MOTHER TONGUE AND PERFORMANCE IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE
IN SOME SELECTED SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN WAJIR
DISTRICT, NORTH EASTERN
PRONVINCE – KENYA

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DECLARATION

I declare that this research report is my own work and it has not been presented to any other university for any academic award.

Signed...

SIYAD BARE ALI

Date...

APPROVAL

This research report has been prepared under my supervision and it is ready to be submitted to the institute of open and distance learning of Kampala International University.

Signed...

Dr. J. S OWOEYE

SUPERVISOR

Date.....4/9/08.................................

DEDICATION

I dedicate this research report to my beloved Wife Zeinab Imah and my children Leyla Siyad B, Hamza Siyad, Miski Siyad.

ACKNOLEDGEMENT

Completion of this work is as a result of both explicit and support of many people to whom I owe acknowledgement. First and foremost, in a special way, greatly indebted to my beloved parents Daddy Bare Ali and Mummy Habiba Maalim whom without their financial and moral support; I would never have made it through KIU.

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May you God bless you all.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST TABLES AND FIGURES

ABSTRACT

The study sought to assess the effect of mother tongue and students' academic performance in English language in selected secondary schools in Wajir District, Kenya. The study was conducted in five schools.

The specific interest areas on the philosophy and understanding of education by different scholars were reviewed addressing similar issues.

The researcher used both random s and purposive sampling procedures. Purposive was used to select different activities in the area of investigation in order to get required data. Questionnaires, interviews and Observation were the data collection methods used to collect data.

The data collected was later recorded in terms of percentages. The recorded data was later edited and interpreted which ensured uniformity and consistence. The results were coded on tables, pie charts and bar graphs which were calculated in percentages. The researcher found out that many factors like teachers teaching methods which most students may not understand lead to students' not understanding English language compared to their mother tongue.

Many recommendations by the researcher were put forward which included teachers' use of a variety of methods to make reading skills more effective in the education system

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the study

In the United States, the Centre for Minority Education and Research of the University of California carried out one of the most comprehensive longitudinal studies (1981-91) of bilingual education programs to date. The objective of the study was to determine whether teaching Spanish-speaking students (who had limited English proficiency) mostly in English or in combination with Spanish enabled them to catch up to their native English-speaking peers in basic skills (English reading, language arts, and math). Students in 51 schools across five states were sampled.

The mother tongue is indeed the primary language of learning, as evidence by the differences between the level of achievement attained by students in the English-immersion programs and that achieved by students in the late-exist bilingual programs. The latter scored significantly higher in the three basic skills. Early transition to English only programs does not work. Students do not maintain or develop the linguistic and cognitive skills acquired in the first language. Proficient access to the second language can occur via second language content classes for the remaining 50% of instruction time. Addictive bilingual or multilingual programs, coupled with an integrated approach to the curriculum, provide the best results in the acquisition of both knowledge and competences in the second language (Ramirez, 1994).

There seems to be a consensus in Mauritius on matters of language and education that English should remain a language through which students gain access to different types of academic knowledge. Literacy education for Mauritian in and through the English language is associated with economic advancement and social progress. In a multilingual setting like Mauritius, where French-based Creole, the home language of the majority of the population and the language of inter

2

ethnic communication, is equated with being powerless and underprivileged, literacy in the official medium (i.e. English) is regarded as a major key to self advancement as well as empowerment.

In a world with trade barriers being broken, with single markets in areas such as Europe growing, and with economic competition rapidly developing on a global scale, competence in languages, in general, is increasingly important. Those who have multi-linguistic capital may, indeed, be in a position to increase their economic capital. It so happens that English has gained a unique status in this context of the liberalisation of world trade and the globalisation of economy, and it would be foolish not to take advantage of this. The language situation in Mauritius being intimately bound up with the socio-economic realities, success in this society is therefore defined by proficiency in English (and, for that matter, French which is another European language used and taught in schools) in both the oral and the written mode.

Okwany (1993) carried out a study to examine the attitudes of Kenyan high-school students toward the national language, Kiswahili. This study was intended to provide useful information for evaluating the Kiswahili-language curriculum. Okwany used a stratified random approach to select the sample of 483 students from three school types in one province in Kenya. The Attitude/Motivation Test Battery (Gardner and Smythe 1981) was adapted to suit the Kenyan context and was administered to the sample. The questionnaire explored seven dimensions of attitudes toward Kiswahili with respect to gender, ethnic background, and school type. Experienced Kiswahili teachers held focus-group interviews to identify factors that might explain these attitudes. In addition, the study explored the effects of making Kiswahili a mandatory subject.

3

1.2 Statement of the problem

Inclusive education aimed at ensuring that English language in secondary schools is perceived as a prerequisite among students as a way for improving on the students' performance in other languages, studies show that students have not considered English language as an important subject instead they prefer to interpret exams in their mother tongues and this have drastically affected their academic performances at different levels, others are dropping the languages and do not give it serious attention among others, the situation appears detrimental and one feels concerned about the consequences it may bring. The study therefore attempted to investigate the effect mother tongue on the performance of students in English language in some selected secondary in Wajir District, Kenya.

