

**EFFECTS OF INDIAN LANGUAGE ON ACQUISITION OF KISWAHILI GRAMMAR
AMONG ASIAN LEARNERS IN ARYA PRIMARY SCHOOL IN STAREHE, NAIROBI,
KENYA**

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ABSTRACT

This research project was carried out to investigate the effects of Indian language on acquisition of Kiswahili grammar among Asian learners in Arya Primary School in Starehe Sub County, Nairobi, Kenya. Learners in Arya Primary School are of mixed tribes and languages but this study delimited itself to those of Indian origin. In Starehe Sub-County, Kiswahili is a second language to most of the Indian learners who mostly communicate in various Indian languages which include Hindi, Gujerati and Punjabi. The purpose of this study was to investigate the effects of first language on acquisition of Kiswahili grammar among learners of Indian origin. The study objectives were to find out the areas of difficulty of a learner's acquisition of the Kiswahili grammar and identify the syntactic structures of L1 which cause difficulty in mastery of Kiswahili syntax. It also sought to identify pedagogical methods which could be applied when teaching Kiswahili to learners with an Indian origin so as to achieve the goals of teaching Kiswahili effectively. The study was a case study. It was limited to a selected primary school in Starehe Sub-County, that is, Arya Primary School, and delimited to learners with an Indian origin from class four to eight in the selected school together with their Kiswahili teachers. Relevant literature on language learning was reviewed with Krashen's Monitor Model language acquisition theory being the theoretical frame work. The design of the study was a case study. The study targeted primary school children from standard four to eight of the Indian background in Arya Primary School. A representative sample was selected from the accessible population. The assumption was that there were factors affecting the acquisition of Kiswahili for these Asian learners due to syntactical differences between Kiswahili and their first language. Also that Kiswahili was a second language to most of the Asian learners in Arya Primary School. The researcher examined studies done previously on the subject and found that most of them aimed at linking the performance of Kiswahili subject with the presence of sheng' language, or the absence of proper teaching and learning materials for Kiswahili learning. As such therefore, the study set out to assess the effects of first language on acquisition of Kiswahili grammar to learners with an Indian background. The data was collected through interviews conducted by the researcher with the pupils, parents and teachers and document analysis. The data was analyzed and arranged according to themes that emerged from the data. Various reasons emerged as to why the learners with an Indian background performed poorly in Kiswahili subject such as wide syllabus, use of sheng even while within the school compound, inadequate facilities, among others but the researcher found out that the main reason why these learners perform poorly in the subject is due to their parents' negative perception about it. Those whose parents had a positive attitude towards it and even used it at home performed quite well and could also express themselves clearly using it. The study therefore recommends more input from the parents in the learning of Kiswahili, by being fully involved in learning activities in and outside school as this problem can only be dealt with once their attitude changes. The researcher also found out that teachers handling Kiswahili subject needed to go an extra mile in assisting these learners through giving them extra time and marking their books so as to do proper follow-up.