

ANALYSIS OF THE INFLUENCE OF MOTHER TONGUE ON ENGLISH PERFORMANCE
IN KENYA CERTIFICATE OF PRIMARY EDUCATION: A CASE OF NDHIWA SUB-
COUNTY

OBUNGU DOMNIC OCHIENG

A RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT FOR THE
REQUIREMENTS OF THE AWARD OF THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF EDUCATION IN
EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATIONS (PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION) OF THE

UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI

2016

DECLARATION

This research project is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any University.

SIGN.....DATE.....

OBUNGU DOMNIC OCHIENG

REGISTRATION NUMBER: E56/72405/2014

This research project has been submitted with my approval as the University Supervisor

SIGN:.....DATE.....

Dr Atieno Kili K'Odhiambo

Senior Lecturer in Philosophy of Education

Department of Education Foundations

University of Nairobi

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my lovely mother Salome Odeny, my wife Elicah Ochieng and children: Jobick, Mary, Noel and Scholastica. They endured socio-economic challenges as a result of this degree. Their inspiration gave me a lot of encouragement that eventually led to the achievement of our objective.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Blessed be the name of the Lord for guiding my steps in writing this Research project. I also honor and praise God for the gift of my supervisor Dr Atieno Kili K' Odhiambo. He did a lot in guiding me to write this good research project, including setting aside his time for my success.

I also express my gratitude to my brother Peter Obungu and his family, Dorine Odhiambo and her children for their constant prayers for my success. May God bless the entire University of Nairobi, especially the Department of Educational Foundation for their contribution to ensure that I achieve this degree.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Declaration.....	ii
Dedication.....	iii
Acknowledgement.....	IV
Table of contents.....	v
Abstract.....	ix

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction.....	1
1.1 Background to the study.....	1
1.2 Statement of the problem.....	9
1.3 Objectives of the study.....	9
1.4 Significance of the Study.....	9
1.5 Limitations of the study.....	10
1.6 Delimitations of the study.....	10
1.7 Theoretical Framework.....	10
1.8 Conceptual framework.....	11
1.9 Research methodology: Philosophical analysis.....	15

1.9.1 Organization of the study.....	17
REFERENCES.....	18

CHAPTER TWO

TRANSITION FROM MOTHER TONGUE TO SECOND LANGUAGE

2.0 Introduction.....	22
2.1 The philosophy of second language acquisition.....	23
2.2 Analysis of the place of English as a second language.....	25
2.3 Analysis of the foreign language and Mother Tongue transfer.....	26
2.4 The analysis of the difference between first language and second language.....	27
2.5 Analysis of the transition from Mother Tongue to second language (English).....	30
2.5.1 Phonological process.....	31
2.5.2 Orthographic skills.....	31
2.5.3 Comprehension and strategies.....	31
2.6 Analysis of educational effects of transition from first language to second language (English).....	32
2.7 Conclusion.....	33
REFERENCES.....	34

CHAPTER THREE

THE ROLE OF THE MIND IN THE ACQUISITION OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE

3.1 INTRODUCTION.....	37
3.2 Analysis of the factors that make the acquisition of the second language (English) difficult.....	38
3.2.1 Problem of vagueness.....	40
3.2.2 Problem of universals and composition.....	40
3.2.3 Nature of language.....	41
3.2.4 Formal versus informal approaches.....	42
3.2.5 Translation and interpretation.....	42
3.3 Analysis of the influence of the first language on the acquisition of the second language (English)	43
3.4 Analysis of the role of the mind in acquisition of the language.....	45
3.5 Analysis of Language and thought.....	47
3.6 Analysis of factors promoting the acquisition of the second language (English).....	49
3.7 conclusions.....	50
REFERENCES.....	51

CHAPTER FOUR

**IDEAS THAT CAN LEAD TO IMPROVEMENT OF PERFORMANCE IN ENGLISH
WHEN LEARNERS USE IT AS A SECOND LANGUAGE**

4.1 Introduction.....55

4.2 Freedom in learning environment as a way of improving English performance.....56

4.3 The use of the mind in improvement of performance in English.....60

4.4 Belief, truth and ground condition that can improve performance of English.....62

4.5 Aspects of the study which are unique.....63

4.6 The major findings and contributions of this research to education in Kenya.....63

4.6 Conclusion65

REFERENCES66

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 summary.....68

5.2 conclusions.....70

5.3 recommendations.....71

REFERENCES.....73

ABSTRACT

This project has discussed analysis of the influence of Mother Tongue on English performance in Kenya Certificate of Primary Education: A case of Ndhiwa sub county, Homa Bay County, Kenya. The researcher has used philosophical analysis to analyze the factors that make the transition from Mother Tongue to second language (English) difficult. The role of mind in the acquisition of English language is also analyzed critically. The researcher has also put forward ideas that can lead to improvement of performance in English, when learners use it as a second language. This analysis is in line with the philosophy of idealism and conceptual framework on the use of the mind to enhance performance in English in K.C.P.E. The major findings and contributions of this research to education are also analyzed. Ultimately, the project ends with summary, conclusions and recommendations.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the study

The relationship between philosophy and language can be unfolded by giving priority to what philosophy itself is and the meaning of language. Philosophy is conceived as an academic discipline to which scholars devote their time and energy. It is characterized by logical, consistent and systematic thinking, so as to reach conclusions that are sound, coherent and consistent in all their parts (Akinpelu, 1982, p.2).

Language is the vital medium in philosophy and a system of communication in speech and writing that is used by people of a particular country or an area (Anand, 1993, p. 829). Mother Tongue is the language that one first learns to speak when they are young (Hornby, 1993, p. 956). As noted by Ashwoth (1992), Mother Tongue or native language is a language which a person acquires in early years and which normally becomes their natural instrument of thought and communication and eventually makes the learning of the second language difficult.

When an individual is fluent in mother tongue, it can be concluded that the individual is knowledgeable and all knowledge, including all other qualities of a person that arise from education, are due to the environment (Akinpelu, 1982, p. 70). Mother tongue probably has some influence on the acquisition of the second language, which is English for this case. Ashworth (1992) observes that the second language is a language acquired by a person in addition to their Mother tongue.

The study of the mind as outlined by Chomsky (1968) asserts that, ‘human language can be used to clarify one’s own thoughts or to display one’s cleverness. Lycan (2000) maintains that philosophy of language is concerned with four central problems: the nature of meaning, language use, language cognition and the relationship between language and reality.

Comparatively, the issue of English and Mother Tongue is a global concern. A study conducted in Boyo District of Cameroon vindicates that students learning in their Mother Tongue (Kom), perform 125% better than their peers learning in English, in class 1-3 (Chuo and Walter, 2011). In Colombia, class 3 students taught in Mother Tongue perform higher on Mathematics test than their counterparts taught in English (Nueva and Ewan, 1998). English is considered to be a foreign language in Cape Verde, not normally used as a means of communication in everyday life and taught as an optional subject at secondary level (Ojuri,2008,p.28).The official language in Nigeria is English and it covers almost all areas of life (Wikipedia, 2011). As mentioned by Nigerian National Policy (2004), Mother Tongue is the medium of instruction from pre-primary to first three years of Education. According to Uganda Policy on Education (2012), English is the language of instruction in learning institutions. In Kenya, the language policy in primary schools considers the learning of English, Kiswahili and Mother Tongue (Republic of Kenya, 2005). According to the policy, the language of instruction in the rural pre-primary and lower primary schools should be Mother Tongue; Kiswahili should be the medium of instruction in urban areas of mixed communities, while English should be the medium of instruction in none indigenous communities (Nyakwara, 2014). The current government maintains that Mother Tongue should be used as language of instruction in early years of school to preserve the Kenyan culture and to ensure smooth transition from home to school (Njeru, 2014).

Nation correspondent (2014) reports that, “the Government has directed schools to teach using Mother Tongue for classes three and below. Education secretary, Prof Jacob Kaimenyi, said Mother Tongue plays a crucial role in education.” It was an assertion by the Government that children in lower primary classes in Kenya are to be taught in their Mother Tongue (or the dominant language of the region). In Kenya there are over 42 communities, meaning there are over 42 languages (Bamgbose, 1991).

Several research reports have supported that English is vital in epistemological dispensation. Patria, Mingcai, Didam and Gyang (2013, p.281) found that Mother Tongue interference on English language pronunciation of senior primary school pupils in Nigeria has pedagogical implication. Kili and Gunga (2010) assert that every language seems to have ways in which it expresses Mathematical operations. They added that Mathematics register in English is the distinct way in which Mathematical meaning is expressed.

However, other researchers are not for this opinion, but have reported that Mother Tongue is of immense importance to the educational foundation of learners. Senadeera (2006) supported the need for Mother Tongue in education for communication, cultural identity and cultural heritage. Krashen (2004), as well has the support for the opinion, stating that many skills acquired in the first language can be transferred to the English language. Brown (2006) also argues in favor of the group that using the Mother tongue, we learn to think, learn to communicate and acquire an intuitive understanding of grammar.

In the sub county under investigation, some words in Dholuo enhance the knowledge of English. For example, *mach*=matchbox, *ng'at ma thiring'inyi*=a thrilling person, *tek m'ologi*=technology, just to mention but a few. Conversely, the issue of Mother Tongue influence on English is a

matter of concern in the Sub County. The issue is universal but Ndhiwa is only used as a case study. Smith (1997, p. 27) notes that the children learn the languages from the people around them. The case in Ndhiwa Sub County has been probably because of historical, geographical and economic establishment of the sub county. Historically, the members of Ndhiwa Sub County are having limited interaction with other tribes. The sub county is not bordering any tribe; it is sandwiched in the Luo community. Economically, the members of the sub county under investigation are farmers. This makes them to settle in their positions, limiting their movements and restricting their interaction with other communities. These factors conceivably make Dholuo to be the dominant language in the sub county. Learners therefore are not possible to dream in a language other than their Mother Tongue. They only meet the second languages (English) when they join school, hence have poor performance in the subject in K.C.P.E.

The sub county has been registering worse performance in English for the last six consecutive years, with a mean that has been below the pass mark: i.e. 50% (K.C.P.E. and K.C.S.E. Result analysis, 17th Sep, 2014, p.1) .The Sub County has over 152 primary schools. The mean score of English in 80% of these schools has never reached the pass mark for the last six years. Between the years 2009 and 2014: the teachers' establishment in the sub county has been improved from 1103 to 3563 (Education/Award giving day, Friday, 3rd May, 2014).This has not improved the performance of English. The Free Primary Education Funds have been used to buy text books for English in an attempt to improve the performance of the subject in the sub county (Ndhiwa Sub County F.P.E. performance, 2013, p.11). However this effort has failed to improve the standard of English. Several organizations have been in the central stage in offering financial, moral and even pedagogical skills to improve the quality of education in the sub county. These groups include; N.G.Os, religious organizations, political organizations and economic institutions like

banks and cooperative societies (Ndhiwa we want forum, 2011, p.43). Despite all these, the performance of English is still a matter of concern to all stakeholders. What is it that makes the standard of English not to improve in Ndhiwa Sub County?

The researcher is interested in investigating the factors responsible for low achievement of English marks in K.C.P.E. and has sampled the already existing data from six Divisions in Ndhiwa Sub County as indicated below.