1.3 Objectives of the study

1.3.1 General objective

The study was to examine mother tongue and performance of English language in some selected secondary schools in Kenya.

1.3.2 Specific Objective

The specific objectives of the study were to:

i) To find out how mother tongue influences the students' performance in English language in some selected secondary schools in Kenya.

ii) To identify reasons why different students with different mother tongues perform differently in English language in selected secondary schools in Kenya.

iii) To classify the different mother tongues in relation to English language in selected secondary schools in Kenya.

iv) To establish the relationship between mother tongue and performance of students in English as a language.

1.4 Research questions

1. How does mother tongue influence the students' performance in English in some selected secondary schools in Kenya?

2. What are some of the reasons as to why different students with different mother tongues perform differently in English language in some secondary schools in Wajir district Kenya?

3. What is the state of mother tongue in the selected secondary schools in Kenya?

4. Is there any significant relationship between mother tongue and performance as a language?

1.5 The scope of the study

The study was carried out in Wajir District, North Eastern province – Kenya, and it considered five schools, that is; Griftu Boys Secondary school, Hon. Khalif Girls S.S, Waso Mixed S.S, Waju Girls S.S and Furah Mixed S.S, because, because they were nearer and easy to get to by the researcher in terms of transport.

1.6 Significance of the study

The findings will assist the English teachers and head teachers in different schools concerned with the teaching of English, researchers and policy makers like district councilors, District Education Officers who play a fundamental role in promotion of education programmes in the district and other parts of the country.

The government of Kenya: It help policy makers at both local and national levels in planning, monitoring and evaluation of educated programmes especially to the Ministry of Education and Sports in Kenya.

As a student of education: I am optimistic that the research findings will to a large extent enhance my career in researching and enable me to have a practical approach in answering language related problems, as the course necessitates.

The study will also be useful to other researchers in the field of education especially teachers and students pursing bachelors in education specializing in English who would wish to expound on the area of languages to obtain a foundation in the form of literature review like the institute of languages in other universities besides KIU.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

In this chapter, a review of some literature how mother tongue and performance of English language in secondary schools in Kenya and else where in the world was made. Specific interest areas on the philosophy and understanding of education and its processes were given. The chapter reviews the other scholars who have written about the topic of the study or those who have written about the topic of the study or those who have addressed similar issues as those of the variable that were available in the study.

2.1 Mother tongue and students' performance in English language

The politics of English education has thus created a caste system of languages - which is Eurocentric and discriminatory – by relegating home languages to an almost non-existent position in the school curriculum. Moreover, an educational policy which establishes the languages to be used as a medium of education at primary, secondary and university level is a key factor in determining how successful speakers of the lesser used languages are within the education system. While modern social and economic systems require certain kinds of language competence, they simultaneously create conditions which ensure that vast numbers of people will be unable to acquire that competence.

With English taking up an important position in the Mauritania educational system, it has become one of the most powerful means of inclusion into or exclusion from further education, employment, or social positions. Ngugi (1986) describes his experiences in Kenya, where English became the main determinant of a child's progress up to ladder of formal education.

Studies reveal that, in general, the students had a positive integrative attitude toward Kiswahili (that is, desire to belong to a given linguistic group), irrespective of the type of school attended, ethnic background, or gender. The study also revealed that this attitude was related to factors both external and internal to the classroom environment. It was concluded that the three most revealing dimensions of the students' general attitude toward Kiswahili, out of the seven dimensions considered, were a desire to learn the language, perceived parental influence, and degree of motivation.

In Kenya, however, this level of mobilization and careful planning was absent (Okombo 1996). The policy environment was not managed, and as a result, the 1976 catchment-area policy is being de facto replaced by a policy formulated by the Ominde Commission of 1964. English is increasingly becoming the LoI throughout the education system; Kiswahili has consolidated its status as a compulsory subject; and mother tongues have lost ground as LoIs (Bamgbose 1991).

Although Kiswahili is supposed to be the LoI for training primary-school teachers, most of the materials used at the teachers' colleges are in English (Msanjila 1990). More serious still is the problem that the trainers of the primary-school teachers (that is, the tutors in the teachers' colleges) are trained in English at the University of Dar es Salaam, although they are supposed to train the teacher trainees to teach in Kiswahili (Roy-Campbell 1992).

Differences in students' attitudes were associated with school type and ethnic group. Students in private commercial schools consistently exhibited more positive attitudes toward Kiswahili, followed by those in public schools and those in private schools for the elite. Although all students exhibited positive attitudes toward Kiswahili, those whose home languages were in the Bantu language group invariably showed more positive attitudes than the others. The study also

determined that making Kiswahili compulsory not only heightened the motivation for learning it but also enhanced its general status.

