

**THE EFFECTS OF FIRST LANGUAGE ON LEARNING OF ENGLISH
IN EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT CENTRES IN NDITHINI
DIVISION MACHAKOS COUNTY**

BY

JOEL NGUI

**A RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
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2012

DECLARATION

This research project is my original work and has not been presented for award of a degree in any other university.



19.11.2012

Joel Ngui

Date

This research project has been submitted for examination with my approval as the university supervisor.



20/11/2012

Dr. A. W. Kibui

Date

Lecturer

Department of Educational Communication and Technology.

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my only daughter Rosemary Ndulu, and sons, Mweu, Musembi and Mutei. May the good Lord light their ways forever.

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It is with great honour that I take this opportunity to humbly register my profound gratitude to my supervisor and mentor; Dr. A. W. Kibui who tirelessly guided me throughout the preparation of this document and whose corrections and positive criticism turned my abstract thoughts into coherent ideas. She went along way in shaping not only this document but also my academic life.

I also feel highly indebted to my esteemed education officer of Ndithini Division, head teachers, Early Childhood Development Centres teachers, parents and children in my school and in other schools that I visited during my research. I thank them all for the support and understanding which they accorded me in agreeing to walk with me in my academic journey. Truly I could not have made it without them.

Lastly I cannot forget to convey my special thanks to my dear mum, wife, children and the family at large for their cooperation and endurance. They provided hope and a pillar to lean on when financial conditions were harsh and turbulent.

To all I say, true friends are like diamonds.

ABSTRACT

This research sought to find out what causes poor mastery of English language and identify possible remedies which can assist ECD pupils to successfully learn English. The study employed the descriptive survey design with a stratified sampling process. The study used questionnaires, interviews and written tests as the main instruments. Completed questionnaires, interview reports and test results were coded and analyzed. The population under study included thirty five ECD centres, thirty five head teachers, seventy ECD teachers, one hundred and fifty parents and one thousand ECD pupils aged between five and six years old. The researcher established that the first language, parental levels of literacy and teacher training played major roles in second language acquisition. The government should reconsider its policy on the medium of instruction to allow the use of English language in all ECD centres.

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ABBREVIATIONS / ACRONYMS

E.C.D	-	Early Childhood Development
LAD	-	Language Acquisition Device
L1	-	Language one (mother tongue)
L2	-	Language two (English)
S-R	-	Stimulus and Response
CA	-	Contrastive Analysis
K.C.P.E	-	Kenya Certificate of Primary Education
K.C.S.E	-	Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education
K.C.E	-	Kenya Certificate of Education

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Language is very important for children, human beings communicate through spoken and written language unlike other animals. Language learning is therefore one of the most important developments that young children accomplish because as they grow, they use language for interpersonal and intrapersonal needs. If children did not have any language it would be difficult to understand their needs. Language helps children understand the complexity of the world around them. Through languages, children understand their environment and interact with their peers. They use language to express their feelings and to understand their role in society. Through language, adults teach children their roles in the society.

The first language is acquired as a basic survival need for the child in order to help him interact with the environment. The first language has a lot of “teachers” at home namely, parents, siblings and relatives. The child is encouraged to use the language and it is taught in a friendly environment with the child discovering rules through trial and error and internalizing them.

The second language which in this case is the English language is taught in schools and in a classroom setting. The second language faces a lot of challenges partly because it is not a basic tool for survival and the already learnt first language interferes with it a lot. The second language lacks the many “teachers” associated with the first language but instead the child’s use of the second language encounters a lot of corrections, and is also learnt artificially with a lot of memorization occasionally the

teacher uses the mother tongue or Kiswahili to explain challenging concepts. (Muthwii, 2004).

In the second language learning, the grammatical apparatus programmed in the mind as the first language interferes with the acquisition of the second language. It is believed that this interference is as a result of previous learning of first language. This interference is referred to as proactive inhibition. Errors occur when a speaker tries to use first language rules to the second language like when a Kikamba speaker says “Ningw’iw’a mbevo” loosely translated to mean (I hear cold). Instead of the correct English (I feel cold) it should be noted that the grammatical structures for English are subject, verb and object which might not be the case for most Kenyan first languages. Dholuo learners of English will articulate the English sound /she/ as /s/ e.g. instead of pronouncing /fish/ they will pronounce /fis/. This is because the English sound /sh/ is not in their first language and the rules of first language (Dholuo) keep on interfering with the new language (English).

For learning of English to occur learners must overcome the proactive inhibition and when the transfer of realization of the first language to English occurs the learners will only have learnt the similarity and acquisition will be easier. It is evident therefore that the most difficult areas of English are those that differ most with Kikamba as a first language.

English language is focal in the learning of all other subjects and therefore the learning of English can not be underestimated, if ECD learners have a poor orientation in English, it impacts negatively on their overall performance not only in ECD classes but also in upper classes, there is therefore an urgent need to deduce the effects of first language in the learning of English and come up with workable

remedies. This would go a long way in achieving new pedagogical innovations in the teaching of English language -which has proved to be quite difficult in not only Ndithini Division but also in many other rural areas in Kenya.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Development of a language is essential given the multifaceted roles played by it in the development of a whole child. Infact research has identified a strong correlation between language competence and cognitive development.

The learning of English in Early childhood and development centres in Ndithini Division Machakos County is an uphill task. Ndithini has Kikamba as the native language and the interference of it in the teaching of English has left the English teacher frustrated. This scenario is compounded by the ministry of education's policy that teachers in ECD centres should use the language of the catchment area but needless to say, that you can't teach English effectively using the native language.

English forms the backbone of communication medium in learning institutions but It is performed poorly compared to the other subjects in not only ECD classes in Ndithini Division but also in the summative appraisal done after eight years in the present system of education. A recent survey done by (Uwezo Kenya, 2011:3) an annual learning assessment report magazine revealed shockingly that one out of five pupils of standard four can not read standard two work. In the words of (Oyaya ,2011)English continues to perform poorly if the application letters employers receive are anything to go by.

It is on the basis of such a remarkable language back drop that this research is set to find out the effects of first language in the teaching of English in ECD centres in Ndithini Division of Machakos County.

1.3 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

This study sought to find out the effects of the first language in the learning of English language and demystify the traditional deep rooted problem of teaching English in rural areas. It also intended to provide practical solutions to early childhood education teachers in overcoming the barriers in learning and teaching of English.

1.4 OBJECTIVES.

The study sought to address the following objectives:

- i) Determine the effects of first language use in learning of the English language in Ndithini Division E.C.D Centers.
- ii) Establish the role played by parental levels of literacy in children's learning of the English language in ECD centers in Ndithini Division.
- iii) Evaluate the influence of teachers' professional training in teaching and learning of the English language in ECD centers in Ndithini Division.

1.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- i. What are the effects of first language use in the learning of the English language in ECD centers in Ndithini Division?
- ii. To what extent does the parental levels of literacy influence children's learning of the English language in ECD centers in Ndithini Division?

- iii. What is the relationship between the professional training of teachers and the teaching and learning of the English language in ECD Centers in Ndithini Division?

1.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY.

The findings of this study might be useful to various Early Childhood development centres and mostly the teachers of English who are keen on achieving quality education in line with the millennium development goals of 2015 and vision 2030. It should be remembered that much of the cognitive and linguistic development is attained at the tender age and if the effects of first language in the teaching of English as a language are identified and worked out positively then teaching English would be made easier in ECD Centers.

The policy makers in the ministry of Education might also benefit from the findings of this study because the findings will guide them in formulating new policies on the learning and teaching of English in ECD centers.

The K.I.E who are the curriculum designers and implementers might also benefit from this study and seek to mitigate the use of the first language and the teaching of English in ECD Centers.

1.7 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY.

The respondents who are teachers and parents might give false information about their levels of education. In addition, there might be a low rate of return of questionnaires due to lack of seriousness or tight schedule on the part of the respondents.

1.8 DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY.

The scope of the study was largely determined by the targeted population and for the sake of this study, the targeted population comprises of 35 ECD centres, 70 ECD teachers, 35 Head teachers, 150 parents and 1000 ECD pupils between the age of 5 and 6 years. It was also necessary to highlight that Ndithini Division has three Educational zones namely; Mananja, Ndithini and Muthesya which would all be included in the research.

1.9 ASSUMPTIONS OF THE STUDY

The researcher assumed that the sample respondents would be honest and a true representation of the targeted population and that the parents would provide the basic needs for their children to attend school and learn without absenteeism.

It was also assumed that the teachers would adhere to their code of regulations and attend to their duties diligently and be role models.

1.10 DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

The following are definitions of certain terms that were used for the purpose of this research.

1. **Effects** – According to this study, it is the negative or positive roles played by first language in learning English
2. **Learning** – According to this study, it is the acquiring of positive language skills.
3. **Influence** – According to this study, it is the extend to which first language affects learning of English.
4. **Literacy** – Ability to read and write
5. **First language** – The mother tongue or native language
6. **Centres** – Schools or areas where learning takes place
7. **Errors** – Areas where first language differs with English language in structure
8. **Pedagogical** – Methods or teaching approaches.

1.11 ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY.

This study comprises five chapters. Chapter one focuses on background the information presenting an overview of the study, statement of the problem, purpose and objectives of the study, significance of the study with limitations, delimitations and assumptions of the study.

Chapter two deals with the origins of language. The first language development and the teaching of a second language. It also brings out the role of parental levels of literacy and the importance of teachers training. The conceptual and theoretical frameworks features in towards the end of the same chapter.

Chapter three has the research design to be used. It also clearly indicates the target population, sample size and sampling procedure. It includes the data collection procedure and the instruments to use.

Chapter four is more elaborate because it has the findings in details. It begins with the questionnaire response rate by head teachers, ECD teachers and parents. It also highlights the languages used in teaching ECD centres, the challenges faced in teaching the English language and the possible remedies. This chapter explores ways of motivating teachers and pupils. A close look at the impact of both academic and professional qualifications of teachers. The teachers role in the classroom and the importance of teaching materials and sound evaluation methods. The influence of parents age and level of literacy which also determines their occupation.

Chapter five gives a summary of the findings, conclusions, suggestions and recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Language can be defined as a basic tool for communication which is essential and critical to human race, language is a social total for enhancing interpersonal relationships and creating cohesiveness. Communication uses speech sounds either orally or written. These speech sounds are related to meaning in an arbitrary manner, there is therefore no relationship between a sequence of sounds and what it refers to; for example one can't explain why a cup in Kiswahili is referred to as "Kikombe" and not "Kokimbe". Language is largely influenced by the speech community.

The question of whether language is the only means of communication remains privy to many with some arguing that if we view language only as a system of communication then even animals communicate and therefore language is not a preserve of human beings. People born deaf and dumb can learn sign language. This is evidence that speech sound is not the only key property of human language. As far as animals are concerned, they produce a particular response to a particular sound-stimulus but do not actually understand the meaning of the words, a dog will respond to commands but will never speak (Fromkin & Roadman, 1983).

Vygotsky (1986) sees language as a social tool for expression of ones needs and goes further to assert that language becomes internalized and becomes a tool for thought such that children can even use the language even when they're not speaking and he calls it inner speech that is speech for oneself as opposed to speech for others.

According to the universal declaration of human rights adopted and proclaimed by the general assembly in 1948 every child has a right to a free and compulsory basic education.

The provision of education therefore becomes one of the most fundamental undertakings of any government in the world. Education has been recognized as a key pillar in social-economic development. Education is a form of investment in human capital. It develops skills, raises aspirations and facilitates good planning.

