Causes of Syntactical Errors in Kiswahili Second Language Learning among Western Kenya’s Kiidakho First Language Speakers

Mocho S. Joy
Kakamega High School,
Department of Kiswahili; P. O. Box 90 - 50100, Kakamega.

Abstract
The purpose of the study was to find out whether Kiidakho, as one’s first languages, affects the learning of Kiswahili as a second language at the level of syntax among learners in Ikolomani Division of Kakamega District in Western Province of Kenya. The study was guided by Edward Thorndike’s identical element theory of transfer of learning, and supported by Ausubel’s and Cross’s theory on generalization in learning. The study population comprised Form Two and Form Three students. Stratified random sampling technique was used to select the sample of the study. Seventy Form Two students and seventy Form Three students from all the six selected schools were involved in the study. The study was descriptive by design. Data was collected by means of a questionnaire and written tasks. Data collected was described in terms of percentages. It was revealed that an Idakho first language speaker who is learning Kiswahili as a second language makes syntactical errors in the areas of pronominal prefixes, adverbal prefixes, verbal prefixes, subject prefixes, augmentatives, diminutives and locatives. The study is significant as it would sensitize teachers of Kiswahili on the causes of syntactic errors that students make, and this would enable them to come up with remedial framework on teaching of Kiswahili syntax. The findings will also help various stakeholders like curriculum developers and authors of Kiswahili books to put in place appropriate instructional designs that would go a long way to curb the problems affecting Idakho students who are learning Kiswahili as a second language.

Keywords: causes, syntactical errors, Kiswahili second language learning, western Kenya kiidakho speakers.

INTRODUCTION
Several scholars have done research on the effects of other L1 on L2 and have come up with varied findings. Nickel (1973) suggests that the first language is a source that the learner relies on less and less as his competence in the second language increases. One major factor that would contribute to the learner’s increased competence in the target language is the exposure. This implies that a learner who is starting to learn a second language will heavily rely on the knowledge he or she has in the first language, hence, the influence of L1 on L2 is inevitable. This effect of L1 on L2 will reduce as the learner continues to acquire knowledge in the second language. In the context of this paper, therefore, a Mwidakho student who is starting to learn Kiswahili will have a lot of Kiidakho linguistic features being reflected in his Kiswahili. This problem will keep on reducing as the learner learns more aspects in Kiswahili.

Finally, the learner will attain proficiency in Kiswahili which is referred to as standard Kiswahili and which is free from the influence of any regional language spoken by any group of people. However, this can only occur in urban areas where the student is exposed to a situation that calls for more use of Kiswahili. This is because urban areas have a heterogeneous population as opposed to the rural settings which are mostly homogenous and where the student has limited time of being in school minutes to speak Kiswahili. Moreover, in most cases, the student has a chance of speaking Kiswahili during Kiswahili lessons only as the remaining subjects are taught in English. This hinders a student from attaining the expected proficiency level in Kiswahili. That is why even after learning Kiswahili in primary school for eight years and two to three years for Form Two and Form Three respectively, students will still exhibit deviant structures in Kiswahili.

A study by Guoala (1981) on the effect of native languages in Congo on English in pronunciation and structure reports that students encounter difficulties in pronunciation and structure of English because of their native language. This shows that the student’s native language affects their ability in acquiring English. Kembo-Sure (1996) has also found out that mother tongue is one of the factors that influence a learner’s speech in English. The same applies to Kiswahili where the students may have difficulties in pronunciation and structure of Kiswahili because of their L1 which is Kiidakho. The same influence, just like in pronunciation, may spill over to the use of concordial agreements. Inadequate knowledge in the noun classification and poor use of concordial agreement hinders and affects one’s ability in standard Kiswahili.
The Need to Deal with the Syntactical Errors among Kiswahili L2 Learners

