

**INSTRUCTION IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LEARNERS' ACADEMIC  
PERFORMANCE IN SELECTED PRIMARY SCHOOLS LOCATED  
IN NAMUGANGA SUB COUNTY MUKONO DISTRICT  
UGANDA**

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**DECLARATION**

I, **EPOK BOSCO**, do declare that this work was my original and has never been submitted to any learning institution other than this one for any award.

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Date: 12th - NOV - 2016

### APPROVAL

The research entitled **instruction in English language and Learners' academic performance in selected Primary schools located in Namuganga Sub County, Mukono District** was carried out under my supervision. And with my approval it is now ready for presentation to the Academic board of Kampala International University.

Signed:  .....

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Date: *12<sup>th</sup> Nov 2016* .....

## DEDICATION

I would like to sincerely dedicate this research work to my beloved wife **Mbekeka Dorothy**, my children **Okello Jansen, Ogwang Julius, Ogwal Joash, Akullu Jenesa, Ojjede Jordan, Okidi Joshua** my late father **Ojjede Teofilo** and mother **Apio Deborah**.

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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

<b>EMP</b>	English Medium Primary school(s)
<b>IMF</b>	International Mon
<b>LOI</b>	Language of Instruction
<b>LOITASA</b>	Language of Instruction in Tanzania and South Africa
<b>NECTA</b>	National Examination Council of Tanzania
<b>UNESCO</b>	United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization
<b>WB</b>	World Bank
<b>ZPD</b>	Zone of Proximal Development

## **ABSTRACT**

This study Investigated Instruction in English and performance of pupils in primary schools of Namuganga Sub County. Two subjects, that is, Social studies and English were used to examine the differences and similarities in pupil's performances. The study mainly used qualitative approach in data collection, analysis and presentation. Quantitative approach was only used to present statistical data. Data was obtained through the use of interviews, observation and documentary review. The study adopted-case study design and content analysis was used for data analysis.

The findings indicate that learners in urban Primary schools performed better than those from rural schools. According to the records of performance for Social studies and English the difference between these schools was marginal. The findings also revealed that there was lack of student participation in class discussions observed in both schools. It was also established that some teachers applied teacher-centered methods due to the scarcity of learning materials. Findings also showed that there was overcrowding in classroom as well as lack of physical facilities such as a library hamper effective learning and developing language skills. Findings also established that poor performance was attributed to other factors such as giving learners punishments and the absence of lunch meals in schools are issues that affect both urban and rural students' academic performance. The findings also revealed that for learners to perform well in examinations they need to be motivated by teachers and be willing to study conscientiously. Parental support and tuition/remedial classes were also highly recommended to enable students to perform much better. A conclusion was given that the fact English is still the language of instruction; therefore, measures need to be taken to solve the language problem. In order to work on this language problem, the teaching of English as a subject should be enhanced to promote effective and efficient teaching and learning in classrooms. Reading programs and oral exercises for learners should be initiated in schools to develop learners' language skills. English training workshops and professional pedagogy workshops for all subject teachers should be organized to improve teachers' language and pedagogy skills.

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.1 Background to the study**

A number of studies done concerning the language of instruction and learners performance in primary schools show the deterioration of education standards as the learner progresses in class.(Criper& Dodd, 1984 in Rubagumye, 1990; Malekela, 2000; Senkoro, 2004).In almost all countries which were colonized by the British, English is taught as a compulsory subject in both primary and secondary schools. To add on that, instruction of all subjects is conducted in English in upper primary ( primary four to seven), and throughout secondary education.

Rubagumye (1990) after their research concluded that the level of English in secondary schools was completely inadequate for the teaching and learning of other subjects and immediate measures were to be taken. These finding apply to the case in primary schools. Roy-Campbell and Qorro (1997) identified two problems that result from using English as a language of instruction in primary schools; first, little knowledge is gained from the subject-matter since learners do not understand English well. Researchers established that whatever is taught in English the learners have to translate the concepts in their own mother language in order to understand them. Secondly English language also was imposed on to the African countries, the British therefore was seen as a negative influence. Furthermore, learners are restricted from adequately acquiring the necessary knowledge, skills and attitudes intended in their academic studies because of using a foreign language as a medium of instruction.

The interest of doing a research in this issue has to do with personal experience of teaching in both urban and rural primary schools during field work. In my experience I saw that the ability of pupil's in using the language of instruction in class was very minimal and so was their performance based on class tests.

## **1.2 Statement of the problem**

At the end of the primary course, every pupil in class seven is supposed to sit for the national examinations (Primary Leaving Examinations). The main requirement of these exams is that the candidates are supposed to write their answers in English which is the LOI stipulated regardless of their academic background. Yet according to the requirements of the thematic curriculum pupils study in their own mother languages up to primary three, and there after that they study in English because the medium of instruction in Uganda schools is in English. A language which does not facilitate effective teaching and learning in classrooms. Both teachers and learners are not competent in the language which has been the medium of instruction for the past 40 years. Consequently the teaching and learning process has been gradually deteriorating because of the English language barrier. Learners experience difficulty in understanding what they are taught in class and performing to their full capability. When the language is foreign to the instructor and the learner it is difficult to communicate the required information thus meaningful learning cannot be achieved. The learners' substandard performance in test and examinations shows how serious this problem is in primary schools.

