

**EFFECT OF KIKAMBA LANGUAGE ON THE ACQUISITION OF STANDARD  
SWAHILI BY SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN YATTA SUB-COUNTY,  
MACHAKOS COUNTY, KENYA**

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DEGREE OF BACHELOR OF EDUCATION (ARTS) OF GREYSA UNIVERSITY**

**DECEMBER 2024**

# DECLARATION

## DECLARATION

This research is my original work and has not been presented for award of a degree or for any similar purpose in any other institution.

Signature.....

Date.....09/12/2024.....

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### Supervisor

This research has been submitted with my approval as university supervisor.

Signature.....

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## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this project to my parents Mr and Mrs.Kavila for their unwavering support in my academic journey.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

I thank the Almighty God for His faithfulness and grace throughout my academic journey. Am also grateful to my supervisor, Edwin Muna for the knowledge shared. To the other lecturers and classmates receive much gratitude for working together throughout this journey.

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## **ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS**

L1- First language

L2- Second language

UNESCO-United Nations, Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

CHAKIDU-Chama Cha Ukuzaji wa Kiswahili Duniani

SADC- South African Development Community

US-United States

AU- African Union

SLA- Second Language Acquisition

LAD- Language Acquisition Device

## **OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS**

Effect- a change which is a result or consequence of an action

Acquisition-a thing gained or acquired

Standard- a level of a quality or attainment

## ABSTRACT

The use of Swahili language by secondary school students in communication clearly indicates whether there is an effect caused by the first language. This study aimed at finding out how Kikamba language affects the acquisition of standard Swahili by secondary school students in Yatta subcounty. Literature has been reviewed to offer various perspectives about the effect of language one on the acquisition of second language. The objectives of the study were; to examine how Kikamba affects proper articulation, to examine how Kikamba affects grammatical agreement in Swahili and to examine how Kikamba affects vocabulary in Swahili. The target population was secondary school students in Yatta subcounty and Kiswahili teachers. Questionnaires were used to gather information from students while interviews were used to gather information from teachers. A total of 1445 students and 30 teachers responded. Some of the findings included; some Kamba words were similar to Kiswahili words, wrong pronunciation of Swahili words, some students prefer using kikamba on their free time rather than Kiswahili, few students spoke fluent Swahili. The researcher concluded that a strategy that incorporates phonetic knowledge and cultural sensitivity, educators to implement focused teaching methods that support students comprehension, application and mastery of Swahili grammar rules, training to be conducted with emphasis on addressing semantic valuations and promoting the usage of Swahili terminologies. The researcher recommended on implementation of regular practice sessions focusing on Swahili phonemes that are challenging to kikamba speaking students, engage students in role playing activities where they can practice Swahili intonation and stress patterns, incorporate regular drills and practice exercises that focus on different aspects of verb, conjugation. This study is essential to secondary school learners and Kiswahili teachers because it illustrates how Kikamba affects Swahili acquisition as far as grammatical agreement, vocabulary acquisition in Swahili is concerned.

# CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

## 1.0 Introduction

This chapter entails the background to the study, statement of research problem, purpose of the study, conceptual framework, research questions, Objectives of the study, significance of the study, the scope of the study, and limitations of the study.

## 1.1 Background to the study

Kiswahili is one of the most spoken languages in the world. It is a Bantu language majorly spoken by people of East Africa that is Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda. The term Swahili is derived from an Arabic word *Sawahili* which means *of the coast*.

Between the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> centuries when the Arabs arrived on the East African coast, they interacted with the inhabitants of the East coast through trade. Due to this there arose the need for a common language to facilitate communication and hence the development of the Swahili language. In Africa, Swahili language is used in countries such as Tanzania, Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo, South Sudan, Somalia, Mozambique, Malawi, Zambia, among other countries. According to the 2010 constitution, Swahili language was made a national language in Kenya in the year 1969. This triggered Swahili language be made a compulsory subject in schools. This policy was adopted in the year 1984 according to the Ominde commission.

According to Maina,(2003) Kiswahili was recognized among the first language of instruction in school. Making Swahili a compulsory subject is a great achievement among learners. Through learning Swahili language learners have acquired proper communication skills, students are able to communicate fluently in Swahili. They are able to use Swahili either among themselves, between themselves and their teachers or even with their parents. Students also learn how to give speeches in Swahili language during official events in their schools or even outside the school environment. This makes students more competent in Swahili. Swahili acquisition is a form of identification among learners. Swahili being compulsory in schools has aroused interest in learners to gain more knowledge in Swahili, this would symbolise them as learned students. They are proud of being competent in Swahili. Swahili acquisition has also enabled students end up acquiring good careers.

Some have specialized in the field of journalism where they use Swahili language, others have become Swahili teachers in primary and secondary schools and even higher institutions of education. Others have become Swahili tutors whereby they teach Swahili in abroad. Since

when Swahili was made compulsory subject in schools, a great number of students have acquired Swahili language in Kenya, therefore it has served as a unifying force among diverse ethnic groups when people come together. In the field of literature, the Swahili language is widely used. Many literature documents such as novels and plays have been published using Swahili. Some of the literature authors have chosen to focus on the Swahili language in their work. Some literature books have undergone translation from English to Swahili for example *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born* has been translated to *Wema hawajazaliwa* and *A Man of the People* has been translated to *Mwakilishi wa Watu*. The Bible has also undergone translation from English to Swahili and hence advancement in the Swahili language. Some of these literature books are used in school by learners to enhance learning and hence improve the acquisition on standard Swahili.

Currently, the Swahili language is gaining popularity globally. It is among the 10 most widely spoken languages in the world. Currently, the Kiswahili language has more than 200 million speakers. On 23rd November 2021, the United Nations, Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) signed 7<sup>th</sup> July as the world Kiswahili Day. This is an official day to celebrate the Kiswahili language. Kiswahili language was the first language to be feted by the United Nations Organization. Through this, Kiswahili has enhanced the promotion of peace by cutting across tribal ethnic ties enabling the development of ideas, economic targets, and cultural identity. During the most recent international conference of the global council for the promotion of Kiswahili (CHAUKIDU- Chama cha Ukuzaji wa Kiswahili Duniani) in Washington DC, Prof. Leonard Muaka, the Kiswahili program at Howard University, said it would be prudent for countries in East Africa to nurture and promote Kiswahili as more and more learners take interest to study the language.

The Swahili language is one of the official languages of the African Union (AU). It is also the working language of the Southern African Development Community (SADC). Kiswahili is taught in over 100 institutions in the US alone. Among them are Harvard, Yale, Stanford, Princeton, and Ohio is also among of the universities in the US that teach Kiswahili. Currently, there are internet-based platforms that support Kiswahili for example Google, Mozilla, Airbnb, Uber, WhatsApp, Spotify among others. The ChatGTP which was launched in November 2022, also provides responses in Kiswahili.