The performance of secondary school learners of Kiswahili in Kenya has been an issue of great concern. Kiswahili is a national language in Kenya. In the educational spheres, it is both a compulsory and an examinable subject at primary and secondary school yet its status in the 8-4-4 system of education is declining. Parents and potential employers are concerned about the low standards in Kiswahili (Sossion, 1993) which appears more explicit in real life situations and in public examination results. Many university lecturers of languages attribute the poor writing skills of high school graduates to an insufficient grounding in grammar. Though this has not been proved through research, it is suspected that first language interference at syntactical level is the contributing factor. Various Provincial Directors of Education and District Education officers who have worked in Western Province and in Kakamega District in particular have been commending some Divisions in the Province for good performance and decrying the performance in some Divisions. Ikolomani Division has always been the most affected, with its remaining at the bottom of the performance ranking list every year after the release of Form Four KCSE results.

In the year 2004, Ikolomani Division recorded a deviation of -0.16. This indicates that the performance of Kiswahili in Ikolomani Division is deteriorating. The cause for this drop in performance calls for attention. The remedy cannot be identified unless the problem is established. The breakdown of analysis of Kiswahili KCSE results in Ikolomani Division in the year 2004 and 2005 is below average. Looking at the results, it is clear that the performance is skewed towards the left. This is an indication of poor performance in Kiswahili in KCSE by students in Ikolomani Division. A summary of the KCSE National Examination reports for the year 2003 and 2004 reveals the following: Firstly, in grammar, the examinees proved inefficient and they showed cases of mother tongue interference; secondly, most students could not construct correct sentences in composition, and, finally, there was improper use of noun concordial agreements.

The worst performed paper was Paper 102/1 Insha (Composition). This paper requires that students construct syntactically correct sentences, which should pass the message across. Hence the student has no choice but to master the grammar of the language where syntax is the backbone. The second poorly performed Paper was 102/2 paper two. This paper comprises comprehension, summary and grammar. The grammar part in this paper, in the year 2003 and 2004 National Examination, was reported to have been poorly performed. Paper 102/3 Fasih, however, was fairly performed because the process of marking considers only valid points and not the grammar of the student. Among the recommendations given by the Kenya National Examinations Council in the year 2003/2004 as remedy was that the candidates should understand the proper use of the noun classification and their concordial agreements.

Majority of schools in Ikolomani Division are District Day schools. Most of the students in Ikolomani Division are first language speakers of Kidakho. It is therefore possible that this language has had some effects in their acquisition and use of Kiswahili. Although it is a Bantu language like Kiswahili, the language has a different syntactical structure. This difference is clearly seen in the concordial agreement and syntactical construction. What the author of this paper has observed as a teacher of Kiswahili is that majority of the students cannot construct grammatically correct sentences in Kiswahili. This is not however restricted to students in Ikolomani Division but affects the whole country. This is because of mother tongue interference, which manifests itself through mixing of concordial agreements and the inability of learners to use proper plurals or prefixes both in written and spoken Kiswahili. This is a problem that is prevalent among the Idakho people.

The concern in this paper is the dimension of syntax. There is always a difference between languages in terms of phonology, morphology, semantics and syntactic structures. Chomsky (1965) says that the syntactic level is the heart of grammar which facilitates correct communication. Kidakho is different from Kiswahili and it is this difference that affects the mastery of second language, which is Kiswahili as a second language. A critical issue such as effect of Kidakho noun classification on Kiswahili syntax, which is a crucial element of grammar, was therefore worth studying. Kiswahili is among the subjects that determine the overall performance in National Examinations and admission to choice of degrees at the University. For one to join the Faculty of Law or Medicine one needs to have passed Kiswahili and failure means losing the chance of being admitted in these Faculties. If the current situation persists, students from Ikolomani Division will obviously be disadvantaged. They will thus be unable to achieve “social mobility” and over time they will also be unable to speak Kiswahili which is the National language fluently and accurately. This will limit and probably affect their future careers.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study focused on the effect of L1 on L2, specifically on how Kidakho affected Kiswahili at syntactical level. It was limited to completing of the questionnaire and the written task as means of collecting data. Relying on written data carries with it
the drawback of external and internal constraints. Another limitation was that the study relied on the answers given by the students. It was thought that the written task was likely not to be taken seriously by the students especially if they discovered that, the marks they were going to attain were not going to contribute to their final performance at the end of the term. The identification of these limitations and the attempts to minimize their effects makes the methods and findings applicable and generalised in other similar linguistic studies.