According to Rubagumya (1993), secondary-school students admit that they understand their teachers better when teaching is carried out in Kiswahili, but the majority of these students still think that English should be maintained as the LoI. Roy-Campbell (1992) also noted that many students resist the change of LoI from English to Kiswahili because they assume that English is the best medium for science and technology, even though Kiswahili is the de facto medium of instruction in many schools. Such an anomaly, argued Roy-Campbell, can be seen as an indication of where the locus of power is perceived to be in society.

2.2 Relationship between mother tongue and English as a language towards performance

The cognitive and academic performance of the students in the project schools was better than that of their counterparts in the mainstream schools. Students educated in Yoruba (the mother tongue) throughout the 6 years of primary education were no less proficient in English than pupils educated in English during the last 3 years. The gains that children reportedly made when instructed in their mother tongue fell into various categories-cultural, affective, cognitive, socio psychological, pedagogic, etc. (Akinnaso 1993).

It is, however, necessary to note Akinnaso's (1993) remarks regarding these results. The following words put the cautionary message most clearly: the results of the [Ife] project were compounded by a combination of several non-linguistic factors, including curricular changes; the use of new course materials; the use of experienced teachers for whom additional training was also provided; changes in classroom practices; and greater attention than usual (especially in English Education) to experimental classes.

In Mali, in 1985, a similar attempt was made to test the cognitive gains of students in experimental schools who had their mother tongue as the LoI. A comparative longitudinal study using relatively small and skewed samples was done. One hundred and fifteen students in the experimental schools were compared with 340 students in French-based schools at the same level (first grade) over 6 years: 46.1% of the cohort in the experimental schools made it to the sixth grade without repeating a grade, but this was true of only 7.5% in the French-based schools (MEB 1996). Despite its methodological weakness, this study points to the use of mother tongue as a factor reducing the repetition of grades.

In Kenya, Cleghorn et al. (1989) carried out a 2-year study in which they observed more than 100 English, Swahili, and science lessons taught in three Kenyan schools. The objective of this research was to assess the impact of language policy and science instruction in Kenyan primary schools.

The schools were chosen to represent the actual LoI practices in Kenyan schools, based on the policy outlined in mother tongue. As the researchers explained (Cleghorn et al. 1989), the three schools in which this study was carried out provide models of Kenya's varied language conditions: one [school 1] was an urban school where instruction was in English from the start; the second [school 2] was a peri-urban school where English and Kiswahili-two second languages for most pupils — were used as the initial media of instruction; the third school [school 3] was located in a rural district where Dholuo [Luo], the local vernacular, was the third initial medium of instruction. In the first two schools most instruction in the upper primary level [grades 4–8] was in English, but in the third school, Luo was used quite freely for giving explanations and the like well past standard 4 [fourth grade].

2.3 Classification of different mother tongues in relation to English language

One of the major findings of this study was the following (Cleghorn et al. 1989, p. 27) English, mathematics, science and Swahili examination results show that school 1 students achieved higher scores than school 2 or school 3 students, but school 3 students achieved higher scores than school 2 students in all subjects except Swahili. Although this study seems to cast doubt on the role of the mother-tongue LoI in cognitive development, what it actually does is point to a possible combination of nonlinguistic factors that may explain the differences in results obtained by the three schools. These factors may include curricular changes; new course materials; trained, experienced teachers; and new methodologies. It should also be noted that English is a mother tongue for many urban Kenyan children.

Baker (1972) argues that English, French and Creole have become associated with knowledge, culture and egalitarianism respectively, while the Oriental languages which include Bhojpuri, Hindi, Urdu, Tamil, Telegu, Marathi and Mandarin, are largely identified with what may be termed 'ancestral heritage'. In the above censuses, it is significant to note that the instructions relating to 'mother tongue' which accompanied the census forms read as follows: 'Mother tongue' - The language spoken in your home during your early childhood. You may not necessarily have spoken or speak the language at present'. It is thus clear that the term 'mother tongue means something quite different from the definition 'one's native language' and it is this writer's experience that many Mauritians of Asiatic origin understand 'mother tongue' to mean a language spoken by one's ancestors at the time of their arrival in Mauritius. It is therefore safe to assume that the oriental languages are, in fact, 'ancestral' languages and are by no means primary or first languages for Mauritians. According to Baker (1972), egalitarianism is generally a more important matter than 'culture', 'knowledge' or 'ancestral heritage', which explains why, in practice, Creole, has been adopted as the language of everyday use by almost all Mauritians.