Although the Swahili language has undergone various advancements, there are various factors that hinder people and majorly students from acquiring standard Swahili, and among those factors is the native language. L<sub>1</sub> has various effects on the acquisition of L<sub>2</sub>, for example, it

may affect the articulation of words in Swahili, the meaning of words and also grammatical agreement in L<sub>2</sub>.

In Machakos County and specifically in Yatta Sub County, the Kamba language has been a challenge to secondary school students as far as the acquisition of standard Swahili is concerned. This has made students be unfriendly towards Swahili.

## **1.2 Statement of the problem**

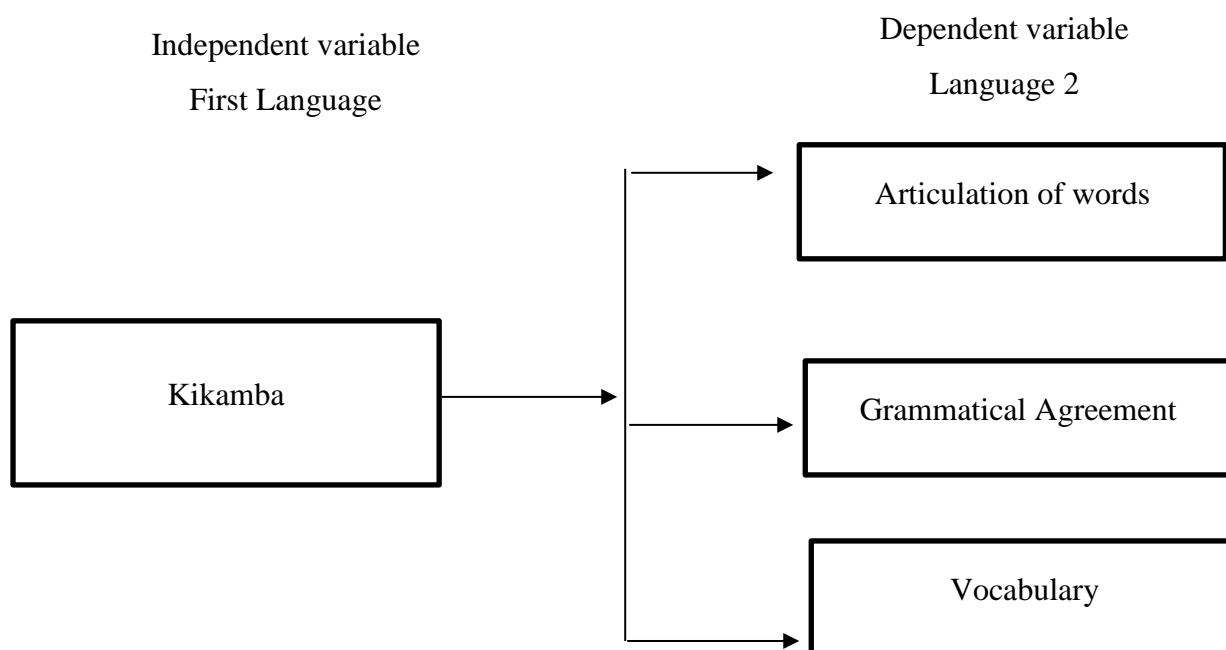
Kiswahili is a core subject and is considered in the selection of courses at higher levels of education hence needs to be given a lot of attention. Due to the expansion of secondary schools in the country, most of them are located in rural areas where the use of native language has been a challenge towards the acquisition of standard language. The effect of the first language on the acquisition of the second language has been a prevailing problem.

According to Krashen1985, language acquisition is a subconscious process and therefore learners will not take the process with a lot of attention. They might also consider or borrow some aspects from their native language when learning the second language. This may lead to direct translation and analysis of Swahili texts in their native language and hence misunderstanding. Some of the previous studies conducted related to this topic have generalized the effects of L<sub>1</sub> on the acquisition of L<sub>2</sub> but this study aims at concentrating on certain factors hence the need for this study. These factors are articulation of words, grammatical agreement, and vocabulary. This study intended to use Kikamba language as the first language and Kiswahili as the second language

## **1.3 Purpose of the study**

The aim of this study was to investigate the effect of Kikamba on the acquisition of standard Swahili by secondary school students in the Yatta sub-county, Machakos County, Kenya.

## 1.4 Conceptual framework



*Figure 1: Conceptual Framework*

## 1.5 Research questions

- i. How does Kikamba influence the articulation of words in Swahili among secondary school students in the Yatta sub-county, Machakos County, Kenya?
- ii. How does Kikamba affect grammatical agreement in Swahili among secondary school students in the Yatta sub-county, Machakos County, Kenya?
- iii. How does Kikamba affect vocabulary in Swahili among secondary school students in the Yatta sub-county, Machakos County, Kenya?

## 1.6 Objectives of the study

### 1.6.1 General objective

To investigate the effect of Kikamba on the acquisition of standard Swahili by secondary school students in Yatta sub-county, Machakos County, Kenya.

### 1.6.2 Specific objectives

- i. To examine how Kikamba affects proper articulation of words in Swahili among secondary school students in Yatta sub-county, Machakos County, Kenya.

- ii. To determine how Kikamba affects proper grammatical agreement in Swahili among secondary school students in the Yatta sub-county, Machakos County, Kenya.
- iii. To evaluate the effect of Kikamba on vocabulary in Swahili among secondary school students in Yatta sub-county, Machakos County, Kenya.

### **1.7 Significance of the study**

Kiswahili is among the recognized official languages in Kenya and East Africa. This study outlined the effects of L<sub>1</sub> on the acquisition of standard Swahili. Through this study, secondary school students especially in Yatta Sub County, Machakos County, Kenya, were made aware about the challenges they may encounter in the process of standard Swahili acquisition as a result of Kikamba language. It was also of great benefit to the Swahili teachers.

### **1.8 Scope of the study**

The study was located in Yatta Sub County, Machakos County, Kenya. The researcher aimed to focus on the effect of Kikamba on the acquisition of standard Swahili. The researcher employed a case study design. The main research instrument was a questionnaire. During the study 6 secondary schools were sampled out, 2064 students and 41 Kiswahili teachers according to the information provided by the ministry of education of Yatta.

### **1.9 Limitations of the study**

Some of the participants did not provide the required information since they did not belong to the Kamba community. A number of students and teachers came from other communities hence was a challenge for them to provide data concerning the effect of Kikamba on the Swahili language. The students were also afraid to provide the required data in Swahili language because according to the school policy, they were not be allowed to communicate in Swahili. On these limitations, the researcher came up with strategies to solve them to ensure the effectiveness of the study. The participants who did not belong to the Kamba community were asked to provide information about the mistakes made by those who originate from the Kamba community either through speaking or writing. On the language policy to be used, the researcher sought permission from the head of the school to be allowed to use the Swahili language when collecting data where Swahili was not authorized to be used on that day.