## **1.3 Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to investigate on factors influencing learners' performance in English language in selected primary schools of Namuganga Sub County in Mukono district.

## **1.4 Specific Objectives of the Study**

The following objectives will focus on the following;

- i. To find out if language policies affect learners performance in English.
- ii. To assess the impact of school location on learners performance.
- iii. To establish and find if teacher characteristics influence learner's performance.

## **1.5 Research questions**

- i. Does language policy affect learner's performance in English?
- ii. What is the impact of school location on learner's performance?
- iii. Do teacher characteristics influence learners performance?.

## **1.6 Scope of the study**

This research shall be carried out in Namuganga sub County, Uganda to investigate factors that influence students' performance of students in English Language with focus on finding out if institutional factors have contributed to learners poor performance in English language, assessing the attitude of learners towards English language and establishing if family background can influence learners performance in English Language. The study begun in April 2015 and ended in July 2016.

## **1.7 Limitation of the study**

This study was conducted in six selected primary schools, in rural Namuganga Sub County. The researcher was unable to interview some teachers who completely rejected to be interviewed stating no apparent reasons. The Headmasters in some schools, who were considered as interview participants, were not present at the time of the research. Instead I interviewed heads of academic as representatives of the school administration.

## **1.8 Significance of the Study**

- This comparative study will help the county step up new measures on how to raise her academic performance in PLE
- This will lure back all education stakeholders within the Sub County to take SWOT analysis to embitter their academic standards. Thus preparing a fair and firm ground for academic excellence. Hence narrowing the widening performance gap between private and public primary schools in PLE.
- This study will as well shed lights on managerial and planning skills; thus enhancing academic performance. Thus anchoring the Division better

academically for a brilliant performance. It will be a guide on how the Division will achieve the provincial set goals under the province's Action Plan of Operation Effective 40-35-30.

- In conclusion, this study will be an eye opener to all education stakeholders on measures to take to uplift academic performance especially in public sector. That is to parents who care less about their children's future life despite of Free Primary Education for all!

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.0. Introduction**

This chapter reviews what other scholars have written about learning second language acquisition and performance.

#### **2.1. Theoretical Framework**

##### **Vygotsky's Theory**

Vygotsky states that learning is distinct in every individual child whereby the knowledge and skills acquired vary from one individual to another (Communique, 1997 in Dahms et al, 2007). Communique says according to Vygotsky the main aim of education is to internalize culture and social relationships through social learning. The importance of past experiences and knowledge in interpreting present experiences is stressed (Feden and Vogel, 1993 in Dahms et al, 2007). Students' culture particularly their home surroundings have a great deal of contribution towards new knowledge and skills that one acquires.

Language skills are particularly critical for creating meaning and linking new ideas to past experiences and prior knowledge (Hamilton and Ghalala, 1994:255 in Dahms et al, 2007).

It is argued that language plays an active role in the development of thought. Vygotsky claims that language played an essential role in cognitive development this is due to the fact that it is through language a child learns how to think and it is through words a child internalizes complex concepts (Feden and Vogel, 1993 in Dahms et al (2007). Thus, learning takes place through the use of language which an external experience transforms into internal process; in this case speech and language being the main means of communication that promotes learning and learning leads to higher levels of thinking (Dahms et al, 2007). They also explain that according to Vygotsky two main ways of learning are through social interaction and language. Language enables individuals to share experiences, thus, enhancing the ability to participate in social interaction (Dahms et al, 2007).



Linguist specialists claim that a language which is not used in daily interactions tends to suffer regression. Therefore, this is the case with English it has become a classroom language because it is only used meagerly in the classroom.

## **2.2 Language policies, bilingualism, the use of code alternation and immersion programs in classrooms and learner's performance**

In every institution, there are policies, and the implementers of these policies. This affects the stakeholders of the institution. In the perspective of an educational setting, there are policies that streamline the teaching and learning activities which in turn influence the products. In Uganda, there are language policies that have been implemented to govern the teaching and learning of in Primary schools and these affect learners' performance not only in English but also in other subjects.

In primary schools for example Lower primary classes are taught in vernacular up to class three. And in relation to the foregoing statement, Prah propounds that any free society transmits knowledge in the home language because it allows creativity and innovation among learners but more importantly it is the language in which they develop their thoughts. If the LOI is not the mother tongue this may be the result of patterns of dominance or colonialism based on the country's history (Prah, 2003).

The main concern however of using a native language as a medium of instruction is the shortage of instructional materials (UNESCO, 1953). UNESCO addresses the financial problem that most African countries face in a document the use of Vernacular Language in Education:

In the next class they switch back to English as a medium of instruction until they graduate from primary education. The choice of the language that should be used as the LOI in many African countries particularly those that were under colonial power is based on both pedagogical criteria as well as political influence. Prah (2003) talks of how dominance of a language (foreign language) makes individuals culture submissive.

However researchers have cited important and difficult problems linked to the use of vernacular languages in education is that of providing reading materials. It often

happens that even a language which is quite capable of being used as a medium of instruction will be almost entirely without books or other materials.