The vast majority of Mauritian learners are taught English in what has been called an 'acquisition poor environment' (Tickoo 1993) and, as a result, the language does not become a usable means of communication. When Mauritians speak of receiving their education through the English medium, it is a different scenario from the type of education that people in India, Anglophone Africa and Carribean countries receive. These areas can be referred to as ESL countries, i.e. where English plays the role of a genuinely second language, where it plays a 'social' role in the community and functions as a recognised means of communication among members who speak some other language as their mother tongue. The peculiar sociolinguistic situation of Mauritius, marked by a multiplicity of languages, affects the motivation to learn English in the classroom.

In South Africa, a study was made in 1990 of a transitional bilingual program, the Threshold Project. In this project, the LoI shifted from the mother tongue to English at the third grade. The objective of the study was to test the cognitive development of the children in that program. According to Luckett (1994, p. 5), "pupils could not explain in English what they already knew in their first languages; nor could they transfer into their first languages the new knowledge that they had learnt through English."

The main conclusion of the study was that bilingual programs that shift the LoI from the mother tongue to a second language before children reach a certain age or level of cognition-what Cummins (1979) called cognitive academic language proficiency-will result in failure (Luckett 1994).

So far, no research has been done in Tanzania to show whether, at the primary-school level, the cognitive development of children whose LoI is Kiswahili is better or worse than that of children whose LoI is English. However, research in Tanzania has clearly shown that, at the secondary-school level, teaching in Kiswahili has a cognitive-development advantage over teaching in English

(Mlama and Materu 1978). It was shown, for instance, that when students are asked a question in English, the answer is often incoherent and irrelevant, showing lack of understanding of the question or an inability to answer in English. When the same question is asked in Kiswahili, students give a relevant and articulate answer. One may conclude that this is also the case at the primary-school level, perhaps to a greater extent, as pupils at this level have had even less exposure to English.

Standards of primary-school education in Tanzania have been said to be falling, but this has not been demonstrated as being a result of using Kiswahili as the LoI. Mvungi (1974) stated that the falling standards were due to other factors, including poorly trained teachers, inadequate facilities, and lack of motivation among teachers because of poor pay.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

The study used a combination of both qualitative and quantitative research design for the purpose of making valid conclusions on the study of mother tongue and performance in English language.

3.2 Area and population of the study

The study was conducted in five schools, and these include; Griftu Boys Secondary school, Hon Khalif Girls' S.S, Waso Mixed S.S, Waju Girls S.S and Furaha Mixed and examined out how mother tongue and performance of English language in some selecte secondary schools. The study population ranged from staff members from the selected schools and the students within the respective schools. Most of the respondents comprised of pre-school teachers.

3.3 Sample selection

The study used both random sampling and purposive sampling procedures. Purposive was used to select different activities in the area of investigation in order to get the required data and information. Random sampling was used because respondents have equal chances of being selected.

3.3.1 Sample size

The respondents were randomly selected and categorized. They comprised of both sexes but of different marital statuses and age groups and the study used 50 respondents.

This was intended to get a variety of views and unbiased response which made the study a reality. Also this sample size was selected since, Sutton and David, (2004); state that a sample size should not be less than 30. Beyond basic description it would be difficult for the researcher to undertake more complex statistical analysis, as most of these analyses require a minimum sample of 30.

14

3.4 Data collection methods

Data was collected from both primary and secondary sources. Secondary data was got by extracting information regarding how mother tongue and performance of English language, by reading newspapers, journals. and text books plus the already existing work on internet and magazines. Primary data was got from the field by use of the following methods;

3.4.1 Interviews

This involved face to face interaction between the researcher and the participant through discussion. The interviews were in two ways, namely:

Structured interview in which the responses by the participants were brief and specific.

Unstructured interviews, where the responses were long, elaborated and not specific, the interviews were conducted in group, individual.

The researcher carried out interviews with teachers and head teachers, using the interview guide because it is the most appropriate method which can be used to study the attitudes, values, beliefs and motives of people. It also has an element of flexibility. These persons were interviewed individually so as to get independent answers.

3.4.2 Observation

This involved the use of personal intuition based on different body senses, for example seeing (eye) hearing (ear) touching (hand) smelling (nose).Observation was used in three main ways, namely;

Naturalistic observation: Here, the presence of the researcher is not known. He hides himself

Passive observation: The presence of the researcher was known but his role in the activity was hidden. He was not participating at all.

An active observation: The presence of the researcher was known to the participants. The observer played a leading role to bring out information.

3.4.3 Questionnaires

This is the discussion in written form whereby the responses of the participants are put on paper provided by the researcher, the questionnaire was in two forms, namely:

Open-ended questionnaire in which the responses by the participants are free according to their understanding.

The close-ended questionnaires in which responses are provided by the researcher and the participants one of them accordingly, for example strongly agree, agree or strongly disagree.

The researcher left out questionnaires to mainly the literate group. These included; staff members and some students. These had guiding questionnaires which the researcher gave to individual respondents to fill. The researcher gave some two days to respondents to study and fill the questionnaires. He requested the respondents to ask for clarification where they were not understood.