2009 DIVISIONAL ORDER OF MERIT (K.C.P.E. and K.C.S.E. result analysis, Ndhiwa Sub County, education day, 17thSeptember, 2010, p.7)

NO.	DIVISION	SCHOOLS /ENTRY	ENG.*	KISW.	MATHS	SCI.	SSRE	TOTAL
1	NDHIWA	27	40.92	50.91	58.86	56.99	53.73	259.41
2	NYARONGI	19	40.04	53.97	52.23	55.71	55.14	257.09
3	RIANA	28	35.02	49.06	52.58	53.43	51.95	242.58
4	KOBAMA	24	32.70	48.42	53.33	54.14	53.14	241.54
5	KOBODO	21	35.23	47.45	50.51	54.39	49.71	237.29
6	PALA	19	31.59	46.71	50.01	54.03	52.16	234.50
TOTAL	6	138	215.50	297.09	315.52	328.69	315.83	1472.50
SUB C.MEAN			35.92	49.51	52.59	54.78	52.64	245.44

2010 DIVISIONAL ORDER OF MERIT (Ndhiwa sub county Education/Award giving day,
Friday, 3rd, May 2011, p.14)

NO.	DIVISION	ENTR Y	ENG.*	KIW	MATH S	SCI	SSRE	TOTAL
1	NDHIWA	27	39.88	51.80	52.66	59.68	50.19	254.21
2	NYARONGI	19	39.00	50.67	53.78	56.67	53.36	253.44
3	RIANA	28	33.98	40.31	54.34	50.40	69.42	248.45
4	KOBAMA	24	31.66	49.43	55.34	56.33	46.60	239.36
5	KOBODO	21	34.19	41.22	53.44	57.40	52.87	239.12
6	PALA	19	30.55	42.02	56.06	58.41	50.46	237.50
TOTAL	6	138	209.26	275.45	325.62	338.85	368.44	1472.08
SUB C. MEAN			34.93	45.91	54.27	56.47	61.41	244.96

2011 DIVISIONAL ORDER OF MERIT (Ndhiwa sub county, K.C.P.E. and K.C.S.E result
analysis, 8th, May, 2012, p.19)

NO.	DIVISION	ENTRY	ENG *	KIW	MATHS	SCI	SSRE	TOTAL
1	NDHIWA	30	35.33	50.78	53.72	58.68	51.20	249.71
2	NYARONGI	19	40.34	40.34	52.66	55.52	52.46	242.32
3	RIANA	28	36.93	41.44	54.32	49.39	59.52	241.60
4	KOBAMA	24	32.67	48.67	56.42	55.22	45.70	238.68
5	KOBODO	21	35.19	42.31	52.41	51.39	52.77	234.07
6	PALA	20	30.89	40.01	55.13	57.30	50.34	233.67
TOTAL	6	142	211.35	263.55	324.66	327.50	311.99	1440.05
SUB C MEAN			35.21	43.91	54.11	54.58	51.99	240.01

2012 DIVISIONAL ORDER OF MERIT (Ndhiwa sub county K.C.P.E. and K.C.S.E. result analysis, May 7th 2013, p.8)

NO.	DIVISION	ENTR Y	ENG.*	KISW	MATHS	SCI	SSRE	TOTAL
1	NDHIWA	30	41.93	51.19	57.68	57.98	52.37	261.15
2	NYARONGI	20	39.33	54.79	51.32	56.17	54.41	256.02
3	RIANA	28	36.01	50.06	51.85	54.34	50.59	242.85
4	KOBAMA	25	30.60	49.24	52.33	55.41	52.41	239.99
5	KOBODO	22	36.32	48.54	49.15	55.93	58.17	238.11
6	PALA	21	30.94	47.17	49.10	55.30	51.61	234.12
TOTAL	6	146	215.13	300.99	311.43	335.13	309.56	1472.24
SUB C MEAN			35.86	50.17	51.91	55.86	51.60	245.37

2013 DIVISIONAL ORDER OF MERIT (Ndhiwa sub county K.C.P.E. and K.C.S.E. result analysis, 18thSeptember, 2014, p.20)

NO.	DIVISION	ENTRY	ENG.*	KISW	MATHS	SCI	SSRE	TOTAL
1	NDHIWA	31	40.76	51.87	52.27	58.86	55.37	259.13
2	RIANA	30	40.00	41.34	51.66	55.36	57.41	245.77
3	NYARONGI	22	34.89	42.43	53.23	49.04	53.59	233.18
4	KOBAMA	25	32.66	49.76	50.24	45.33	50.41	228.40
5	KOBODO	23	35.91	40.13	41.14	50.04	51.17	218.39
6	PALA	21	31.55	41.10	44.31	47.14	50.61	214.71
TOTAL	6	152	215.77	266.63	292.85	305.77	318.56	1399.58
SUB C MEAN			35.96	44.44	48.81	50.96	53.10	233.26

2014 DIVISIONAL ORDER OF MERIT (Ndhiwa sub county K.C.P.E. and K.C.S.E. result analysis, May, 11th, 2015, p.12)

NO.	DIVISION	ENTRY	ENG.*	KISW	MATHS	SCI	SSRE	TOTAL
1	NDHIWA	31	42.29	52.92	60.68	56.01	60.34	272.24
2	NYARONGI	22	40.40	54.79	53.32	54.12	58.41	261.04
3	RIANA	30	37.20	48.61	53.85	52.31	54.43	246.40
4	KOBAMA	25	34.07	47.24	51.34	54.34	52.41	239.40
5	KOBODO	23	37.32	47.45	51.15	50.93	50.17	237.02
6	PALA	21	33.95	45.17	50.10	50.44	51.01	230.76
TOTAL	6	152	225.23	296.18	320.44	318.15	326.77	1486.86
SUB C. MEAN			37.54	49.36	53.41	53.03	54.46	247.81

From the above records, it is evident that the learners have never achieved a mean score of pass mark of 50% in English language for the last six consecutive years. The sub county's mean score for English has been below 50%. What is the panacea for this problem? This is the reverse of other sub counties such as Nakuru, Busia, Kisii, Kilifi and Samburu as shown below.

NO.	SUB COUNTY	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	TOTAL	AVERAGE MEANS SCORE
1	NAKURU	50.13	52.33	60.23	55.3	50.01	49.34	317.34	52.89
2	BUSIA	46.7	50.08	58.78	50.45	50.64	50.87	307.50	51.25
3	KISII	50.02	51.44	48.06	56.28	50.03	50.47	306.30	51.05
4	KILIFI	51.46	46.78	56.66	50.31	50.39	50.46	306.06	51.01
5	SAMBURU	50.00	51.13	54.44	47.90	50.01	50.30	303.78	50.63
6 *	NDHIWA	35.92	34.93	35.21	35.86	35.96	37.54	215.42	35.90 *

The average mean score for six consecutive years is below the pass mark, while other sub counties have displayed the average means score above the pass mark. What is it that has prevented good performance in English in Ndhiwa Sub County? This is why the researcher has shown concern to carry out his research work in this area.

1.2 Statement of the problem

According to the study under investigation, there has been poor performance in English language in Ndhiwa sub county, Homa Bay County. Comparatively, English language has been performing poorly for the last six consecutive years. The dominant language which is used within the sub county is Dholuo, which form the natural instrument of thought and communication. To transit from Dholuo to English and perform well has been a problem to learners in Ndhiwa sub county, Homa Bay County. The study therefore intends to use philosophical analysis to examine the influence of Mother Tongue on English performance in an attempt to offer clarifications with a view to improving performance in English in K.C.P.E. in Ndhiwa sub county of Homa Bay county.

1.3 Objectives of the study

The objectives of the study are:

- i) to analyze how a learner transits from Dholuo to English.
- ii) to analyze the role of the mind in the acquisition of second language.
- iii) to suggest solutions that can lead to improvement of performance in English when learners use it as a second language.

1.4 Significance of the study

The study may benefit education stake holders especially teachers and administrators to promote the education of the learners. The study will further enhance the performance of the language (English) and this will promote it within Ndhiwa Sub County. The findings of study can be applied in other parts of Kenya where the performance of English is low.

1.5 Limitations of the study

The study has the following limitations: lack of sufficient time to cover all the aspects of the Study such as the opinions of all parents and other stakeholders in the sub county because tracing them will require considerable time. Limited finance is also a limitation that can prevent more and better conclusive result.

1.6 Delimitations of the study

Mother Tongue affects the learning of many languages in Kenya. For example, it affects the learning of German, French, Kiswahili, just to mention but a few. However, all these cannot be investigated. The study is restricted to English language. It is further narrowed to philosophy of education as a discipline. It looks at the influence of Mother Tongue on English performance as a factor affecting performance on the side of the learners and not the side of the teachers.

1.7 Theoretical Framework

The philosophy or the school of thought that informs the study of the researcher is idealism. Idealism is one of the classical schools of thought in the development of philosophy of Education. It was developed by Plato. It emphasizes the supremacy of the mind in reality. It regards the mental or ideational entities as the key to understanding the nature of reality

(Makabu, 2005). Plato argued that; the ideas are more real than things and the reality that we see around us is only a reflection of a higher truth (Hirst, 1974, p.58). According to Gutek (1997, p. 13) in the philosophy of idealism, ‘‘reality is spiritual or mental and it is unchanging’’. The learners use the mind to get knowledge which is mental and unchanging.

Plato (2003) puts it that; ‘‘we are born possessing all knowledge and our realization of that knowledge is contingent on our discovery of it. The soul, which is spiritual, is trapped in the body. It once knew everything, but forgot it. However, the mind is capable of getting back to true knowledge through the process of recollection. To do this, one must overcome the body. This view implies that nothing is ever learned; it is simply recalled or remembered. In short, it says that all that we know already come pre-loaded on birth and our senses enable us to identify and recognize the stratified information in our mind’’ (Oluoch, 1982, p. 8).

Education involves cognitive learning, which result to knowing and understanding. The mental world of ideas is eternal, permanent, regular and orderly (Ozmon and Craver, 1995, p. 14). What is the meaning of knowing? What is knowledge? What are the sources of things that are claimed to be known? How can we categorize and justify knowledge? These are some of the epistemological questions in the world of philosophers.

Knowledge is first a matter of belief and to know something points in the first instance to believing something (Njoroge and Bennaars, 1986, p. 152). What is known must be true. Plato believed that the aim of education should be directed towards the search for true ideas (Ozmon and craver, 1995, p.15). Truth is what one asserts (Njoroge and Bennaars, 1986, p. 153). To know something is more than to believe. To know implies having a belief that is actually true. It is a matter of true belief. When people claim to know something, they must give reasons for

knowing that thing. There must be sufficient ground to verify the claim of what is known. In other words, there must be evidence. This implies that knowledge is a justified true belief (Njoroge and Bennaars, 1986, p. 184).

Based on evidence or sufficient grounds to verify the claim of what is known, the sub county under investigation has been performing poorly in English subject, vindicated in the data obtained for the last six consecutive years. This is evidence and a sufficient ground to verify that there has been poor performance in English in this sub county. On the same note, the philosophy of idealism stresses the priority of the mind. The learners in Ndhiwa Sub County of Homa Bay County are expected to use their mind to acquire knowledge that can help them to improve in English. The acquiring of knowledge through the mind, where the mind gives them different ideas which can be cultivated during learning, shows the relevance of idealism as a philosophy to study under investigation.

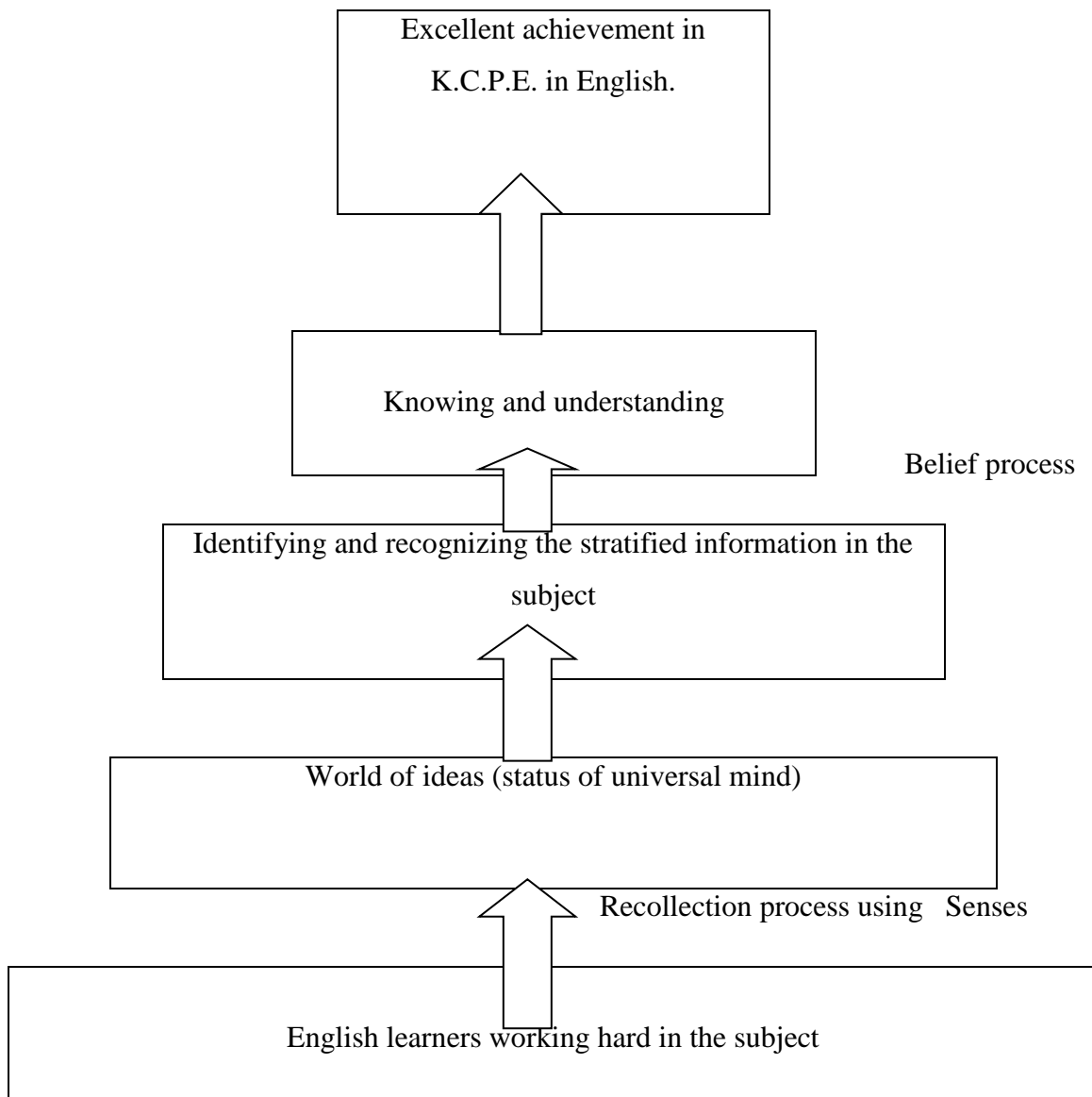
With regard to the epistemology of idealism, knowing is the rethinking of latent ideas (Gutek, 1997, p. 13). Idealism emphasizes the recognition of ideas that are latent. This means ideas that are already present but not evident in the mind. Such ideas concern knowledge that exist prior to and independent of human experience about them. Learners in Ndhiwa Sub County therefore have potential knowledge to learn English because the idea is already in their mind which needs to be developed by professional teachers. The aim of education according to idealism is to enable the learners to realize the truth, beauty and goodness in their own life and to cultivate their own personality (Chaube and Chaube, 2002, p. 96). This proves that the philosophy of idealism is relevance in making the learners in the sub county under investigation to realize truth, beauty and goodness in relation to performance in English subject.