Secondly scholars have observed that children who speak a language other than the language of instruction [which refers to the European languages] confront a substantial barrier to learning. In the crucial early grades when children are trying to acquire basic literacy as well as adjust to the demands of the school setting, not speaking the language of instruction can make the difference between succeeding and failing in school, between remaining in school and dropping out (Lockheed and Verspoor, 1991 in Mazrui, 1997:38).

In a comparative study between Tanzania and Kenya on high school students' performances, the Kenyan language policy is questioned by the WB because the results were not quite impressive (Mazuri, 1997). The WB stated that the Kenyan education system of using Kiswahili throughout the eight years of primary school has shown how difficult it is for students to learn in English in secondary school (World Bank, 1988 in Mazrui, 1997). This is seen in their academic achievement in high school where Kenya has done remarkably well while Tanzanian students results were very low (World Bank, 1988 in Mazrui, 1997: 42).

There is a lot of evidence to show the current dominance of English in international trade, finance, world governance and in tertiary education, science and technology, the publishing industry and other domains (Alexander, 2005).

In Uganda case, English language was inherited as the LOI from the British colonialists immediately after independence. Dominance is currently portrayed by international donor agencies exerting their power in the publishing industry, educational policies and even the policy on the LOI by placing conditions to be fulfilled for government to receive aid.

Eastern Africans believe that English should be the medium of instruction. ,":which literally means English is the Kiswahili of the world, in other words, as Kiswahili is

the national language of Tanzania, English is considered the most important international language in the world (Rubagumya, 1991). Therefore, the decision of having English as the LOI is not because Kiswahili is not ready to be used as a medium but rather English is seen as the language of technological development (Rubagumya, 1991).

Bilingualism is used unofficially in most Uganda classrooms as well as code-switching<sup>3</sup> and code-mixing<sup>4</sup>. Roy-Campbell and Qorro (1997) suggest in order for bilingualism to be used in the education system the government needs to provide training for teachers and language specialists and funds for books and other resources to facilitate the program. Both languages Kiswahili and English should be incorporated in primary and secondary education. Stroud (1991) in Holmarsdottir (2006) defines bilingual speakers as those who use two or more languages in their daily speech situations and code-switching is seen as language shift<sup>5</sup> that users apply.

Code-switching is defined as the alternate use of two or more languages a common bilingual or multilingual communication strategy (Holmarsdottir, 2006).

“Code-mixing is the changing of one language to another within the same utterance or in the same oral/written text” (Ho, 2007).

Language shift is a process whereby a community of speakers shifts to speak one language to another language or a speech community of one language becomes bilingual in another language (Wikipedia, 2009)

Holmarsdottir (2006) notes in her classroom observation that the use of IsiXhosa is to avoid „superficial explanations code-switching is used to enable teachers to carry out a meaningful lesson allowing them to discuss and explain concepts and terms in detail since English alone hinders them to fully clarify these concepts. Kadegehe (2006) agrees with Holmarsdottir as he says that code-switching is used as a

communication resource for explanations, discussions and introducing new topics; as well as developing teacher-student rapport or maintaining teachers' authority.

Kadeghe also clarifies that the use of code-switching does not imply that a teacher is incompetent in the subject matter but enables the teacher to clarify some concepts which would have been misunderstood or overlooked if the teacher had not used a familiar code. Code-switching helps carry out the lessons across the curriculum hence making it a beneficial resource in Ugandan classroom.

Despite the effectiveness of code-switching in classroom teaching and learning there is a problem which arises with its use; students fail to perform well in their examinations since it is not a legitimate strategy (Brock-Ute, 2004). It is difficult for learners to master a foreign language when code-switching is a common routine during the teaching and learning process. Even the language they are familiar with in this case Kiswahili does not fully develop because of the constant switch and mix of the two languages and this tendency continues as learners progress in higher levels of education, that is, high school, college and university.

Genesee (2001) describes second language immersion education in Canada is a type of program within bilingual education which includes: early, middle and late immersion. Genesee explains the three types of immersion programs which can be used in bilingual classrooms:

**Early immersion:** includes both partial and total which begin in kindergarten or grade 1 up to grade 3 or 4. The second language is used as a medium of either all or some of the instructions.

**Middle immersion:** the first language is used up to middle grade (grade 4 or 5) then the second language takes over.

**Late immersion** is usually initiated in the first year of secondary school.

Genesee (2001) found out that early exposure in the second language in elementary school is a prime feature to enable smooth transition into secondary school where all subjects are taught in the second language except first language (as a subject). Genesee (1995) in Sa (2007) asserts that in all three types of immersions the first language which is English was not affected in any negative manner. Students who participated in the immersion program showed consistency in level of proficiency in subjects of mathematics and science unlike students in the non-immersion program (Genesee, 1995; Sa, 2007).

### **2.3. School location, language of instruction and learners' performance in English.**

Rural and urban schools differ in terms of the extent in which the language of instruction influences their academic performance because first the teachers that are normally in rural schools are not as competent as those who are in urban primary schools.

