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The Impact of Phonological Defects in Learning of English Language: Examples from Jita Language in Mara, Tanzania

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Abstract

English Language pronunciation is crucial in the student's learning process. The required pronunciation is geared toward the correct English Language phonological skills that are of concern to most linguists that English language learners whose first and second language is not English, hinder the learning processes. This paper focuses on the impact of phonological defects on Jita English language learners in Bunda Town Council, Tanzania. This qualitative and quantitative inquiry probes the complicated difficulties facing secondary-level learners of the English Language which if not well addressed, harden the English language learning process. Employing purposive sampling, this study chose 56 (40 students, 12 teachers and 4 heads of schools). The data were collected through closed questionnaires, sound test activities, and interviews. The collected data were analysed using percentages and frequencies. The challenges include priority conflicts, foundational inadequacies, educators' limited proficiency, oversight of mispronunciations, temporal constraints, peer emulation, lack of educational resources, students' reading limitations, and limited exposure. The study recommends prioritising phonological adequacy and correct pronunciation instruction, refining skills, integrating feedback, immersive practice, enriching resources, fostering reading habits, and using REALIA, which is "real-world learning" with the proper phonological drills in the teaching processes.

Keywords: Kijita, Phonological Defects, Learning, and English Language

1. Introduction

This paper examines the impact of Phonological defects on English language learners, which usually hinder effective pronunciation. Brock-Utne (2005) and Kilangi (2023) report that Tanzania is one of the few African nations that have tried to promote English as a second language (L2) and third language (L3) or foreign language in most African countries like Tanzania. Faced with the choice to make underdeveloped vernacular and the more developed languages of their colony's masters. English, the Tanzanian leaders adopted a bilingual policy that has taken steps to implement a local vernacular as a medium of instruction in public schools. Though this is a commendable step that was aimed at developing a local language, Kiswahili, the language policy in education in Tanzania as a whole can however be described in the words of Brock-Utne (2005); Ligembe & Ligembe (2022), as confusing, contradictory and ambiguous. Therefore, it was crucial to examine the impact of Phonological defects on English language learners which usually hinders effective pronunciation difficulties. Furthermore, Uwezo (2019); and Ligembe & Ligembe, (2022) add that in Tanzania pupils' reading situation is worse because the majority of them complete primary schools with very low phonological awareness skills and English language reading ability, while almost all of the secondary school reading materials and examinations are written in English language.

Unlike many African countries, Tanzania opted quite to intensify and extend the use of an indigenous as a lingua franca in the social and political realms the country's 1962 constitution, which has since been amended more than third languages times, only mentions Kiswahili and English as the official languages. The official language in education policy is spelt out by the Education and Training policy. The policy recognizes Kiswahili as the medium of instruction in all public pre-primary schools. Accordingly, English is taught as a compulsory subject at these levels of education. English is introduced as a subject in the third year of primary school. It is expected that at the end of the seven-year cycle of primary education (which in an actual sense gives a pupil only four years to have grasped the language), pupils would have attained sufficient oral and written proficiency to handle the rigorous of English as the medium of instruction in secondary and post-secondary education.

Uwezo (2019), Kilangi (2023), and Dung (2024) argued that third-language learner uses first-language knowledge and various strategies to facilitate his or her learning of the target language (i.e., speaking, reading, writing, spelling and pronunciation skills) via what is called language transfer skills. Transfer occurs consciously as a deliberate communication strategy, where there is a gap in the learner's knowledge; and unconsciously either because the correct form is not known or because, although it has been learned, it has not been completely automatized.

As people learn languages, they develop certain skills. They naturally transfer the skills learned in the first language to the second language. García, et al., (2022) state that transfer as "the use of previous linguistic or prior skills to assist comprehension or production" This indicates that while reading or writing in the second language, learners transfer their first language knowledge or skills. This transfer process may either support (positive transfer) or detract (negative transfer) from learning. Transfer can be facilitative, in areas where the two languages are identical.