Idealism further advocates for education for the attainment of true self through hard work in learning different subjects across the curriculum, including English (Hugh, 1982). Learners in Ndhiwa Sub County are therefore expected to work hard to change the true self, because education is a self-development activity. Nobody learns for the other. Idealist teachers always emphasize that the solution of a problem needs the effort of the self, that the improvement on performance can be realized through hard work (UNESCO, 1999). Idealism is therefore a school of thought that is relevant to the problem under investigation.

1.8 Conceptual framework

The researcher conceives the study based on the elements of idealism. The true reality is permanent existence and composites of ideas of mental conceptions, emanating from the intellect. It is in the universal mind that all ideas persist. Idealism advocates for the attainment of true self through hard work. English learners working hard in the subject reach recollection process using senses of feeling, hearing, smelling, tasting and seeing.

The activities of the senses lead the learners to the world of ideas (status of universal mind). The learners will start identifying and recognizing the stratified information in the subject. They will believe that what is recalled is actually true, then knowing and understanding will take place. The result will be excellent achievement in K.C.P.E. in English subject. The diagram below displays the conceptual framework on the use of the mind to enhance performance in Kenya Certificate of Primary Education. The conceptual framework indicates that the number of learners moving towards excellent achievement in K.C.P.E. is reducing. This is because, the reality is a reflection of the high truth and only a few reaches this supremacy of the mind, it is a divine status and metaphysically endowed.



(Conceptual framework on the use of the mind to enhance performance in English in K.C.P.E.)

1.9 Research Methodology

To make the research methodology clear, the main method that the researcher will use is philosophical analysis. However, the critical method and speculative method will be used slightly.

1.9.1 Philosophical analysis

Philosophical analysis is a method of philosophical inquiry that underlines argument, attention to semantics, use of classical logic and non-classical logic. Most words we use in everyday language are vague. According to Hugh (1982), philosophical analysis is a general term for techniques used by philosophers in the analytic tradition of breaking down philosophical issues, phenomena or concepts. Mainly it involves the analysis of concepts (usually referred to as conceptual analysis) and prepositions. The philosophical issues are broken down into their constituent parts, in order to gain knowledge or better understanding of the issues. As such, concepts are analyzed to avoid multiplicity in meanings and interpretation. It avoids ambiguity and misunderstanding.

On a broader basis, philosophical analysis examines and explains the epistemological, ontological and ethical component of an issue, process, problem or concepts. It is therefore the attempt to identify, examine and explain the significant beliefs, values, assumptions and communication practices underlying a philosophical issue, process or phenomenon. Frege (1884) observes that there is inherent vagueness due to the fact that philosophizing is frequently done verbally. In this regard, appeal to conventional meaning does not help.

Philosophical analysis started with Socratic Method of dialectic of asking questions on common sense beliefs and examining the adequacy of possible answers without suggesting a definite

solution to the problem raised, until people realize that they need to continually examine their belief to know on a firm basis. Philosophical analysis performs the rational function of philosophy. Foley and Mohan (1987, p. 10), puts it thus: philosophical analysis examines the adequacy of the principles that form the basis of our belief system. It seeks to analyze terms, concepts statements and language used in different context in order to clarify and justify their meanings.

Philosophical analysis provides definition of vague terms by delimiting cases for which particular term may be applied. On the same vein, philosophical analysis provides the principles that govern the correct use of the term thus revealing the basic assumptions underlying its use. It is used to achieve clarity of concepts, logical structure, methods and objects of human knowledge. Frege (1884), a founding personality of the tradition of philosophical analysis discusses the privacy of logic including that “always separate the psychological from the logical, the subjective from the objective. This separates clearly the subject matters of logic and psychology. This is because logical entities are both objective and public while psychological objects are subjective and private”. To Frege, ontological independence of the mind and intentional accessibilities are the criteria for objectivity. He added that, “never ask for the meaning of a term in isolation, but only in the context of a preposition”. He insisted that there should be unsaturated nature of concepts and their need for completion by objects.

For the fact that philosophical analysis gives the connective link between language, meaning and being; the researcher will use it to analyze what language is, what is the first language? What is the second language? What is the difference between first language and the second language? What are the contextual factors that promote the second language acquisition? The above are the philosophical issues that the researcher will handle in this investigation. The researcher will

further use philosophical analysis to analyze the language skills to be acquired during transition from Mother Tongue to second language (English). Further analysis will be on the educational effects of transition from first language to second language. All these make philosophical analysis to be relevant to the study under investigation.

1.9.2 Organization of the study

The study consists of five chapters, in chapter one, we have introduction and it deals with background to the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, significance of the study, limitations of the study, delimitations of the study, theoretical framework of the study, conceptual framework of the study, research methodology and organization of the study.

Chapter two will deal with transition from Mother Tongue to second language (English). The role of mind in the acquisition of English language will be dealt with in chapter three. In chapter four, ideas that can lead to improvement of performance in English when learners use it as a second language will be proposed. The work ultimately will end with chapter five which will be summary, conclusions and recommendations.

REFERENCES

- Akinpelu, J.A. (1982). *Introduction to philosophy of education*. London: Macmillan Publishers.
- Amuseghan, S.A. (2007). *Curriculum in secondary schools in Nigeria*. Nigeria: ESL Printing Press.
- Ashwoth, M. (1992). *Beyond methodology*. Malta: Cambridge University Press.
- Anand, P. (1993). *Philosopher*. London: Oxford University Press.
- Bamgbose, A. (1991). *Language and the nation*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
- Chaube, S.P., and Chaube, A. (2002). *Foundation of education*. New Delhi: Vikas Publishing House.
- Chomsky, N. (1968). *Language and mind*. Basque: Oxford University Press.
- Chuo, K., & Walter, S. (2011). *The Kom experimental Mother Tongue education project Report*. Research Triangle Park: Research Triangle Institute.
- Craver, S.M., & Ozman, A.H. (1981). *Bilingual children's Mother Tongue*. USA: Merrill Publishing.
- Deci, E.L., & Ryan, R.M. (1985). *Intrinsic motivation and self-determination in human Behavior*. New York: Plenum Press.
- Ewan, P. (1998). *Evaluating Multigrade schools*. Latin America: Latin American press.
- FPE. (2013). *Free Primary education fund*. Ndhiwa: Ndhiwa Publication.
- Frege, L. (1984). *Tradition of philosophical analysis*. London: Oxford University Press.
- GuteK, M.A. (1997). *Philosophy of idealism*. London: Oxford University Press.

Hirst, P. (1974). *Knowledge and curriculum*. London: Routledge and Kagen University Press.

Hugh, H. (1982). *Curriculum and reality in African primary schools*. Singapore: Selector Printing Press.

Kili, A.K., &Gung, S.O. (2010). *The Impact of the Interaction between Verbal and Mathematical Languages in Education. Nairobi: department of Educational Foundations University Of Nairobi. A journal of the Philosophical Association of Kenya (PAK) New series, vol. 2 No. 2. Retrieved 4/9/2015, from <http://ajol.info/index.php/tp/index>.*

Kiruki, J.K. (2004). *Introduction to critical thinking*. Eldoret: Zapf Chancery Research Consultants and publishers.

Krashen, S. (2004). *The power of reading*. Port Mouth: Heinemann.

Lycan, W.G. (2000). *Philosophy of Language*. New York: Routledge.

Ministry of education. (2010). *2009 KCPE examination report*. Nairobi: Government Printer.

Ministry of education. (2011). *2010 KCPE examination report*. Nairobi: Government Printer.

Ministry of education. (2012). *KNEC Newsletter*. Nairobi: Government Printing Press.

National Correspondent. (2014). *Use of Mother Tongue as language of instruction*. Daily

Nation on the web: online edition, retrieved 15/8/2015 from [http://www.](http://www.Nationaudio.com)

[Nationaudio.com](http://www.Nationaudio.com).

Ndhiwa sub county. (2010). *KCPE and KCSE result analysis*. Ndhiwa: Ndhiwa examination Publication.

Ndhiwa sub county. (2011). *Education and awards giving day*. Ndhiwa: Ndhiwa examination Publication.

Ndhiwa sub county. (2012). *KCPE and KCSE result analysis*. Ndhiwa: Ndhiwa examination Publication.

Ndhiwa sub county. (2013). *KCPE and KCSE result analysis*. Ndhiwa: Ndhiwa examination Publication.

Ndhiwa sub county. (2014). *KCPE and KCSE result analysis*. Ndhiwa: Ndhiwa examination Publication.

Ndhiwa sub county. (2015). *KCPE and KCSE result analysis*. Ndhiwa: Ndhiwa examination Publication.

Njeru, M.W. (2014). *Why Mother Tongue must be embraced*. Nairobi: Riara university press.

Njoroge, R.J., & Bennaars, G.A. (1986). *Philosophy and Education in Africa*. Nairobi: Trans-African press.

Nyakwara, B. (2014). *Use of Mother Tongue as a language of instruction in early years of School to preserve the Kenya culture*. Nairobi: Kenyatta university press.

Oluoch, G.P. (1982). *Essential of curriculum Development*. Nairobi: Elimu Bookshop.

Patrick, J.M., Mingcai, S., Didam, B., and Gyang, S.T. (2013). *Mother Tongue interference on English language*. Nigeria: Nigeria printing press.

Plato, C. (2003). *Cambridge studies in the dialogue of Plato*. Trans David's sedley: Cambridge University press.

Republic of Kenya Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology. (2005). *Sessional paper No.1 of 2005 on a policy Framework for Education, Training, and Research*. Nairobi: Ministry of Education Press.

Senadeera, S. (2006). *The importance of learning Mother Tongue in adopted county.*

Retrieved from [http://www.tamil.net/people/indy/Mother Tongue.htm](http://www.tamil.net/people/indy/Mother_Tongue.htm) on
5-8-2015.

Smith, B. (1997). *Through writing to reading.* New York: Oxford University Press.

UNESCO. (1999). *Improving the effectiveness of curriculum development.* Nairobi Kenya:

UNESCO Press.

Wikipedia. (2009). *First language.* Retrieved from <http://www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/first->

Language on 5/8/2015.

CHAPTER TWO

TRANSITION FROM MOTHER TONGUE TO SECOND LANGUAGE

2.0 Introduction

What is philosophy of language? What is the relationship between language and cognition? Do people who speak different languages think differently? Is there a level of cognitive development necessary for language acquisition? These are just but examples of philosophical questions that philosophers ask in the world of philosophy. Wikipedia (2014) maintains that philosophy of language prioritizes inquiry on the nature of meaning and seek to explain what it means to “mean” something. It seeks to better the understanding of what speakers and listeners do with language in communication, and how it is used socially. Philosophy of language also underlines how language relates to the minds of both the speaker and the interpreter. Wikipedia (2014) further concludes that philosophy of language investigates how language and meaning relate to truth and the world.