Secondly, is the learners' perceptions of the language of instruction, learners' from urban schools have a more positive outlook towards English and see the benefits that come with the language, unlike their rural counterparts who have little or no motivation to diligently learn the language. Socio-economic status also plays a role in this urban-rural divide in terms of the family individual learners come from and their future prospects of further studies.

Batibo (1990) claims that rural schools have a negative attitude towards English due to inadequate teaching methods and teaching aids while urban schools are more interested and motivated due to the availability of teaching aids and appropriate teaching methods used.

Batibo (1990) mentions the last reason as lack of proper language impact whereby the impact of English language is weak in primary school mainly because: vernacular is the medium of instruction in all the subjects except English; the number of English

lessons per week have dropped from 12 to only 5 or 6; the practical usage of the language outside the classroom is very rare or non-existent; and the class sizes are too large to allow effective teaching and learning to take place.

It's important for the learning environment to be conducive for the learners to allow effective teaching and learning to occur. However, this isn't the case in most government primary schools apart from the factors mentioned above there are other issues that exist including: overcrowded classrooms, few teaching and learning material such as textbooks and supplementary books, shortage of well-qualified teachers and the situation differs across urban and rural primary schools.

One of the reasons why students in secondary schools face so much difficulty using English is their reluctance in the language (Roy-Campbell & Qorro, 1997). They note that students are unwilling to actively participate in class discussions because teachers would criticize them or other pupils laugh at them because of their lack of ability to express themselves in English. However, primary who have had early exposure to English from the beginning of primary school are able to cope using English as a medium of instruction in primary school and their performance tends to be better off in comprehension tests conducted unlike those who started learning English from class three and thus have less exposure in the language (Roy-Campbell & Qorro, 1997).

The socio-economic background of a student matters a lot. For instance parents who support their children by paying for extra tuition class after school and buying supplementary reading books help their children to improve their English language knowledge and skills (Roy-Campbell & Qorro, 1997). Such opportunities help them to cope with their academic studies in primary school using English as the language of instruction unlike children who are unable to get additional support from their families.

Roy-Campbell & Qorro (1997) research also reveals that children who had a language background of studying English from kindergarten or class one and a home environment that was supportive that allowed them to practice English with family or with friends, had a positive contribution in helping them learn English language while those who started English later (from class three) and usually spoke their mother tongue at home or with friends indicated that their poor competence in English was due to the weak foundation from primary school.

Lindberg and Nârman (2005) describe what is happening in Sri Lanka with regards to English as a subject and as a LOI showing the difference that prevails between rural and urban areas. In rural areas performance results of English examinations has been poor one of the reasons being the lack of teachers but also the local environment in which many children come from doesn't expose them to speak English. Lindberg and Nârman further explain that the distribution of resources is unequal between schools and localities thus many are abandoning rural schools and joining urban schools where opportunities for learning English are available including private tuition which helps them pass examinations as well as adequate textbooks and teachers. However, most children from rural areas come from poor families.

English language teaching and learning in Ugandan primary schools has declined over the years, a problem affecting both teachers and learners. According to Batibo (1990) the location of schools whether urban or rural has a major influence on English language learning and usage. Batibo describes that urban primary schools are far better off than rural schools since they have good facilities and surroundings also learners are well motivated by the school and home environment for personal and academic reasons for instance to be able to understand what is said in newspapers, radio, films and for further academic pursuit. On the other hand, most rural primary schools lack basic school facilities although not all depending on when the school was built and learners are less motivated or interested in learning English „to them English is as remote as the name England is in their minds“ (Batibo, 1990).

The shortage of textbooks is usually the main problem that a large number of pupils share a book or there is only the teachers copy while reference and subsidiary books are often old, very few or not at all there.

Mistakes are often not corrected in this case and learners' understanding is during choral repetition another reason is lack of proper motivation: the main source of interest and motivation for learners depends highly on the teacher's methodology and whether teaching materials are available.

These are some of the problems that face English language teaching and learning in primary schools. Such problems also exist in rural primary schools in Uganda including lack of well-trained English teachers, shortage of teaching and learning resources and use of poor teaching strategies while in urban secondary schools there are slightly better opportunities available unlike rural although there are common grounds which both rural and urban schools share such as overcrowded classrooms, shortage of learning materials, overall, the language impact is poor nowadays.

Research confirms that proficiency in English language does correlate with their achievement in mathematics; students with high scores in mathematics also performed well in the English test administered while those with low scores didn't. Findings of the study also show that students who came from homes where either English or Afrikaans was used achieved better scores in both Mathematics and English tests unlike those who did not. The low English language proficiency is also closely linked to learners' lack of books to use at home (Howie, 2002). Also the average English test score was very low and the overall English skills were poor. Other influences include location of the school in rural or urban areas, teachers' attitudes and belief and commitment also contributes to mathematics achievement as well as students socioeconomic status to a certain extent. English language has a strong effect on the achievement of mathematics; therefore, it needs to be given more attention as a subject and as a medium of instruction.