## CHAPTER 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 Introduction

Under this chapter, different previous studies related to the effect of L<sub>1</sub> on the acquisition of L<sub>2</sub> were reviewed. This review was done as per the objectives in Chapter One.

### 2.2 Articulation of words

According to Aghai and Sayer (2016), different languages have different consonants and vowel systems. Due to this, consonants and vowels are used differently in different languages, and some are stressed differently in those languages. Language one influence makes L<sub>2</sub> learners transfer skills from their native language hence incorrect pronunciation of words in L<sub>2</sub>. Related to this study, Jabbari and Samavarchi, (2011), languages have different systems of sounds which may be similar and different in some aspects from other languages. Words with different phonological systems are difficult to learn due to the learner's first language's phonological rules. According to Krashen, (1985), language acquisition is a subconscious process.

L<sub>2</sub> learners are not aware of the rules of the language and therefore, they are likely to make a lot of errors when pronouncing words. Language learners often make errors in syntax and pronunciation thought to result from the influence of their native language. Some L<sub>2</sub> language learners are good at writing but poor at reading and others are good at reading but poor at writing.

This is a result of their articulators being used to articulate words in their native language. Articulating Kiswahili words by secondary school students, especially in the Yatta sub-county, Machakos County, Kenya, were victims due to the influence of the Kikamba language. For example, if a learner intended to say *atakuja* and instead he says *hatakuja* then the target meaning of the word changes, and a misunderstanding arises. Other articulation errors made by these students include the *r* and *l* challenge whereby they use the letter *r* instead of *l* and vice versa. Another error made was inserting letters *m* and *n* where they are not required to be in Swahili words, for example saying *mbidhaa* instead of *bidhaa* and *mbonga* instead of *mboga*. This study was important because it focused on finding out how Kikamba influences the pronunciation of words in the Swahili language by secondary school students.

### **2.3 Grammatical agreement**

In Yahya's (2012) study findings indicated eleven error categories imposed on L2 grammar by L1. These errors include fewer possessives, prepositions, pronouns, singular and plural, subject-verb agreement, verbs, word choices, and spellings among other errors. The role of L<sub>1</sub> on L<sub>2</sub> depends on some similarities and differences between the two languages. According to Lado, (1957), due to the differences between languages, whether in their syntactic, grammatical, pragmatic, or phonological systems, difficulties may arise in learning a second language. When learning L<sub>2</sub> it is common to make mistakes in grammar as a result of the influence of the first language. Lado, (1957), argues that individuals tend to transfer the forms and meanings of their native language and culture to the second language.

The first language of a learner might have an influence over the second language by acting as a source for the learner to understand how the language works when L<sub>1</sub> and L<sub>2</sub> are similar or being a factor of interference if the two languages are very different. Different languages have different language structures, for example in Swahili if we say *yeye ni mkulima*. And *yeye ni mkulima?* , the order of words signals the question and the statement. This kind of structure is different from the structure of the case study language, Kikamba and if learners transfer their native language structure to the target language there is improper grammatical agreement.

### **2.4 Vocabulary**

Various researches were conducted on the effect of L<sub>1</sub> on vocabulary in L<sub>2</sub>. For example, Dulay et al, (1982) define interference of the first language as the automatic transfer of the surface structure onto the surface of the target language due to habit. According to Corder, (1981) when an L<sub>2</sub> learner is under pressure, the learner will borrow or substitute words from the mother tongue (pg 26). He argues that borrowers retrieve words and structures from their mother tongue to help them develop a sense of a second language. Due to the influence of the first language, learners end up confusing the items of vocabulary Krashen, (1985). L<sub>2</sub> learners will not be able to understand the new vocabulary in L<sub>2</sub> due to L<sub>1</sub> influence.

They will also not be able to know the use of those vocabularies hence being a great challenge to them. They tend to translate information directly from their native language to the target language. Also, cues that signal the beginning and ending of words can differ in different languages and therefore leading to misleading information. This was the current situation among secondary school students in Yatta sub-county, Machakos County, Kenya in their

acquisition of the Swahili language due to the influence of the Kikamba language, for example, this sentence was a direct translation from the Kamba language, *katoto haka kananichezea*.

## **2.5 Theoretical framework**

This study was based on acculturation theory. This is an environmental-oriented theory proposed by John Schuman, (1978). This theory states that second language acquisition is a result of acculturation, which he defines as the social and psychological integration of the learner with the target language group. He argues that acculturation, which is a cluster of social psychological factors, is the major cause of the second language acquisition Schumann 1990. According to this theory, learners will be successful in second language acquisition if there are fewer social and psychological distances between them and the speakers of the second language.

The other major theory considered in this study was Nativism which became popular in the 1960s, it states that language is an innate, universal skill that all humans, regardless of their native language, experience the same way. One of the influential contributors to the nativist and Second Language Acquisition theory (SLA theory), Noam Chomsky, observed that children were able to produce grammatical utterances even when such structures have not been heard before. According to Chomsky, (1965) under the theory of universal grammar, all humans with a language acquisition device (LAD) that enables them to process language.

The LAD consists of an innate grammar that sets limits on learners' predictions. The theory states that language consists of a set of abstract principles that characterize core grammars of all natural languages, that is, children are born with an understanding of the rules of the language, and they simply need to acquire the vocabulary. The above theories applied to this study because this study endeavored to find out the effect of language one on the acquisition of language two.

## **2.6 Summary of identified gaps in the reviewed literature**

This chapter enabled the researcher to gain an understanding of the existing research and debates relevant to the topic. It provided the foundation of knowledge on the topic and also opened gaps and questions left from the previous research. From the reviewed literature, the following was established. In Lado's study in 1957, he majored in the effect of L<sub>1</sub> on L<sub>2</sub> in grammar. This was not enough because L<sub>1</sub> had various effects on L<sub>2</sub> and therefore there were more challenges imposed on L<sub>2</sub> by L<sub>1</sub>.

Also despite the fact that various strategies have been laid down to standardize the Swahili language, there was still a big challenge in the acquisition of standard Swahili due to the influence of the first language. This study aimed to show how the native language affects the acquisition of standard Swahili by secondary school students. The main factors to major in this study are articulation of words, grammatical agreement, and vocabulary. The case study was the Kikamba language and the area of study was Yatta sub-county, Machakos County, Kenya. Swahili due to the influence of first language.

## **CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter entails research design, study area, target population, sampling techniques, sample size, research instruments, reliability of measurements, data collection techniques, data analysis, and logistical and ethical considerations.

### **3.2 Research design**

The researcher employed a descriptive research design because it was convenient for providing the required information in the study. Data was collected and recorded by the use of questionnaires administered to as sampled population. Glass and Hopkin (1984) state that a descriptive design collect data, organize, tabulate, show and make good decisions that are guided by the raw data collected.

### **3.3 study area**

In the study, the opinions of 2064 secondary school students and 41 Kiswahili teachers were selected in Yatta sub-County, were sought on the effect of Kikamba on the acquisition of standard Swahili by secondary school students in Yatta Sub County, Machakos County, Kenya.