Like any other language, English is one of the languages learned in Kenya as a second language hence found within the curriculum (Republic of Kenya, 2012). In this chapter the researcher uses philosophical analysis to analyze different issues: Philosophy of second language acquisition, analysis of the place of English as a second language, analysis of the foreign language and Mother Tongue transfer, difference between first language and second language, transition from first to second language and educational effects of transition from one language to another.

2.1 The philosophy of second language acquisition

What is second language acquisition? How long does it take to learn a second language? What influences the learning of the second language? What is the role of the teacher in facilitating the learning of the second language? Marysia (2004, p.8) observes that language acquisition is innately determined and that we are born with certain systems of language. This is supported by different linguistic scholars. For example, Chomsky (1975, p.26) asserts that each human being possesses a set of innate properties of language which is responsible for the child's mastery of the native language. He further argues that this language mechanism defines the forms in which language may take. The innate properties of language are as well underlined in the philosophy of idealism. Plato puts it that, "we are born possessing all knowledge and our realization of that knowledge is contingent on our discovery of it. All that we know already come pre-loaded on birth and our senses enable us to identify and recognize the stratified information in our mind". Marysia (2004, p. 34) distinguishes between acquisition and learning: Acquisition is a sub-conscious process which leads to fluency. Learning on the other hand is a conscious process which manifests itself in terms of learning rules and structures.

Krashen (1985, p. 39) maintains that there are three operative internal processes when learners acquire second language. These are the monitor, filter and organizer. The monitor is responsible for conscious learning and has nothing to do with acquisition. Brown (1973, p. 21) claims that filter is responsible for extent in which the learners acquisition of the second language is influenced by the social circumstances such as motivation and effective factors like anger and anxiety. The organizer determines the organization of the learner's language. It organizes the usage of incorrect grammatical instructions and provisional precursors, grammatical structures, the systematical occurrence of errors in the learnt item.

Brown (2000, p. 278) puts forward the affective filter hypothesis by stating that it is easier for learners to acquire language when they are not tense, angry, anxious or bored. According to Marysia (2004, p.39) performers with optimal attitude have a lower effective filter. A low filter means that the performer is more open to the input language. According to the theory of the second language acquisition, communicative competence is very necessary. Hacking (1975, p. 12) defines competence as what a speaker needs to know in order to be fluent in speech. This involves both language and ability for language use. Hacking (1975, p. 13) underlines four dimensions of communicative competence that are defined as a linguistic competence, discourse competence and strategic competence. To realize these competences, it is logically appropriate for learners to develop a general knowledge of language they want to understand and produce. Hurst (1974, p. 26) argues that things we know and use automatically may not necessarily be learned through gradual build up of automaticity, but they may be based on the interaction of knowledge that we already have. They may also be based on the acquisition of new language which somehow fits into an existing system and may restructure the system.

As outlined by Tharp and Gillimore (1998, p. 9), native speakers possess pragmatic competency that places language in the institutional setting of the use, relating intentions and purpose to the linguistic means at hand. Philosophy of second language acquisition has a place in the study under investigation. Learners in Ndihiwa Sub County, as elsewhere in the world, have innate nature in acquisition of second language. It may mean that they possess internal process in acquisition of the second language; for instance, their acquisition of the second language (English) can be influenced by social circumstances such as their Mother Tongue (Dholuo). Their acquisition of the second language (English) may depend on the interaction of the knowledge they already have (knowledge of *Dholuo*).

Learners are advised to use their internal process in learning English as a subject in their curriculum. English is a second language to these learners. Therefore their ability in achieving fluency demands commitment to four skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) and exposure to environment where the language is practiced.

2.2 Analysis of the place of English as a second language

Amuseghan (2007) summed up the place of English language that for most learners, English is a second language. Therefore it becomes expedient to provide better environment for them at each educational level to improve in the four skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing). To determine the success or otherwise of the aims, goals, objectives, methods and materials of English curriculum; a study of mass accumulation of the four skills as well as different levels (phonetics and phonology, morphology, syntax, lexis and semantics) is an evitable task. These different levels are some of the influence of Mother Tongue (Dholuo) on English performance because they are not clear in *Dholuo*, but emphasized in second language (English).

English is a restricted code language across the world. Oluwole (2008, p. 207) observes that the socio-linguistic realities are different in that English is really a restricted code language in many countries' settings, even in school premises. In the real sense of communicative situation, the ability to understand a language and to reproduce it in actual communication is not the same as meeting a descriptive standard which examination oriented English curriculum emphasizes. This is because actual language use involves many varieties of knowledge, which no one has ever attempted to squeeze into textbooks or grammars. For example the knowledge of the texture of letters used in language development have no grammatical expression and meaning in textbooks e.g. what is the texture of letter *t* in the word (*tea*)?

English is an important language as a stepping stone. Oluwole (2008) argues that the knowledge of English is important for Educational, economical, and national development. Learners may perhaps have difficulties in acquiring English as a second language because in their imminent environment the language is not spoken and it is restricted, only met at schools. They struggle to learn it because it has value in learning other subjects in the curriculum and can be used in promoting economy. It is a foreign language and therefore not the original language of the learners in Kenya.

2.3 Analysis of the foreign language and Mother Tongue transfer

It is popular belief that foreign language is strongly influenced by the learner's first language. Ellis (1999) observes that the first language has a negative influence on the learning of the second language. That is the first language gets in the way or interferes with the learning of foreign language such that features of the first language are transferred into the foreign language. As cited by Marton in Ellis (1999, p. 150), "there is never peaceful co-existence between two language systems in the learner, but rather constant warfare, and that warfare is not limited to the moment of cognition, but continues during the period of storing newly learnt ideas in memory". Learners in the sub county in question are having their first language (Dholuo). This language interferes with learning of English as a second language and most of its features are transferred to this foreign language. Dholuo as the first language is different from second language (English), especially in its process of acquisition. This may be the reason why it has a lot of influence on acquisition of English.

2.4 The analysis of the difference between first language and second language

The languages that people speak are for them, the most expressive and most beautiful of all languages (Fromkin, Rodman and Hyams, 2007). Language is not only a product of human's life, but it is the prerequisite of it, or in other words, human beings require a human relationship to survive (Wikipedia, 2009). According to Boyer (1996): "language is central to learning and life itself". This may explain why it is said that the success of language education is generally the success of education. And it might equally true that education failure is basically a linguistic failure. Oyetunde and Muodamogu (1999) summarize that language is not just one of the subjects in the curriculum; it is the essential vehicle for learning all other subjects.

Hugh (1982, p.11) observes that although first and second languages are different, there are some similarities in the way in which they are acquired. First and second languages are both learned gradually. On the same note they need model. This implies that they are learnt through exposure. Environment where the language is spoken is very important for the child. Smith (1997) notices the differences between the learning of the first and the second languages. He maintains that learning first language is natural, formal and smooth. He argues that those people around the child use the language purposefully and naturally and the child hears it. He as well observes that the child's effort to use the language to communicate is met with a lot of appreciation. He summarizes that through exposure to language use in a natural purposeful context and with appropriate response from adults; the child spontaneously acquires the correct use of language.

In a classroom situation, learning the second language is formal and quite artificial compared to first language learning. The child comes across the regular use of the second language for the first time in school (Smith, 1997, p. 28). In learning English as a second language, the learner

feels burdened for the demand of grammatical and structural correctness. This somewhat is one of the major problems facing the children in Kenya as far as the learning of English language is concerned. Dholuo as the first language for the sub county under study has different learning stages from second language (English) because the second language does not go through the babbling and uttering of sound stages. When learners start to learn the second language they are therefore faced with Mother Tongue influence (Boote, 1994, p. 16).

Okwanyi (1993, p. 14) summarizes the major differences between learning the first language and learning the second language, which to some extent similar to situation in Kenya in the table below.

COMPARISON BETWEEN FIRST AND SECOND LANGUAGE LEARNING:

FIRST LANGUAGE	SECOND LANGUAGE
It is learned informally from birth by hearing purposeful speech and continues to be for purposeful communication in a wide range of situations.	Learning is programmed and timetabled and there is examination to be done both at school level and national level.
It suffers no interference by any other language.	The already learned language interferes and influences the learning of the second language.
It is taught in a relaxed friendly atmosphere with great love and care of the mother, father, siblings, relatives and adult speakers who are native speakers.	It is taught by the teachers who are employed to do the work. These teachers are at times impatient with the learners. Moreover they are not native speakers themselves.
It is acquired as a basic survival need for child to interact with the environment.	Learning it is not a basic survival need because the learners can already communicate.

Learning is smooth. It takes place naturally and informally with the child discovering rules by trial and error method or through play and experimentation without analyzing tenses, grammar etc. it is learned in every day environment.	It is learned artificially and formally and the child can be bogged down with memorization of vocabulary or rules of grammar and analysis of tenses.
Any attempt by the child to use the language is met with encouraging response.	A child's use of second language is met with corrections concerning grammar and spelling.
The child has great exposure to the language from parents, siblings, relatives and other adults.	Exposure to second language is limited in some cases, but only to the school.

The comparison summarized by Okwany (1993, p. 14) in the table above is possibly relevant to the problem under investigation where Ndhiwa sub county is used as a case study. In this region, Dholuo is learned informally from birth by hearing purposeful speech. This is a situation that influences the learning of English which is differently structured, having timetabled and examination done both at school level and national level. Dholuo get deep in to the mind of the learners in this sub county because it is learned through love in a relaxed friendly atmosphere with care from parents and relatives. This feasibly makes the learning of English to be difficult for these learners because it is taught by teachers who are impatient and not native speakers of the language.

Learning of Dholuo takes place naturally and informally with children discovering rules by trial and error method or through play and experimentation. This influences the learning of English which is bogged down with memorization of vocabulary or rules of grammar and analysis of tenses. Learners are not naturally used to this artificial and formal learning. Dholuo has great

exposure from the parents, siblings, relatives and other adults where English is only met by these learners at school. Because Dholuo is a first language for them, it suffers no interference by any other language. English suffers interference from Dholuo as the natural instrument of thought. English lacks motivation to be learned because learners have acquired Dholuo as the basic survival need for interaction with the environment. Learners therefore are advised to have transition techniques to enable them acquire English as a second language.

2.5 Analysis of the transition from Mother Tongue to second language (English)

Mother Tongue interference on English language can be dealt with when there is smooth transition from Mother Tongue to second language. A study outlined by Skehan (1989) suggests that a person can always be ready to speak a language no matter what level one is at. Tharp and Gillimore (1998, p. 39) support that people can communicate with limited words in a given language. Halliday (1975, p. 33) contends that; majority of learners take long before they start speaking a second language like English, the reason being that they are not ready and free to speak the language. Some learners wonder how they can speak English, when they have few words in it. Tharp and Gillimore (1998, p. 40) argue that the learners should use the little amount of words that they know.

Adam (1990, p. 6) maintains that; in order to make transition from Mother Tongue to second language (English), transition skills from first language to second language are important. This is so because the skills shed light on how learners can build on when acquiring English literacy. Learners are encouraged to use these skills for the smooth transition from their Mother Tongue to English. Some of these skills are phonological process skills, orthographic skills, comprehension skills and strategies.

2.5.1 Phonological process

Phonological process is the study of sound of a particular language. Phonological awareness implies that speech is composed of units which facilitate the understanding of the relationship between sounds and symbols in alphabetical language (Adam, 1990, p. 6). Learners to some degree need this skill of transition to enable them understand the sounds in English language and their symbols. Phonological awareness would viably make them to have fluency in pronunciation hence good performance in K. C. P. E.

2.5.2 Orthographic skills (skills of pronouncing letters correctly)

The study conducted by Krashen (1985, p. 6) found that; Spanish pupils speaking English produce more than four times as many predicted errors as the English speaking pupils. This is due to skills of pronouncing letters correctly. The orthographic skills can therefore help the learners to develop the correct pronunciation leading to smooth transition. The purpose of orthographic skill to learners is to expose them to environment where practice is given priority and willingness of making mistake to learn. This will also make them to have comprehension skills and strategies.

2.5.3 Comprehension skills and strategies:

Deci and Ryan (1985, p. 13) examined the cross language transfers of comprehension skills and strategies. Their studies indicate that students' reading performance at the end of sixth grade was most highly correlated with their reading in Spanish a year earlier. They concluded that skills that are academically mediated do transfer e.g. skills of reading to skills of writing. However, the above skills are very important since they help the learners to transfer the knowledge and skills that they already have to the second language. Initiates already have knowledge of their Mother

Tongue which they can use appropriately to develop the second language (English), which has educational effect.