## **2.4. Characteristics of teachers and learners' performance**

In a survey carried out in America on the teaching of English to English language learners, findings indicated that the attitudes and feelings of preparedness indicate that teachers are uneasy with their lack of knowledge in this area. In the 2001 NCES survey, only 27% of teachers felt that they were "very well prepared" to meet the needs of ELLs, while 12% reported that they were "not at all prepared" (U.S. Department of Education, NCES, 2001). In a separate survey of over 1,200 teachers, 57% indicated that they needed more information to work effectively with ELLs (Alexander, Heaviside & Farris, 1999, p.10). In research conducted with 279 teachers in a school district with a minimal number of ELLs, Reeves (2006) found that 81.7% believed that they did not have adequate training to work effectively with ELLs, and 53% wanted more preparation. Given the steady increase in the ELL population it is safe to assume that a growing number of teachers see the need for—and feel the lack of—professional development.

Smaller scale attitudinal surveys of teachers have often focused on teacher attitudes toward and knowledge about ELLs as a proxy for preparedness, reasoning that if teachers do not have accurate information about the cultural, linguistic and learning characteristics of ELLs then they are not well prepared to teach them. Teachers of ELLs often hold beliefs that have either been disproven or are seriously contested.<sup>3</sup> For example; Reeves (2006) found that 71.1% of teachers surveyed believed that ELLs should be able to learn English within two years. In a survey of 729 teachers in a school district in which almost one third of students were ELLs, Karabenick & Clemens Noda (2004) found that a majority (52%) believed that speaking one's first language at home inhibited English language development. Nearly one-third (32%) thought that if students are not able to produce fluent English, they are also unable to comprehend it. The authors also reported that many mainstream teachers do not "distinguish between oral communication proficiencies and cognitive academic language capabilities" (p. 63). Several researchers, including those above (and see also Bartolomé, 2002; Lee & Oxelson, 2006; Phuntsog, 2001), have found that

culturally sensitive and comprehensive training of educators leads to a shift in these attitudes toward ELLs.

Given the fact that the training of teachers lags behind the realities of the classroom, these misconceptions and feelings of unpreparedness are unsurprising. The recent increase in ELLs in U.S. classrooms has been rapid, and teacher education and professional development has not yet caught up with the demographic shift. There is a pressing need for education for teachers at all stages in their careers which aim to prepare or upgrade teachers' knowledge and skills in order to close the achievement gap between linguistic minority students and their native English speaking peer.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.0. Introduction**

This chapter examines the methods and techniques of research that were used to carry out this study. The chapter begins by presenting the research strategies and the reason for choosing these strategies. The following section is data collection techniques which include interviews, class observations and documentary analysis. Sampling and sampling techniques is the next section. This chapter also discusses validity and reliability and the last section is concerned with ethical issues.

#### **3.1. Research design**

This study mainly drew on a qualitative research strategy. Quantitative research approach was also used in some cases. The reason for selecting qualitative research strategy was based on the fact that it involves direct experience during field work in order to be able to understand and interpret the setting as well as the individuals. Predictable reasons (a theoretical replication) A naturalistic inquiry which involves studying real-world situations without manipulation is what the researcher aims to do except that the presence of the researcher becomes the only manipulation (Patton, 2002).

#### **3.2. Study Area.**

The study was conducted in Namuganga Sub County and in particular Mukono District. The researcher chose this area because that is where he hailed and therefore was convenient for him.

#### **3.3. Study Population.**

The target population included the secondary teachers in the six selected primary schools together with the administrators.

#### **3.4. Sample size and collection techniques**

The researcher employed a stratified random technique to select a sample of secondary school teachers who would act as respondents for this study.

### **3.5. Data collection instruments**

The researcher formulated a close ended questionnaire together with an interview guide which he used to collect relevant data.

### **3.6. Data collection techniques**

#### **3.6.1 Interviews**

According to Patton (2002) interviews are done with the intention of finding out things that cannot be observed. In this study semi-structured interviews were used to collect data from teachers and the education officer. This technique was chosen for the purpose of obtaining rich and detail information concerning the language of instruction and the influence it has in learners' performance

#### **3.6.2 Class observations**

Observations allow first-hand experience of what is taking place in a setting (Patton, 2002). I used non-participant observation technique in this study to observe participants in their natural surroundings with the aim of looking at specific details that may enhance my research. According to Patton (2002) observation allows a researcher the chance to learn things that people would be unwilling to share in an interview. The class observations were done alongside interviews which enabled me to confirm some of the responses from the interviews but there were also other things that were not mentioned during interviews.

#### **3.6.3 Documentary analysis**

This method was employed as a primary source of data whereby official assessment records were used which would be analyzed along with data from interviews and observations.

### **3.7 Validity and Reliability of Instruments**

In order to ensure validity this study made use of triangulation which is the use of more than one source of data.

Multiple sources of information are sought and used because no single source of information can be trusted to provide a comprehensive perspective on the program (Patton, 2002: 306).

The research instruments used were interviews, classroom observations and document analysis. Studies that use only one method are susceptible to errors linked to a particular method than studies that use multiple methods whereby different types of data provide cross-data validity checks (Patton, 2002).