### **3.4 Target population**

The target population for this study was secondary school students and Kiswahili teachers. According to the information provided by the ministry of education of Yatta sub county, there were a total of 66 secondary schools whereby 61 schools were public and five schools were private such as St.Andrew, Capital High school, Small Angels High School among others. There were 136 Kiswahili teachers in Yatta.

### **3.5 Sampling techniques**

The researcher used the simplified formula by Yamane (1976: 886) to calculate the sample as it provides a systematic approach to determine the appropriate sample size for conducting a survey in the population.

$$\text{Sample size} = \frac{N}{1 + N(e^2)}$$

N: population size

$$e = \text{sampling error} = 0.05$$

$$\frac{2105}{1 + 2105(0.05^2)} = 1500$$

The population size (N) of this study is 1445.

### 3.6 Measurement of variables

Variable	Measurement of scale	Questionnaire number
Articulation of words	Ordinal	A
Grammatical agreement	Ordinal	B
Vocabulary	Ordinal	C

### 3.7 Research instruments

The researcher used questionnaires and interviews as study instruments. Questionnaires were administered to students while the interviews were conducted on teachers. They were expected to focus on how the Kikamba language affected the acquisition of standard Swahili.

### 3.8 Validity and reliability of instruments

Validity is the extent which an instrument measures what is supposed to measure.

A questionnaire guide was used to ensure validity.

Reliability is the degree to which an instrument gives similar results over a number of repeated trails.

Kothari (2004) says that for information to be reliable it should have the ability to consistently give the same results when measured repeatedly.

Comparison of data from different schools selected, helped in a ascertaining their similarities.

Comparison of the information obtained with previous research is done also helped to ensure the validity of instruments.

### 3.9 Data collection techniques

Questionnaires were administered to secondary school students for them to give their responses. The questionnaires entailed both open-ended ended closed-ended questions. For the open-ended questions, the researcher expected free responses from the respondents but for the closed-ended questions responses were restricted.

### 3.10 Data analysis

In this study, both the qualitative and quantitative methods of data analysis were considered.

Under qualitative method narrative analysis was used to analyse data capturing the essence of people's opinion and feelings. Under quantitative method descriptive statistics was used to summarize data in a logical way using measures like mean, medium percentages, frequent etc. To describe and analyze data, the following was used to represent the information; Frequency distribution tables, percentages among others.

### **3.11 Logistical and ethical considerations**

#### **3.11.1 Logistical**

The researcher sought a clearance form from Gretsia University to be allowed to conduct the study.

#### **3.11.2 Ethical considerations**

It was the role of the researcher to ensure that the confidentiality of the respondents was maintained. No personal information or details was disclosed, and the names of the participants were not written anywhere on the questionnaires. The researcher ensured that the participation of the respondents was voluntary during the collection of data. The participants were not forced or rewarded to participate in this study because by doing so the information provided would be irrelevant.

## CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS, FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### 4.1 Introduction

The chapter states the results and findings of the analysis done. This was done according to the data collected in the field. The research majorly focused on establishing if Kikamba as a language affects proper articulation of Swahili words in the students at Yatta. The research also focused on determining how Kikamba affects proper grammatical representation of Swahili as will be discussed much later in the chapter. The last variable was to determine to what extent does Kikamba as a first language affects the choice of vocabulary in Swahili.

The data was exclusively gathered by use of questionnaires whose questions were extracted from the research objectives of the study.

### 4.2 Response rate

The completed and returned questionnaires were 1445 students and 30 teachers which represented an average of 71% of the total sample size. Table 4.21 below illustrates the response rate;

Variables	Frequency	Response Rate
Response	1445	70%
Non-Response	619	30%
Total	2064	100%

*Table 1: Response Rate (students)*

Variables	Frequency	Response Rate
Response	30	72%
Non-Response	11	28%
Total	41	100%

*Table 2: Response Rate (teachers)*

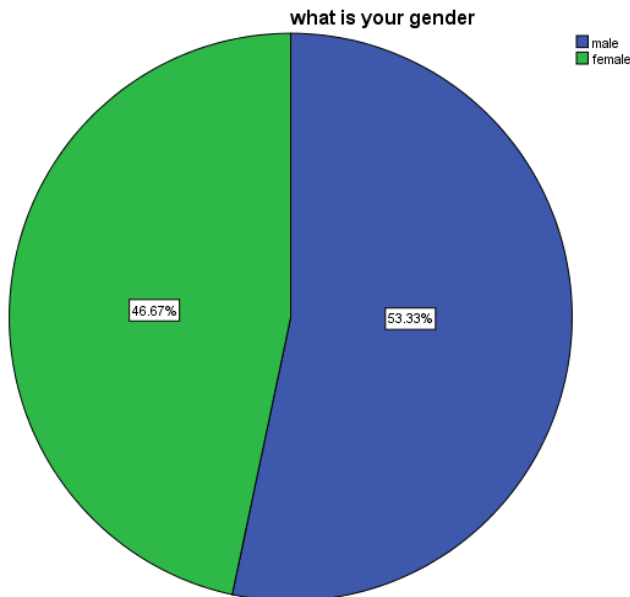
### 4.3 Gender response

The research involved both male and female. Males were 53.3% while females were 46.7%.



Therefore, the males were slightly higher than the females but either gender was well represented.

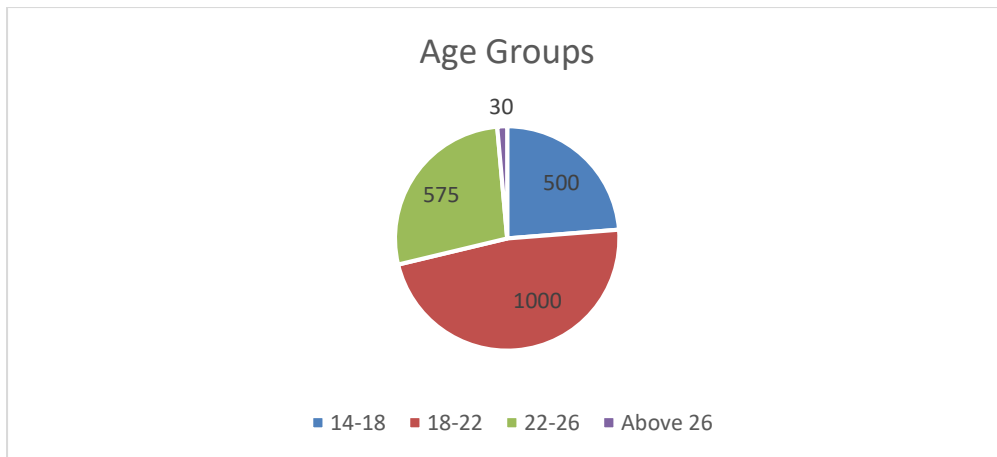
This is shown in chart 4.31 below;



*Figure 2: Gender response*

#### **4.4 Age groups**

The age groups were distributed across from the teachers to the students. There were a total of 2105 respondents, that's inclusive of both teachers and students. The teachers all recorded above 26. Majority of the students nonetheless were between the ages of 18-22 recording 1000 persons, 500 students were between the age of 14-18, 575 students were between the age of 22-26. The ages were evenly spread out which proved to be positive towards our research. The chart below illustrates how the ages were presented.