2.6 Analysis of educational effect of transition from first language to second language (English)

Factors promoting acquisition of second language can result to transition from first to second language, which has educational effect. Tharp and Gilmore (1990, p. 24) argue that learning is best acquired when learners actively participate in meaningful activities that are constructive in nature. In order to achieve these, learners are operably tutored to use the second language constructively in the four areas of skills development. According to Smith (1997, p. 21), language is a natural function of human development. It progresses from simple to complex functions. It has made learners to interact hence creating development. In order to make the process of transition to have positive effect, the teacher can better understand and interpret pupil's performance, thus enabling them to analyze the nature of errors that pupils make and help them to improve.

According to Akinpelu (1981, p. 30), education is the art of turning the eye of the soul from darkness to light. By this he meant leading a person from the dark cave of ignorance into lamp light of knowledge. It is not putting knowledge in a person's soul as pouring water into an empty port, but rather it is aiding the individual to discover knowledge through self-reasoning processes.

Similarly, in the process of transition from Mother Tongue to English, the learners learn the skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing. They also expose themselves to appropriate environment for second language in order to create context in which they exert effort to interact

entirely in English. Their teachers exert effort to present materials in a manner which is understandable and accessible to them. They as well engage them in interactive task of creating meaning in order to further language development. This gives positive effects on the transition from Mother Tongue to second language. The skills achieved in the process of transition would perhaps result to acquisition of the second language (English), through the use of the mind.

2.7 Conclusion

In this chapter, the researcher has used philosophical analysis to discuss transition from Mother Tongue to second language. He has underlined the following areas: philosophy of the second language acquisition, analysis of the place of English as a second language, analysis of the foreign language and Mother Tongue transfer, different between first language and second language, transition from first to second language and educational effect of transition. He has also displayed the relevancy of each area to the problem under investigation. The next chapter will be Philosophical analysis of the role of the mind in acquisition of English language.

REFERENCES

- Adam, E.M. (1990). *The difference between first language and second language*. New York: Willey and sons.
- Akinpelu, J.A. (1981). *An introduction to philosophy of education*. London: Macmillan Publishers.
- Amuseghan, S.A. (2007). *Curriculum in secondary schools in Nigeria*. Nigeria: ESL Printing press.
- Boote, D.J. (1994). *English teaching in primary schools*. London: Evans Brothers Limited.
- Boyer, E. L. (1996). *Literacy and Learning*. New York: Teachers College, Columbia University.
- Brown, A. (1973). *Developing language and literacy*. New York: Longman.
- Brown, P.M. (2000). *Using the Mother Tongue to teach another Tongue*. New York: Longman.
- Chomsky, N. (1975). *Reflection on language*. New York: Pantheon press.
- Deci, E.L., & Ryan, R.M. (1985). *Intrinsic motivation and self-determination in human Behavior*. NewYork: Plenum press.
- Ellis, R. (1999). *Understanding Second Language Acquisition*. London: Oxford University Press. ForeignLanguage (n.d, n. p). Retrieved December 17th, 2015, from <http://www.eric.ed.gov>.
- Fromkin, V., Rodman, R., and Hyams, N. (2007). *An introduction to language*. Beijing: Peking university press.
- Gillimore, R.(1990). *Second language and Mother Tongue*. New York: Cambridge

University press.

Gillimore, R. (1998). *Rousing mind to life*. New York: Cambridge university press.

Hacking, I. (1975). *Why does language matter in philosophy?* Cambridge: Cambridge University press.

Halliday, M.K. (1975). *Language structure and language functions*. London: Macmillan Publishers.

Hurst, P. (1974). *Knowledge and Curriculum*. London: Rout ledge and Kagen University Press.

Krashen, s. (1985). *Principle and practice of second language acquisition*. New York: Longman.

Marysia, j. (2004). *Language acquisition*. Nairobi: University of Nairobi press.

Okwanyi, L.A. (1993). *Attitude of Kenyan school students in the learning of languages*. Nairobi: Kijabe press.

Oluwole, D .A. (2008). *The impact of Mother Tongue on Students achievements in English language in junior secondary certificate examination*.

Western Nigeria: Journal of social sciences, vol. 1 No 1. 41-49. Accessed at [Http://www.krepublishers.com/02-journals/JSS/JSS-17-0-000-0 oo-2008-Web//JSS-17-1-001-08-Abst-Text](http://www.krepublishers.com/02-journals/JSS/JSS-17-0-000-0-oo-2008-Web//JSS-17-1-001-08-Abst-Text) on 14/12/2015.

Oyetunde, T.O., & Muodumogu, C.A. (1999). *Effective English Teaching in Primary and Secondary Schools*. Nigeria: JOS conference on Educational Improvement.

Republic of Kenya Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology. (2012). *Sessional Paper No.1 of 2005 on a policy Framework for Education, Training, and*

Research. Nairobi: Ministry of Education Press.

Smith, B. (1997). *Through writing to reading.* New York: Oxford university press.

Tharp, R.G., & Gillemore, R. (1998). *Rousing mind to life.* New York: Cambridge University Press.

Wikipedia. (2009). *First language.* Retrieved from [http://www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/first Language](http://www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/first_Language) on 5/8/2015.

Wikipedia. (2014). *First language.* Retrieved from <http://www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/first-Language> on 18/12/2015.

CHAPTER THREE

THE ROLE OF THE MIND IN THE ACQUISITION OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the role of the mind in the acquisition of the English language is discussed, underlining the following areas: analysis of the factors that make the acquisition of the second language (English) difficult, analysis of the influence of the first language on the acquisition of the second language (English), analysis of the role of mind in the acquisition of language, philosophical analysis of language and thought and factors promoting the acquisition of the second language (English). The chapter ends with conclusion and references.

To begin with, what is first language? What is second language? What is the relationship between language and mind? How can language be acquired? What are the factors that promote the acquisition of the second language? These are some of the questions in the world of philosophers that the researcher deals with. The first languages are languages that people first learn to speak when they are young (Hornby, 1993, p.956). The second languages are languages acquired by people in addition to their Mother Tongue (Ashworth, 1992). According to Chomsky (1968), language and mind are inter-related, such that they contribute distinctively to the development of each other.

3.2 Analysis of the factors that make the acquisition of the second language (English) difficult

Collier (1988, p. 2) asserts that second language acquisition is concerned with the studies of the ways in which individuals become able to use one or more languages that are different from their first languages. This process can take place in a natural setting or through formal classroom instruction. Why do some people struggle to learn second languages and never achieve full proficiency as it happened to them when they were learning first language? Guirra (1975, p. 10) maintains that the hardest part of learning a new language is pronunciation which can result in a foreign accent. The accent is caused by transfer between the sound of the first and the second languages. Learners in Kenya most likely find it difficult to reach pronunciation of English terminologies as per the foreign accent. They struggle to learn English for a period more than eight years and never achieve full proficiency as it happened to them when they were learning Their Mother Tongue. This makes them to lack motivation and they are discouraged to perform well in the language, a factor that impact negatively on the performance of K.C.P.E.

Collier (1988, p. 10) observes that successful language acquisition depends on age. In one of the earliest studies on second language acquisition, Lenneberg (1976, p. 11) claims that there is a certain period in the acquisition of the second language. In this period which is identified as critical period of hypothesis in language acquisition, Lenneberg theorizes that the acquisition of language is an innate process determined by biological factors.

Lenneberg (1976, p. 12) believes that after lateralization and that is a process by which the two sides of the brain develop specialized functions, the brain loses plasticity and lateralization of the language function which is normally completed at puberty making post-adolescent language

acquisition difficult. In the study of assessing students acquisition of pronunciation after three years of exposure to the second language, Fathman (1975, p. 16) found that younger children had retained more accent free pronunciation when compared to adolescents just past puberty. The situation is practicably similar to Kenya, for instance in the sub county used as the case study an informal research carried out by IMPACT (2015) reports that some class eight learners were between 17 to 20 years of age. Such candidates perform poorly in languages especially English which is under investigation.

According to the report, their teachers explained that they only have interest in playing football and come to school in term one after which they disappear for crashing sugar cane and waiting for another term one the following year. A few of them that report for K.C.P.E. exams in third term usually perform dismally, especially in English subject.

Kendra (2009, p. 11) suggests that willingness to make mistakes allows learners to improve by getting feedback on what they are doing wrong and how to make correction. Beginners do not want to make grammatical mistakes because they usually shy off in making attempts in speaking in English due to the fact that the already learned language (Mother Tongue) interferes and influences the learning of the second language (English). This to some extent prevents their chances of getting corrected by their teachers or fellow learners.

Wikipedia (2015) in the philosophy of language suggests problems in philosophy of language that involve vagueness, problem of universals and composition, nature of language, formal versus informal approaches, translation and interpretation. These problems, as universally witnessed, make the acquisition of English language to be difficult for learners in Kenya.

3.2.1 Problem of vagueness

Learners conceivably have the problem of vagueness as noted by Corchia (2010) who maintains that one issue that has troubled philosophers of language and logic is the problem of the vagueness of words. He explains that the specific instances of vagueness that most interest philosophers of language are those where the existence of “borderline cases” make it seemingly impossible to say whether a predicate is true or false. For instance the learners in question are perhaps confused on conceptualizing issues such as “is tall” or is “bald”, where it cannot be said that some borderline case (some given person) is tall or not tall. In consequences, vagueness makes them have the *paradox of the heap*, that result to total confusion in acquisition of the second language (English).

3.2.2 Problem of universals and composition

Corchia (2010) notes that one debate that has captured the interest of many philosophers is the debate over the meaning of *universals*. He gave example that “when people say the word *rock*, what is it that the word represents?” two different answers have emerged to this question. Some have said that the expression stands for some real, abstract universal out in the world called “rock”. Others have said that the word stands for some collection of particular, individual rocks that we associate with merely a nomenclature. The former position has been called *philosophical realism* and the latter is *nominalism*.

The issue according to Corchia can be explicated if a proposition is examined. For instance, “*Obungu is a man*”. From the radical realist’s perspective, the connection between “*O*” and “*m*” in the words “*Obungu*” and “*man*”, respectively, is the connection between two abstract entities. There is an entity “*man*” and an entity “*Obungu*”. These two things connect in some way or

overlap. From a nominalist's perspective, the connection between *O* and *m* is the connection between a particular entity (*Obungu*) and a vast collection of particular things (*men*). To say that Obungu is a man is to say that Obungu is a part of the class of "men". Another perspective is to consider "man" to be a property of the entity, "Obungu". Learners may possibly find themselves in the problem of universals and composition because they may not conceptualize philosophical realism and nominalism due to the fact that their natural instrument of thought is their Mother Tongue.

3.2.3 Nature of language

Learners most likely have problem related to nature of language. This is a problem that has been possibly preventing good performance in English subject in K.C.P.E. Many works by linguist Chomsky (2000) have emphasized the role of syntax as a characteristic of any language. More puzzling is the question of what it is that distinguishes one particular language from another. What is it that makes "English" English? Chomsky indicates that the search for what it means to be a language must begin with the study of the internal language of persons, or languages, which are based upon certain rules (principles and parameters) which generate grammar.

This view is supported in part by the conviction that there is no clear, general and principled difference between one language and the next, and which may apply across the field of all languages. Learners are almost certainly in the similar situation of lacking clear, general and principled difference between their Mother Tongue and the next language (English).

3.2.4 Formal versus informal approaches

Learners may have been in total confusion of the extent to which formal logic and informal approaches can be used as an effective tool in the analysis and understanding of natural

languages. This is at times because of lack of smooth transition from their natural language to the second language (English). They find difficulties in acquiring the second language because they complicate the theories of speech acts, which describe the kinds of things which can be done with English sentences (assertion, command, inquiry, exclamation) in different contexts of use on different occasions. Stainton (1996) argued that the truth table semantics of the logical connectives (e.g. \wedge , \vee and \rightarrow) do not capture the meaning of their natural language counterparts ("and", "or" and "if-then"). While the "ordinary language " movement basically died out in the 1970s, its influence was crucial to the development of the field of speech act theory and the study of pragmatics. While keeping these traditions in mind, the question of whether or not there is any grounds for conflict between formal and informal approaches is far from being decided and impacts negatively to acquisition of English language.

3.2.5 Translation and interpretation

Translation and interpretation are two other problems that learners can have. Quine (1950) argued for the indeterminacy of meaning and reference based on the principle of radical translation. In word and object, Quine asks readers to imagine a situation in which they are confronted with a previously undocumented, primitive tribe and must attempt to make sense of the utterance and gestures that its members make. This is the situation of radical translation. He claims that in such a situation, it is impossible in principle to be absolutely certain of the meaning or reference that a speaker of the primitive tribe's language attaches to an utterance.