Jita is one of the Bantu ethnic Languages spoken in Tanzania along the eastern and southern shores of Lake Victoria. Kijita language is said to be spoken by 269,000 people. Kijita is spoken in Bunda district, Musoma district (both urban and rural) of Mara region, Sengerema district and Ukerewe district of Mwanza region, Chato district and Geita district of Geita region.

2. Research Methodology and Theory

The investigation of the Jiata phonological defects in the learning of the English language as the third language was supported by scholars by using a number of theories including Optimality Theory (OT) in Phonological Acquisition (Gierut & Barlow, 1999). According to these two scholars, the OT's basic assumptions of this constraint-based theory and the concepts unique to the theory, including the "emergence of the unmarked," are also described. OT then examines more specifically within the context of phonological acquisition. The theory is applied in descriptions of children's common error patterns, observed inter- and intra-child variation, and productive change over time. The particular error patterns of fronting, stopping, final-consonant deletion, and cluster simplification are considered from an OT perspective. The discussion concludes with potential clinical applications and extensions of the theory to the diagnosis and treatment of children with functional phonological disorders. The other co-occurring theory is the Contrastive analysis theory is the first major theory dealing with the relationship between the languages learners acquire or master at all levels that is pronunciation, grammar, spelling and vocabulary. Linguists always have been interested in comparing and contrasting different language systems and the first pioneering works appeared in the 19th century (Dung, 2024)

Alomari (2024) formulated a contrastive analysis hypothesis on language in the book "Linguistics". Theoretical contrastive studies give an account of the differences and similarities between two or more languages provide an adequate model for the comparison and determine how and which elements are comparable. The basic assumption for this hypothesis was that "the principal Perrier for L2 acquisition is the interference of the L1 system in the L2 system... and ...that L3 learning involved the overcoming of the differences between the two linguistics systems the native and the target language. The term 'interference' here refers to any 'influence', from the L1 which would have any effect on the learning of L3. This implies that there is a usual constraint if one does not know or is not well informed on any of the language aspects in the new language, i.e. spelling, phonological aspects, pronunciation, grammar, and morphology.

Alghamdy (2024) claimed that the student who comes in contact with the L3 will find some features of it quite easy and others extremely difficult. Those elements which are similar to both languages will be easy and those which are different will be difficult to learn. On the other hand, many language teacher novices or veterans feel insecure about what they do in the classroom. Partly as a consequence of this, teachers are in general eager to embrace new material and techniques hoping to increase the percentage of class time that they can see as successful (Amoush, Mizher, & Alzoubi, 2024)

This study used these theories because they speculate in advance and relate with the investigation on how Kijita as a first language influence the learning of the English language in secondary schools.

This study employed a descriptive design as it sought to make a description of the impact of phonological defects of the Jita English language on learners. A Descriptive study design was used to obtain data that describes the characteristics of the influence of phonological defects in English language learning on other mother-tongue speakers (Dung, 2024). A mixed approach was mainly applied because the studies collected and analysed data using both qualitative and quantitative methods though qualitative data were most dominant in Bunda district secondary schools (Lubana secondary school, Nyiando secondary school, and Dr Nchimbi secondary school in Mara region) where Kijita is spoken, and where the natives use English language as their L3 preceded by Kiswahili as their most L2. The target population of this study had three (4) public secondary schools where the data was collected. The study had 40 students from three public secondary schools (10) from each school who are native speakers of Kijita were selected as the key participants to the study, 12 teachers from three (4) secondary school teachers (3) from each school and 4 Headmasters one (1) from each school. Therefore, the sample size of the study was fifty-six (56) respondents. All are obtained via Simple random sampling is a method of selecting respondents in which all members of a group (population or universe) have an equal and independent chance of being selected. Random sampling was used when selecting schools and when selecting respondents to be included in the study. In this study, 40 students from three public secondary schools (10) from each school who were native speakers of Kijita were selected as the key participants to the study and 12 English teachers from four(4) secondary schools, (3) teachers from each school in Bunda Town Municipal district were randomly selected into the study. The procedure of choosing the schools was by writing the names of all schools on separate pieces of paper and folding them. In this study, English teachers were selected through purposive sampling because they are the ones who have information on phonological defects in the process of learning English as a third language based on the Jita language. The data were collected through pronunciation tests, questionnaires, and interviews, whereas, frequency, percentages, and distribution tables were the means for the data analysis.