3.5 Procedure for data collection

After the approval of the proposal by the responsible authority at the school of education, the researcher got an introductory letter from the institute of open and distance learning KIU to progress to the field for data collection. The researcher presented the letter to the L.Cs Wajir district, north eastern province, who later introduced him to different L.CI officials who assisted him to make sampling frames with the help of other relevant respondents. The researcher made appointments with respondents on when to meet them. The interviews were conducted in staff rooms and in compounds of the schools. The structured interviews were for about 30 minutes. The in-depth interviews were for about an hour.

The researcher took the questionnaires to respondents preceded by a briefing about the purpose of the questionnaires and asked to fill them on their convenience to allow them more time and

flexibility. Later the researcher made a follow-up and collected the filled questionnaires. Careful observation of respondents from the area of study was carried out by the researcher.

3.6 Reliability and validity of research instruments

In order to ensure and maintain a high level of reliability and validity in this study, the researcher did the following:

Questionnaires were pre-tested. Ambiguous questions were made clear and irrelevant questions deleted.

The researcher used accurate questions which are open ended in nature by use of questionnaires from the staff members, and head teachers. The questions set had enough space to give appropriate responses. Close ended questions were also used.

3.7 Data processing

3.7.1 Editing and spot checking

The researcher edited and spot checked during and after each interview with the respondents. This ensured that information given is logical, accurate and consistent.

Obvious errors and omissions were corrected to ensure accuracy, uniformity and completeness so as to facilitate coding.

3.7.2 Coding

This ensured that all answers obtained from various respondents are given codes and classified into meaningful forms for better analysis.

3.7.3 Data analysis

The data filled in the questionnaires was copied and analyzed by tallying it and tabling it in frequency tables identifying now often certain responses occurred and later evaluation was done. The information was later recorded in terms of percentages.

The recorded data was later edited and interpreted which ensured uniformity, legibility and consistence. Also, interview results were coded on frequency tables and be calculated in terms of percentages and presented in this study.

CHAPTER FOUR

4.0 PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter shows how the collected data was analyzed and interpreted. The data filled in the questionnaires was copied and analyzed by tallying it and tabling it in frequency tables identifying how often certain responses occurred and later evaluation was done. The information was later recorded in terms of percentages. The recorded data was later edited and interpreted which ensured uniformity, legibility and consistence. Also, interview results were coded on frequency tables, pie-charts and bar-graphs which was calculated in terms of percentages and presented in this study in relation to the research questions.

A total of 50 respondents were used in the study, these included students from the selected secondary schools, their head teachers and all class teachers this was intended in order to make the study a reality.

4.2 Background information

Respondents were asked to state their sex and the results are shown figure 1.

Figure 1; Classification of respondents by sex
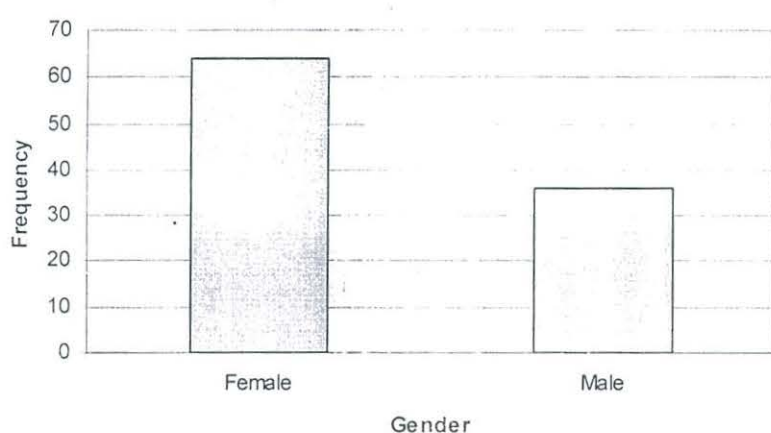
During the field study, it was witnessed out that, the biggest numbers of respondents from the selected secondary school, Wajir district, North Eastern province were females as it was represented by 64% and 36% of the respondents were males, implying that, females to a greater extent took part in the study.

Figure 2: Classification of respondents by age
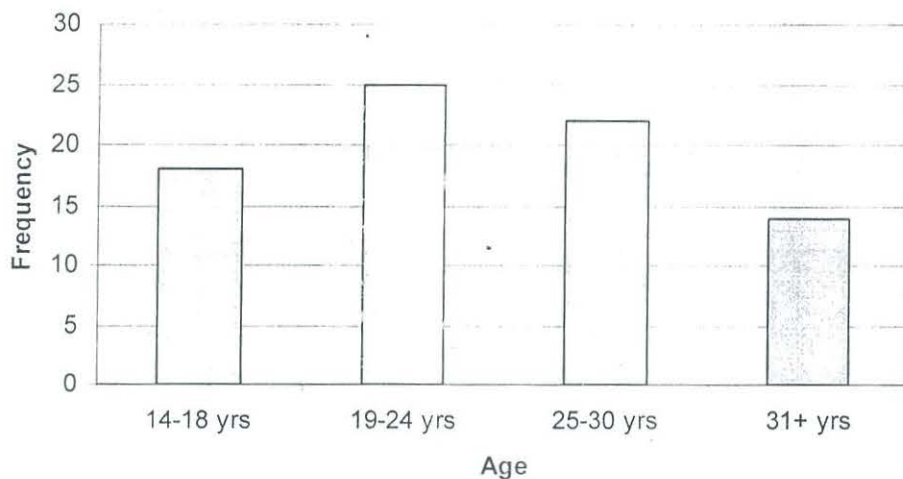
Source: primary data