For example, in the sub county used as the case study, if a speaker sees a rabbit and says "*ogila*", is the speaker referring to the whole rabbit, to the rabbit tail, a temporal part of the rabbit or rabbit has seen him/her? All that can be done is to examine the utterance as a part of the

overall linguistic behavior of the individual, and then use the observations to interpret the meaning of all other utterances. From this basis, one can form a manual of translation. But since reference is indeterminate, there will be many such manuals, no one of which is more correct than the others. This will amount to semantic holism, which is a great problem affecting learners.

3.3 Analysis of the influence of the first language on the acquisition of the second language (English)

Factors that make acquisition of English language difficult for learners are based on influence of their Mother Tongue. The most notified interference is pronunciation. Onuigbo (1984) cited that errors may occur due to the fact that some of the English sounds are not found in the Mother Tongue. It has rightly been observed that in the first language learning, the learners are highly motivated and are surrounded by conducive linguistic environment, the kind that the second language lacks. This implies that though language learning is generally difficult, second language learning has greater problems which result in the greater number of errors in performance of second language users.

Bhelda (1999) opined that; the learners begins the learning task of learning a second language from point zero (or close to it) and through the study accumulation of the mastered entities of the target language. Language interference when speaking or writing in a second language is generally life long experience which need perpetual attention, sometime even up to adulthood the lexical stress patterns of the Mother Tongue in their second language (English) , are not shaken off in spite of years of teaching and listening. This situation is in Kenya where the learners are subjected to K.C.P.E. at the end of eight years in primary school.

Interference can be identified according to regional variations especially in phonology and lexis. Certain pronunciations are identified with members of an ethnic group and when the markers of the group's accents are present in a particular speaker, one can be fairly certain that the speaker in question is a member of that ethnic group by birth or upbringing, or both (Idowu, 1999).

Onike (2009) posited that interference is a psycho-linguistic concept which is reality in language learning. Errors in second language learning are partly attributable to interference. Theories of interference believe that acquisition of the first language usually affect performance in the subsequent language acquired. Interference as a linguistic problem is common in communities where second language (usually the lingua franca) must be learnt. In other words, interference is either positive or negative transfer of the linguistic knowledge of language into the performance in the other. This is somewhat similar to the problem under investigation because English is a compulsory subject in Kenyan primary schools' curriculum.

According to Duskova (1969, p. 18), error in second language acquisition are traceable to the first language. This problem affects learners, for example, in *Dholuo* letters “*q, v, she, and x*”, are not coming out from daily communication. This to a certain degree affects the smooth transition to English. More importantly, first language influence appears to be strongest in complex word order and in word for word translations of phrases. Duskova (1969, p.27) asserts that the interference from Mother Tongue is plainly obvious in errors of word order and sentence construction. One of the most Common example in the sub county under examination as noted by Lococo (1997, p.14) is that the high incidences of Interlingua involves word order errors. For example “*happy I am here*” instead of “*I am happy to be here*”. This situation continues to affect the performance of English in Kenya.

3.4 Analysis of the role of the mind in acquisition of the language

For transition to be successful, the role of the mind in acquisition of the second language is of the necessity. Light Foot (2010, p. 14) defines language acquisition as a process whereby human beings acquire the capacity to perceive and comprehend language as well as to produce and use words and sentences to communicate. Miller (1997, p. 26) asserts that the human language capacity is represented in the mind (Brain) and even though this capacity is finite, one can say and understand an infinite number of sentences which are based on the syntax principles called *recursions*. Miller adds that human being can use the mind to combine the syllables that form language and this language can be understood by another human being.

According to Chomsky (1975, p. 11); “infants are able to acquire most aspects of languages using their mind without being taught. Children within few years of birth understand the grammatical rules of their ethnic language without being taught as one learns grammar in school”. Tomasello (2008, p. 19) maintains that language acquisition has subject of human’s ability to acquire knowledge and learn concepts using the mind. Plato states that word meaning mappings in some form are innate and God given (Pailler, 1977, p. 17). The mind therefore helps in language development. Due to this fact, the learners use their mind to develop the language of their Mother Tongue from the community hence the language is cemented in their mind.

Searle (2007) in the philosophy of language presented the connection between the mind and learning of languages (Innateness and learning). Some important philosophical questions are *how much of language is innate? Is language acquisition a special faculty in the mind? What is the connection between thought and language?* There are three general perspectives on the issue of language learning. The first is the *behaviorist* perspective, which dictates that not only is the

solid bulk of language learned, but it is learned via conditioning. The second is the *hypothesis testing perspective*, which understands the child's learning of syntactic rules and meanings to involve the postulation and testing of hypotheses, through the use of the general faculty of intelligence. The final candidate for explanation is the in- born perspective, which states that at least some of the syntactic settings are innate and hardwired, based on certain modules of the mind.

He maintains that there are varying notions of the structure of the brain when it comes to language. *Connectionist* models emphasize the idea that a person's lexicon and their thoughts operate in a kind of distributed, associative network. *Nativist models* assert that there are *specialized devices* in the brain that are dedicated to language acquisition. *Computation* models emphasize the notion of a representational language of thought and the logic-like, computational processing that the mind performs over them. *Emergentist* models focus on the notion that natural faculties are a complex system that emerges from simpler biological parts. Reductionist models attempt to explain higher-level mental processes in terms of the basic low-level neurophysiological activity of the brain. Learners are having their mind that can get engaged in acquisition of language through the process of innateness. They have potential knowledge to learn English because the idea is already in their mind.

3.5 Analysis of Language and thought

An important problem which touches both philosophy of language and philosophy of mind is to what extent language influences thought and vice versa. There have been a number of different perspectives on this issue, each offering a number of insights and suggestions. Gruyter (1988) in

the philosophy of language and thought discusses different perspectives of language and thought in the following aspects of linguistics which are most likely relevant to the situation under study:

Linguists Sapir and Whorf (1981) suggested that language limited the extent to which members of a "linguistic community" can think about certain subjects (a hypothesis paralleled in George Orwell's novel (1984). In other words, language was analytically prior to thought. Philosopher Michael Dummett (1983) is also a proponent of the "language-first" viewpoint.

The stark opposite of the Sapir-Whorf (1981) position is the notion that thought (or, more broadly, mental content) has priority over language. The "knowledge-first" position can be found, for instance, in the work of Paul Grice (1986). Further, this view is closely associated with Jerry Fodor (1979) and his language of thought hypothesis. According to his argument, spoken and written language derive their intentionality and meaning from an internal language encoded in the mind. The main argument in favor of such a view is that the structure of thoughts and the structure of language seem to share a compositional, systematic character. Another argument is that it is difficult to explain how signs and symbols on paper can represent anything meaningful unless some sort of meaning is infused into them by the contents of the mind. One of the main arguments against is that such levels of language can lead to an infinite regress. In any case, many philosophers of mind and language, such as Ruth Millikan (1985), Fred Dretske (1987) and Fodor (1979), have recently turned their attention to explaining the meanings of mental contents and states directly.

Another tradition of philosophers has attempted to show that language and thought are coextensive; that there is no way of explaining one without the other. Donald Davidson (1988), in his essay "Thought and Talk", argued that the notion of belief could only arise as a product of

public linguistic interaction. Daniel Dennett (1986) holds a similar *interpretationist* view of propositional attitudes. To an extent, the theoretical underpinnings to cognitive semantics (including the notion of semantic framing) suggest the influence of language upon thought. However, the same tradition views meaning and grammar as a function of conceptualization, making it difficult to assess in any straightforward way. Some thinkers, like the ancient sophist Gorgias (1982), have questioned whether or not language was capable of capturing thought at all. There are studies that prove that languages shape how people understand causality. Some of them were performed by Lera Boroditsky (1983). For example, English speakers tend to say things like "John broke the vase" even for accidents. However, Spanish or Japanese speakers would be more likely to say "the vase broke itself." In studies conducted by Caitlin Fausey (1988) at Stanford University speakers of English, Spanish and Japanese watched videos of two people popping balloons, breaking eggs and spilling drinks either intentionally or accidentally. Later everyone was asked whether they could remember who did what. Spanish and Japanese speakers did not remember the agents of accidental events as well as did English speakers. In another study, English speakers watched the video of Janet Jackson's infamous "wardrobe malfunction", accompanied by one of two written reports. The reports were identical except in the last sentence where one used the agentive phrase "ripped the costume" while the other said "the costume ripped." The people who read "ripped the costume" blamed Justin Timberlake more.

In another series of experiments a group of people was asked to view furniture from an IKEA catalog. Half the time they were asked to label the object whether it was a chair or lamp, for example, while the rest of the time they had to say whether or not they liked it. It was found that when asked to label items, people were later less likely to recall the specific details of products,

such as whether a chair had arms or not. It was concluded that labeling objects helps our minds build a prototype of the typical object in the group at the expense of individual features. Learners in Kenya are virtually in the position of making use of language and thought to develop their skills in acquisition of languages especially English. They are expected to work hard to change their true selves, because solutions of their problems almost need their own effort.

3.6 Analysis of factors promoting the acquisition of the second language (English)

Mind is very important in acquisition of the second language as mentioned above. For it to work effectively, the environment must have factors promoting the acquisition of the second language. The following factors promote the acquisition of the second language: Motivation, regular practice, emotional involvement, willingness to make mistakes, age factor, personality, instruction and culture and status. Skehan (1991, p. 12) called for an expansion of the motivational construct in second language learning in the field of applied linguistics. With reference to Skinner (1954, P. 16), intrinsic motivation has been found to correlate strongly with educational achievement. Students who enjoy language learning and take pride in their progress do better as compared to students who do not.

Pinker (2007, p. 20) established that our memory can retain much better information if it is associated with strong emotions and regular practice. According to Chomsky 1975, p. 15), introverts or anxious learners usually make slower progress especially in the development of oral skills. They are less likely to take advantage of opportunities to speak or to seek out such opportunities. However, extrovert learners will not worry on the grammatical mistake that they make. They can take risks of speaking second language thereby acquiring good command of vocabulary.

Kendra (2009, p. 12) reports that some language teachers are better than others at providing effective learning experiences for their pupils in classroom situation. These pupils will make better progress than others whose teachers cannot deliver the content well. Finally, culture and status promote the performance of the second language acquisition. Chomsky (1975, p. 15) claims that learners in situations where their own culture has a lower status than that of a culture in which they are learning the language are likely to make slow progress.

3.7 Conclusion

In this chapter, the role of the mind in the acquisition of the English language has been discussed under the following headings: analysis of the factors that make the acquisition of second language (English) difficult, analysis of the influence of the first language on acquisition of the second language (English), analysis of the role of mind in acquisition of language, Philosophical analysis of language and thought. The chapter ends with analysis of factors that promote acquisition of the second language (English). The next chapter will contain ideas that can lead to improvement of performance in English when learners use it as a second language.

REFERENCES

- Ashworth, M. (1992). *Beyond Methodology*. Malta: Cambridge University Press.
- Bhelta, B. (1999). *Native language interference in learning a second language*.
New York: University of Chicago.
- Boroditsky, L. (1983). *Language and mind*. New York: Pantheon Press.
- Chomsky, N. (1968). *The logical structure of linguistic theory*. Chicago: Chicago University Press.
- Chomsky, N. (1975). *Reflection on language*. New York: Pantheon press.
- Chomsky, N. (2000). *New horizons in the study of language and mind*. Cambridge: Cambridge University press.
- Collier, V.P. (1988). *The effect of age on acquisition of second language for school*.
New York: National Clearing House Press.
- Corchia, L. (2010). *Logic in language culture*. Genova: Genova University press.
- Dennet, Q. (1986). *Influence of language upon thought*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Donald, D. (1988). *Thought and talk*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Dretske, F. (1987). *Philosophy of language*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Dummett, M. (1983). *Linguistic community*. Basque: Oxford University press.

- Duskova, J. (1969). *Language acquisition*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Foder, J. (1979). *Language of thought hypothesis*. Latin America: Latin America Press.
- Fathman, A. (1975). *The relationship between age and second language*. Hills Dale: Tesol Press.
- Fausey, C. (1988). *Language and thought*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
- Gorgias, S. (1982). *Language and mind*. Berlin: Walter Press.
- Grice, P. (1986). *Notion of Thought*. New Delhi: Vikas Publishing house.
- Gruyter, S.K. (1988). *Language and thought*. Berlin: Walter Press.
- Guirrona, A. Z. (1975). *Empathy and second language learning*. Boston: Academic Press.
- Hornby, T. (1993). *Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Idowu, O.A. (1999). *Regional Variations in English*. Nigeria: Retrieved from <http://www.unilori.edu.Ng/uniloren/journals/education/ije/june1999/language.pdf> On 20/12/2015.
- IMPACT. (2015). *Improving curriculum development*. Ndhiwa Kenya: IMPACT Press.
- Kendra, A. P. (2009). *Understanding human language*. Nairobi: student's pulse.com Retrieved on 22/12/2015.