3. Results/ Data Presentation and Discussion

Kijita has the following phonological realisations from different respondents as indicated in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Summary of phonological units of the Kijita language

Phonological units of Jita ¹	Responses	Frequencies	Percentage
Students	Positive responses	25	63
	Negative responses	15	37
Difficult in sentence formation ²			
Teachers	Yes	12	100
	No	0	0
Influence of Kijita	Yes	8	67

on Learning English Teachers	No	4	33
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Source: Field data 2022

3.1 Phonological Units of Jita

The findings from Table 1 above show that 25 students which is equal to (63%) of respondents responded that the phonological units of Kijita differ from that of English and that the pronunciation of some words in English is constrained such that it becomes difficult for Jita learners in learning English Language. Also 15 students which are equal (37%) responded negatively about learning the English language where most Jita native speakers face some problems in pronunciation as some phonemes tend to have variation in their syllabic structures between /r/ and /l/ and they tend to omit /h/ where it is necessary. The findings supported by Gierut and Barlow (1999) who say that the work on the relationship between first-language and third-language vocabulary, spelling, grammar, phonology, pronunciation, and reading skills strongly indicates that native language abilities can influence the third language vocabulary and reading performance negatively or positively.

3.2 Difficult in sentence formation

Moreover, the findings from Table 1 revealed that there were no difficulties in sentence formation. The findings revealed that 12 which is equal to (100%) teachers agreed that there were critical difficulties in sentence formation when listening for dictation as there is a problem in understanding the speaker who uses correct IPA pronunciation and that there was a difference in sentences structure between Jita language and English language The interviewee finding indicated negatively response from the statement, one of the interviewee reports:

“.....it differs in all aspects such as grammar, spelling, and pronunciation of some words which makes it difficult for English language learners unless taught by competent, professional, and English language fluent teachers”.

Ligembe and Ligembe (2022) support the findings of this study by claiming that people show more lexical interference on similar items. So, it may follow those languages with more similar structures for example English and French are more susceptible to mutual interference than languages with few similar features than languages that originate from different language families.

3.3 English Phonological Defects to Jita Learners

Table 1 indicates the defects Kijita learners face in the English teaching and learning processes. Furthermore, it is indicated that some of the English language phonological sounds are restricted to Jita English language learners since the pronunciation of the two languages is different from each other, and it is because the languages do not relate to each other as the respondents noted here via interviews:

“.....No pronunciation defects affect the learning of the English language for the reason that English differs in all aspects such as grammar, word order, spelling, and pronunciation of some words”

This situation is valid at 8 which is equal to (67%) of respondents denoting that English language phonological constraints are a hindrance to Jita English language learners. As such, it is indicated

that even the teaching and learning of the English language to Jita learners lack influence each other where the readiness, competent teachers, and adequate English language teaching facilities.

The findings were supported by Amoush, Mizher, and Alzoubi's (2024) research about Native (Spanish, Vietnamese, Cambodian, and Italian) language interference in learning a second language (English language). In this case, Bheba was designed to uncover something of the complexity of language use in a particular sample of language learners and so it had an explicit descriptive purpose. It aimed to analyse the use of specific parts of the language and to use the results of that analysis to make judgments about the phonological defects in the learning of the English Language.

3.4 The relationship between English and Kijita language

Table 2: Shows the Summary of the relationship between English and Kijita language

Relationship between Kijita and the English language	Response	Frequencies	Percentage
Students	Yes	32	80
	No	8	20
Teachers	Yes	10	83
	No	2	17

Source: Field data 2022

3.5 The relationship between Kijita and the English language

The findings from Table 5 above show responses from the respondents by percentage as those who agreed there is a relationship between the Kijita language and the English language. The findings revealed that 10 teachers who are equal to (83%) agreed that there was a relationship between Kijita and the English language by saying many of the morphological processes do not differ. Therefore the findings show that there was a relationship between the Kijita language and the English language because most of the teachers agreed there was a relationship between Kijita and the English language due to the use of some vowels as used in the English language.