Figure 1 shows that the biggest percentage of the respondents were in age bracket of 19-24 years, where as 18% represents interviewees who were in the age bracket of 14-18 years, then 17% of the respondents (teachers) were 31 years and above.

Figure 3; Respondents' marital status
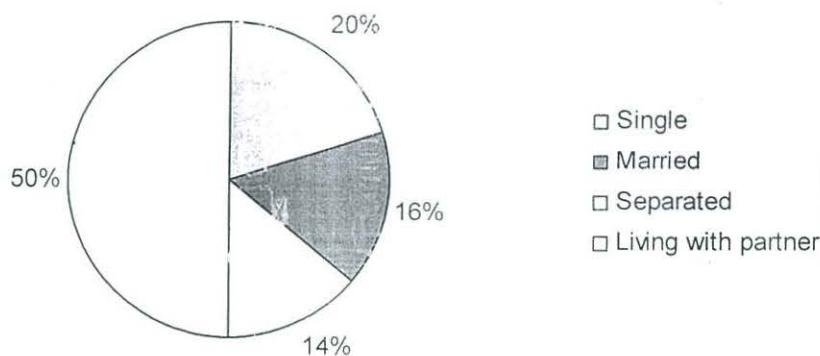
An assessment of the respondents' marital status was as follows; the biggest percentage of the respondents were found to be living with their partners as shown by 50% where as 20% of the interviewees attributed to be single, 16% of them said that they are married, implying that they have their own problems, then 14% of the respondents in the school where the interviews where held from attributed that they separated, implying that, they are too a greater extent have their own problems by relationships as illustrated in Figure 2 above.

Figure 4; Qualifications attained by teachers at Wajir district
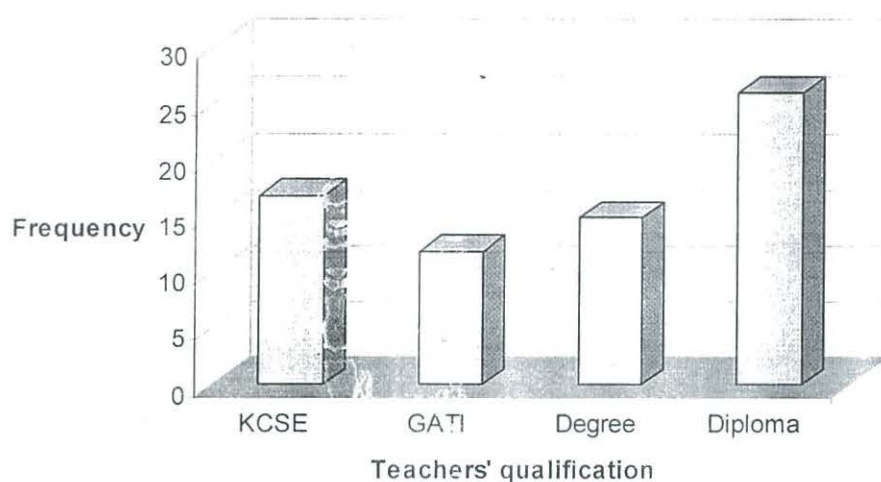
Source: primary data

An assessment of the teachers' qualifications were as follows; the researcher found out that, 26% teachers had attained Diploma in education and 30 of them had attended Advanced level certificate in education where as 17% of the interviewed respondents attributed to have attained KCSE, implying that teachers at Wajir district, North Eastern province had attained qualifications in different fields.

Table 1: Head teachers' opinions on teaching materials for English language

Opinions	Frequency	Percentage
Cooperation among teachers & pupils	20	40
Make use of the available materials	08	16
Ensure efficiency among teachers	22	44
Total	50	100

Source; Primary data

Different opinions were received by the researcher which ranged from; 40% of the respondents emphasized there should be cooperation among the teachers and pupils especially when learning reading skills in English language is concerned where as 44% of the interviewees said that efficiency should be enhanced among the teachers, and 16% of them attributed that teachers should make use of the available materials as portrayed in table 1 above.