While validity in quantitative research depends on instrument construction, in qualitative research "the researcher is the instrument"

### **3.8. Data analysis procedures**

The data analysis procedure used is content analysis which according to Patton in general terms "is used to refer to any qualitative data reduction and sense-making effort that takes a volume of qualitative material and attempts to identify core consistencies and meaning" (2002: 453). This research method is applied in both qualitative and quantitative research strategies. However, SPSS statistical analysis was used to analyze quantitative data collected which were mainly students' assessment records.

The data collected during field work was analyzed through the following steps:

First, is the transcription and translation of the raw data collected: All the interview responses were recorded while notes were taken during the observations. These were carefully transcribed and translated. All interviews except one were conducted in Kiswahili.

Coding data was the second step: this involved tagging of importance key concepts; content that answers the research question and the relevant information that showed similarity or difference in both schools. This was done after translating the data into English.

Thirdly, categorization of unprocessed data: this is done during interpretation of the data to see the discrepancies and similarities that exist and the relevance of this in relation to answering the research questions. The main point is figuring out possible categories and themes which are known as open coding (Strauss & Corbin, 1998; Patton, 2002).

Lastly, is presentation and discussion of the data: in writing up the report all the findings were presented based on the specific objectives of this study. Themes and sub-themes were created as well.

### **3.9. Ethical consideration**

At the preliminary stage before going for fieldwork a letter was obtained from the University of Oslo that was used to obtain a research permit at the Ministry of Education in Tanzania in order to proceed with my research. That letter was used to get an official letter which granted permission to collect data from the two schools. Then I proceeded to meet the key figures of the secondary schools I expected to conduct fieldwork in order to explain the intention of my study and how I plan to conduct the research as well as the participants who would be involved in the study. In order to maintain confidentiality and anonymity of interviewees the names of the participants are not disclosed. To assure confidentiality of official documents obtained for this study was by not disclosing names of schools.

Once permission to start the research was granted I began by scheduling interviews sessions and observations in the classrooms. At the beginning of each interview and group interviews I explained the purpose of the study, asked for consent to conduct the interview and explain their rights as participants to partake in the interview. Considering the subjects of the research who are the main source of information is important, therefore, ethical issues ought to be observed during field work. 40

## CHAPTER FOUR

### DATA PRESENTATION ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS

#### 4.0 Introduction

The purpose of this study was to investigate on factors influencing learners' performance in English language in selected primary schools of Namuganga Sub County in Mukono District.

The following objectives will focus on the following;

- i. To find out if language policies affect learners' performance in English.
- ii. To assess the impact of school location on learners' performance.
- iii. To establish find teacher characteristics influence learners' performance.

This chapter deals with presentation and analysis of data collected through class observations, interviews and document review of examination results.

#### 4.1. Language policy and students performance in English

In every institution, there are policies, and the implementers of these policies. This affects the stake holders of the institution. In the perspective of an educational setting, there are policies that streamline the teaching and learning activities which in turn influence the products. In there are language policies that have been implemented to govern the teaching and learning of English language in secondary schools and these affect learners' performance in English.

**Table 1: presents the distribution of responses according to policy and students performance in English language.**

<b>RESPONSE</b>	<b>AGREEE</b>	<b>DISAGREEE</b>	<b>NOT SURE</b>
Uganda inherited English as a language of instruction from The British colonialists.	<b>25</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>
Bilingualism is used un officially in Uganda's primary	<b>28</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>
Code switching is used officially in Uganda during instruction	<b>28</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
Teachers who use code switching are incompetent.	<b>10</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>8</b>
Learners' perform poorly because of code switching	<b>21</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>112/150</b>	<b>23/150</b>	<b>15/150</b>
<b>Percentage</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>10</b>

**Source; primary data 2016**

Twenty five responses were in agreement that Uganda inherited English as a language of instruction from the British colonialists, three disagreed and the remaining two were not sure.

Twenty eight responses agreed that bilingualism is used un officially in Uganda and the remaining two were not sure.

Twenty eight responses agreed that code switching is used officially in Uganda during instruction one disagreed and the remaining individual was not sure.

Concerning Teachers who use code switching being incompetent, ten agreed, twelve disagreed and the remaining eight were not sure.

About learners' performing poorly because of code switching twenty one agreed to the notion, seven however disagreed and the remaining two were not sure.



#### 4.2. School location and students performance.

Rural and urban schools differ in terms of the extent in which the language of instruction influences their academic performance because first the teachers that are normally in rural schools are not as competent as those who are in urban secondary schools.

**Table 2: showing the percentage distribution of respondents according to school location and performance in English.**

<b>RESPONSE</b>	<b>AGREE</b>	<b>DISAGREE</b>	<b>NOT SURE</b>
Learners' perception of instruction has a positive outlook towards English.	<b>23</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>5</b>
Rural learners have little or no motivation to diligently learn English..	<b>17</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>1</b>
Learners from urban schools perform well in English compared to the rural ones.	<b>19</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>8</b>
Learners from urban schools perform well in English because they have had early exposure to English	<b>25</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>
Rural learners have a negative attitude towards English language	<b>26</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>
Urban learners are more proficient in the language because they speak the language at home.	<b>28</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>
Rural learners perform poorly in other subjects because they find it difficult to grasp the content in English.	<b>29</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>
Rural learners lack proper language impact because their use of language is weak.	<b>29</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>196/240</b>	<b>24/240</b>	<b>30/240</b>
<b>PERCENTAGE</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>8</b>

**Source; Primary Data 2016**

Concerning learners perception of instruction has a positive outlook towards English twenty three were in agreement of the notion , the two disagreed and the remaining five were not sure of the statement.