Lenneberg, E. (1976). *Biological foundations of language*. New York: Willey and Sons.

Light foot, D. (2010). *Language acquisition and language change*. New York: Willey and Sons.

Lococo, M. (1997). *Language acquisition*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Miller, J. (1997). *Philosophy of language*. New York: retrieved from <http://archives.econ.Ed/archives/pen> on 22/12/2015.

Millikan, R. (1985). *Philosophy of mind*. London: Oxford University Press.

Onike, R. (2009). *Interference Phenomenon in Yoruba-English bilingual context*.

Retrieved from <http://searchwarp.com/swa556725-Interference-Phenominon-in-Yoruba-English-Bilingual-Context.htm> on 18/12/2015.

Onuigbo, H. (1984). *Language structure*. Nigeria: Nigeria Printing Press.

Orwell, G. (1984). *Hypothesis novel*. Malta: Cambridge University Press.

Pailler, C. (1977). *Language acquisition*. Boston: Academic Press.

Pinker, S. (2007). *The language instinct*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Quine, W. V. (1950). *Word and object*. MIT: MIT Press.

Sapir, N., & Whorf, M. (1981). *Linguistic novel*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Searle, J. (2007). *Philosophy of language*. New York: Broadview Press.

Skehan, P. (1991). *Individual differences in second language learning*. New York: Willy
AndSons.

Skinner, B. F. (1954). *The science of learning and the art of teaching*. New York:
Academic Press.

Stainton, R. J. (1996). *Philosophical perspectives on language*. Peterborough: Broadview
Press.

Tomasello, M. (2008). *Constructing a language*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Wikipedia. (2015). *First language*. Nairobi: Accessed at <http://en.Wikipedia.org/Wiki/first>

Language on 24/12/2015.

CHAPTER FOUR

IDEAS THAT CAN LEAD TO IMPROVEMENT OF PERFORMANCE IN ENGLISH WHEN LEARNERS USE IT AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter the researcher proposes ideas that can lead to the improvement of performance in English when learners use it as a second language. He focuses on idealism and conceptual framework on the use of the mind to suggest possible ways that can lead to the improvement of performance of learners. He conceives these ideas under the following areas: freedom in learning environment as a way of improving English performance, the use of the mind in improvement of performance in English and belief, truth and ground condition that can improve performance in English. The researcher also incorporates the ideas with the major findings and contributions of this research to education and ends the chapter with conclusion.

To begin with, what is idea? What is performance? How can learners improve their performance? What is education? Why does human being devote time and energy in education? These are some of the epistemological issues that the researcher contemplates in this chapter in line with idealism and conceptual framework. Hume (2000, p. 21) argues that idea is a technical term that refers to the component of thought. This implies that idea is a kind of mental image that is invisible hence hidden from others and does not deteriorate. Murdock (1992, p. 11) maintains that performance is any external manifestation of behavior emanating from the mind.

Education is the liberation of human mind through academic and formal training (Reece and Walker, 1997, p. 9). To educate a person means to have someone learn something. However, to have learnt something is not necessarily that somebody is educated. Since not all learning is

educational, there is need for criteria for evaluating and justifying educational activities. it is logically appropriate for English learners to work hard to reach the world of ideas through recollection that enable them identify and recognize the content of the subject. Believing in the content identified is appropriate in developing knowledge and understanding that result in excellent achievement in K. C. P. E.

4.2 Freedom in learning environment as a way of improving English performance

Idealism stresses on the creativity of the mind in acquisition of knowledge and creativity is the freedom of the mind which results in growth (Hugh, 1982). When children are left free to grow, they can develop and mature naturally, which reveals innate powers of creative expression in English language. Their teachers and education stake holders are guided to understand that learners have inherent impulse to be creative, which is a starting point in teaching them. They may be given direction from what they already have in their mind. This principle of freedom of mind in learning environment, which is also the guiding principle of art education or fine art , views creativity as a natural need that is virtually catered for during the child's natural development (Njoroge and bennaars, 1986). Education stake holders are coached not to control or interfere with learner's creativity; this may mean that they let nature follow its course. English language is an art that rather needs learner's creativity from their natural status.

Freedom in the learning environment initiates learning through senses. The idea of perceptibility in learning English contents is aided by mental vision. Because of this, English learning is abstract, having intellectual vision originating from the brain. Learning environment is credibly required to have the learning resources at the vicinity. English teaching aids are very important in the learning institutions because what is seen or touched can be recollected easily. It may be

advisable for English teachers to use objects, charts, pictures, maps and diagrams while teaching. This possibly will mean that they avoid a lot of theory but engage the learners in practical activities which are visible and tangible.

When learners have freedom, they can manipulate learning resources without fright. It is therefore important if Learners can touch English learning resources. Vocabularies that involve texture can be learned through the sense of touch. Manipulation can as well boost the confidence of the learners, makes them have genuine interest and induce cooperation as they acquire the language.

The skill of listening is perhaps necessary in language development. The child can develop this skill in a free environment. English teachers are advised to expose their learners to relevant contents presented by experts. They can invite resource persons who are role models as guest speakers. The learners can also listen to English lessons presented through the radios and televisions. Education stake holders are tutored to polish their speeches because they are also role models in English learning environment. Other teachers who teach other subjects are also coached to be fluent while teaching because they also contribute to the development of the language to the learners.

Learning environment is desirable to be harmless to the learners. Attention is of value to the learners and things which can destruct their attention like bad smell may be avoided but at times necessary in developing the vocabulary related to smell. Learners are therefore advised to embrace their sense of smell in acquiring English content as a whole.

Learning English to some extent have preference that is developed by the sense of taste. Preference can make the learners to create their own knowledge. The ideology of freedom of

mind in learning can be achieved to perfection if individual learners accept to work hard in creating their knowledge. It is convincing if Learners can be viewed as individuals in the learning environment. Individualization refers to a process of learning whereby the individuals develop to the best of their abilities. Learners are individuals that differ from others in many aspects, which include growth, innate abilities, specific needs and interest among others. In order to develop their personalities, philosophers advocate for their individualized learning. This makes them to learn at their own pace. In individualization, their individual interests as well as talents and short coming are also catered for. Professional teachers are advised to cater for individual differences. They are convinced to limit the idea of class, form or standard for individualization to succeed. This is probably why the researcher conceives the study, indicating that the number of learners moving towards excellent achievement in K. C. P. E. is plummeting.

Teachers are tutored to emphasize that the solution of English problem needs the effort of the self, that the improvement of performance can be realized through hard work. Teachers, education stake holders and parents are instructed to avoid authoritarianism in educating their learners to acquire English language. Individual learners can do well if there is less authority in the learning environment. Educators are guided to avoid being dictatorial in passing the content, but accept the ideas proposed by the individual learners as well, because they are also human beings who can contribute to knowledge. Individual learners are therefore tutored to conjoin their classmates in their learning so as to advance the performance in English subject. It is most likely reliable if they can be free and participate in class activities through discussions so as to enable their teachers to know their areas of weakness and assist them accordingly. Learners are suppose to be willing participants and teachers are expected to stop using their authoritative dominance of the class, because the mind needs freedom for it to work effectively. Too much authority creates

fear among some learners hence block their mind from thinking and eventually perform poorly in the subject.

Freedom in learning environment promotes creativity as supported by the ideology of Nyerere (1979, p. 45) which maintains that education is a human action thereby emphasizing the creative dimension in a fundamental manner. Education is not meant to turn the learners in to tools or marketable commodities according to Nyerere. Education is reasonably intended to be for creators and not for creatures. Learners are creators of themselves and their conditions. This is the liberating education that the learners are likely to create so as to improve their performance in English. The ideas imparted by education are rationally appropriate if they can be liberating. The skills are expected to be liberating too, making education to be for person, by person and of a person (Nyerere, 1979, p. 48).

Education that results in mere verbalism is ineffective and unproductive in terms of human need and requirements and therefore learners cannot only learn to speak fluent English, but also have divergent thinking in terms of problem solving to aid them reach the world of ideas (status of universal mind). This may mean that they develop new ideas or solution that is adequate in terms of response to communication related problems. They are also trained to approach their performance problems with a lot of creativity whereby they find new ideas that can end the perpetual menace. It is realistically suitable if they can use their mind to create ingenuity in acquisition of English language. Skills that are therapeutic are very appropriate in enhancing their understanding of English. This will make them creators and not creatures as far as acquisition of English language is concern.

Akinpelu (1981, p. 30) notes that education is a process of turning the eye of the soul from darkness to light. The learners to a certain degree are instructed not to flout their mind because the mind may be the proprietor of creativity, a condition that would lead them from dark cave of ignorance to the lamp light of knowledge. They would be independent and work hard on their own with limited direction from professional teachers.

4.3 The use of the mind in improvement of performance in English.

Mind is rather supreme in reality and those who ignore the work of the mind probably fall in to error. This supremacy is possibly developed by education and philosophical thinking as Peters (1972) puts it. Because of this, learners are tutored to use their mind in improving their performance in English to realize good enactment in K. C. P. E. It may be fairly apt if they regard their mental or their ideational entities as the key to acquisition of English language. The knowledge that their minds conceptualize may perhaps be mental and unchanging. This is plausibly the knowledge that can be applied during K. C. P. E. because what is real is conceivably that which is recollected or remembered.

Learners can be assisted by their teachers to improve their imagination. It is rationally practicable if teachers can employ story telling techniques, enhance memorization through role play, use songs and poetry in presenting English content and use proverbs to enhance retention of the learned items. Repetition or re-reading English lesson possibly fixes it durably. Learners and their teachers are also advised to divide long lessons in to parts, and study each part by itself till mastered. Logical memorization of sensible materials can incorporate the content into mental structure and accomplishes much for permanent knowledge. This is credibly way the permanent knowledge would make the learners identify and recognize the information in the subject.

The learners are as well instructed to accept their latent ideas because knowledge is to some magnitude the rethinking of these ideas as stipulated by Gutek (1997, p. 13) in the philosophy of idealism. Because of this, professional teachers are advised to help them to recognize the knowledge that exist prior to and independent of their experience. It is advisable for them to teach from known to unknown, involving what is already in the mind of the learners. All that the learners know viably come pre-loaded on their birth as supported by Oluoch (1982, p. 8). Learning a matter effectively requires the intention to remember. This may perhaps explain why unintentional learning of English content is ineffective. The will to learn is necessary if any learning is to be accomplished.

It is resounding if learners can use their mind, reflect and accept formalization of English subject because formalization to a certain gradation entails a lot of cognition. This may mean accepting fixed time table, follow syllabus, have classroom setting and established work organization as the map to success in acquisition of English language. It is also credible if they work hard because hard work pays. Idealism advocates for education for the attainment of true self through hard work in learning different subjects across the curriculum (Hugh, 1982).

Kiruki (2004) suggests that learning is cognitive whereby it deals with concept formation and formal thinking. Education does not simply mean learning but cognitive learning. Learning is not the same as knowing. It is the cognitive learning that leads to knowing (Njoroge and Bennaars, 1986, p. 145). Cognitive education is a kind of package that a person gets through hard work. For this reason, learners are prepared to devote their life to hard work so as to do well in English subject.

Learners language capacity is represented in the mind as opined by philosopher Miller (1997, p. 26). This implies that they can use the mind to combine the syllables that form English language which can be understood by other learners and even their teachers. This can take place without their teachers' instructions as noted by philosopher Chomsky (1975, p. 11). Children are logically instructed to get exposed to favorable environment for learning English at an earlier stage. This is probably because; the minds of children within few years comprehend grammatical rules better.

The researcher suggests that reaching the supremacy of the mind to ensure excellent achievement in English in K. C. P. E. is divine and metaphysically endowed. Word meaning mapping in some form are innate and God given. Some of the syntactic settings are innate and hardwired based on certain module of the mind as suggested by Plato (2003). Searle (2007) notes that language acquisition has a special faculty in the mind. This supports the reason why learners should learn the solid bulk of the language via conditioning, postulation and testing of hypothesis through the use of general faculty of intelligence. A person's lexicon ideas are distributed in different parts of the brain which are dedicated to language acquisition. Education stake holders are therefore advised to consider the mind of the learners as sole proprietor of knowledge, especially English knowledge.