In chapter 4 of the constitution of Kenya, the bill of rights section 44, dealing with language and culture states, that every person has the right to use a language and to participate in the cultural or linguistic activities with other members of that community in order to enjoy the persons culture and use the persons language to form, join and maintain culture and linguistic associations with other organs of the civil society.

The national committee on educational objectives and policies recommended that the language of the catchment area should be used as the medium for the first three years of primary education. English should be taught as a subject from nursery school and to become the medium of education from standard four onward. This policy was based on the understanding that the local language makes transition between home and school easier and that the use of mother tongue makes learning more meaningful. It also enhances active pupil participation in class and makes a close relationship between the teachers and the pupils through effective communication.

The sectional paper number one of 2005 on a policy framework for education training and research, the official blue print in educational sector commits the government to providing every Kenyan with basic quality education this has nevertheless been achieved.

Most of the African countries were colonized by the Europeans in varied magnitudes, a brief historical review shows that the colonizers set “bush schools” in order to teach literacy skills and their mother country language in order to facilitate communication between them and the locals these languages were later used as official languages of instruction in learning and communication.

The British English was taught and used in formal settings. The Ominde commission of 1964 in one of its recommendations said that it was the view of many Kenyans to see English being used as a medium of instruction right from standard one because of what the commission referred to as the advantages of the English medium to the whole education process.

K.I.E, (1985) the body mandated to design and implement curriculum affirmed that English is a service subject and consequently, fluency in all aspects of language will undoubtedly enable the learner to perform better in other subjects.

2.2 ORIGINS OF LANGUAGE

Rousseau, (1712) cited the inventory theory by asserting that language was invented by man and says that the earliest manifestations of languages were cries of nature that man shared with other animals. These were cries of pain, fear and pleasure but with time communication became inefficient and could not serve the needs of the growing man and therefore man invented language, another linguistic Philip Lieberman links

the development of language with the evolutionary development in speech production and perception. Descartes (17th century), however, disputed this and pointed out that language is not based on physiological abilities to produce speech and gave examples of parrots which would produce several sounds repeatedly but never form a language.

Modern theories which explain learning of languages are the behaviorist theory advocated by (Skinner, 1957) among others. Skinner while using his experiment with rats asserted that languages are learnt through imitation and reinforcement, children learn language through imitating the mother and other siblings and when she receives praises and acknowledgement then there is need to pleurably repeat the patterns.

According to (Chomsky, 1968) every normal child (born without speech disorders) has innate or inborn qualities dully programmed for language acquisition which he calls language acquisition device (LAD) or the universal grammar which is active between age 0-6 years. This however has recently been criticized by new discoveries and research. Chomsky argues that language is too complex to be learnt entirely from the performance data available to the child. There's some innate core of abstract knowledge about language, specialists now generally accept predisposition to language, though this can't account to all aspects of language development, which results from an interaction between innate abilities and environmental factors.

2.3 THE FIRST LANGUAGE

The learning of the first language is a gradual process and similarly children learn English gradually and in stages it should also be remembered that children want to learn language so that they can interact with the world around them. We should not

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however expect our learners to produce a language until they are ready to do so (Krashen, 1981).

From the time babies are born most mothers and adults talk to them as though they can understand, this is referred to as motherese. This exposes them to their first human language and in the process the baby learns the mother's voice and responds to it by stopping to cry or to smile. Talk continues and gradually the child learns language. Research has shown that children whose parents talk to them a lot learn to talk much faster than those whose parents have no time for them. This shows that exposure to a language is very important in language learning.

The quality of patience and tolerance in adults helps children to learn first language and can be used to assist in learning of second languages. It should also be noted that first language learning is informal and smooth. Those around the baby use the language naturally and purposively. The child's efforts to use language is appreciated, there are no demands at the early language development stage. The child spontaneously acquires correct use of language. English as a second language is learnt formally in a classroom situation which is quite artificial compared to first language learning. A child comes across the regular use of English for the first time at school. The children may feel burdened with the demand for grammatical and structural correctness. There are a few challenges which make the learning of second language difficult, to start with the inborn ability to learn a language (LAD) advocated by Chomsky has decreased at older age and the language learning stages for a second language are also different from those of a first language, that is English learning does not go through cooing and babbling which are the elementaries in first language.

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2.4 LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

Language development in young children is orderly and sequential globally. It begins with the pre-linguistic speech which contains no actual words. The first vocalization made by an infant at birth is a cry. Crying although not a language in itself is considered as the infants way of communication, it's the child's way of telling others when she/he is hungry, in pain or wet. There are different ways of crying depending on why the infant is crying and mothers are able to interpret the reasons for cry and the subsequent meeting of their needs.

After crying then follows cooing at the age of 3 months ,cooing consists of a repetition of vowel sounds like aaaa..... eee oooo infants normally cooo when they are happy, this is followed by babbling which begins at the sixth month and its characterized by a continuation of consonant and vowel sounds like 'mama mama' 'baba baba' at around the 10th or 12 month they shorten their babbles to one or two repetitions of the syllable for example 'ba-ba' . (Craig, 1982).

Bee, (1985) said that babies usually say their first real words at around 12 months of age, often the child's first word approximates adults sounds pattern as when 'boo' is used to refer to book sometimes the children use a totally different sound sequence than the one used by adults to refer to an object or an action for example a child may use 'dindi' consistently referring to the feeding bottle. Children also use sounds produced by objects to derive their names e.g. "buuu" to represent a car.

As young children learn words they often do not use them the same way as adults do. Sometimes they overextend the meaning of a word. This happens when for example they call a goat 'dog' because it has four legs. This is called overextension.

Researchers suggest that children produce two kinds of speech during their first speech period, meaningful speech using real words and non-meaningful speech using babbling. Children use meaningful speech sounds and words that will soon show up in their talking speech (Halliday, 1976).

Bee (1995) asserts that with the acquired ability to vary intonation children begin to express themselves using one word. This is called holophrase which occurs between 14-18 months, a common holophrase is 'that' meaning what's that? They can also point at an object and say that! Meaning she or, he requires the item. Another common holophrase in Kiswahili is ai! Meaning, No, I don't want or don't touch me, and so on depending on context. Between 18-24 months children begin to combine words to form sentences which are not grammatically correct "Jane book" mama milk,' these sentences are called telegraphic sentences because they're similar to the shortened sentences used when sending telegrams such sentences are missing some words and the adult who receives this telegram has to fill in the missing words to understand the message.

A child's vocabulary and knowledge of syntax structure continue to develop rapidly during the fourth year, the child learns some plurals and verbs, children however make overgeneralization mistakes 'I goed home' at this age the children have acquired all basic elements of adult language. Its worth noting that their language will continue to develop as they acquire more experiences at age 5-6 they sound much like adults when they speak their syntax also increases in complexity and they have approximately 2500 words (Apelt, 1985) however they have difficulty pronouncing some words. They become aware that a word can have multiple meaning, they are creative and if they don't have a word for a particular situation they supply their own.

2.5 TEACHING THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Development of literacy is a major school objective, one of the expectations of a parent or guardian who sends a child to school is that the child will learn to read and write.

Reading involves looking, understanding and interpreting shapes which have meaning and represent the language spoken, to do this effectively the child needs to recognize the difference in the shapes and more so understand language she/he intends to read. This complex combination of skills is often difficult for a child to cope with at first and may lead to disappointment; to avoid this the teacher needs to do preliminary work with children which is the pre-reading work. Pre-reading equips children with skills they will need to read fluently and aids the teachers in diagnosing any child's reading problems. These include language skills, visual skills, auditory skills and left to right eye orientation skills.

Ellis (1985:299) has defined language learning quite broadly as the internalization of rules and formulas which are then used to communicate in the language.

The teacher can choose language development activities like telling stories, most children derive joy and excitement in stories. The teachers can use mother tongue or the language the children understands and later retell the story using simple English aided by pictures and drawings or even real objects and make the story vivid. Vary your voice and use more gestures and keep the story short and to their level of understanding and pose for prediction questions.

Children can draw and paint pictures and encourage them to talk about their pictures; some children are however shy and may not speak, glove puppets and use of masks on their faces may help conceal their identity and give them courage to talk.

(Appett 1985) states that the more opportunities we have to hear, read and produce language, the more language we can produce and understand and that picture books can provide or stimulate a very large amount of such language.

Kibui (2006) confirms that the teaching and learning of English is made difficult because the classroom is the only environment where the learners can hear and attempt to speak it. She asserts that a more practical approach is needed to establish in which sub-skills learners are weak and the remedies needed to minimize them. This problem can also be traced in the ECD classes which are the foundations for setting a good precedent in the learning of English.

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know better what the real problems are and can tackle them in class. (Njiri and Owili, 2003).

English language learning is dependant on being able to hear and imitate and therefore the teacher should choose effective teaching methods which make use of the complete senses of the child like visual and auditory discriminations, the later referring to ability to distinguish similarities and differences in sounds, like /t/d/ and /p/v/. Some of the teaching methods the teacher can use are; the phonetic method, the word phonetic comes from Greek word "phone" meaning sound in this method the child is taught letter sounds first and how to combine to form words /d/o/g/=dog. The other method that the teacher can use is the whole word method where the child is taught the whole word as (dog) not in parts; the third method used in teaching English is the sentence method, use short sentences like 'Mary has a doll'.

2.6 PARENTAL LEVELS OF LITERACY

The learning of English is a multifaceted issues as hinted earlier, it is important to highlight the fact that parents with lower levels of literacy may attribute less importance to children's literacy development or they may feel a sense of helplessness in fostering that development or they may actually be less able to foster that development. Parents with higher literacy levels on the other hand may have experienced the satisfactions associated with literacy such as attainment of higher job levels and the use of reading and writing as an escape or release from everyday stress and as a result they may place high value on their children's learning they may also feel capable of providing literacy experiences for their children.

Briggs (1974) in a prior research has documented clearly the importance of having adults serve as literacy role models because parental literacy modeling has been associated with children who tend to show high interest in learning to read at an early age. Children may be socialized into the world of literacy through the presence of literary materials such as newspapers, children's books, magazines availability of pen and paper in the house experiences such as seeing mum and dad reading and commenting on the good story they are reading carries an impact beyond the actual teaching of reading and writing in a classroom .

To conclude, children of parents with higher educational levels have higher literacy drives because of the rich environment provided at home. It is also likely that literacy levels and social economic are highly connected. Its therefore paramount for the ECD teacher to guide the parents on the need to prepare rich environments with charts, crayons, pencils, rubbers and all other necessary materials and show involvement in scaffolding the young children to do activities related to teaching and writing.

2.7 TEACHERS' TRAINING

The concept of teacher training dates back to the medieval times when teaching was highly valued and therefore the training of teachers was accorded first priority. Needless to say is the impact a trained teacher has on his/ her subjects in comparison with the untrained teacher. In training, the teacher is exposed to the psychology of the learner and clear pictures depicting how education takes place and how the child develops mentally, physically, socially emotionally and cognitively.

Teaching is the conscious, deliberate and properly thought out pattern of fostering human mental growth through the acquisition of desired knowledge skills and

attitudes. In teaching individuals creatively and imaginatively use themselves and their knowledge to promote others. Teaching should be pedagogically sound and morally accepted.

Mambo (1986) and (Kabiru, 1993) suggested that training helps in performance since it helps teachers to understand what they teach. It's therefore important to equip trainee teachers with relevant skills and knowledge in order to perform effectively. The training should include highly organized bodies of knowledge which include pedagogical approaches that are suitable.

Teacher training entails four major components which a teacher trainee has to undergo for him/her to exhaustively cover all what is essential.