*Figure 3: Age groups*

#### 4.5 Effect of Kamba Language on Proper Articulation Of Words In Swahili

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
There is knowledge on Kamba words that are almost similar to Swahili words	2105	3.73	1.258
There is knowledge of mis-pronunciation of some Swahili words	2105	4.00	.947
Teachers are aware of the influence of Kamba on articulation of Swahili words	2105	4.07	.980
Students are aware of the influence of the Kamba language commonly spoken at home	2105	4.03	.999
Mother tongue speaking at school affects Swahili articulation	2105	4.20	.997
Kamba affects articulation of Swahili from generation to generation	2105	4.23	1.006
Valid N (listwise)	2105		

*Table 3: Effect of Kamba Language On Proper Articulation Of Words In Swahili*

This table is explained below;

#### **4.5.1 Knowledge of Kamba words Similar to Swahili words**

Mean: 3.73. Standard Deviation: 1.258 The mean score of 3.73 suggests that respondents, on average, moderately agree that there was awareness of Kamba words that closely resemble Swahili words. The score is closer to 4, which would indicate a stronger agreement. The standard deviation of 1.258 shows that there was considerable variability in the responses. This variability could be due to differences in individual exposure or familiarity with both languages. Some respondents had extensive knowledge of both languages, while others did not, leading to a wider spread of answers.

#### **4.5.2 Wrong pronunciation of Swahili words.**

Mean: 4.00. Standard Deviation: 0.947. A mean of 4.00 indicated that respondents generally agree that there was a recognition of the mispronunciation of certain Swahili words due to the influence of Kamba. The standard deviation of 0.947 was relatively low, suggesting that the majority of respondents share a similar viewpoint. This consensus implied that the mispronunciation of Swahili words influenced by Kamba was common and recognized issue among the respondents.

#### **4.5.3 Teachers' awareness of the influence of Kamba on Swahili articulation**

Mean: 4.07. Standard Deviation: 0.980. With a mean score of 4.07, respondents agreed that teachers were aware of how Kamba influences the articulation of Swahili words. The standard deviation of 0.980 indicated moderate variability in responses, implying that while most respondents believe teachers were aware, there might be differences in the extent of this awareness. This awareness among teachers was crucial as it could impact teaching strategies and interventions to address the influence of Kamba on Swahili pronunciation.

#### **4.5.4 Students' Awareness of the influence of Kamba spoken at home**

Mean: 4.03. Standard Deviation: 0.999. A mean score of 4.03 suggested that respondents agreed that students were conscious of the impact that speaking Kamba at home had effect on their Swahili articulation. The standard deviation of 0.999 showed moderate variability, indicating that while the majority of respondents agreed, there was some variation in the extent of students' awareness. This awareness among students was important as it could influence their approach to learning and speaking Swahili.

#### **4.5.5 Effect of mother tongue speaking at school on Swahili articulation**

Mean: 4.20. Standard Deviation: 0.997. The mean score of 4.20 indicates a stronger agreement that speaking Kamba at school affected Swahili pronunciation. The standard deviation of 0.997 suggested moderate variability, meaning that while most respondents agree, there were some differences in opinion. This pointed to a recognition that the use of the mother tongue (Kamba) in school settings had a noticeable effect on how Swahili was articulated by students.

#### **4.5.6 Influence of Kamba on Swahili across generations**

Mean: 4.23. Standard Deviation: 1.006. A mean score of 4.23 indicated strong agreement that the influence of Kamba on the articulation of Swahili persisted across generations. The standard deviation of 1.006 showed some variability in responses, suggesting that while the majority agreed with this statement, the degree of agreement varied. This generational influence highlighted the long-term impact of language interaction and the persistence of linguistic features over time.

Overall, the table suggests a broad agreement among respondents that the Kamba language significantly influenced the articulation of Swahili. The mean scores for all statements were above 3.73, indicating general agreement. The standard deviations, ranging from 0.947 to 1.258, showed varying degrees of consensus, with some statements having more variability in responses than others. This data highlighted the need for awareness and possibly interventions in educational settings to address the influence of Kamba on Swahili pronunciation.

#### 4.6 Effect of Kikamba language on proper grammatical agreement

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
There was improper flow of words on students' literature writings	2105	4.27	0.944
The performance of Swahili exams was generally low compared to the rest	2105	3.37	1.033
The schools were no punishments when students break grammar at school	2105	4.00	.963
Students preferred to use Kikamba language during free time rather than Swahili	2105	4.00	.983
Difficulties in understanding Swahili set books among students	2105	4.10	.960
Few students spoke fluent Swahili at school	2105	4.23	.935
Valid N (listwise)	2105		

**Table 4: Effect of Kikamba language on proper grammatical agreement**

This table delves deeper into the effects of Kikamba language in relation to grammatical agreements in Swahili language. The explanations to the table above is provided below;

##### **4.6.1 There was an improper flow of words in students' literature writings**

Mean: 4.27. Std. Deviation: 0.944. The data indicated that a significant number of respondents believed there had been an improper flow of words in students' literature writings. The mean score of 4.27 suggested that this was a widespread issue. With a standard deviation of 0.944, it was evident that while most respondents agreed, there was some variability in the strength of

their agreement. This improper flow likely disrupted the coherence and clarity of students' literary works, making them difficult to understand and less effective in conveying their intended messages.

#### **4.6.2 The performance of Swahili exams was generally low compared to the rest**

Mean: 3.37. Std. Deviation: 1.033. Respondents reported that students' performance in Swahili exams had generally been lower compared to other subjects. The mean score of 3.37 indicated that this was a common observation, though not as strongly agreed upon as some other issues. The standard deviation of 1.033 showed a greater variability in responses, suggesting that while many agreed, some had differing views on the extent of this issue. This disparity in performance might have been due to various factors, including the influence of the Kikamba language on Swahili proficiency.

#### **4.6.3 The schools had no punishments when students broke grammar rules**

Mean: 4.00. Std. Deviation: 0.963. It was reported that schools did not enforce punishments when students made grammatical mistakes. With a mean score of 4.00, respondents strongly agreed that this was the case. The standard deviation of 0.963 indicated moderate variability in responses, suggesting that while there was strong agreement, the extent to which this was true might have varied across different schools. The lack of enforcement could have contributed to the students' continued grammatical errors and a casual attitude toward correct Swahili usage.