4.4 Belief, truth and ground condition that can improve performance of English

Mind is the Centre of knowledge and for the knowledge to be real, mind to a certain extent cannot work without the basis of belief, truth and ground of what it believes. Learners are convinced that acquisition of English is possible and that they have potential to learn the language. Knowledge is perhaps a matter of belief; to know something points in the first instance

to believing something. Believing is certainly spiritual, meaning that it may go beyond the visibility. Initiates are therefore educated to accept without doubt that acquisition of English knowledge is fairly based on believing on the content stipulated on the curriculum, teaching concept presented by the teachers, learning resources and authorities in English field as a way to success in achieving good performance.

What learners believe in may be true. Knowing may be more than just belief on the content of what is described to be English, but the content of knowledge is logically appropriate, because truth is a universal value and cannot fade away. What is truth? This implies that by recognizing the truth, there will be somewhat correct and relevant knowledge of English in the mind of the learners which will be reproduced without strain during K. C. P. E. exams and good performance would be realized. For true content, the learners are directed to rely on the relevant content outlined in their curriculum, approved to be the true content for their levels, so as to make learning of the subject specific and achievable. This implies that they embrace progressive approach to learning and accept learning from simple to complex. Their teachers are virtually advised to accept that ideas for the solution of a problem in a discipline is not limited to the discipline itself but application of multidisciplinary approach can also work.

For learners to have inspiration in acquiring English language, it is sensibly proper that they have reasons for devoting their time and energy in learning the subject. These reasons and energy that propels learning are based in the mind of the learners that eventually make them be committed to hard work which may be a map to success. It is also logically fitting if they can be ambitious and have self-determination, a situation which would possibly amount to getting English knowledge that ensures effective adjustment to fluctuating demands of experience. The learning of English to some range would direct their abilities and interest to the satisfaction of self needs. The

education stake holders are wisely tutored to accept that in the process of getting education, if the learners do not get knowledge and understanding, then the process is defective.

4.5 The aspects of the study which are unique

The aspects of the study which are exclusive include: the conceptual framework on the use of the mind to enhance performance in English, the locality taken as the case study (Ndhiwa Sub County), the period of the study, the unique back ground of the study and the organizations of the contents of the study.

4.6 The major findings and contributions of this research to education in Kenya

The research investigates the influence of Mother Tongue on English performance in Kenya Certificate of Primary Education: A case of Ndhiwa Sub County of Homa Bay County. The research reveals that wherever English is learnt and tested in examinations as a second language, poor performance is a universal phenomenon. The same phenomenon is realized in Ndhiwa Sub County where the influence of the Mother Tongue (Dholuo) as exposed to the learners by parents, siblings, relatives and other adults from the community impacts negatively to the learning of English. Learners do not apply the use of English for immediate and pressing communication because they already have *Dholuo* for the basic survival.

In the field of education, this research not only promotes English language but also all other languages taught in the school because it deals with change of the mind in relation to acquisition of languages. The research also benefits teachers to ascertain areas of strength and weaknesses that eventually leads to performance. The findings of the research further help stakeholders, education administrators and parents since they also act as role models in the community, interacting with the learners and finding solutions to their areas of difficulties as far as learning

of languages are concerned. They are expected to interact linguistically with their children and knowing their areas of problems and offer corrective measures. They are advised to understand that learners are supposed to have a lot of exposure to the second language (English). They are directed therefore to use the research to solve problems related to languages in epistemological indulgence.

4.7 Conclusion

In this chapter, the researcher has discussed the ideas put forward that can lead to the improvement of performance of English and the major findings and contribution of this research to education. The ideas put forward have been presented in line with the philosophy of idealism and conceptual framework on the use of the mind to enhance performance in English in K. C. P. E. These ideas are presented under freedom in learning environment as a way of improving English performance, the use of the mind in improvement of performance in English and belief, truth and ground condition that can improve performance in English.

The major findings of this research have been presented that *Dholuo* has greater exposure than English in the community that is initiated by parents, siblings, relatives and other adults. Contribution of this reach to education includes Promotion of other languages apart from English, change of mind in relation to learning of languages, benefit teachers to a certain areas of strength and weaknesses and help stakeholders, education administrators and parents since they also act as role models in the community, interacting with the learners and finding solutions to their areas of difficulties as far as learning of languages are concerned. Chapter five will be summary, conclusions and recommendations.

REFERENCES

- Akinpelu, J.A. (1982). *Introduction to philosophy of education*. London: Macmillan Publishers.
- GuteK, M.A. (1997). *Philosophy of idealism*. London: Oxford University Press.
- Hugh, H. (1982). *Curriculum and reality in African primary schools*. Singapore: Selector printing Press.
- Hume, D. (2000). *A treatise of human nature*. Oxford: Oxford University press.
- Kiruki, J.K. (2004). *Introduction to critical thinking*. Eldoret: Zapf Chancery Research Consultants And publishers.
- Miller, J. (1997). *Philosophy of language*. New York: retrieved from <http://archives.econ.Ed/archives/pen> on 22/12/2015.
- Murdock, B. B. (1992). *The psychology of learning and motivation*. New York: Academic press.
- Njoroge, R.J., & Bennaars, G.A. (1986). *Philosophy and Education in Africa*. Nairobi: Trans-African press.
- Nyerere, J. (1979). *Education for liberation and development*. Hamburg: Willy and Sons.
- Oluoch, G.P. (1982). *Essential of curriculum Development*. Nairobi: Elimu Bookshop.
- Peters, R. S. (1972). *Ethics and education*. London: Longman.
- Plato, C. (2003). *Cambridge studies in the dialogue of Plato*. Trans David's sedley: Cambridge

University press.

Reece, I., & Walker, S. (1997). *Education and training*. London: Business Education

Publishers.

Searle, J. (2007). *Philosophy of language*. New York: Broadview Press.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary

The research analyzes the influence of Mother Tongue on English performance in Kenya Certificate of Primary Education: A case of Ndhiwa Sub County of Homa Bay County. Idealism as a classical school of thought has been used to develop the work. Conceptual framework on the use of the mind to enhance performance in English in K. C. P. E. has also been used to advance the exertion. Philosophical analysis has been used as the key research methodology. The research has been organized in to five chapters in chapter one, we have introduction. Chapter two deals with transition from Mother Tongue to second language (English).The role of the mind in the acquisition of English language is dealt with in chapter three. In chapter four, ideas that can lead to improvement of performance in English when learners use it as a second language are also proposed. The work ends with this chapter, containing summary, conclusions and recommendations.

With reference to idealism as a classical school of thought that has developed the research: Hurst (1974, p. 58) asserts that the mind is supreme in reality. This means that the concern knowledge exist prior to and independent of human experience about them (Gutek, 1997, p. 13). Through introspection, the individuals examine their own mind and find a copy of macrocosmic mind. Since what is to be known is already present in the mind, the teachers challenge is to bring this latent knowledge to consciousness (Gutek, 1997, p. 14). The research has discussed that the situation of idealism is relevant to the problem under investigation, where Ndhiwa Sub County of Homa Bay County has been used as a case study. Learners have latent ideas that are present in

their mind. These ideas are to be brought to consciousness so that improvement in the performance of English in K. C. P. E. can be realized. The research has presented that the goal of education according to idealism is to help the learners to arrive at a broad, general and unifying perspective of the universe.

The process of education as discussed in this research in relation to idealism is to aid the learners to discover the knowledge through their own reasoning process. The theme of education held by metaphysical philosophy of idealism according to Plato is that human being's soul had a previous existence in an ideal world (Akinpelu, 1982, p. 30). In this world of ideas, the soul had perfect first-hand knowledge of all that exist in this world. Our world is a flawed copy of this world of ideas. When the soul was detached from the perfect world of ideas and planted in the body of human being, it lost that knowledge. Education now is the only process according to Gutek (1997, p. 13) that the soul can be helped to regain that knowledge.

In learning, the learners must reason to arrive at conclusion. Reason is the level of freedom from blunder (Kiruki, 2004). The learners have the capacity to utilize reason to recall the forgotten ideas. The research has advised the learners in Kenya to use reason to develop knowledge in English language so as to promote education. Reason is the intellectual faculty that utilizes intuition to discern pure spiritual forms behind their material embodiments (Chaube and Chaube, 2002). When education focuses on the soul to recollect all that has been learned in English language, Mother Tongue influence as stated in the research makes learners to be deeply buried in their Mother Tongue (Dholuo) as a language of the ethnic community. They have greatly internalized the said language in their mind. The same mind can be used to learn new ideas, especially English. This is why the researcher has analyzed the role of the mind in the acquisition of second language.

Krashen (1985, p. 17) puts it that learning to speak another language is not an easy task and fluency cannot be accomplished without deliberate interaction in the target language. Due to this fact, learners are expected to practice speaking English to make them acquainted. Language eloquence can only be adopted through speaking. This is why the researcher has used philosophical analysis to analyze the problems making the acquisition of the second language difficult. On the same note factors that can promote the acquisition of second language has also been analyzed. The research has also discussed that most learners fear talking in English due to lack of willingness to make mistakes. This makes them to speak Mother Tongue both at home and at school. Kristmanson (2000, p. 15) posited that a learning environment should be created in which learners are not afraid to make mistakes and encouraged to take risks.

For transition from Mother Tongue to English to be successful, Skehan (1989) suggested that a person should be ready to speak a language no matter what level one is at. Tharp and Gillimore (1988, p. 39) proposed that even if a person knows one word in a given language, can still communicate. Due to this fact, learners are directed to be ready to speak the language of English using the little vocabulary that they know. The teachers should motivate them to speak English using their professionalism.

5.2 Conclusions

Language is very vital in proving that an individual has gone to school. This may mean that when people are Learned, they can to some extent speak a second language as a proof that they went to school. The second language would indicate that a person has gone to school and studied the language, hence receive education. Dewey (1906, p. 40) suggests that education involves acquisition of structured body of knowledge and functional skills. Gutek (1997, p. 10) defines

education as a family of processes of culminating into a person social, moral and intellectual soundness. This makes education to prepare children for public positions. Because English is spoken in learning institutions across the nation, it would prepare the learners to be philosophically relevant.

According to kiruki (2004, p. 337), language depicts not the world but a worldview. Hence any attempt to infer propositions regarding reality from facts of language, is a form of *world-superstition*. Each person's individual senses present a worldview unique in certain ultimately undeterminable respects, a fact that is underlined by the researcher in his conceptual framework. In his view, learners have a worldview unique in respect to performance in English subject and they are motivated using pedagogical skills so as to improve their performance.

5.3 Recommendations

The following are the recommendations that the researcher has made from the study: Curriculum developers are to be educated to do consultation and involve stakeholders, learners and teachers for successful curriculum implementation. The teachers training colleges are encouraged to change their curriculum to infuse the concepts that are taught in primary schools and to consider the environments where the learners are coming from. It is realistic to avoid frequent changes of English textbooks as this gives the learners and teachers hard time. English teachers are directed to be serviced through seminars and workshops so as to understand the reporting issues in curriculum content. This will perhaps motivate the teachers who will in turn motivate the learners.

The pupils should buy their own English text books so as to help them do homework and personal studies. This would help them improve their standard in English. Teachers who are not

native speakers of *a given Mother Tongue* are supposed to be posted to the learning institutions to help in reinforcing man power in English. English teachers who are designated as heads of English departments are expected to be posted to schools to give guidance on curriculum matters concerning English.

Parents are to be encouraged to take their children to school at an early age because children are capable to acquire languages better while young. Learners are guided to accept to make mistakes while speaking English because through mistakes we learn to speak fluently. It is also rationally fitting if they can limit speaking in their Mother Tongue so as to have smooth transition to the second language (English). This may imply that they have regular practices in relation to English language to enable them acquire new language skills that involve speaking and writing. Education stakeholders are convinced also to do away with dogmatic beliefs that limit the acquisition of the second languages.

REFERENCES

Akinpelu, J.A. (1982). *Introduction to philosophy of education*. London: Macmillan Publishers.

Chaube, S.P., and Chaube, A. (2002). *Foundation of education*. New Delhi: Vikas Publishing House.

Dewey, J. (1906). *Philosophy of education*. New York: Chicago University Press.

Gillimore, R. (1988). *Second language and Mother Tongue*. New York: Cambridge University press.

GuteK, M.A. (1997). *Philosophy of idealism*. London: Oxford University Press.

Hurst, P. (1974). *Knowledge and curriculum*. London: Routledge and Kagen University Press.

Kiruki, J.K. (2004). *Introduction to critical thinking*. Eldoret: Zapf Chancery Research Consultants

And publishers.

Krashen, s. (1985). *Principle and practice of second language acquisition*. New York:

Longman.

Kristmanson, P. (2000). *Effects on the second language classroom*. New York: Willey and

Sons.

Skehan, P. (1989). *Individual differences in second language learning*. New York: Willy

And sons.