During the field survey, it was found out that neither to a smaller nor to larger extent, but the biggest percentage of the respondents said that its to a smaller extent as it was represented by 75% and 20% of the interviewees emphasized that its to a larger extent especially teachers from Griftu Boys secondary school, Hon. Khalif Girls' S.S, Waso Mixed S.S, then surprisingly 5% of the teachers were not certain about the intervals these materials are provided.

Table 2: lack of teaching materials on the instruction of reading skills in English language in relation to mother tongue your school

Opinions	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	35	70
NO	15	30
Total	50	100

Source; Primary data

Table 2, indicates that majority of the respondents attributed to yes, implying that there is lack of teaching materials in the instruction of reading skills in English language in relation to mother tongue in the selected schools as it was revealed by 70% where as 30% of the interviewees pointed out that they do not experience problems associated with inadequate teaching materials in the instruction of reading skills in English language in relation to mother tongue as illustrated in the table above.

Table 3: methods used while teaching English language in relation to mother tongue

Methods	Frequency	Percentage
Chalk and board	22	44
Multi media presentation approach	4	8
Audio visual method	8	16
Inquiry approach	10	20
Reading method	6	12
Total	50	100

Source; Primary data

Table 3 shows the majority of the respondents in the selected secondary schools who use chalk and board methods as represented by 44% while teaching English language to students with different mother tongues, where as 12% revealed that the use reading methods. When interviewed in detailed to find out why they mainly use chalk and board, their responses were attributed to lack of enough reading materials in English language to cover all the students.

The researcher also found out that teachers in the selected secondary schools use a variety of methods while teaching English language but the major one is chalk and talk high helps the teachers to express the feelings and interaction with students speaking different mother tongues.

The researcher acquired some information from the teachers about the effects of lack of teaching materials in English language on students learning of the reading skills in English language in the selected schools and the results collected regarding this research question were illustrated in figure 1 below;

Figure 5: effects of Mother tongue on students' performance in English language

40% 60%

☐ Hard to communicate

▦ Failing of exams
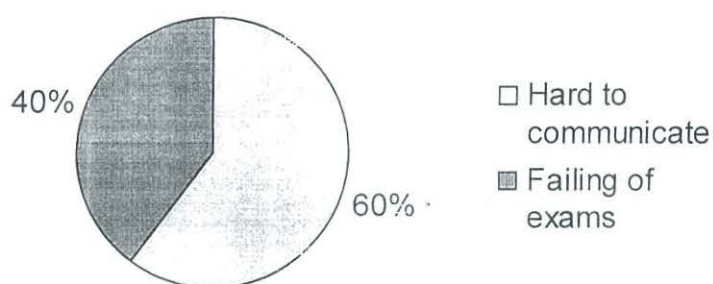
Source; Primary data

An assessment of the effects of Mother tongue on students' performance in English language were as follows; 60% of the teachers from where the study was conducted from, attributed to the process of delivering/communication with the students becomes a problem, this was supplemented by the 40% of the respondents who said that, students who can not read in most cases fail exams which bring the blame to us by the head teacher, parents and the government as portrayed in figure 1 above.

Figure 6: aims of learning reading English language in the selected secondary schools
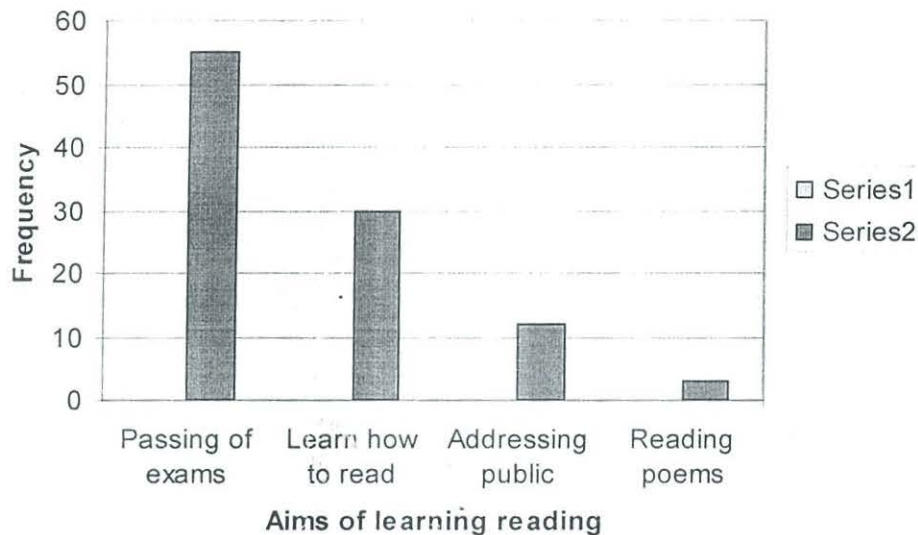
Source; Primary data

An assessment of the aims as to why students are encouraged to grasp the learning reading skills in English language were as follows; the biggest percentage of the respondents said that, it enables students pass their exams since their they are set in English and this was showed by 55% of the interviewees where as 30% of the respondents attributed that enabling students learn how to read and the least percentage emphasized that it enables them learn how to read poems as depicted in the figure above.