These components are:

- (i) Foundations of education-Which traces the evolution of education to what it is today. Through it, the student is able to view education as a social institution and appreciate the interrelatedness of society and education.
- (ii) The educational psychology-Which gives the student teacher a better understanding of the growth and development of the child. The student teacher is therefore able to identify and satisfy the learners' psycho-social developmental needs. This leads to effective learning.
- (iii) Curriculum studies – which enables the student teacher to interpret and implement the curriculum. The student teacher learns to select and to use the appropriate teaching approaches and methods in the learning and teaching process in order to optimize the development of the learner's abilities.

- (iv) Educational administration and management-which helps the student teacher to appreciate teaching as a profession. It equips the student teacher with theoretical and practical knowledge on the administration and management of educational institutions.

Although the four components have their distinct characteristics, they have been integrated to bring out the holistic approach to teacher training. (Thungu, 2008).

The teacher who is untrained therefore lacks a big chunk of knowledge pertaining the child and may have limitations when handling the lessons. The trained teachers have the advantage of being exposed to the different pedagogical approaches that he / she can use, because in the class we teach individuals not the classroom and every learner comes along with different talents or multiple intelligences.

Sifuna (1997) viewed college training programmes as avenues to equip the teacher with the necessary knowledge, skills and attitudes in handling individual problems among children in order to impart them with appropriate knowledge and skills.

The trained teacher has the advantage in knowing how to approach the different subject matters and knowing that the learner requires to learn from simple to complex and applies the same on the learning and teaching activities. He /she also has the knowledge of the variety in which one has to choose from the syllabus, the language and content to use.

The untrained teacher is incapacitated due to lack of these basic professional requirements and therefore ends up in applying unorthodox ways in his quest to fulfill the employer's needs. This trend is more rampant in ECD classes because for a long time ECD has been ignored by policy makers. This research is expected to find out

the real difference in the execution of duties between trained and untrained teachers and prescribe a remedy.

2.8 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

There are different theories which explain how children learn to speak; knowing how language is acquired has strong implications for providing environments that promote language developments. For purposes of this research I will use the behaviorist theory.

2.9 BEHAVIORIST THEORY

The behaviorist school of thought advocated by skinner and others has acknowledged one chief component of learning language which is instrumental conditioning or operant conditioning . The central notion in instrumental conditioning is that language like other behaviours is learnt through imitation and reinforcement in form of rewards. Earlier proponents were Watson and thordike.

Skinner (1957) proposed a formulation of behaviour which arose out of observations of a rat put in an experiment designed box, the rat after going round the box would step on a metallic bar at one end and food pellets would drop.

Language learning and acquisition begins with imitation, children imitate their mothers and if the imitation is rewarded pleasurably then the child continues to enjoy it. If the imitation is not rewarded then the possibility of dying away exists.

Behaviorists use two processes to explain language acquisition which are imitation and reinforcement, they suggest that children learn to speak by imitating what they hear adults speak and repeat it. When children imitate and adults give attention and praise, this increases their likely hood that they will imitate again and through

continuous observation and imitation the child's language expands and that way he/she develops language.

The advocates of behaviorist theory considered language learning as a process of habit formation. The behaviorist psychology explained behavior by monitoring the response that took place when specific stimuli were present. The behaviorist therefore explained and described language acquisition using a stimulus response model (S-R model).

Skinner (1957) tried to examine this regular or predictable behaviour that resulted from interplay between stimulus and responses their focus was to establish how habits were formed in an organism and as a result they identified two characteristics of habits they were observable and reflexive therefore automatic unless there changes in the environment caused extinction of stimuli.

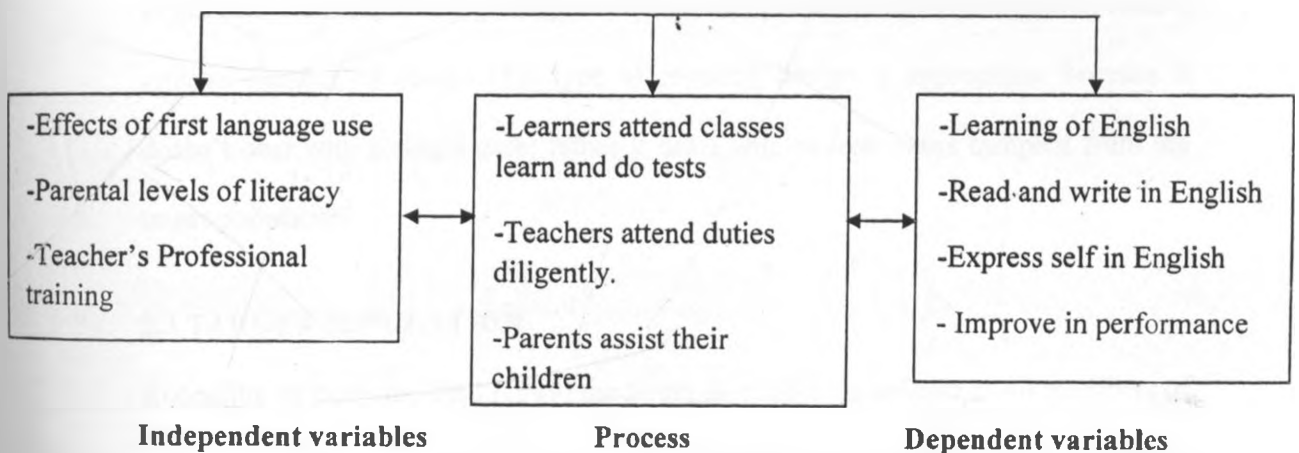
Skinner observed that language learning theories were general theories applied only to learning language and like other forms of behavior it was learnt through a process of habit formation. Children were assumed to learn their first language by imitating adult utterances (sounds and patterns) if their efforts of language use were either rewarded or corrected and the child repeats the sounds and patterns so that they become habits. The Childs' verbal behaviour is conditioned (shaped) until the habits coincide with the adults it models. It was believed that through this way the children mastered patterns (syntax) and habit of language.

2.10 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK.

Learning of English in ECD is influenced by several factors which interrelate positively and also negatively. The learning of English is much influenced by the learner's use of first language which inhibits the learning of English. The parental levels of literacy determines the home environment and the background of the English language. The teacher's professional levels of education that is the trained teacher will have better pedagogical approaches compared to the untrained teacher.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE STUDY

Figure 1: The figure below shows the independent variables, the process and dependent variables and how they interrelate with each other.



CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents a detailed description of research methodology. Methodology is the detailed procedure used to answer the research questions. Methodology includes a description of research design, sampling techniques instrumentation and data analysis techniques, it describes in details what will be done and how it will be done it comprises several subsections which are usually presented orderly.

3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

The study will use exploratory survey design; the survey design helps the researcher to get into the insight of a given phenomenon to collect the basic information from a relative number of cases. This type of research design is appropriate because it doesn't deal with a single case; rather it deals with several cases sampled from the target population.

3.3 TARGET POPULATION

According to Borg and Gall (1989) the target population is defined as all members of a real or hypothetical set of people, events, or objects to which an investigator wishes to generalize the results of the study.

This study therefore targets to investigate 35 early childhood centers, (30 public centers and 5 private centers). 70 Early childhood teachers, 35 Headteachers, 50 parents and approximately one thousand pupils.

3.4 SAMPLE SIZE AND SAMPLING PROCEDURE

Koul (1984) defines sampling as the process by which a relatively small number of individuals are selected and analyzed in order to find out something about the entire population. This sample will consist of 10 ECD centres (5 public centres and 5 private centres) 20 ECD teachers, 10 Headteachers, 200 ECD pupils and 20 parents.

NDITHINI ECD STATISTICAL DATA.

School type	Female teachers	Male teachers	No. of trained Teachers	No. of untrained teacher	year
Public	25	10	29	6	2011
Private	5	2	6	1	2011
Public	27	9	30	6	2012
Private	5	2	6	1	2012

Source – Education Office Ndithini Division

Comments – it is clear that most ECD teachers are females and most untrained teachers are in public schools employed by parents due to shortage of trained teachers.

This study will employ stratified sampling techniques. Stratified sampling technique is a technique that identifies subgroups in the population and their proportions and select from each sub-group to form a sample. It aims at proportionate representation with a view of accounting for differences in the subgroups (Gay, 1992). The researcher is convinced that the target population is not uniform because different schools use different approaches to teaching English and as a result there's variation in the levels of language competence and performance.

3.5 DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURE

The researcher upon developing the data collection instruments and a pilot test done to ascertain the validity and reliability of the instruments then an approval is sought from the supervisor and an introductory letter from the department of educational communication and technology in the University of Nairobi.

After the researcher has acquired the necessary authority documents to enable him collect data in the field, the researcher then moves to the sampled schools and introduces himself to the Headteacher, and the teachers highlighting the motives of carrying out the research and the confidentiality involved. The researcher would organize to meet parents on a parents day in any of the schools.

3.6 RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

This research will use questionnaires, interviews, and tests as the main tools for data collection. The selection of these tools has been guided by the nature of data to be collected, the time available as well as the objectives of the study.

3.7 VALIDITY

Validity of the instruments represents the degree to which a test measures accuracy and relevance made based on research results. Mugenda and Mugenda (1999) validity is therefore the best available approximation to the truth or falsity of a given inference; it's the measure of the degree to which data collected using particular instruments represent a specific domain, for validation the researcher would pilot test 5, ECD centres.

3.8 RELIABILITY

A measure is considered reliable if a person's score on the same test given twice is the same. Reliability is best estimated not measured, reliability is the ability of a research instrument to measure what it's meant to measure consistently and dependably.

Reliability of measurement concerns the degree to which a particular measuring procedure gives similar results over a number of repeated trials determined through test and retest methods.

3.9 DATA ANALYSIS

Data analysis is the statistical method used in sorting and analyzing data so that it can be interpreted. In data analysis the available raw data is grouped and coded depending on the themes under study.

In this research the researcher will sort the completed questionnaires to identify those items responded to, and to break the data into constituent parts. Responses from questionnaires will be tabulated and processed using statistical package for social sciences and micro soft office excel suite.

This study will use qualitative techniques of analyzing data. In qualitative techniques this research would use descriptions, definitions and use percentages, graphs to represent the information diagrammatically. The results of the data analysis will provide a basis for making inferences about the study.

3.10 ETHICAL ISSUES

The issue of Ethics is very important in research because despite the high value of knowledge gained through research, knowledge can't be persuaded at the expense of human dignity Yuko (2009).

In this research the major ethical issue is the privacy and confidentiality of the respondents because obtaining a valid sample will entail gaining access to specific personal information which could be an infringement on the privacy and confidentiality of respondents. For confidentiality purposes, the respondents will not disclose their identities or that of their school.

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study was to investigate the effects of first language on learning of the English language in ECD Centres in Ndithini Division, Machakos County. The objectives of the study were, to determine the influence of first language on the learning of the English language and to establish the role played by parental levels of literacy in learning of the English language in ECD Centres. The study also sought to evaluate the importance of teachers' professional training on learning of the English language in ECD Centres.

4.2 RESPONSE RATE

The researcher collected the data with the response rate of the targeted population as indicated in table 4.1.