About rural learners having little or no motivation to diligently learn English seventeen were in agreement of this notion, twelve however disagreed and the remaining one was not sure.

Nineteen responses concurred that rural learners had a negative attitude towards English language, the three disagreed and the remaining eight were not sure of the response.

Regarding learners from urban schools performing well in English they have had early exposure to English, the majority twenty five were in agreement, one disagreed and the remaining four were not certain.

Twenty Responses concurred that Urban learners are more proficient in the language because they speak the language at home, the remaining two were not sure.

About rural learners performing poorly in other subjects because they find it difficult to grasp content in English, twenty nine of the responses were in agreement and only one wasn't sure..

Lastly about rural learners lacking proper language impact because their use of language is weak twenty nine of the responses were in agreement and only one wasn't sure..

#### **4.3. Teacher characteristics and learners' performance in English.**

The researcher also investigated the role of teacher characteristics on influencing learners' performance in English as follow;

The researcher assessed the role of teacher characteristics in influencing their ability to carry out instruction in English language.

**Table 3: showing the percentage distribution of respondents according to teacher characteristics and learner's performance in English.**

<b>Responses</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Not sure</b>
Steadiness and competence of English language teachers depends on their qualifications.	26	2	2
Most qualified teachers prefer teaching in urban schools.	24	1	5
Most unqualified and under qualified teachers teach in rural primary schools.	15	10	5
Rural teachers are poorly remunerated and therefore hold a negative attitude towards teaching.	12	18	0
Unqualified teachers have little interest in teaching English language.	27	0	3
Unqualified teachers do not apply the relevant methods and strategies of teaching English language.	29	0	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	133/180	31/180	16/180
<b>PERCENTAGE</b>	74	17.2	9

**Source; Primary data 2014**

Twenty six responses agreed that steadiness and competence of English language teachers depended on their qualifications, two disagreed and the remaining two were not sure.

Twenty four responded in agreement that most qualified teachers preferred teaching in urban schools one however disagreed with the statement and the remaining four were not sure.

Most unqualified and under qualified teachers teach in rural primary schools.

Regarding rural teachers being poorly remunerated and therefore holding a negative attitude towards teaching twelve concurred with the statement and the remaining eighteen disagreed.

Twenty seven responses agreed that unqualified teachers have little interest in teaching English language and the remaining three were not sure of what to believe.

Lastly twenty nine agreed that unqualified teachers do not apply the relevant methods and strategies of teaching English language and only one was not sure.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMENDATIONS

#### 5.0. Introduction

The preceding chapter carried out analysis on the institutional factors that influence learners' performance in English language in primary schools located in Namuganga Sub county. This chapter summarizes the findings of the study, discusses them in comparison with the theoretical statements, and gives a conclusion and recommendations.

#### 5.1. Summary of findings and discussions.

##### 5.1.1. Language policies and learners performance in English language.

The policies that were of concern included the language of instruction adopted by the Ugandan government; how effective it is to make learning real and to prepare the students to study and internalize content in all subjects other than English language. Findings indicate that in Ugandan children are taught in other languages other than English to help them understand the concepts better. This was through unofficial code- switching. Findings however indicate that there was no formal sensitization about how best teachers could apply code switching to the teaching of not only in English.

Second researchers like professor Mazrui, have cited important and difficult problems linked to the use of vernacular languages in education is that of providing reading materials. The same scholars caution that even a language which is quite capable of being used as a medium of instruction will be almost entirely without books or other materials.

Research further has warned that despite the effectiveness of code-switching in classroom teaching and learning there is a problem which arises with its use; students fail to perform well in their examinations since it is not a legitimate strategy (Brock-Utne, 2004).

It is difficult for learners to master a foreign language when code-switching is a common routine during the teaching and learning process. Even the language they are familiar with in this case Kiswahili does not fully develop because of the constant switch and mix of the two languages and this tendency continues as students' progress in higher levels of education, that is, high school, college and university.

### **5.1.2. School location and learners' performance in English.**

Findings reveal that the learners in urban secondary schools were performing better than their counterparts in the rural schools because of the following reasons; the children from urban schools get early exposure to English materials compared to the rural children; most urban children communicate in English language in their early years of development through their parents and kindergarten / preschool. This concurs with the citation of Batibo (1990), findings also show that rural schools have a negative attitude towards English, due to inadequate teaching methods and teaching aids while urban schools are more interested and motivated due to the availability of teaching aids and appropriate teaching methods used.

One of the reasons why learners in primary schools face so much difficulty using English is their reluctance in the language (Roy-Campbell & Qorro, 1997). They note that students are unwilling to actively participate in class discussions because teachers would criticize them or other students laugh at them because of their lack of ability to express themselves in English. However, students who have had early exposure to English from the beginning of primary school are able to cope using English as a medium of instruction in primary school and their performance tends to be better off in comprehension tests conducted unlike those who started learning English from class three and thus have less exposure in the language (Roy-Campbell & Qorro, 1997).