The findings were supported by Ellis (2021) refers to interference as "transfer" which he says is the influence that the learner's first language extends over the acquisition of a second language; he argues that transfer is governed by the learner's perception of what is transferable and by their stage of development in third language learning. In learning a targeted language, learners construct their own interim rules with the use of their first language knowledge, but only when they believe it will help them in learning tasks or when they have become sufficiently proficient in the second language for transfer to be possible. He raises the need to distinguish between errors and mistakes and make an important distinction between the two.

Furthermore, the relationship between the Kijita language and the English language can be in different ways such as: Many of the morphological processes that occur in Jita, occur in English as well. However, the degree to which these processes occur differs. In Jita, inflexion and derivation have a more decisive role than in English. The fact is that Jita nouns (which can be placed in different noun classes) are often bound and need a prefix, unlike in English where most nouns are free.

Also, Jita uses the same letters for the vowels, as are used in English (a, e, i, o and u), but the pronunciation is regular and a little different from standard English. Jita vowels are short without the subtle diphthongs that often are sounded by English speakers altering the same vowels

Both observe tenses for example:

Omwanaalilile (a baby cried).

Omwanakajolila (a baby will cry).

Abhanabhalilile (babies have cried).

Both have different dialects, for example:

Kijita has four dialects, namely; Kwaya, Ruri, Kara, and Kerewe. The standard dialect of Kijita is Ruri due to the following: Seniority of lexeme; Kwaya 78%, Ruri 88%. Kara 81% and Kerewe 62%. The English language also has different dialects including British, American, and Scotland English language.

3.6 Jita and English Phonological Defects

The research findings from Table 2 above indicate the response from the respondents in percentage as those who responded positively that there was a relationship between the Kijita language and the English language. The findings revealed that 32 students which is equal to (80%) responded positively that there was a relationship between Kijita and the English language their first language shows the way of learning the English language.

Therefore, the finding shows there was a relationship between Kijita and the English language because as people learn the language they learner develop certain skills. García, et al., (2022) regards transfer as the use of previous linguistic or prior skills to assist comprehension or production. This indicates that while reading or writing in second language in second language learners transfer their first language knowledge or skills.

3.7 Mitigating the Phonological Defects of Jita English Language Learners.

Table 3 shows Mitigations to be used in teaching and learning English.

Suggestion of teachers	Frequencies	Responses	Percentage
Using real things or objects in teaching English to students so that they can understand easily the things which are referred	16	7	43.8
Teaching English from the grass root to be used for Jita native speakers	16	4	25
More practical speaking English language among the Jita community, especially on the school campus	16	5	31.3
Total		16	100

Source: Field data (2022)

3.7.1 Using real things in teaching English to students can help to understand a third language easily

This was responded to by seven respondents who present 44% of total respondents. It was found that using real things or objects in teaching a third language to Jita natives helps them to understand easily the language. The finding was supported by García, et al. (2022) say that the work on the relationship between first language and third language vocabulary and reading skills strongly indicates that native language abilities can influence second language vocabulary and reading performance. One of the respondents said that;

“Though using real things in teaching makes students understand easily the lesson”

3.7.2 Teaching English from the grassroots to Jita native speakers

This was responded to by four respondents who were equal to 25% of total respondents. It was found that teaching English to Jita natives from the grassroots to develop skills in learning another subject. One of the respondents said that;

“In order to understand the English language teachers should teach students from primary level to higher education level”

The finding was supported by Amoush, Mizher, and Alzoubi (2024) say that the work on the relationship between first-language and third-language vocabulary and reading skills strongly indicates that native language abilities can influence second-language vocabulary and reading performance.