MATERIALS AND METHODS
The study was a descriptive survey by design conducted in Kakamega District’s Ikolomani Division in Western Province, Kenya. The target population of the study was Form Two and Form Three students. Form One and Form Four students were left out because, according to KIE (2002) syllabus, it is believed that in Form One the student has just been introduced to the linguistic structures on the use of language and in Form Two and Form Three the student has been adequately exposed to syntactical structures of a sentence including noun classification. The sample size for the study was limited to 140 students in both Form Two and Form Three students from six selected schools. Selection was based on the number of streams per school. Therefore, from each of the three schools selected, ten students were selected from Form Two and ten from Form Three making the total population to be sixty students. The sampling procedure was done at two levels. These included stratified sampling technique and proportionate random sampling technique. The instruments and techniques used for data collection were questionnaire and written task.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
The written task was meant to elicit data on the students’ prefix errors. The Kiswahili prefixes, which formed the dependent variables were selected and observed in order to detect the effect of Kiidakho on Kiswahili prefixes. This was done to prove whether or not prefix errors in Kiswahili are as a result of the influence of noun classification on Kiswahili. The prefixes under investigation fell under the following categories: Verbal prefixes, Pronominal prefixes, Adjectival prefixes, Subject prefixes, Augmentatives, Diminutives, and Locatives.

Verbal Prefixes
In this section of the task, the learners were given sentences in singular form that had blank spaces for the verbal prefix. They were required to re-write the sentences in plural form by prefixing to the verb the correct prefix, which was to be determined by the noun used in the sentence. The detected errors were as follows:

Respondent 014 * (1a) Mang’ombe zimekula mahindi yote
Respondent 040 * (1b) Machungu zilivunjika jana
Respondent 070 * (1c) Wamama wamepata virufia vilivyopotea mwaka jana

The correct forms of these sentences are:
(1a) Ng’ombe wamekula mahindi yote
(1b) Vyungu vilivunjika jana
(1c) Mama wamepata sufuria zilizopotea mwaka jana

The number of respondents who made errors in this section were 73(52%) out of 140 of the total number of students. In Kiswahili, the verb is prefixed by the pronominal concord proper to the noun, which forms its subject. This is also a feature of the Bantu speech and contributes to its preciseness. These kinds of errors were as a result of the difference in noun classification between Kiidakho and Kiswahili. In Kiidakho, all animals fall under /-tshi/ class which is the equivalent of /-zi/ in standard Kiswahili. In standard Kiswahili, all animals fall under the /-wa/ class same as human beings. A Mwidakho first language speaker will have the following sentences in his mother tongue:
Tsing’ombe tsianje tsikori.
Which is translated in non standard Kiswahili as:
Ngo’mbe wangu zimepotea.

The correct form of this sentence is:
Ngo’mbe wangu wamepotea.

The noun chungu-vyungu (pot-pots) is classified in the same noun class with the noun ngo’mbe in Kiidakho. They are both classified in the /-tshi/ class on the basis of their morphology.