The socio-economic background of pupils matters a lot. For instance parents who support their children by paying for extra tuition class after school and buying supplementary reading books help their children to improve their English language

knowledge and skills (Roy-Campbell & Qorro, 1997). Such opportunities help them to cope with their academic studies in primary school using English as the language of instruction unlike children who are unable to get additional support from their families.

### **5.1.3. Teacher characteristics and students performance in English.**

Findings show that teachers from rural schools are failing to carry out instruction in English because of the following reasons; some have a negative attitude towards English due to inadequate teaching methods and teaching aids while urban schools are more interested and motivated due to the availability of teaching aids and appropriate teaching methods used. Some teachers fail to deliver English language content because they are either under qualified or not qualified to teach English language.

Primary are performing poorly in English because of teacher characteristics.

## **5.2. Conclusion**

It's important for the learning environment to be conducive for the learners to allow effective teaching and learning to occur. However, this isn't the case in most government primary schools apart from the factors mentioned above there are other issues that exist including: overcrowded classrooms, few teaching and learning material such as textbooks and supplementary books, shortage of well-qualified teachers and the situation differs across urban and rural primary schools.

Socio-economic status also plays a role in this urban-rural divide in terms of the family individual students come from and their future prospects of further studies. Learners from rural primary schools are worst hit because they lack proper language impact whereby the impact of English language is weak in primary school mainly because. Findings also show that in rural schools the practical usage of the language outside the classroom is very rare or non-existent and hence the poor performance. There exists a disparity in learner's performance in English language between rural and urban secondary schools.

Teacher in English language in Uganda lags behind the realities of the classroom.

### 5.3. Recommendations of the study

- Ministry of education must ensure effective pedagogical content knowledge, which requires teachers to know how to teach the content of their subject in ways which result in English language learners having the ability to communicate effectively within the discipline. Because pedagogical content knowledge is so discipline-specific, the skills of an effective math's teacher should differ from the skills of an effective social studies teacher.
- Ministry should also organize teacher development at the state and local levels to include the education of teaching and other educational staff as a part of the ongoing professional development of practitioners.
- Ministry must set standards to support long-term and continuous teacher development and should represent a departure from decontextualized workshops presented by external experts. They must include a commitment to intellectually rigorous learning that enhances "the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and beliefs necessary to create high levels of learning for all students
- Teacher development that improves the learning of all students deepens educators' content knowledge, provides them with research-based instructional strategies to assist students in meeting rigorous academic standards, and prepares them to use various types of classroom assessments appropriately.
- Ministry should involve families and the wider community in the educational process in order to have a dual benefit for English language learners. First, it will bring into the school community the parents of children who otherwise might be left out due to linguistic and cultural barriers. Second, it will allow for teachers and students to integrate cultural and family knowledge directly into the curriculum.
- High quality family involvement requires that educational leaders build structures which respond to the needs of immigrant and non-English



speaking families, and that teachers know how to access these resources. Districts must make available resources such as translation and interpretation services, and teachers must be aware of and know how to use them.

- **Teacher Performance Criterion:** Teachers can also be able to increase student engagement by identifying language challenges in a text, differentiating material, and grouping learners in purposeful and meaningful ways.
- Let government avail relevant study materials for the teachers and students.

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix I:

#### Questionnaire for teachers

My name is **Epok Bosco**, a student of Kampala international University Kampala, pursuing bachelors of Arts in education. I am carrying out research Institutional factors and students performance in English in Namuganga sub county Mukono District. I kindly request you to provide me with information. It will be treated as confidential and used for academic purposes only.

#### Instructions;

**Tick where applicable**

**A stands for Agree**

**D stands for Disagree**

**NS stands for not sure**

#### 1. Language policies and students performance in English language.

RESPONSE	A	D	N
Uganda inherited English as a language of instruction from The British colonialists.			
Bilingualism is used un officially in Uganda.			
Code switching is used officially in Uganda during instruction			
Teachers who use code switching are incompetent.			
Learners perform poorly because of code switching			

## 2. School location and students performance.

RESPONSE	A	D	N
Learners' perception of instruction has a positive outlook towards English.			
Rural Learners have little or no motivation to diligently learn English...			
Learners from urban schools perform well in English compared to the rural ones.			
Learners from urban schools perform well in English because they have had early exposure to English			
Rural Learners have a negative attitude towards English language			
Urban Learners are more proficient in the language because they speak the language at home.			
Rural Learners perform poorly in other subjects because they find it difficult to grasp the content in English.			
Rural Learners lack proper language impact because their use of language is weak.			

## 3. Teacher characteristics and students performance in English.

Responses	A	D	N
Readiness and competence of English language teachers depends on their qualifications.			
Most qualified teachers prefer teaching in urban schools.			
Most unqualified and under qualified teachers teach in rural secondary schools.			
Rural teachers are poorly remunerated and therefore hold a negative attitude towards teaching.			
Unqualified teachers have little interest in teaching English language.			
Unqualified teachers do not apply the relevant methods and strategies of teaching English language.			