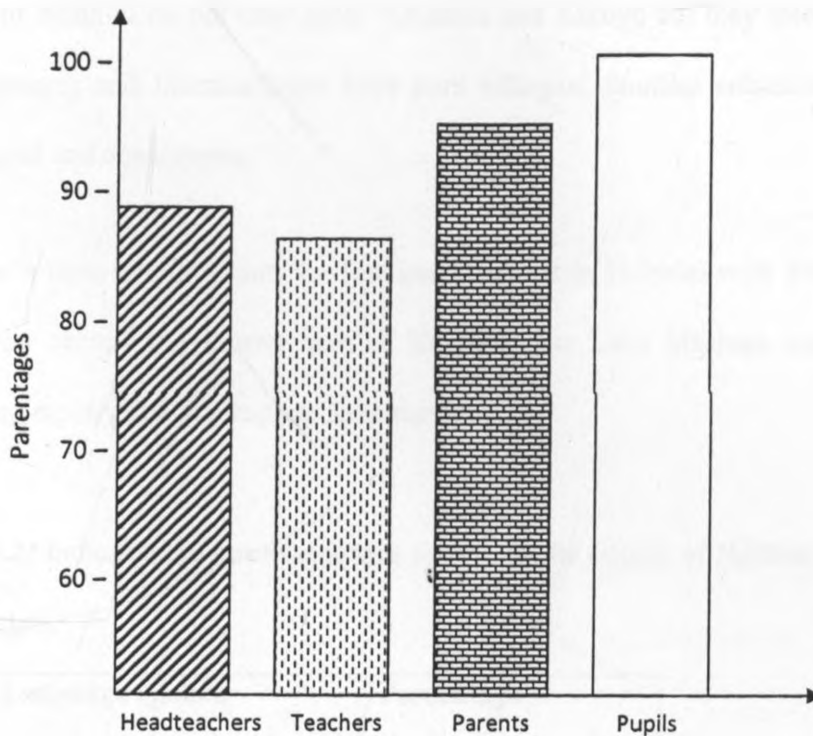
According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) a response rate of 50% is allowed for analysis.

Table 4.1: Study questionnaires and test response rate for ECD Centres in Ndithini division.

Respondents	Sampled population	Returns	Percentage
Head teachers	10	8	80%
Teachers	20	15	75%
Parents	20	18	90%
Pupils	200	200	100%

Source: Field data

Figure 4.1: A bar graph indicating the study questionnaire response rate for ECD Centres in Ndithini division; note that the response rate for pupils was 100% because they sat for the examinations and all the papers were collected and marked.



4.3 REPOSES BY HEADTEACHERS

This research sought to find out the languages spoken by the inhabitants of the area in which this research was conducted. The researcher wanted to find out the correlation between the language spoken by the people of Ndithini division and the languages used for teaching the ECD classes in the same area.

In this research the findings revealed that there are several languages used by the people of Ndithini division. The first language is Kikamba, with the highest number of speakers according to the head teacher's report. Most people inhabiting this division are the Akamba with 83% of the total population making Kikamba the most spoken language.

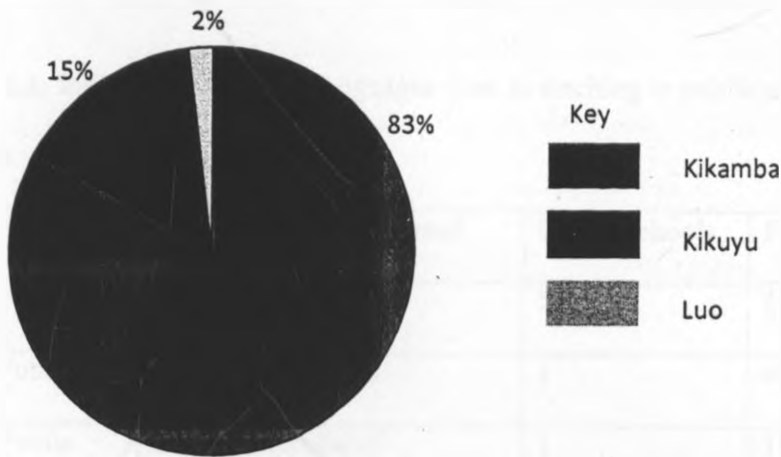
The Kikuyus who have bought land and migrated from the neighbouring Murang'a and Thika districts form 15% of the total population therefore making Kikuyu the second language widely spoken in Ndithini division. It is imperative to note that the people of Ndithini do not only speak Kikamba and Kikuyu but they interact beyond the languages and intermarriages have born bilingual families enhancing a strong nationhood and coexistence.

The Luo's form the third and the smallest language in Ndithini with 2% only. The Luos who occupy the Eastern part of Ndithini near Lake Masinga are fishermen spreading rapidly due to adequate food supply.

Table 4.2: Indicates the three languages spoken by the people of Ndithini division in percentages.

Language spoken	Percentage
Kikamba	83%
Kikuyu	15%
Luo	2%

Figure 4.2: A pie chart indicating the three languages spoken by the people of Ndithini division.



4.4 TEACHING LANGUAGES

This research is set to find the languages used in teaching ECD classes after identifying the languages spoken by the inhabitants of Ndithini. It was however noted that contrary to expectations that ECD classes would use the three languages spoken in Ndithini. This research found out that the private schools sampled differed in choice of teaching language with the sampled public schools.

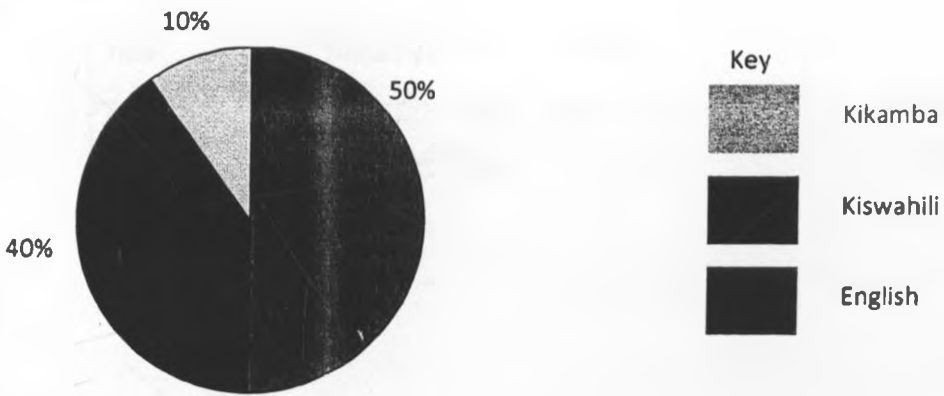
The private ECD Centres used English mainly as their medium of instruction with at least 50% of the ECD Centres sampled. The use of English in private ECD Centres partly explains why most of the private schools perform far much better than the public ECD Centres. The other language used in teaching ECD Centres is the Kikamba language which is the language of the catchment area. Teaching in Kikamba is mainly done in public ECD Centres constituting at least 40% of the sampled schools.

Kiswahili is the third language used with at least 10% of the sampled schools, its important to note that public schools which use Kiswahili are those where the ECD teachers are non Kikamba speakers.

Table 4.3: Indicates the type of languages used in teaching in public and private ECD Centres.

School type	Language used	No. of schools	Percentage
Private	English	5	50%
Public	Kikamba	4	40%
Public	Kiswahili	1	10%

Figure 4.3: A pie chart showing languages used in teaching the private and public schools.



4.5 CHALLENGES IN TEACHING THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE IN ECD CENTRES

This research found out that there were several challenges facing the teaching of English language in ECD Centres. The first challenge is how to overcome the influence of the children's first language. In most of the public ECD Centres children came to school with fully developed language skills. They used the influence of their mother tongue to conceptualize and shifting the same language skills and experiences to the English language is not simple; this is partly due to the differences in sentence structures which affects even the pronunciations for example:-

In English

Jane	kicked	the	ball
N	v	a	o

In Kikamba

Jane	Nunatheelile	Muvila
N	V	O

N – Noun

V – Verb

a – Article

O – Object

Sentence structures in English language are different from sentence structures in Kikamba and any attempt to compare and contrast the two language structures brings out this difference clearly.

Lack of proper role models by those near the child, especially the teacher makes the situation complex. Most teachers' diction, pronunciation is also influenced by their first languages and teachers end up teaching the wrong pronunciations.

Lack of adequate learning and teaching materials in the classrooms is a problem which has remained despite the introduction of Free Primary Education in 2003.

4.6 GOVERNMENT POLICY ON THE LANGUAGE OF TEACHING

The National Committee on educational objectives and policies recommend that the language of the catchment area should be used as the medium of instruction for the first three years of basic education; this was founded on the basis that this would make transition from home to school accommodative and make learning more meaningful.

This research however found out that this good intention has brought negative impact especially when we consider that due to this governments policy most ECD Centres in Ndithini division use Kikamba in teaching ECD children something which puts the children at a disadvantage given that the private schools use English right from the start and before the child is in standard three he/she can communicate effectively in English.

This research found out that due to this government's policy on language use there is a significant difference between the learners in public and private ECD Centres. Learners in private centres who use English have good mastery and competence both in written and spoken English evident in the standard one examination administered.

Table 4.4: Shows the results of an English test administered to private and public schools in percentages.

Public schools	Percentage pass	Private schools	Percentage
Reading	60%	Reading	80%
Matching	80%	Matching	100%
Writing	40%	Writing	60%
Drawing	60%	Drawing	80%

Source: Field Data

4.7 MOTIVATING TEACHERS AND PUPILS

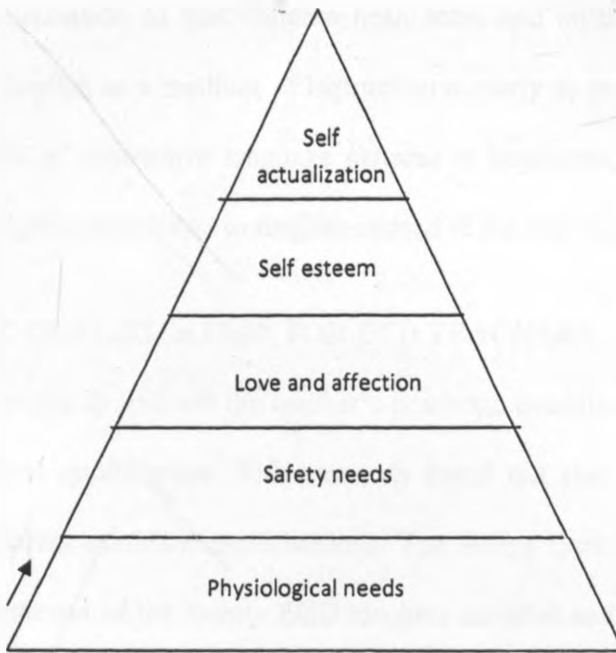
This research found out that most of the head teachers lacked the proper methods of motivating teachers and pupils and that most of them thought that the teachers can only be motivated by high salaries paid by the government. Teachers and pupils require both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation.

Motivation is important in realizing good output and therefore the headteachers should be equipped with the necessary managerial skills to ensure that they cut across the two categories of people quite well.

Issuing of certificates of recommendation for promotion is a good way of motivating the teachers, organizing for motivational trips and also giving rewards in recognition of good performance either by the teachers or pupils.

Eradication of any form of biasness in the work place like acts of corruption, ethnicity, gender disparities, disabilities based discriminations, would ensure a motivated team.

Figure 4.4: Maslows hierarchy of needs.



All human beings work to satisfy their needs which start from the basic needs to the apex which is self actualization.

4.8 ADDRESSING CHALLENGES

The researcher sought to find out how the head teachers addressed the challenges highlighted in the previous question and it was found that the head teacher being the custodian of the school has the sole discretion of ensuring that funds provided for procuring instructional materials and books are well utilized to ensure that there is adequate teaching and learning materials.

The head teacher can also mobilize the parents and other key stakeholders to support learning by providing the basic necessities like food, uniforms and reference books. Introduction of strict language policies in the school is also a possible remedy where the ECD learners are required to speak in English only and subsequent penalties for the offenders clearly spelt.