#### **4.6.4 Students preferred to use the Kikamba language during free time rather than Swahili**

Mean: 4.00. Std. Deviation: 0.983. The data showed that students strongly preferred to use the Kikamba language during their free time instead of Swahili. The mean score of 4.00 reflected this strong preference. The standard deviation of 0.983 suggested moderate variability, indicating that while the majority of students preferred Kikamba, the extent of this preference varied. This preference for Kikamba could have limited students' opportunities to practice and improve their Swahili, further impacting their proficiency.

#### **4.6.5 There were difficulties in understanding Swahili set books among students**

Mean: 4.10. Std. Deviation: 0.960. Respondents agreed that students had difficulties understanding Swahili set books, as indicated by the mean score of 4.10. This strong agreement highlighted a significant issue. The standard deviation of 0.960 showed moderate variability, suggesting that while most students struggled, the degree of difficulty varied. This difficulty in understanding set books likely hindered students' ability to engage with and learn from these materials effectively.

#### 4.6.6 Few students spoke fluent Swahili at school

Mean: 4.23. Std. Deviation: 0.935. There was a strong agreement that few students were fluent in Swahili at school. The mean score of 4.23 suggested that this was a significant issue observed by respondents. The standard deviation of 0.935 indicated moderate variability, meaning that while most respondents agreed, the extent to which students lacked fluency varied. This lack of fluency could have stemmed from the preference for Kikamba and the insufficient practice and reinforcement of Swahili both in and out of the classroom.

The table highlighted several significant issues related to the influence of the Kikamba language on proper grammatical agreements in Swahili among students. The data revealed that students had issues with the flow of words in their literature writings, performed lower in Swahili exams, faced no penalties for grammatical mistakes, preferred Kikamba during free time, struggled with Swahili set books, and had few fluent speakers of Swahili at school. These findings suggested that the prevalence of Kikamba usage had a considerable impact on students' proficiency and performance in Swahili.

#### 4.7 Effect of Kikamba language on vocabulary

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Swahili wordings could be mis spelled to lean on Kamba since all are Bantu.	2105	3.90	.961
Swahili language was seen as more foreign language while kamba was more acceptable	2105	4.23	.935
Teachers were not keen to follow up on vocabulary development at school	2105	3.97	.944
Schools lacked adequate literature books ton support Swahili vocabulary	2105	4.27	.868
Students showed laxity in grasping new words as used in Swahili texts	2105	3.50	.988
Students rarely used new words in their Swahili literature	2105	4.10	.960
Valid N (listwise)	2105		

**Table 5: Effect of Kikamba language on vocabulary**

The table is further explained below;

#### **4.7.1 Swahili wordings could be misspelled to lean on Kamba since all were Bantu.**

Sample Size (N): 2105. Mean: 3.90. Standard Deviation: 0.961. The respondents moderately agreed that Swahili words were often misspelled to resemble Kikamba words, likely due to the shared Bantu origins of both languages. The mean score of 3.90 out of 5 indicated a moderate level of agreement. The standard deviation of 0.961 suggested that while most respondents agreed, there was some variability in their responses. This variability might be due to differences in individual experiences or levels of exposure to both languages.

#### **4.7.2 Swahili language was seen as a more foreign language while Kamba was more acceptable.**

Sample Size (N): 2105. Mean: 4.23. Standard Deviation: 0.935. There was strong agreement among respondents that Swahili was perceived as a more foreign language compared to Kikamba, which was considered more acceptable locally. The high mean score of 4.23 indicated a significant level of agreement. The relatively low standard deviation of 0.935 suggested that most respondents had similar views on this issue, indicating a widespread perception of Swahili as less familiar or less integrated into the local culture compared to Kikamba.

#### **4.7.3 Teachers were not keen to follow up on vocabulary development at school.**

Sample Size (N): 2105. Mean: 3.97. Standard Deviation: 0.944. Respondents generally agreed that teachers did not place enough emphasis on the development of Swahili vocabulary at school. The mean score of 3.97 reflected this general agreement. The standard deviation of 0.944 indicated some variability in responses, suggesting that while many respondents felt this way, there were varying degrees of agreement. This variability could be due to differences in school resources, teacher attitudes, or individual student experiences.

#### **4.7.4 Schools lacked adequate literature books to support Swahili vocabulary.**

Sample Size (N): 2105. Mean: 4.27. Standard Deviation: 0.868. There was strong agreement that schools lacked sufficient literature books to support the development of Swahili vocabulary. The mean score of 4.27 indicated a high level of agreement, and the low standard deviation of 0.868 suggested a high consensus among respondents. This consensus points to a widespread recognition of the lack of resources as a significant barrier to learning Swahili.

#### **4.7.5 Students showed laxity in grasping new words as used in Swahili texts.**

Sample Size (N): 2105. Mean: 3.50. Standard Deviation: 0.988. There was moderate agreement that students were lax in learning new Swahili vocabulary from texts. The mean score of 3.50 reflected a middle ground, suggesting that opinions were more varied on this issue. The higher standard deviation of 0.988 indicated significant variability in responses, meaning that while



some students might be very lax in learning new words, others might be more diligent. This could be due to individual differences in motivation, interest, or prior exposure to Swahili.

#### **4.7.6 Students rarely used new words in their Swahili literature.**

Sample Size (N): 2105. Mean: 4.10. Standard Deviation: 0.960. Respondents agreed that students seldom used newly learned Swahili words in their literature work. The mean score of 4.10 indicated a strong level of agreement. The standard deviation of 0.960 suggested some variability in responses but overall consensus. This indicated that despite learning new words, students were not frequently applying them in their writing, which might be due to a lack of practice opportunities or confidence in using new vocabulary.

The table highlighted several significant issues affecting the development of Swahili language skills in areas where Kikamba was spoken. There was strong agreement on the lack of resources, such as literature books, and the perception of Swahili as a foreign language. Additionally, it was noted that teachers did not follow up adequately on vocabulary development, and students showed laxity in grasping and using new words. The overall responses suggested a consensus on the influence of Kikamba on Swahili language development, with some variability in individual opinions. This variability could stem from differences in personal experiences, school environments, and levels of exposure to both languages.

## **CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **5.1 Introduction**

This chapter examined the implications of Kikamba as the first language on the acquisition of standard Swahili among secondary school students in Yatta sub county, Machakos County, Kenya. The discussion delved into how Kikamba influenced three critical aspects of language acquisition: articulation of Swahili words, grammatical agreements in Swahili, and vocabulary development. The conclusions drawn from these findings highlighted the challenges faced by Kikamba-speaking students and underscored the importance of tailored educational strategies. Recommendations were provided to enhance language instruction and support services, aiming to facilitate improved proficiency in standard Swahili among these students.

### **5.2 Summary**

The study found that because the phonological patterns of Kikamba and Swahili differ, it was difficult for children speaking Kikamba to pronounce Swahili words appropriately. This affected their Swahili pronunciation accuracy and fluency.