3.7.3 Practical drills in speaking English language among the Jita

This was responded to by five respondents who present 31% of total respondents. It was found that more practical speaking English develops the skills of reading. One of the respondents said that; one of the respondents said that;

“By making the practice of speaking English can improve the language abilities”

This finding was supported by Ellis (2021) says that for decades there has been a learning decline in the level of student performance in Tanzanian secondary schools. Various explanations for the underperformance have been given, for example, of-content curriculum, inadequate resources, poor management and demoralized teachers.

The study aimed to investigate the role of the first language in the process of learning English language as a third language. The specific objectives were to establish if there is a role posed by Kijita in the process of learning English language as a third language that is to identify phonological units of Kijita in English language learning, to explain the relationship between Kijita and English language, to determine the ways of teaching English to Jita native speakers.

From the findings, there were some phonological units posed by Kijita in the process of learning English language as the third language. The main causes of such a unit were due to the mother tongue, Kijita is mostly spoken in the area so people in a certain area do not have the habit of speaking the English language and the teacher used Kijita in the classroom to explain some concepts of English. Therefore this made Kijita have a big role in the process of learning the English language.

Nevertheless, the findings revealed that there is no relationship between Kijita and the English language because both languages come from different families- Bantu for Jita and Indo-European for the English language which do not match in any way.

3.7.4 Ways of teaching English to Kijita Native speakers

According to Mohamed (2024), there are several factors which combine in a profile of the success of third language learners. Obviously; the motivation to learn is important however, it has been noted that those who experience some successes are among the most motivated to learn. Thus, motivation may be as much a result of success and accomplishment must consequently be more helpful than one that dwells on errors and corrections. Indeed, the learner who is willing to guess, risks making mistakes, and tries to communicate in the L3 will tend, given the opportunity to be more successful an important part of the input.

It is underscored by researchers on language in Education that the majority of Tanzania teachers are less at ease in teaching English because of their low language proficiency. Persistence in the use of English as MOI in secondary schools has had serious consequences for decades there has been a learning decline in the level of student performance in Tanzanian secondary schools. While various explanations for the underperformance have been given, for example, content curriculum, inadequate resources, poor management and demoralized teachers. The language barriers seem to contribute substantially to poor performance.

Moreover, teachers play a critical role in supporting language development. Beyond teaching children to read and write in school, they need to help children learn and use aspects of language associated with the academic discourses of the various school subjects (Ligembe & Ligembe, 2022). They need to help them become more aware of how language functions in various models of communication across the curriculum. They need to understand how language works well enough to select materials that help to expand their students' linguistic horizons and to plan instructional activities that give students opportunities to use new forms and modes of expression to which they are being exposed (Warren, 2015). Teachers need to understand how to design the classroom language environment so as to optimize language and literary learning and avoid linguistic obstacles to content-area learning.

Yule (2004) argues that some obvious reasons for the problems experienced in third language acquisition are related to the fact that most people attempt to learn another language during their teenage or adult years, in a few hours per week of school time, with a lot of other occupations and with an already known language available for most of their daily communicative requirements, some likely reasons including the suggestion that adults tongue get stiff pronouncing one type of language; for example, English and just cannot cope with the new sound of another language. Speech organs can cause problems in learning a second language but this can be through physical defects in speech organs but not individual differences in speech organs of different people.

Furthermore, individual differences in speech organs in different persons (apart from obvious physical defects) have no significant effects on the kind of sound produced. The difference between a boy's sound and a man's or between a man's and a woman's is not generally relevant in speech. Age is one of the factors which cause native speakers either to learn quicker or fail to learn easier third language.

Oraif (2024) argued that people who learn their second language master it more easily and usually have a noticeable foreign accent. A foreign accent results partly from the influence of the first language but other factors are responsible as well as because of some developmental error in a second language. Interlingua are common errors of learners regardless of the first language, transfer from the first language cannot be only the source of the Interlingua patterns.

The pronoun “she” in English can stand for a girl or a woman, but in Kijita a girl means “omuyakalaji” and a woman is “omugasi”.