Teachers should be good role models and try as much as possible to teach the right diction and pronunciation so that children hear, learn and imitate the right things. Introduction of English as a medium of instruction as early as possible would easily erase the problem of contrastive language patterns or structures, whereby the ECD learners are out rightly introduced to English instead of the first language.

4.9 ACADEMIC QUALIFICATION FOR ECD TEACHERS

The researcher sought to find out the teacher’s academic qualifications in relation to his/her professional qualification. This research found out that most of the ECD teachers had different academic qualifications. The Kenya Certificate of Education had one respondent out of the twenty ECD teachers sampled and which represented 5% of the twenty sampled teachers.

The Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (K.C.S.E) had the highest number of teacher respondents and which had twelve teachers out of the twenty sampled teachers which was a 60% of the total respondents. The Kenya Certificate of Education which is the predecessor of (K.C.S.E) had a total of seven teachers which was 35% of the total number of sampled teachers.

Table 4.5: Teachers academic qualifications

Teachers qualifications	No. of respondents	Percentage
KCPE	1	5%
KCSE	12	60%
KCE	7	35%
Total	20	100%

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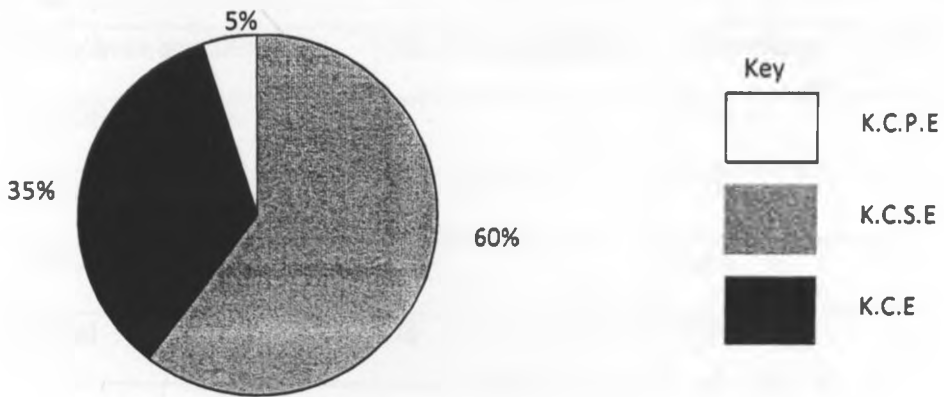
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Figure 4.5: A pie chart depicting the ECD teachers' academic qualifications



4.10 PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS FOR ECD TEACHERS

Training is one of the key components in the teachers professional life. This research sought to find out the relationship between the teachers professional training and the teaching of the English language in ECD Centres from the data collected and analyzed there was evidence that ECD teachers training was spread from Certificates to Diplomas and most commonly was the primary teacher education certificate popularly known as P1.

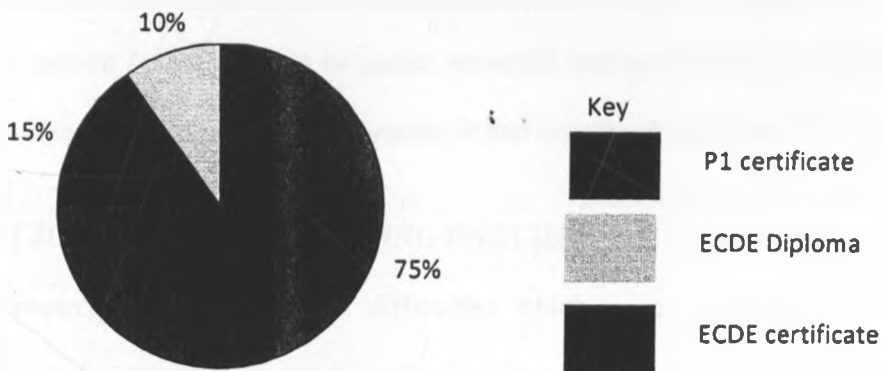
The ECD certificate had a total of three teachers out of the sampled twenty teachers which represented 15% of the total respondents. The primary teacher education (P1) certificate represented the biggest share with fifteen respondents out of the sampled twenty teachers, this was 75% of the total respondents.

The Early Childhood Diploma represented a smaller number of teachers with only two teachers out of the twenty sampled teachers which was 10% of the total number respondents.

Table 4.6: The table represents the teacher professional qualifications and their percentages.

Teachers qualifications	No. of respondents	Percentage
ECDE certificate	3	15%
P1 certificate	15	75%
ECDE diploma	2	10%
Total	20	100%

Figure 4.6: A pie hart showing the ECD teachers professional qualifications



4.11: PROMOTING ENGLISH PERFORMANCE

The researcher sought to find out from the ECD teachers the measures they employ in ensuring that they promote good English performance in the classroom and it came out clearly that the teacher is like the central nervous system in the classroom, the teachers preparedness is paramount because it will determine the content, methods and even the learning and teaching materials to be used.

The choice of methods to be used must commensurate with the age and level of learners, for ECD classes the use of short stories, songs, poems and dramatized plays help to capture the children's sensation, heighten their curiosity and create interest.

Use of rewards like small tokens, books and pencils could help in motivating the child and also create a spirit of competition in the class. It should also be remembered that even small words of appreciation like 'thank you' 'well done' after a child has performed a task go along way in encouraging the learners.

Adequate coverage of the syllabus is also cited as one of the key components in ensuring that the English language is well performed. The encouragement of learners to use spoken language can't be under estimated because the more the learners get used to the language the more they master it and become more fluent.

4.12: CHALLENGES IN TEACHING ENGLISH

The research found out several difficulties which were highlighted as the main challenges experienced in teaching English, the most critical challenge is lack of enough learning and teaching aids. After the introduction of Free Primary Education in (2003), the Government of Kenya undertook the responsibility of providing instructional materials and text books in public schools. The schools face several challenges including irregular disbursements of funds high rates of tear and wear of the books and vandalism.

The other challenge is posed by the influence of the first language. The already programmed sentence structures in mother tongue differ a lot with the English language patterns or language structures, there is therefore negative interference and more often children code switch when attempting to speak English.

Children with special needs is another challenge experienced in teaching English, some children have speech disorder which deter them from making normal speeches and it therefore becomes a challenge to the teacher who is attempting to teach English to such a child.

Teacher characteristics is another challenge given that some teachers have not been professionally trained and therefore end up using unorthodox teaching methods, the teacher is also supposed to be a good role model but the influence of their first language, cited earlier becomes a big challenge.

4.13 METHODS OF EVALUATION

This research sought to find out the different methods of evaluation used by ECD teachers, evaluation is a key component in learning institutions as it is the only way the teacher and other stakeholders can identify the strengths and weakness of the education system and find possible remedies.

From the findings of this research the written test is the most preferred method of evaluating the ECD learners with twelve respondents out of the twenty sampled teachers which is 60% of the total respondents. Most of teachers are compelled by the parents demands to major in teaching, reading and arithmetic skills and this necessities the need for use of written tests as measures of evaluation.

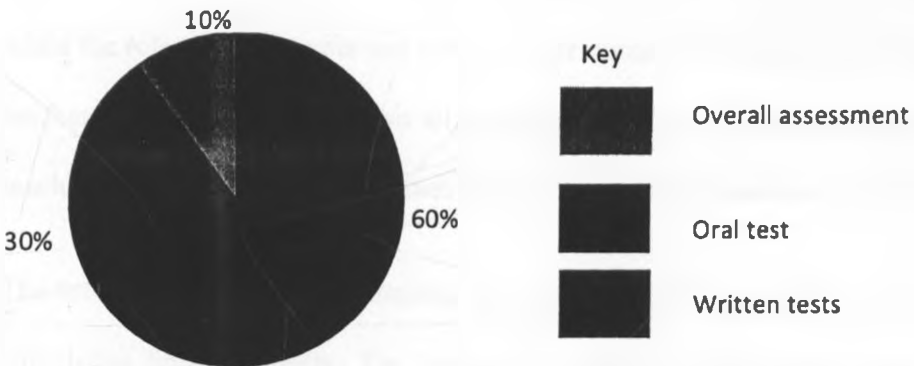
The oral method of testing is also used and has a total of six teachers out of the twenty teachers which is 30% of the total respondents. Oral method of evaluation deals with testing through interviewing the child through question and answer sessions and quantifying the learners responses to ascertain his / her level and recommend whether the child is fit for promotion or not.

There is also the overall assessment which blends both the written and oral evaluation methods. This method is however not very common with teachers comparing it with the first two. The overall assessment method was used by two teachers out of the twenty teachers sampled which represented a total of 10%.

Table 4.7: Illustrates the different methods of evaluation and their percentages.

Evaluation methods	No. of respondents	Percentage
Written tests	12	60%
Oral tests	6	30%
Overall assessment	2	10%
Total	20	100%

Figure 4.7: A pie chart showing the different methods used in evaluating ECD children.



4.14: INTERVENING MEASURES

The research sought to find out the intervening measures which can be applied to assist slow readers in English learning. These measures are cited as possible remedies in working with slow readers. The provision of extra time for slow readers in order to

complete their tasks and scaffolding wherever necessary, encourage the child to read by providing adequate reading materials.

Give simple words, texts or even books to encourage them to read, use masks and puppets for the shy slow readers so that you instill confidence in them, it was also noted that the use of the stick in the classroom should be avoided and instead exercise a lot of love and caution. This is important because the ECD classes are the foundations of the future educational parameters.

Do not ignore the slow readers, neither should you discourage them but instead provide a conducive atmosphere for them to work at their own pace where necessary provide group activities so that they can learn from each other.

4.15 TEACHER'S ROLE IN THE CLASSROOM

The researcher sought to find out the roles played by the teacher in the classroom and while the roles of the teacher can not be underestimated it is important to note that the teacher should strive to make an all round personality. The teacher should therefore teach important life skills and virtues besides the co-curriculum and academic work.

The teacher is a parent and nurturing the child should be his priority while imparting knowledge follows closely. The teacher is a source of knowledge which the ECD learner requires in order to understand and explore the world around him.

The teacher should also be a good role model to the ECD learner. The theories of learning advocated by Watson Thorndike and Skinner all attest that learning takes place through imitation and reinforcement therefore the teacher should provide the best personality possible because the child will copy what the teacher is doing. Teachers should also give encouragement through incentives in the classroom.

Another teacher's role is assessment after the teacher has taught there is need to evaluate the ECD learner to find out the effects of his / her teaching.

The teacher should also provide learning and teaching materials and a conducive learning environment.

4.16 ROLES PLAYED BY TEACHING MATERIALS

The researcher sought to find out the roles played by teaching materials. This would also indicate the significance attached to the teaching materials by the ECD teachers. Teaching materials are very important because they expose the ECD learners to the real objects, situations and therefore give the chance to the pupils to see and even touch the object where possible. This leaves a big imprint in the learners memory and seldom do they forget whatever they saw or even touched.

Teaching aids are used in illustrating diagrams which can not be easily understood, they also help in sustaining the children's curiosity and interest. Teaching aids usually aid the learners memory to remind them what they learnt previously.

4.17 TEACHING METHODS

The researcher sought to find out the different teaching methods used by the ECD teachers and while all the ECD teachers were presumed to be professionally trained there emerged several differences in the methods used by the teachers.

The phonic method which is the most popular method of teaching the English language according to this research had thirteen teachers out of the sampled twenty ECD teachers this represented 65% of the total respondents. The phonic method involves teaching by use of letter sounds like /d/ /o/ /g/ and putting the letters together as one sound /dog/.

Another teacher's role is assessment after the teacher has taught there is need to evaluate the ECD learner to find out the effects of his / her teaching.

