

**AN ANALYSIS OF THE INFLUENCE OF FIRST LANGUAGE (L1)  
TRANSFER ON SPOKEN ENGLISH IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN  
MOGOTIO SUB-COUNTY, BARINGO COUNTY, KENYA**

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## ABSTRACT

There is a notable decline in the performance of spoken English in secondary schools in Mogotio Sub County. The causes of this decline are not known. It is speculated that first language (L1) among other factors is responsible for this decline. Therefore, this study investigated the influence of L1 on spoken English language in selected secondary schools in Mogotio Sub County, Kenya. The objectives of the study were to identify the nature of errors in spoken English, categorize LI transfer errors and establish whether performance in spoken English influences students' communicative competence in written English among sampled students in secondary schools in Mogotio Sub County. The study was guided by error analysis, inter-language, contrastive analysis and Eckman's markedness differential Hypothesis. The study used both qualitative and quantitative approach. The study was based on a descriptive survey design. Data were collected by means of a guided written composition and a reading proficiency test. The reading sessions were recorded and transcribed for purposes of analysis. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics. The study population comprised Form Two students. Purposive sampling technique was used to select the sample of the study. A study sample of 279 form two students from four secondary schools was involved in the study. The study found out that the errors made in this study were classified as phoneme deletion, phoneme oddity, syllable deletion, phoneme identification, phoneme segmentation, phoneme substitution, phoneme addition, inter-lingual errors and intra-lingual errors. More errors in language use occurred in the context of use of the homophones *pail* and *pale*. It was also observed that the position of the sound in a word influenced the nature of errors made by the L2 language users. The frequency of errors in pronouncing the sound /p/ was highest when the sound appeared word initially but relatively fewer errors were reported in both word medially and word finally. The study also concludes that performance in spoken English influenced students' communicative competence in written English among the students in Mogotio Sub County. The study recommends that teachers should view students' errors positively and not as the learners' failure to grasp the rules and structures of English. The results of this study may be useful to ESL teachers in secondary schools in Kenya.