Interference refers to “transfer” which he says is the influence that the learner’s first language extends over the acquisition of a second language; he argues that transfer is governed by the learner’s perception of what is transferable and by their stage of development in third language learning (Shawaqfeh, Jameel, & Yousef, 2024). In learning a targeted language, learners construct their own interim rules with the use of their first language knowledge, but only when they believe it will help them in learning tasks or when they have become sufficiently proficient in the second language for transfer to be possible. He raises the need to distinguish between errors and mistakes and make an important distinction between the two. He says that errors reflect gaps in the learner’s knowledge, they occur because, in a particular instance, the learner is unable to perform what he or she knows. It appears to be much more difficult for an adult to learn a second language system that is well-learned as the first language. Typically, a person learns a third language partly in terms of the meanings already learned in the first language.

According to Shawaqfeh, Jameel, and Yousef (2024), people show more lexical interference on similar items. So, it may follow those languages with more similar structures for example English and French are more susceptible to mutual interference than languages with fewer similar features English and Japanese. On the other hand, we might also expect more learning difficulties and thus more likelihood of performance interference at those points in the second language which are more distinct from the first language as the learner would find it difficult to learn and understand a completely new and different usage. Hence, the learner would resort to first language structures for help.

García, et al., (2022) dealt with the role of the mother tongue language in learning a second language (English) children who have the opportunity to maintain their first language can extend their cognitive development while learning English as a second language. Their level of competence in a second language will be related to the level of competence they have achieved in their first language. Children with sound knowledge of their first language will be able to transfer skills from one language to another (Ligembe & Ligembe, 2022). The present study also identifies the role of the differences or similarities between the structure of the first and second language on the target language. In the end, Pune said that the use of the first language has merits and demerits for learners to learn a second language. The use of a first language to students to improve reading skills and vocabulary in learning a second language and it does not help them improve speaking and writing skills in the third language.

This research shows that teachers should encourage for use of a second language in the class the classroom of a second language is useful for the communication of learners. So, this research refers to the direct method of teaching a second language in the direct

method, teachers’ use of the first language in class which is why learners have significant progress in learning a second language. In most of the roles of the first language that have been looked at, there is a common theme that the first language provides a familiar and effective way of quickly getting to grip the meaning and content of what needs to be used in the second language. Therefore, the second language needs to be seen as a useful tool that like other tools should be used where needed but should not over used.

Oraif (2024) did a study on how mother tongue (Cantonese) influences have a greater role in second language (English) speech perception. This study only focuses on the production of second-language speech sounds, and the perception of these sounds has largely been ignored, so the extent of the mother tongue’s influence on the perception of second-language speech sounds Cantonese. The result of the study showed that the participant’s perceptual abilities were different from the production abilities. Mother tongue influence also had a different role on the participant’s perception and production of English speech sounds.

For example, obstruents which are found only in English ie /z/, /s/ and /v/ were on the whole, not more poorly perceived than those shared by both the Cantonese and English phonological systems /s/, /f/, for example, /z/ received an overall perception accuracy of 81% and /s/ also received a similar overall occupancy rate of 84% when the two sounds were contrasted with each other.

Aman (2004) did on “description of Kijita reduplication”. Kijita makes use of full reduplication of monosyllabic words. The process differs from that of polysyllabic words in that the former includes the infinitives and subject makers in the reduplicates. A systematic reduplication is attested and divided into stem copy and segmental doubling. While the derivational and inflectional behaviour of the verbal reduplication in Kijita resembles other Bantu languages. It includes the object maker at least in the monosyllabic verb-na “give” –nana “give repeatedly”. Also, vowel initial words are associated with vowel deletion and lengthening process. Reduplicates in Kijita are prefixes but those tone criteria used in Bantu languages cannot apply. This study attempted to answer two questions:

In Kijita as in other Bantu languages, there is a syllable structure that is (V), (N), (CV), (NCV), (CGV) and (NCGV).

What are reduplication characteristics demonstrated by word categories that undergo reduplication in Kijita and what are the functions related to the reduplication process in the language?

Adjective reduplication in Kijita may indicate a derogatory or negative connotation.