According to the study, Kikamba-speaking pupils had trouble with verb conjugation and noun class agreement, two common Swahili grammatical structures. The different grammatical systems of Kikamba and Swahili were blamed for this problem, which resulted in mistakes in syntax and agreement norms.

Along with identifying the similarities and contrasts between the languages, the conversation also looked at the cognitive and linguistic transfer processes between Kikamba and Swahili, and how they affected students' language use and learning strategies.

The results of the study showed that Kikamba had an impact on Swahili language learners' vocabulary development. When speaking Swahili, students frequently used Kikamba terms or structures, which had an impact on their lexical choices and language proficiency.

The study acknowledged limitations such as regional specificity and sample size, which may have influenced the generalizability of the findings to broader contexts within Kenya or other bilingual communities.

## **5.3 Discussions**

### **5.3.1 Articulation of Swahili words**

Swahili and Kikamba have different phonological systems. Being a Bantu language, Kikamba had different consonants, vowels, and phonotactics (the rules defining acceptable phoneme sequences) than Swahili. For example, phonemes in Kikamba might not have existed in Swahili, and vice versa. Pronouncing Swahili words proved difficult for Kikamba-speaking students due to this disparity in phonetic structure. They frequently used Kikamba phonological patterns on Swahili words, which made it difficult to precisely reproduce Swahili sounds or cause pronunciation mistakes.

Kikamba and Swahili also differed in terms of accent and intonation patterns. The rhythm and stress patterns in spoken Kikamba differed significantly from those in Swahili. This affected the natural flow of speech when Kikamba-speaking students switched to speaking Swahili, impacting their overall articulation and fluency.

When they were learning Swahili pronunciation, the students' first language, Kikamba, caused problems. They frequently introduced phonetic features from Kikamba, including consonant clusters or certain vowel sounds, into their Swahili speech. Pronunciation issues resulted from this language transfer, which needed to be resolved with focused training and repetition.

### **5.3.2 Grammatical agreement in Swahili**

The classes into which Swahili nouns are divided control patterns of agreement with adjectives, verbs, and pronouns. In Swahili grammar, distinct agreement indicators for each noun class must be utilized correctly. However, Kikamba might have distinct agreement rules or noun classification schemes. Because of this, Kikamba-speaking students frequently found it difficult to accurately apply Swahili noun class agreements, which resulted in problems in agreement and sentence structure comprehension.

Kikamba-speaking students found it challenging to use Swahili verbs accurately due to differences in verb forms and agreement markers between Kikamba and Swahili. This difficulty affected the grammatical accuracy of their spoken and written Swahili, as errors in verb conjugation could alter the meaning and coherence of sentences.

When creating Swahili sentences, Kikamba-speaking pupils frequently utilized Kikamba syntactic principles, which led to unconventional sentence forms or syntactic problems. To get past these problems with linguistic transfer, understanding and mastering Swahili grammar required extensive teaching and practice.

### **5.3.3 Vocabulary acquisition in Swahili**

Students who spoke Kikamba often used words from Kikamba in their Swahili discourse. This included applying Kikamba word structures in Swahili settings or utilizing Kikamba words with comparable meanings. Transfer of words occasionally helped students learn new words, but it also resulted in improper usage of Swahili terms or idioms that had different meanings or cultural contexts from their Kikamba equivalents.

Students engaged in language-switching between Kikamba and Swahili, alternating between languages depending on the context or communicative needs. While code-switching can facilitate communication, it also impacted the development of a robust Swahili vocabulary as students relied on Kikamba words or structures instead of actively acquiring Swahili equivalents.

Students who spoke Kikamba found it difficult to comprehend the exact meanings or connotations of Swahili vocabulary items, especially those that had culturally distinctive references or use settings that were exclusive to Swahili-speaking groups.

The study revealed the intricate ways in which the Kikamba language influenced the articulation of Swahili words, grammatical agreements in Swahili, and vocabulary acquisition among secondary school students in Yatta sub-county, Machakos County, Kenya. Addressing these linguistic challenges required targeted educational strategies that recognized and accommodated students' linguistic backgrounds while promoting proficiency in standard Swahili.

Providing opportunities for practice and feedback in a variety of linguistic contexts, encouraging reading and exposure to Swahili literature and media, encouraging vocabulary expansion through meaningful interactions and discussions in Swahili, and explicitly teaching Swahili words and their contextual usage are all effective educational strategies for improving vocabulary acquisition in Swahili among Kikamba-speaking students.

Vocabulary acquisition in Swahili also involves understanding the cultural context and appropriate usage of words. Kikamba-speaking students may struggle with Swahili vocabulary items that have culturally specific meanings or are used differently in formal versus informal contexts. Mastery of Swahili vocabulary requires exposure to diverse contexts and authentic language use situations that may differ from those experienced in Kikamba-speaking environments.

## **5.4 Conclusions**

### **5.4.1 Articulation of Swahili words**

Complex Swahili/Kamba distinctions, accent and intonation patterns, interference from Kikamba phonetics, and the requirement for focused instructional strategies to support accurate and fluent spoken Swahili all affect how Kikamba-speaking pupils articulate Swahili words. In order to overcome these obstacles, a thorough strategy that incorporates phonetic knowledge, cultural sensitivity, and efficient language teaching techniques catered to the unique requirements of Kikamba-speaking students was needed.

The rhythm, stress patterns, and intonation in Kikamba differ significantly from those in Swahili. Kikamba has its own melodic patterns and stress placements that are distinct from Swahili's more uniform and predictable stress patterns.

It was possible for students who speak Kikamba to retain their stress patterns and intonation when they transition to speaking Swahili. This may result in irregular speech patterns or misplaced stresses in words and sentences in Swahili.

Students often experience interference from their native language (Kikamba) when learning Swahili pronunciation. They may unconsciously apply Kikamba phonetic rules or transfer phonetic habits from Kikamba to Swahili.

### **5.4.2 Grammatical agreement in Swahili**

Because Kikamba and Swahili have different noun class systems, verb conjugation patterns, learning grammatical agreements in Swahili might be difficult for Kikamba speakers. In order to overcome these obstacles, educators must implement focused teaching methods that support students' comprehension, application, and mastery of Swahili grammar rules while taking into account their cultural backgrounds and linguistic backgrounds.

Students who speak Kikamba often struggle to understand the concept of Swahili noun classes since they might be very different from Kikamba's noun categorization systems.

Incorrect use of noun class agreement can cause grammatical problems and misconceptions in sentences written in Swahili. For example, a statement may become grammatically erroneous or change in meaning when the improper agreement marker is used.

Addressing these linguistic challenges required targeted educational interventions that recognize the influence of Kikamba on Swahili grammatical agreements. Strategies such as explicit instruction on Swahili noun classes and verb conjugations, guided practice sessions,

and opportunities for peer feedback are essential in supporting students' proficiency in Swahili grammar.