Example:
Kiidakho | Kiswahili | English
---|---|---
Ingo’mbe | Tsingo’mbe | Cow
Inyungu | Tsinyyungu | Cows

In Kiiswahili, these two nouns fall in different noun classes. The noun Ingo’mbe- ngo’mbe/,cow-cows/ falls in (a-wa) class while the noun chungu-vyungu/ (pot-pots) falls in (ki-vi) class. This is the reason the learners assigned the nouns chungu-vyungu/ the /-zi/ verbal prefix. The noun /safurial/ pan is classified in /shi-bi/ class in Kiidakho which comprises of some nouns in /-zi/ and /-vi/ class in standard Kiswahili. It is because of this classification system that led to the use of verbal prefix /vi/- by the learners which is a verbal prefix error. In Kiidakho, this sentence reads as:
Banyina banyoli bifulia bikor miwaka kubwere.

This sentence translates into non standard Kiswahili as:
Wamama namepata vifuria vilivyopotea mwaka jana.

Kiswahili
Respondent 040 *(1a) Mango’mbe wamekula mahindi yote.
Respondent 75 *(1b) Machungu ilivunjika jana.
Respondent 174 * (c) Wamama namepata vifuria
Vilivyopotea mwaka jana.

English
The cows have eaten all the maize.
The pots broke yesterday.
The mothers have found the Pans that got lost last year.

In these two cases, the prefix /mu-/ is erroneously used to pluralize the nouns /ngo’mbe /cows and /chungu/ pots. This is caused by the fact that the learners want to ease the burden of learning. It may also mean that the learner is not aware of the rules of Kiswahili noun classification. The class 1-2 (mu-ba) has two groups of nouns. It has nouns that have both the singular and plural markers.

Example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kiidakho</th>
<th>Kiswahili</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mukhan - Bakhana</td>
<td>Msichana – Wasichana</td>
<td>Girls - Girls</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It has nouns that do not have the singular prefix marker but they do have the plural prefix marker.

Some learners took the noun /mama/ to be in singular form hence pluralizing it by adding the plural marker /wa/ to make it read as /wamama/ which is wrong in standard Kiswahili. The noun /vifuria/ pan is classified in /shi-bi/ class in Kiidakho hence giving the noun /vifuria/ (pan) /shi-bi/ verbal prefix, which is the equivalent of /ki-vi/ class in Kiswahili.

Pronominal Prefixes

One item in the written task required the learners to re-write the sentences in singular form. The sentences in the written task were in plural form and they had nouns that do not have the plural prefix but they do have the prefix denoting the singular form in standard Kiswahili. The nouns included in the sentences have the /u/ prefix as marker for the singular form. In Kiidakho, all these nouns fall in /shi-bi/ class but they fall in different noun class in Kiswahili as shown in the following example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kiidakho</th>
<th>Kiswahili</th>
<th>English</th>
<th>Kiswahili noun class</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shitere – Bitere</td>
<td>Ukuca – Kucha</td>
<td>Nail – Nails</td>
<td>U-ZI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shilenje – Bilenge</td>
<td>Mguu – Mguu</td>
<td>Footstep – Footsteps</td>
<td>U-ZI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shiyeya-Biyeyu</td>
<td>Ufagio – Fagio</td>
<td>Broom – Brooms</td>
<td>U-ZI</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The errors made by the learners in this item were as follows:
Respondent 004 *(2a) ÔKucha yangu imevunjika
Respondent 067 *(2b) ÔNyayo hii ni yangu.
Respondent 095 *(2c) ÔFagio yangu imepotea.

There were sentences such as:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>021</td>
<td>*(2a i) Kikucha changu kimevunjika.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>180</td>
<td>*(2a ii) Kinya hii ni changu.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>139</td>
<td>*(2c i) Kifagio changu kimepotea.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These errors emanated from the fact that all these nouns: /kuchal-/nails, /Nyayo/-footsteps and /fagio/-brooms belong to the same noun class /shi-bi/ in which is the equivalent to the /ki-vi/ class in standard Kiswahili. In this case the learners transferred the system of noun classification into Kiswahili. The correct forms of these sentences are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kiswahili</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(2a i) Ukuca wangu umevunjika</td>
<td>My nail is broken</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2a ii) Unyayo hii ni wangu</td>
<td>This footstep is mine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2a iii) Ufagio wangu imepotea</td>
<td>My broom is lost</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The number of respondents who wrote the right answers was 59(42%), and those who got it wrong for all the items in this section were 81(58%). Out of the 81 respondents who got it wrong, twenty-nine (21%) treated the nouns as singular form and thus, did not give them the pronominal prefixes. Fifty-two respondents (37%) treated these nouns as belonging to the same noun class of the /shi-bi/ class which is the equivalent of Kiswahili /ki-vi/ class hence giving all of them /ki-vi/ pronominal prefixes.