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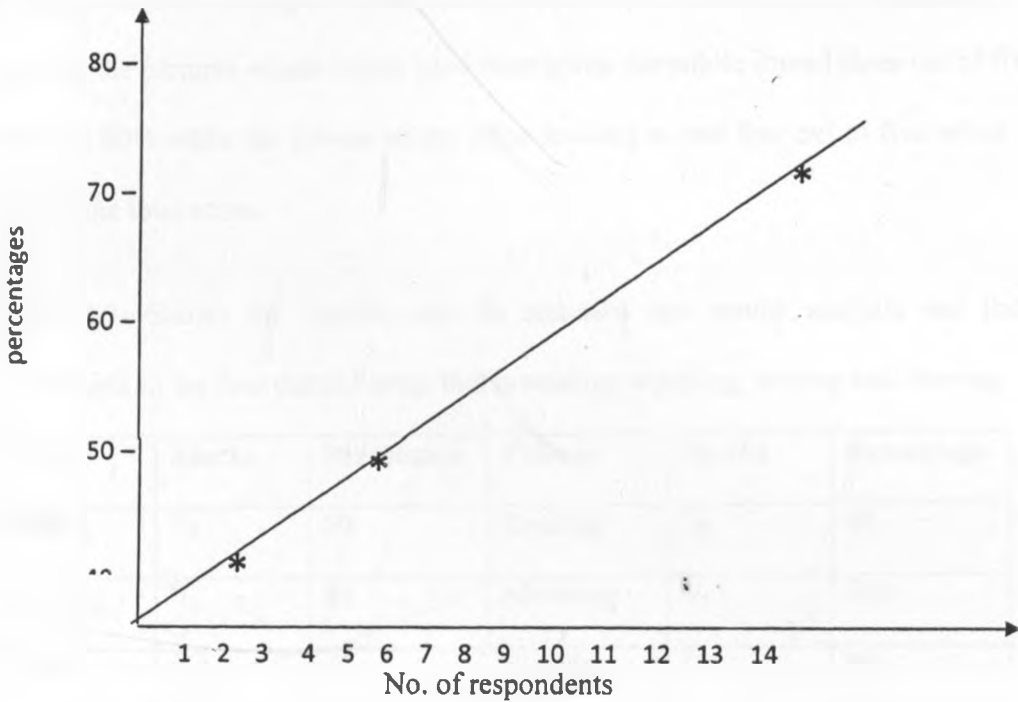
The whole word method is different from the phonic method in that it uses the whole word approach with segmenting the word into letter sounds. This research found out that the whole word method of teaching had five respondents out of the sampled twenty teachers which is 25% of the total number of respondents.

The whole sentence approach where the teacher makes a sentences with the integrated new word is also preferred by quite a number of teachers. The sentence approach had two respondents out of the twenty sampled ECD teachers, which is 10% of the total respondents.

Table 4.8: Indicates different teaching methods used in teaching English language in ECD centres

Teaching method	Total respondents	Percentage
Phonic	13	65%
Whole word	5	25%
Sentence	2	10%
Total	20	100%

Figure 4.8: A line graph showing the different methods of teaching the English languages in ECDE



4.18: STANDARD ONE ENGLISH TEST RESULTS

This research through the analysis of a test given to standard one class in ten schools, five of them being private and five of them public schools which tested different skills like reading, matching, writing and drawing came up with findings which drew out a distinct difference between the private and public schools.

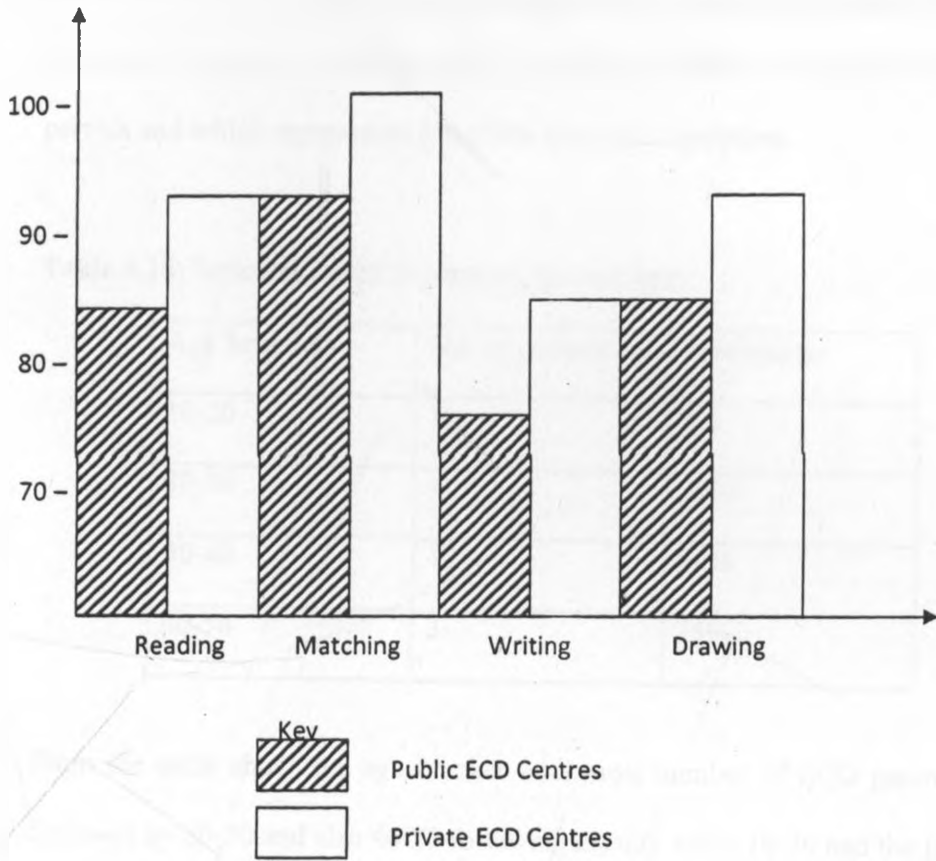
The examination had four sections each section with five questions. In reading, the public schools scored an average of three out of five which is 60% while the private schools in reading scored an average of four out of five which is 80%. In matching the shapes with their correct words the public scored an average of four out of five which is 80% while the private scored an average of five out of five which is a 100% score.

In writing the jumbled letters in order to make sensible words the public schools scored an average of two out of five which is 40% while the private on the same writing scored an average of three out of five which is 60% of the whole score. In drawing the pictures whose words have been given the public scored three out of five which is 60% while the private on the same drawing scored four out of five which is 80% of the total score.

Table 4.9: Shows the English test for standard one results analysis and their percentages in the four distinct areas that is reading, watching, writing and drawing.

Public	Marks	Percentage	Private	Marks	Percentage
Reading	$\frac{3}{5}$	60	Reading	$\frac{4}{5}$	80
Matching	$\frac{4}{5}$	80	Matching	$\frac{5}{5}$	100
Writing	$\frac{2}{5}$	40	Writing	$\frac{3}{5}$	60
Drawing	$\frac{3}{5}$	60	Drawing	$\frac{4}{5}$	80

Figure 4.9: A bar graph showing an English test scores for reading, matching, writing and drawing shapes.



4.19 PARENTAL AGES

This research was set to find out the age brackets of the sampled ECD parents. It is important to note that most of the ECD parents were clustered in the age brackets of between 30-40 years with 12 parents out of the twenty sampled parents which in 60%. This implies that most of the ECD parents are neither too young nor too old.

The second age bracket with a large number of is the 20 – 30 years of age which had a total of four parents out of the twenty sample parents which is 20% of the total parents.

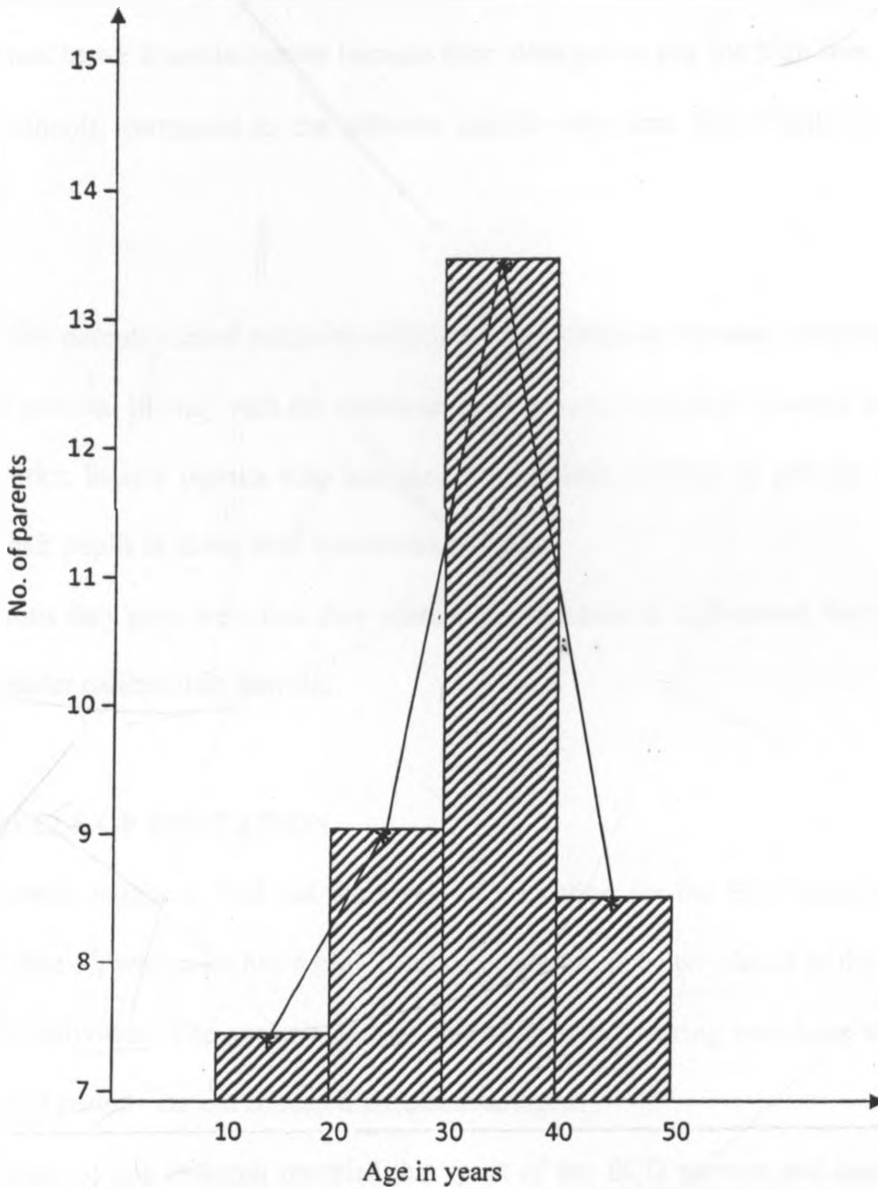
The third cluster of parents is between the ages of 40-50 which had three parents out of the twenty parents which is three parents out of the twenty parents sampled which is equivalent to 15% of the total population. The last age bracket of 10-20 years had the smallest number of parents which had only one parent out of the twenty sampled parents and which represented 5% of the sampled population.

Table 4.10: Indicates the ECD parental age brackets

Age brackets	No. of parents	Percentage
10-20	1	5%
20-30	4	20%
30-40	12	60%
40-50	3	15%

From the table above the age bracket with most number of ECD parents is 30-40, followed by 20-30 and also 40-50 following closely while 10-20 had the least number of parents pointing to low rates of early marriages or pre marital sex.

