

# The Semantic Field Theoretical Approach in the teaching of English and its Grammatical Implication to Second Language Development

## Abstract.

The Semantic Field Theory (SFT) has been widely used in teaching English as a second Language to preschool children in Kenya. In the SFT approach, the grammars of two or more languages are in contact. The grammar of languages involved in the SFT approach may be similar or different. However, studies have indicated that where the grammar of two languages in contact differ, syntactic mismatches are likely to result. It was against this background that the investigation was undertaken to establish the potential syntactic mismatches between English and Lukabarasi when using the SMT approach and the possible grammatical implications to English language development lessons. Contrastive Analysis (CA) by Lado (1967) was used in the comparison of the structures of Lukabarasi and English in order to identify syntactic similarities and differences in The First Language (L1) and The Second Language (L2). A sample of 10 key informants teaching English as a second language in rural pre-schools were purposively sampled to help collect the songs. Two songs were purposively sampled for collecting the relevant data. Content analysis guided the data analysis to identify the parts of the songs that were relevant to the achievement of the research objective. The findings indicated that teachers used Lukabarasi songs during English development lessons to enhance vocabulary acquisition using the SFT approach. Further, rules of the two languages were not observed and finally, there were syntactic mismatches during the teaching of English lessons. The findings revealed that extensive use the SMT approach and failure to follow rules of languages during L2 lessons may affect second language development. The findings recommend use of SFT approach when necessary in teaching English and adherence to rules of the two languages during English lessons to reduce negative transfer and to enhance L2 development.

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