Adjectival Prefixes

This item had sentences where the adjectival prefixes were omitted. The respondent was required to prefix the adjective correctly so that the adjective used is in agreement with the noun used in the sentence grammatically. The errors detected were as follows:
Respondent 016 *(3a) * Choo ingine imejengwa.
Respondent 077 *(3b) * Machura Ônne imeingia shimonii.
In Kiidakho, the noun /chool/toilet is classified in the /i-tsî/ noun class which is of an equivalent of the /k-i-li/ class in Kiswahili. The adjectival prefixes in class /k-i-tsî/ in Kiidakho will be /i-tsî/ prefixes as follows:

**Example:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kiidakho</th>
<th>Kiswahili</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Singular</td>
<td>Plural</td>
<td>Singular Plural Singular Plural Plural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lishere Mashere Chara Vyura Frog Frogs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Out of the 71(51%) respondents who gave the wrong responses in this item, 52(37%) exhibited the error of overgeneralization of rules. This is where the noun /vyura/-frogs was given the /ki-vî, ch-yy/ adjectival prefixes because of its morphological structure. This noun was treated in the same way as /cheti-vyetti/-certificate - certificates. The rule of animacy was not considered. Those who wrote /vyura vinne vimeingia shimonyi/ simply overgeneralized the rule that applies to nouns in /ki-vî/ class where we have (cheti-vyetti)-certificate - certificates, hence in standard Kiswahili we shall have a sentence such as: *Vyetti vinne vimepotea* - Four certificates are lost. In this case, animacy determines the choice of adjectival prefix to be used. It is acceptable to have a sentence like: *Mashere kanne kenjile mubwina*.

Most learners translated this sentence in Kiswahili as: *Machoo ane imeingia shimonyi*.

What the respondents did was a direct transfer of the adjectival prefix into standard Kiswahili. The correct adjectival prefix is /wa/- hence the correct form of this sentence is as follows:

**Kiswahili**

Vyura wanne vimeingia shimonyi

Four frogs have entered into the hole

Further, the prefix /k-i-li/ was erroneously used to apply to other nouns in different classes. This is as a result of the Kiidakho noun classification system where nouns that fall under /k-i-li/ class, /ki-vî/ class and /u-zî/ class in Kiswahili are classified together in the /shi-bî/ class in Kidakho as seen in:

**Kiidakho** | **Kiswahili** | **English** | **Noun Class**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shiitabu</td>
<td>Kitabu</td>
<td>Book</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shitere</td>
<td>Bitere</td>
<td>ukucha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shibune</td>
<td>Bibune</td>
<td>Sababu</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The sentence, which is translated in non-standard Kiswahili as: *Gari mzuri limeibwa* is wrong grammatically. This is a case of transfer of adjectival prefix /m-/ of Kiidakho adjectival prefix into Kiswahili. The Kiswahili system of adjectival use is different from that of Kiidakho, whereby in Kiidakho if the nominal prefix is /m-/ then the prefix /m-/ will be used with all the adjectives referring to that noun unlike in Kiswahili where the adjectival concord (m-) is invariably prefixed to some adjectival roots, e.g. – zuri (good) and –pya (new) for agreement with nouns of different classes depending on the class that the noun belongs to and the morphological class of the noun. The noun Gari - vehicle belongs to the /li-ya/ class in standard Kiswahili. The adjective –zuri (good) is not prefixed when used with nouns in /li-ya/ class in standard Kiswahili. Therefore, this sentence is supposed to read as:

**Kiswahili** | **English** |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gari</td>
<td>zuri</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The error in the sentence *Mandizi yote yameliwa* was caused by transfer of the Kidakho adjectives into Kiswahili. In Kidakho, this sentence will read as follows:

**Kiidakho** | **Kiswahili** |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Maremwa</td>
<td>kosi</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The prefix ko- in the adjective *kosi* is what translates into yo- in the adjective ‘yote’ in Kiswahili.
This sentence is in plural form and should therefore read as follows:

Kiswahili | English
---|---
Ndizi zote zimeliwa | All the bananas have been eaten

The noun *ndizi*-banana is classified in /li-ma/ class together with nouns like:

Kiswahili | English
---|---
Liremwa - Maremwa | Banana - Bananas
Lahuyu - mabuyu | Yai - Mayai

In Kiswahili, the noun /ndizi/-banana falls into the /ki-zi/ class and the adjectival prefix is /i-zi/. Out of a total of 140 respondents, 71(51%) manifested these types of errors, which were revealed to have resulted from transfer of linguistic features of adjectives into Kiswahili.

**Subject Prefix**

This item had various sentences with nouns that fall in /i-tsi/ noun classification. All these nouns fall in different noun classes in Kiswahili. These sentences were written without any subject prefix hence all the spaces for subject prefix were left blank. The respondent was required to determine the kind of subject prefix that was appropriate depending on the noun used. These subject prefixes were a mixture of adverbial and adjectival subject prefixes. The errors identified in this item were as follows:

- Respondent 002 *(4a) Chooyetu imejaa.
- Respondent 070 *(4b) Mbu zilizokuwa chumbhani zineuwa zote.
- Respondent 090 *(4c) Yohana anaumwa macho yake ya kushoto.

All these nouns were treated as belonging to the same noun class in Kiswahili since they all belong to the same /i-tsi/ class in hence the /i-zi/ concords were used regardless of the type of that noun that was being referred to. Sometimes animacy overrides the feature for class gender. Though the noun /Mbu-Mbu/ (Mosquito-Mosquito) would belong to /i-zi/ class and the noun /Samaki-Samaki/ (Fish-Fish) would belong to /i-zi/ class if classified morphologically but because they are animate, they are classified in /a-wa/ class in standard Kiswahili taking on the concordial agreements that apply to all nouns in /a-wa/ class whether they are pronominal, adverbial, or adjectival concords. Though the nominal forms for singular and plural for /mbru-mbru/ (mosquito-mosquitoes) are same with those nouns in /i-zi/ class, and the nominal forms for samaki-samaki (fish-fish) are also similar in singular and plural with other nouns in /i-zi/ class but there is a mixed agreement pattern. The /ma/ concord is many times over-generalized in Kiswahili by learners to apply to nouns that don’t use /ma/- as nominal prefix. Most learners use the noun /macho/ eyes to refer to /jicho-eye/. The noun /imoni-tsimoni/, /jicho-macho/ belongs to /i-ksi/ class in Kidakho. It is this Kidakho singular prefix /i/ that led to the use of the concord *yake ya kushoto. This is a problem caused by transfer of Kidakho syntactic structures into Kiswahili. This case was the same case that resulted into the error of *chooyetu imejaa. The noun chooy belongs to /i-tsi/ class in Kidakho. The learners treated the noun in the same way it is treated in Kidakho by giving it the concords that are used to refer to nouns in /i/ class in standard Kiswahili.