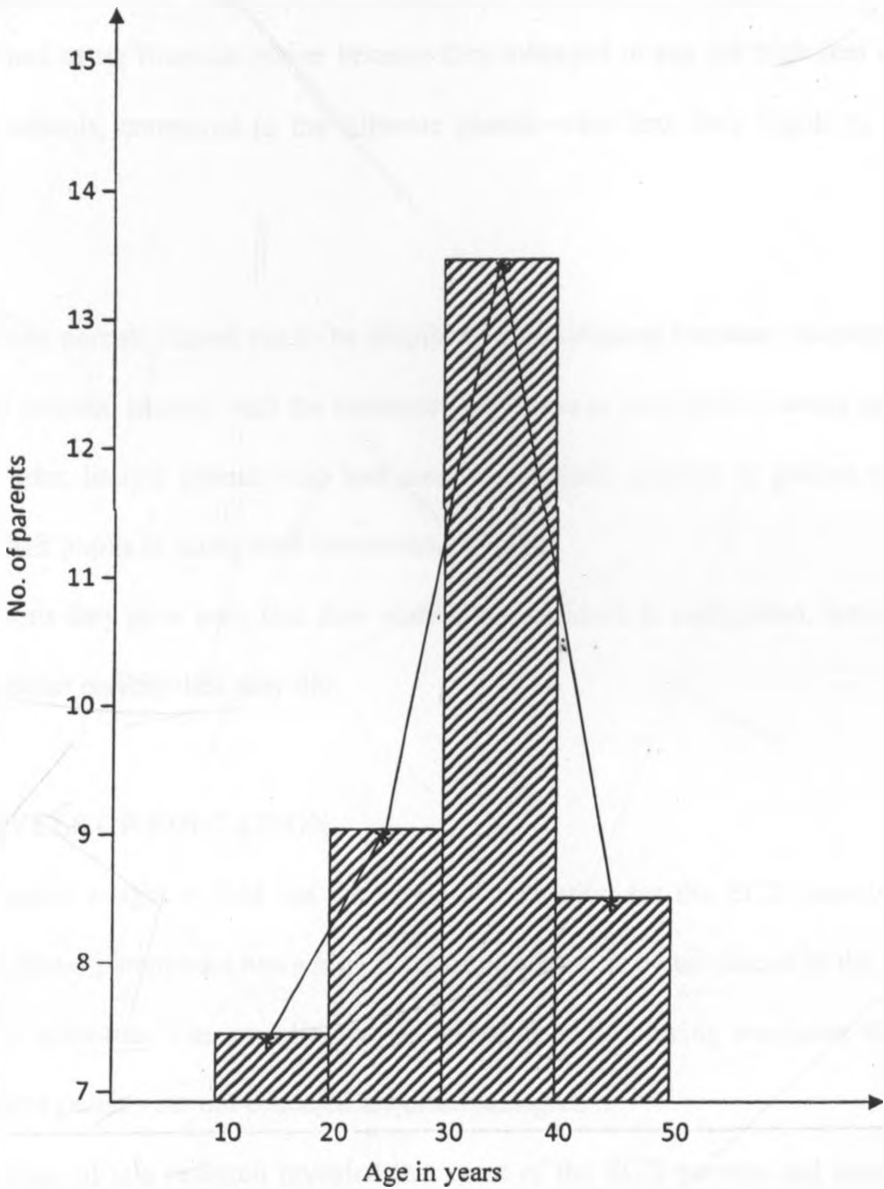
Figure 4.10: A polygon showing the parents ages.



4.20 READING AND WRITING

The research sought to find out if the ECD parents knew how to read and write. The logic behind this was that a parent who was literate would use the same knowledge to influence his ECD pupil to learn. The literate parent would also have the right knowledge on how to nurture children including exposing them to literacy skills early enough.

Figure 4.10: A polygon showing the parents ages.



4.20 READING AND WRITING

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Most of the literate parents preferred sending their children to private schools compared to the illiterate parents. It was also evident that most of the literature parents had better financial power because they managed to pay the high fees paid in private schools, compared to the illiterate parents who sent their pupils to public schools.

The literate parents turned out to be helpful to their children because comparing the levels of parental literacy with the assistance they gave to their ECD learners in doing home works; literate parents who had mostly sent their children to private schools helped their pupils in doing their homework at home.

The reasons they gave were that they wished heir children to understand, learn better and get better careers than they did.

4.21 LEVELS OF EDUCATION

This research sought to find out the levels of education for the ECD parents. It is believed that a parent who has a high level of education is better placed in the socio-economic activities. The social activities including child rearing translates that the child whose parents are not educated are disadvantaged.

The findings of this research revealed that most of the ECD parents had secondary levels of education with ten out of the twenty parents which is 50% of the total sampled parents. This indicates that the government's commitment to provide education for all (EFA) by 2015 is achievable.

The ECD parents of Ndithini division under study were also found to be accumulated in the primary school levels of education, that's five out of the twenty parents

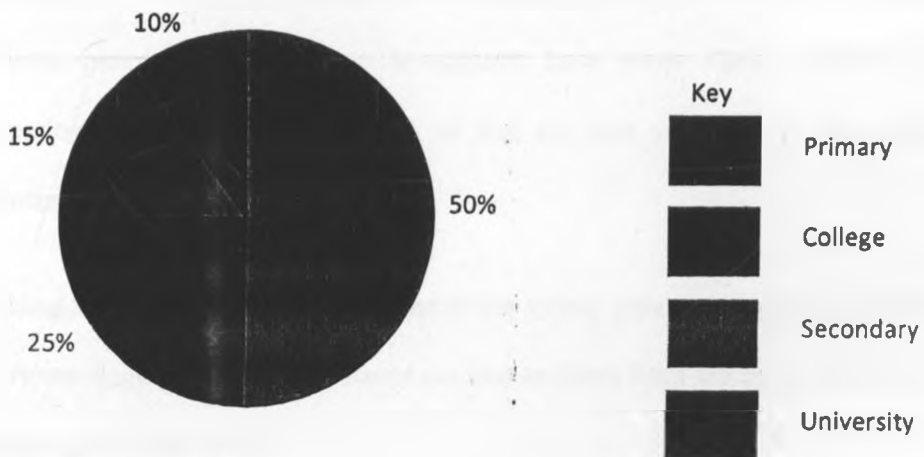
sampled which is equivalent to 25% of the total sampled parents. This trend reveals that there is low transition rate from primary to secondary schools.

The higher levels of education included the colleges which had three parents out of the sampled twenty parents which is 15% of the total parents and the university level which had 2 parents out of the twenty schools sampled which was 10% of the total population. This data reveals that most ECD parents are not highly educated and this could in return affect their children in ECD classes.

Table 4.11: indicates the parents levels of education

Level of education	No. of teachers	Percentage
Primary	5	25%
Secondary	10	50%
College	3	15%
University	2	10%

Figure 4.11: A pie chart showing the parents levels of education



4.22: PARENTS OCCUPATIONS

This research intended to find out the different occupations for the ECD parents who were sampled out. The researcher found out that the area under research had various economic activities which supported the people of the area.

Farming was identified as the occupation with the largest number of respondents with ten out of twenty of the total parents sampled which represented 50% of the total respondents. Most of the land in Ndithini is arable with a variety of soils. The black soil and the red soil support the growth of maize and beans too well while the sandy soil supports the growth of a variety of fruits like mangoes, oranges and pawpaw. The climate is also favourable for agriculture despite the ever changing rainfall patterns.

The other important occupation for the ECD parents is business which had five out of the twenty respondents which was 25% of the total respondents. Small market centres are scattered in all the villages with even some parents converting some of their houses to be shops.

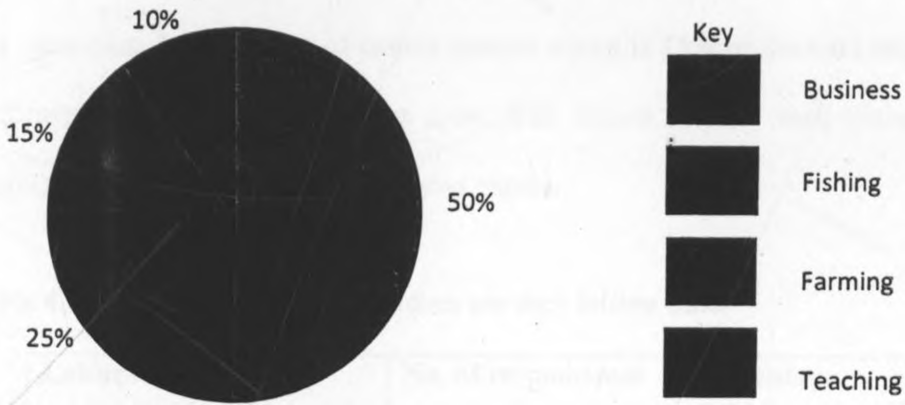
Fishing was also a major occupation with three out of the twenty respondents which represented 15% of the respondents. Masinga dam cuts across the whole division and the local people and other Luo immigrants have taken fishing seriously as an occupation and dozens of kilograms of fish are sent daily to the fish market in Gikomba (Nairobi).

Teaching is another occupation with out of the twenty parents representing 10% of the total respondents. This research found out that teachers form the bulk of civil servants working in the rural areas.

Table 4.12: Indicate the various occupations for ECD parents in Ndithini division

Occupations	Respondents	Percentage
Farming	10	50%
Business	5	25%
Fishing	3	15%
Teaching	2	10%
Total	20	100%

Figure 4.12: Indicates the various occupations for ECD parents in Ndithini division



4.23 LEISURE TIME ACTIVITIES

This research sought to find out the activities that school children do at home during their leisure time. The research involved twenty ECD parents and whose revelations revealed shockingly that most of our ECD children are just left to play uncontrollably a trend which is worrying and dangerous.

Most of the interviewed ECD parents that, is twelve out of twenty which is 60% of the total respondents confirmed that their children just played at home during their leisure time.

Although play is very important for the all round growth of the child, the child should be involved in other social activities like cultivating, washing of clothes or more importantly use their time in reading which lays the foundations for future careers and life skills.

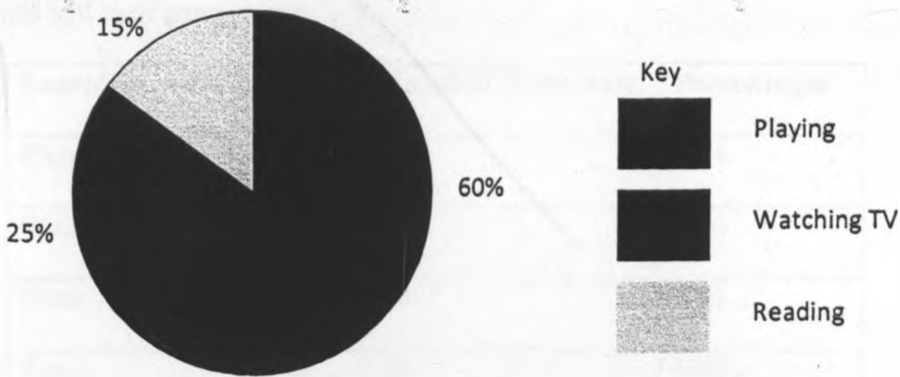
Five out of twenty, parents confirmed that their ECD children watched the television during their leisure time. This is 25% of the total respondents watching the television especially children designed programmes like cartoons is ideal but over dependency of viewing the TV is also dangerous and causes laziness and obesity.

The remaining 3 parents out of twenty parents which is 15% of the total respondents confirmed that their ECD children spent their leisure time in their sitting rooms reading story books, magazines and news papers.