For example; *Ayanileomwanawaeomlelaa*

She gave her tall child

a-ya-nile-omwa-an-waeomlelalela

Kijita’s verbal reduplication indicates habitualness and repetition.

Forexample: kijita: *Omunuunukendaokulyabhwangubhwangu,*

Lolakutyokalyanasubhililasubhilila.

English: This (person) likes eating frequently, seeing the way he eats sugarcane repeatedly.

Kijita adverb reduplication is used to express intensification, illustration sentences from Kijita as follows:

For example; *nulyebhwanguintaleekuluma*

Nulyebhwanguinjale o-kulum-a

Eat quickly, the lion would swallow you.

Therefore, reduplication in Kijita involves nouns, adjectives, adverbs, as well as numerals. Both total and partial reduplications are attested in Kijita; both at the word level and at the sentence level, reduplication in Kijita involves the intensification and the repetition meanings as well as the derogatory and the diminutive meanings and the kind of “N” meaning.

According to a 2005 Senate Resolution, fewer than 1% of United States adults are fluent in a second language compared to more than half of the adults in Europe only 7% of US adults attribute their second language proficiency to schooling, according to the nation opinion research centre general social survey in 2000, the centre of applied linguistic studies studied 19 countries where second language program are the norm; common features were a coherent, framework, strong leadership, designation of foreign language as a core subject, rigorous teacher education use of targeted language(s), to teach content creative use of technology and support for heritage language.

At independence, efforts were made in all African countries towards demonstrating the education system inherited from colonialism. In this regard, the need to promote indigenous languages was high on the agenda. Difference language policies were worked out over the years to give African languages Elbow room in relation to the foreign language. Many local languages consequently sank in status and became the language of the commoner, as exemplified in a study by Alomari (2024) which investigated the choice of language in Nigeria and confirmed a strong preference for English as their second language, even where the choice of the learners own ancestral language was available.

Most Tanzanians are bilinguals (that is they have their first language/ native language and Kiswahili) hence they have difficulty in learning a second language. For most Tanzanians, their first language is their native language while their second language is Kiswahili. Therefore, according to this situation, some of them are learning Kiswahili as their second language for those who have already acquired the native language and their second language is English because, for some, their first language is Kiswahili, for Kijita native speakers learn English as their second language, and hence learning the English language is constrained by their defects in the phonological levels.

4. Conclusion and Recommendations

From the findings, the researcher revealed that the first language has a role in learning the English language. It can facilitate if there are some similarities either phonologically, morphologically or semantically and also it can hinder if there are no similarities. This means the success of language transfer of a third language depends on how similar the two language transfers will facilitate third language learning, if there are no similarities there is no language learning as if is Kijita language and English language.

Phonologically, Kijita has negative influences on learning the English language where most Jita native speakers face some problems in pronouncing tend to have variation between /r/ and /l/ and they tend to omit /h/ where it is necessary.

Therefore, Jita natives find difficulties in learning English. Hence the finding of this study suggests teaching the English language

from the grass root to be useful for the Jita native speakers. More practical in speaking English language among the Jita community, especially on the school campus.

For the government primary education and another level of training should be taught in the English language only so that the students from the beginning at a lower level are familiar with the language. More capable English teachers are needed therefore the government should train and employ capable English teachers. The government through the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training should supply enough facilities such as books, and textbooks in all schools, build libraries and bring enough books to the libraries.

Teachers should use English in explaining different concepts instead of explaining in their student's native languages. Therefore direct translation from natives should be avoided rather they should find different words in the same languages and use teaching and learning material (aids) so they can simply explanations.

Students should be encouraged to read newspapers written in English language, use English frequently in their communication and participate in extra-curricular activities that use English language like debate. This research was based on the Jita phonological defects in the learning of the English language. Therefore it is recommended future researchers focus on the influence of other Bantu languages in learning English as the third language. The results of this study investigated only the role of the first language in the process of learning English language as the third language. The study suggests further analysis of the role of other Bantu languages in English learning in order to determine if they are similar to that of Kijita and whether their speakers' phonological defects influence the learning of the second and or the third languages.

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