The study has provided important new information about the ways in which secondary school pupils in the Yatta sub-county of Machakos County, Kenya, acquire Swahili and how the Kikamba language affects their grammatical agreements. The study's findings allow for the deduction of several important findings.

### **5.4.3 Vocabulary acquisition in Swahili**

Kikamba-speaking students frequently transfer vocabulary items directly from Kikamba into their Swahili speech. This practice, while sometimes facilitating initial communication, often results in inaccuracies or inappropriate usage of Swahili vocabulary.

Targeted vocabulary training was required, with an emphasis on addressing semantic variations and promoting the usage of Swahili terminology in their cultural context.

Providing a wealth of Swahili reading materials, promoting active engagement with Swahili literature and media, and promoting vocabulary growth through meaningful exchanges and debates in Swahili are all effective methods for improving vocabulary acquisition in the language.

Understanding the cultural context in which Swahili vocabulary is used enhances students' ability to comprehend and utilize words appropriately. This includes recognizing socio-cultural nuances and idiomatic expressions embedded in Swahili vocabulary.

The study highlights the complexities involved in vocabulary acquisition in Swahili among Kikamba-speaking students. By addressing the challenges of lexical transfer, semantic understanding, code-switching practices, and promoting cultural competence, educators can effectively support students in acquiring a rich and nuanced vocabulary in Swahili, thereby enhancing their overall language proficiency and communicative competence.

## **5.5 Recommendations**

### **5.5.1 Articulation of Swahili words**

Implement regular practice sessions focusing on Swahili phonemes that are challenging for Kikamba-speaking students.

Provide clear and accurate models of Swahili pronunciation through audio recordings, native speaker demonstrations, or pronunciation guides. Offer constructive feedback to students on their pronunciation errors.

Incorporate phonemic exercises into meaningful conversations, narratives, and dialogues. This aids in students' comprehension of how pronunciation impacts communication in everyday settings.

Engage students in role-playing activities where they can practice Swahili intonation and stress patterns in simulated conversations or scenarios.

Encourage a positive learning atmosphere in the classroom where students can offer and receive helpful corrections on their pronunciation. Peer review sessions can assist students in recognizing and cooperatively resolving pronunciation problems.

Give students the tools they need to self-monitor and fix pronunciation mistakes brought on by Kikamba phonetics. Promote self-correction and introspective practice.

### **5.5.2 Grammatical agreement in Swahili**

Create interactive tasks where students must match nouns to the proper agreement markers and utilize those markers in sentences that make sense in the given context. Through real-world application, this strengthens comprehension.

Give instances from everyday life when noun class agreements are necessary for clear communication. To illustrate how agreement markers differ depending on noun classification, use real-world examples.

Incorporate regular drills and practice exercises that focus on different aspects of verb conjugation (e.g., tense, aspect, subject agreement). Provide opportunities for both written and spoken practice.

Create structured activities that require students to rearrange words or phrases to form correct Swahili sentences. Emphasize the importance of proper word order and sentence structure.

Provide samples of proper sentence formation to pupils, and then urge them to copy and practice making comparable sentences. Give concise examples of grammatically correct Swahili sentences.

Students should be urged to examine grammatical mistakes in their own speech and writing. In order to encourage self-editing and revision abilities, provide techniques for spotting and fixing sentence-level errors.

### **5.5.3 Vocabulary acquisition in Swahili**

Through semantic mapping exercises, assist students in gaining a deeper comprehension of Swahili vocabulary definitions and usage situations. Urge them to look up idiomatic terms, and synonyms.

Provide opportunities for authentic language use where students can practice using Swahili vocabulary in meaningful contexts (e.g., debates, presentations, storytelling). Foster a communicative approach to learning vocabulary. Promote awareness of semantic differences and encourage accurate vocabulary usage.

Incorporate cultural elements into vocabulary instruction to improve students' comprehension of Swahili words that have particular cultural meanings. Talk about the sociocultural nuances and vocabulary-use settings.

Give students readings that will introduce them to a variety of literary, media, and academic text uses of Swahili terminology. Promote vocabulary conversation and critical analysis in a range of settings.

Facilitate group discussions where students can explore and share interpretations of Swahili vocabulary meanings. Encourage them to articulate their understanding and justify their interpretations.

Create role-plays that copy actual situations and call for the usage of Swahili language. Give students the chance to practice and use language in appropriate contexts.

## **5.6 Recommendations for further research**

### **5.6.1 Comparative Linguistic Studies**

Conduct comprehensive comparative studies between Kikamba and other Bantu languages to analyze similarities and differences in phonological systems, syntactic structures, and grammatical features.

Explore how these linguistic differences impact the acquisition of Swahili among Kikamba-speaking learners compared to speakers of other Bantu languages.

Investigate broader patterns of language transfer and interference to better understand the challenges faced by Kikamba-speaking students in mastering Swahili phonetics, grammar, and vocabulary.



### **5.6.2 Language learning with the use of technology**

Examine how using digital tools and technology-assisted language learning (TALL) can help students who speak Kikamba acquire Swahili more quickly.

Assess the efficiency of digital platforms, virtual learning environments, mobile apps, and internet resources in facilitating individualized language learning.

Examine how TALL can help learners of Kikamba overcome particular language difficulties, such as the phonological and semantic distinctions between Kikamba and Swahili.

### **5.6.3 Sociolinguistic Research**

Examine the sociolinguistic facets of language use in classroom, community, and digital communication situations among students who speak Kikamba.

Examine how language attitudes, identity development, and social dynamics affect learning and becoming fluent in Swahili as a second language.

Analyze language shift and maintenance phenomena in Kikamba-speaking populations, especially as they pertain to Swahili use in various contexts of social interaction.

These suggestions seek to improve teaching methods, broaden our understanding of language learning processes, and aid in the creation of practical plans for helping Kikamba-speaking students learn Swahili as a second language. Every field of study presents chances to expand knowledge, fill in knowledge gaps, and enhance language learning results in multilingual settings.

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# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX I: Questionnaire for the students

Instructions; Please tick where appropriate.

Don't indicate your name in this form

### Part 1

Which class are you in?

Form 1 [ ]      Form 2 [ ]      Form 3 [ ]      Form 4 [ ]

Is Kikamba your first language?      Yes [ ]      No [ ]

Does Kikamba affect your Swahili acquisition?      Yes [ ]      No [ ]

### Part 2

How does Kikamba affect your articulation of words in Swahili while learning Swahili language?

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How does Kikamba affect your grammatical agreement in Swahili while learning Swahili language?

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How does Kikamba affect your vocabulary in Swahili while learning Swahili language?.....

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## **APPENDIX II: Interview for teachers**

1. Which class do you teach?
2. Are you a Kamba?
3. Which challenges do your students face in learning Swahili due to the effect of their first language?
4. How does Kikamba affect their articulation of words in Swahili?
5. How does Kikamba affect their grammatical agreement in Swahili?
6. How does Kikamba affect their vocabulary acquisition in Swahili?