in Learning Kiswahili?

(i) Listening and Speaking Skills( )

(ii) Reading Skills ( )

(iii) Writing skills ( )

Give reasons

.....  
.....

4. In your opinion, which area(s) do you encounter problems in teaching Kiswahili in class one?

(i) Listening and speaking Skills ( )

(ii) Reading Skills ( )

(iii) Writing Skills ( )

Give reasons

.....  
.....

5. In your opinion, please suggest solutions to the above mentioned challenges.

(a) .....  
.....

(b) .....  
.....

(c) .....

.....

(d)

.....

.....

(e)

.....

.....

(f)

.....

.....

**Thank you very much for your co-operation.**



**APPENDIX C**

**Observation schedule of selected Kiswahili activities for class one**

NAME OF SCHOOL.....

| Behaviour in Kiswahili Skills                  | Mastery of the skill |       | Comment  |
|--|----------------------|-------|--|
|  | Yes                  | No    |  |
| <b>(a) Listening &amp; Speaking Skills</b>     | .....                | ..... | .....  |
| (i) Following verbal instructions              | .....                | ..... | .....  |
| (ii) Answering questions properly              | .....                | ..... | .....  |
| (iii) use of mother tongue                     | .....                | ..... | .....  |
| (iv) use of 'sheng'                            | .....                | ..... | .....  |
| <b>(b) Reading Skills</b>                      | .....                | ..... | .....  |
| (i) Sorting matching grouping                  | .....                | ..... | .....  |
| (ii) Reading short sentences.                  | .....                | ..... | .....  |
| <b>(c) Writing Skills</b>                      | .....                | ..... | .....  |
| (i) Writing his/her name                       |                      |       |  |
| (ii) Writing short sentences                   |                      |       |  |
| (iii) use of Mother tongue                     |                      |       |  |
| <b>Teaching Activities</b>                     | <b>Observations</b>  |       | <b>Comments</b>                                    |
| (a) Instructional Materials                    | YES                  | NO    | .....<br>.....<br>.....<br>.....<br>.....<br>..... |
| (i) Availability                               |                      |       |  |
| (ii) Use                                       |                      |       |  |
| (b) Instructional methods                      |                      |       |  |
| (b) Teacher's Level of competence in Kiswahili |                      |       |  |
| (i) use of mother tongue                       |                      |       |  |
| (ii) use of English                            |                      |       |  |

**APPENDIX D**

**INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR HEADTEACHERS**

NAME OF SCHOOL.....

- (a) How long have been a school head teacher?
- (b) What is your professional qualification?
- (c) Is there learning of Kiswahili Language as a subject in pre school in your school?
- (d) What is the Language policy in your school?
- (e) What criteria do you use in allocating Kiswahili lessons to teachers?
- (f) What challenges do class one children face in learning Kiswahili Language?
- (g) Please suggest possible causes of these challenges
- (h) What are the likely solutions to the above challenges?

**APPENDIX E**

**AUTHORIZATION FOR RESEARCH**