Table 4.13: Indicates how ECD children use their leisure time

Leisure time use	No. of respondents	Percentage
Playing	12	60%
Watching TV	5	25%
Reading	3	15%
Total	20	100%

Figure 4.13: This figure illustrates how ECD children through a data collected from their parents normally use their leisure time. It is noted that most of the ECD pupils spent time playing with a smaller number watching TV and the smallest reading.



4.24 LEARNING MATERIALS

This research was set to find out the home environments in which the ECD parents and learners lived in. The research revealed that most of the homes are bear without any learning related materials.

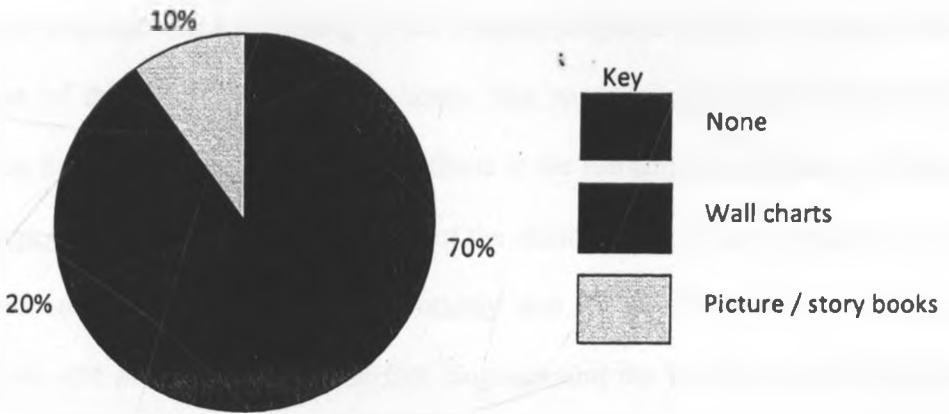
The research involved twenty ECD parents interviewed and fourteen out of twenty which is 70% of the total sampled respondents indicated that they had none learning related materials. Only 4 out of twenty parents had wall charts for reading and arithmetic skills in their homes while the remaining two out of twenty parents which is 10% of the total respondents had picture books or story books in their homes.

The results revealed a common phenomenon in most rural areas and although earlier we had noted that most of the parents had secondary education. It is evident that the parents don't value their children's education which could be due to ignorance, poverty or lack of proper information on the role of enriching home environments.

Table 4.14: Indicates the numbers of ECD parents who had learning materials in their homes and their percentages.

Learning materials	No. of ECD parents	Percentages
Picture/story books	2	10%
Wall charts	4	20%
None	14	70%
Total	20	100%

Figure 4.14: A pie chart showing the learning materials found in the parents homes.



CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides a summary of significant findings from the study. It gives a conclusion to the findings and recommendations; there are also suggestions for further studies.

5.2 SUMMARY

This study delved into considerable depths in the quest for unraveling the effects of the first language on the learning of the English language which is acquired easily because of the many “teachers” at home. The natural and unconditional way of learning the first language has negative effects in the learning and teaching of English language in ECD centers. This blocking of the ability to learn a new language is also referred to as inhibition and occurs mainly due to the differences in language structures and patterns for both the first language and the intended second language which is English.

5.3 CONCLUSION

Teachers teaching the English language in ECD centers where the first language is used to teach ECD classes should make a smooth transition from the first language to the second language by way of translating the concepts and words from the first language to the second language, use of short stories, poems and dramatized plays enhances the learning of the English language. The teachers should be friendly, kind and loving in order to win the trust of these ECD learners.

The home environment is also very important. Parents should ensure that they have 'rich' home environments like walls covered with charts, picture books, story books and exercise encouragements for the children to read these books.

5.4 SUGGESTIONS

The government of Kenya through the Ministry of Education should re-assess the government's policy on the language used in teaching ECD classes and come up with a new policy which favours English use in all ECD classes. This is so because the first language is never used in official matters and only serves as a tribal tool for delineating other tribes, therefore beating the logic behind the first national goal of education, that of creating unity in our country.

The second suggestion is that only competent teachers should be appointed for teaching the English language. Teachers are presumed to be role models but more often they fail miserably to articulate their diction and pronunciation before the learners.

5.5 RECOMMENDATIONS

The government should increase the free primary education allocations per child in order to ensure that schools have adequate learning and teaching materials together with employment of more teachers to ensure no understaffing in schools which necessitates the employment of untrained teachers.

Lastly more research should be done on the effects of first language on the teaching of the English language to trace other underlying factors which hinder the learning of the English language besides the first language.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR HEAD TEACHERS.

Please answer the following questions by providing the most appropriate answer and explain where necessary. Do not disclose your name or the name of your institution on this interview schedule. The information is confidential. Your co-operation will enable the researcher to compile a comprehensive report for the study.

1. What is the language used by the people of this area?

.....

2. What is the language used in teaching ECD classes?

.....

3. How does the government policy on teaching language affect learner's performance in English?

.....

4. What are the challenges encountered in teaching English as a language in ECD classes?

.....

.....

5. How do you address the above named challenges in question 4

.....

.....

6. Name the methods you use to motivate the following groups to teach and learn English.

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.....

4. What are the challenges encountered in teaching English as a language in ECD classes?

.....

.....

5. How do you address the above named challenges in question 4

.....

.....

6. Name the methods you use to motivate the following groups to teach and learn English.

(i) Teachers?.....

(ii) - Pupils?.....

7. Suggest three ways of enhancing English performance in ECD centres.....

.....

.....

8. How do you ensure that English teachers have adequate teaching aids?

.....

.....

APPENDIX II

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR ECD TEACHERS

Please answer the questions by ticking the most appropriate answer and explain where necessary. Do not write your name or the name of your institution in this questionnaire. The information collected will be treated as confidential. Your cooperation will enable the researcher to compile a comprehensive report for the study.

1. What is your highest academic qualification?(tick)

(a) K.C.P.E

(b) K.C.S.E

(c) K.C.E

(d) Any other specify _____

2. What is your professional qualification? (tick)

ECD Certificate

P1 Certificate

E.C.D Diploma

Any other Specify _____

3. a. Which of the following methods of teaching reading do you find appropriate

(tick)

i. Phonic

ii. Whole word

iii. Sentence

b. Explain your reasons in (3 a) above _____

4. How do you promote good English performance in your classroom?

.....
.....

5. Name three difficulties experienced in teaching English

(i)

(ii)

(iii)

6. Mention three intervening measures you can apply to slow readers

(i)

(ii)

(iii).....

7. Name the most critical roles of an English teacher in the classroom

(i) _____

(ii) _____

(iii) _____

8. Name two roles played by teaching materials in a classroom

(i)

(ii)

9. What methods do you use for evaluation

(a) Written tests

(b) Oral test

(c) Overall assessment

APPENDIX III

ENGLISH TEST FOR STD ONE CLASS

Please answer the following questions in the most appropriate way possible. Do not write your name or school. the information is confidential.

READING

Read the following words loudly.

- i. Box
- ii. Book
- iii. Pencil
- iv. Cat
- v. Teacher

Match the following Shapes with the correct words



Ball



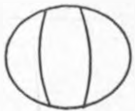
Oval



Cup



Triangle



Rectangle

Write the following words correctly

i. slcas

ii. ybo

iii. tromhe

iv. rac

v. lrig

Draw the following pictures



- Flower



- Book



- Ruler



- Pencil



- Rubber

APPENDIX IV

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR ECD PARENTS

Please answer the following questions by providing the most appropriate answer and explain where necessary. Do not write your name or the name of your school in this interview schedule. The information is confidential and your co-operation will enable the researcher to complete a comprehensive report for this study.

1. How old are you?

10-20 yrs

20- 30 yrs

30-40 yrs

40-50 yrs

2. Do you know how to read and write in English?

Yes

No

3. What is your highest level of education (Tick appropriately)

Primary

College

Secondary

University

4. Which of the following categories of schools does your child attend? (Tick)

Public

Private

5. What is your occupation? _____

6. What does your school going child do for leisure at home?

Reading

Playing

Watching TV

7. Does your home have the following? (Tick appropriately)

Wall Charts

Picture /Story
books

None

8. a) Do you help your child to do homework which is given by the teacher?

Yes

No

b) Give reasons for your answer in (8 a) above.

Research Permit No. NCST/RCD/11/012/1077

Date of issue 30th July 2012

Fee received KSh. 1,000

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT
of **Dr./Mr./Mrs./Miss/Institution**

el Ngugi
(Address) **University of Nairobi**

Box 30197-00100, Nairobi.
has been permitted to conduct research in

Location

District

Machakos
County

on the topic: **The effects of first language on**

learning of English in early childhood development

res in Ndithini Division, Machakos County

for a **period ending 30th September, 2012.**



[Handwritten Signature]

Applicant's

[Handwritten Signature]

Secretary

National Council for
Science & Technology



UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION & EXTERNAL STUDIES
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL COMMUNICATION &
TECHNOLOGY

Telephone: 020-2500759, 020-2500760
NAIROBI

P.O. BOX 30197, 00100

020-2500762, 020-2460056

P.O. BOX 92, 00902 KIKUYU

REF: UON/CEES/C/4/18

11th June 2012

T O W H O M I T M A Y C O N C E R N

RE: NGUI JOEL

REG No: - E57/64267/2010

This is to certify that Ngui Joel is a bonafide student of the University of Nairobi, Department of Educational Communication and Technology. He is doing Master in Early Childhood Education. His project Title is "THE EFFECTS OF FIRST LANGUAGE ON LEARNING ENGLISH IN ECD CENTERS IN NDITHINI DIVISION MACHAKOS COUNTY".

Any assistance accorded to him will be highly appreciated.

Yours faithfully, E.S.

11 JUN 2012

PROF. P.O.O. DIGOLO

CHAIRMAN, DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL COMMUNICATION AND TECHNOLOGY

University of Nairobi

CONDITIONS



1. You must report to the District Commissioner and the District Education Officer of the area before embarking on your research. Failure to do that may lead to the cancellation of your permit.

2. Government Officers will not be interviewed without prior appointment.

3. No questionnaire will be used unless it has been approved.

4. Excavation, filming and collection of biological specimens are subject to further permission from the relevant Government Ministries.

5. You are required to submit at least two (2)/four (4) bound copies of your final report for Kenyans and non-Kenyans respectively.

6. The Government of Kenya reserves the right to modify the conditions of this permit including its cancellation without notice.

REPUBLIC OF KENYA

RESEARCH CLEARANCE

PERMIT

GPK6055t3mt10/2011

(CONDITIONS - see back page)



UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI

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NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Telephone: 254-020-2213471, 2241349
254-020-310571, 2213123, 2219420
Fax: 254-020-318245, 318249
When replying please quote
secretary@ncst.go.ke

P.O. Box 30623-00100
NAIROBI-KENYA
Website: www.ncst.go.ke

NCST/RCD/14/012/1077

30th July 2012

Our Ref:

Date:

Joel Ngui
University of Nairobi
P.O.Box 30197-00100
Nairobi.

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION

Following your application for authority to carry out research on "*The effects of first language on learning of English in early childhood development centres in Ndithini Division Machakos County,*" I am pleased to inform you that you have been authorized to undertake research in **Machakos County** for a period ending **30th September, 2012.**

You are advised to report to the **District Commissioners and the District Education Officers, Machakos County** before embarking on the research project.

On completion of the research, you are expected to submit **two hard copies and one soft copy in pdf** of the research report/thesis to our office.

DR. M. K. RUGUTT, PhD, HSC.
DEPUTY COUNCIL SECRETARY

Copy to:

The District Commissioners
The District Education Officers
Machakos County.