The number of respondents who manifested these errors was 76(54%). The respondents who got the answers right were 64(46%). The subject prefix is determined by the noun it refers to. It is also important as it indicates the class of the noun, which the prefix relates to the verb. It indicates the marker of the noun being related to. It signals particular grammatical roles in a sentence and its presence is obligatory to almost all constructions in a sentence. The prefix conveys almost all the information relating to the noun, therefore it is important for the learners to understand the subject prefixes in standard Kiswahili. The correct version of the sentences is:

Kiswahili | English
---|---
(4a) Yohana anaumwa na jicho lake la kushoto | John’s left eye is paining.
(4b) Samaki wote watauzwa kesho | All the fish will be sold tomorrow.

**Augmentatives and Diminutives**

In the item of augmentatives and diminutives, the respondents were given sentences in their standard form and they were required to re-write them in augmentative form and finally rewrite the same sentences in the diminutive form. The errors identified where as follows:

- Respondent 004 *(5a) Kungoma kukipigwa sana hupasuka.
- Respondent 062 *(5b) Kambuzi huku kutchinjwa kesho.

In the diminutives, the errors detected were as follows:

- Respondent 004*(6a) Kangoma kikipigna sana hupasuka.
- Respondent 062 *(6b) Kambuzi haka kutchinjwa kesho.

The respondents who got the augmentatives wrong also got the diminutives wrong. The number of those who gave the wrong responses in both the augmentatives and diminutives was 94(67%) and those who got the answers right were 46(33%). In Kidakho noun classification, the augmentative class is marked by /ku-ni/ and the prefix marker for diminutive is /kha-ru/. The prefix marker for augmentative in standard Kiswahili is /ji-ma/ and for diminutive is /ki-vi/. There are rules that govern the morphological changes that will affect the noun in standard Kiswahili if it is to occur in diminutive or
augmentative form as stated by Waihiga and Wamitila in Chencheni za Kiswahili (2003) kidato cha kwanza. Such rules are that: The number of the syllables that the root of the noun has and its noun prefix. If the root of the noun is monosyllabic, if the noun starts with the nasal consonant and finally, if the noun in its original form falls in /ki-vi/ or /li-ya/ in Kiswahili then the noun in augmentative form will start with ji- followed with the root of the noun. In diminutive, it will start with ki- followed with ji- then end with the root of the noun. One of these rules states that if the noun starts with a nasal consonant then the nasal consonant is dropped and replaced with the diminutive marker /ki/. For the augmentative, the prefix /ji/ will replace the nasal consonant at the beginning of the noun or the nasal consonant will be dropped and will not be replaced as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Noun</th>
<th>Kiswahili</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ngoma</td>
<td>Kigoma</td>
<td>Goma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mbuzi</td>
<td>Kibuizi</td>
<td>Buzi</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The correct version of these sentences is:

**Augmentatives**

Kiswahili
(5a) Goma lkipigwa sana hupasuka
(5b) Buzi hili litachinja kesho

**Diminutives**

Kiswahili
(6a) Kigoma kikipigwa sana hupasuka
(6b) Kibuizi hiki litachinja kesho

When dealing with diminutives and augmentatives, the class gender overrides animacy hence the pronominals used are /ki-vi/ and /ji-ma/. By the fact that the respondents still use the prefixes /Ka/ and /Ku/ class (12/13) for diminutives and augmentatives respectively means that the morphological structures of Kiikadho have been transferred into standard Kiswahili. This Kind of interference is attributable to the morphological structures of the noun.

**Locatives**

Locatives in Kiikadho appear as suffixes only; unlike in Kiswahili where they can appear either as suffixes or prefixes. This item had sentences that were written with wrong locative suffixes. The learner was supposed to re-write them using the correct locative suffix. The error identified was in respect to the answer given by respondent 120 as follows:

Respondent 120 * Hapa ndiko anaishi mjomba.

Other respondents like respondent 16, 34, 50, 63 and 140 made similar errors. Kiikadho three locative nouns just like in Kiswahili. These locative nouns have different suffixes that refer to specific place, general place and inside. This is similar to the Kiswahili locative nouns where the feature for location is realized on nominal categories by three different prefixes. The prefix on the verb expresses the type of location as exact, appropriate and contained location.

**Example**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kiikadho prefix</th>
<th>Kiswahili prefix</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-Ha</td>
<td>Pa/-Po</td>
<td>Refers to specific place.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Ho</td>
<td>Ka/-Du</td>
<td>Refers to general place.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Mu</td>
<td>Mo/-Mu</td>
<td>Refers to inside.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In Kiikadho, there is no difference in the use of specific place and general place when the locative suffix, is used together with the copular verb /ni/ which is the equivalent to the copular verb /ndi-/ in Kiswahili. This remains the same in Kiikadho whether it refers to the specific place or general place. It remains /ho/ which translates into /-ko/ in Kiswahili as shown in the example:

Kiikadho
Yecho niho amunyoli Hoko ndiko alimpata
Yumu nimwo amunyoli Humu ndimo alimpata

In Kiikadho, the locative suffix is suffixed to the main verb in the sentence, as is the case in Kiswahili as shown in the example above. The right form of these sentences is:

(7a) Hapa ndipo anaishi mjomba.
(7b) Kule ndiko alikowakuta.

The learners omitted the locative prefixes in the main verb because in Kiikadho the main verb does not carry the locative suffix. Another error that was made by respondents was as follows:

Respondent 76 *Hapa ndiko anaishi mjomba.

This is a feature of the Kiikadho locative prefixes where the locative denoting specific place and general place is same when used with copula verb ndi-. These types of errors were as a result of transfer of the Kiikadho linguistic structure of locatives into standard Kiswahili. The number of students who got the right locative suffixes was 104(74%) of the sample. The performance in each item was calculated in terms of percentages in order to find out the item
that was worst performed. The worst performance was in the item of diminutives and augmentatives. The item on locative prefixes was better performed. The performance in all items except the locative prefixes was below 50%, which is the average mark.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

From the results of the study and discussion held in this paper, it is evident that an Idakho first language speaker who is learning Kiswahili as a second language makes syntactical errors in the areas of pronominal prefixes, adverbial prefixes, verbal prefixes, subject prefixes, augmentatives, diminutives and locatives. In the study, these dependent variables were tested through written task and the results showed that the correct responses in all items except in locative prefixes were scored below 50% by the respondents which are considered to be an average mark in this case.

From these findings, teachers of Kiswahili in Ikolomani Division should identify the difference between Kiidakho and Kiswahili noun classification system so as to teach Kiswahili effectively. Comparison of Kiswahili and Kiidakho syntactic structures can be a source content for the teaching of Kiswahili. On the other hand, since the curriculum developers are the ones who design the curriculum textbook writers are guided by the designed curriculum in the writing of their books which the teachers use to relay knowledge to the learners. These stakeholders should determine the amount and type of details to give in particular features of noun structure. Carrying out the analysis of syntax and identifying the most difficult areas where most errors are made by students will enable the teachers, curriculum developers, and writers of Kiswahili text books need to carry out of syntax and decide the areas of syntax that need more emphasis in terms of time and content. Teachers also need to know the nature of the errors that learners make to be able to plan their teaching strategies appropriately. Learning may be organized in such a way that learners start by handling simple concepts before they move on to difficult ones.

Teachers should point out to the learners and emphasize areas where overgeneralization of rules is applicable by using the relevant examples. By so doing, they will improve the learners’ capacity to generalize the rules and be aware of the rule restrictions for progressive language learning. Teachers should assist the learners in identifying important features and aspects of syntax by naming them and paying increased attention to difficult features. This will help learners to avoid cases of transfer of L₁ linguistic features into L₂. The pedagogical implications of the findings of this study is that from the students’ errors that the teacher will be able to identify the best teaching materials, the teaching method, and the pace at which he/she should progress and the amount of practice to be given to the learners in particular features.

REFERENCES