Figure 7; ways and means of improving quality and quantity of teaching materials to instill reading skills in English language
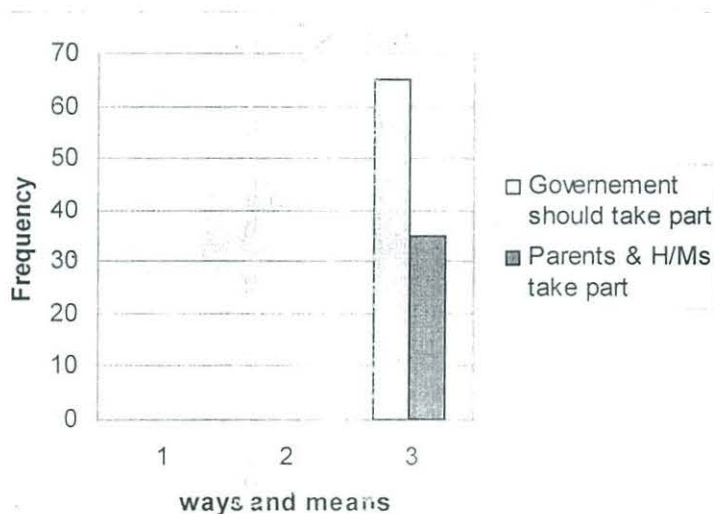
Here different suggestions were put forward by the respondents and these ranged from; the government has to take part in providing of teaching materials in English language aimed converting mother tongues as it was showed by 65% besides that, 35% of the interviewees attributed that, parents should also buy these materials and after the head teachers of the selected schools have a role of putting emphasis to have them being provided by the government, parents, and the school administration.

4.5 Summary of key findings

This study focused on examining the relationship between mother tongue and performance of English language in some selected secondary schools in Wajir district, North Eastern province-Kenya and the study was considered to be necessary because not much had been accepted out in view to reading towards students' learning in English more so in the entire province. This condition has shaped a state of low academic performance among students in the selected secondary schools. Consequently the presentation of this chapter is in line with the study objectives.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSIONS, SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter looks at the discussions, summary, conclusion and recommendations that can be adopted in order to solve the negative effects of brought about mother tongues in relation to the students performance in English language in the selected secondary schools in Wajir District, North Eastern pronvice-Kenya.

5.2 Discussion of the findings

5.2.1 Reasons as to why different students with different mother tongue perform differently in English language in the some secondary schools in Kenya.

The study found that English language help students of different mother tongues to interpreted and pass their examinations which are set in English for the students. The researcher also discovered that reading is a process of appreciation, understanding and perception of written or printed materials. Reading skills help the students to understand the meaning of written materials and covers the alert strategy that that lead to understanding. The aims of reading skills according to the teachers 70% revealed that they are many and 30% attributed that much as the aims of teaching reading skills are many, the majority of them essentially use them.

Teaching English language helps students and teachers to communicate and associated with each other beside their different mother tongues more easily because it involves the recognition of letters, words phrases and clauses and in some esteem, it can be considered a simpler process than intellectual capacity which enhances them perform better in science subjects. Understanding on the other hand is a process of agreeing, understanding between the reader and the writer.

The study findings closely tally with Wendy's (2003) who found out that improving the school readiness and literacy skills to children (pupils) is an essential goal of the parents taking children to school preface findings of the 4 year national evaluation of the teaching process revealed that participating children who had no prior pre-school experience double the expected developmental growth rate. These findings suggest that as students enter the government schools they are more likely to know the basic concepts and pioneers of such skills than would have with the absence of the programme.

Grant (1988) also observed that in the family literacy standard, parents work on foundation of academic and parenting skills while their children attend pre-school class. Follow up studies of pre-school participants who were at risk of failure when they enrolled in the family literacy programme showed that primary grade pupils performed above average on variables such as academic performance, motivation to learn, attendance and probable success in school. And 90% of the school children who knew how to read were rated as not considered at risk for school failure by their current teachers.

Research indicates that the sequence of failure starts early in child's school career. Stanovic (1986) argues with good evidence that children who encounter problems in the stages of learning to read fall farther and farther behind their peers. Longitudinal studies (Juel 1988) reveal that there is an early 90% that a child who is a poor reader will always remain a poor reader at the end of any grade. As they move through the grades, poor readers are opted to experience continued failure and defeat which may account for the tendency of low achieving learners to drop out of school.

The researcher found out that teachers in secondary schools use a variety of methods in the teaching and learning of English. This is because reading trains students in literal comprehension, which

28

consist using two types to enable learners to know how to read. The tasks include recognition and recall tasks. Recognition tasks require the students to identify the main points regarding selection or the exercise that use the explicit content of the reading selection

The study finding was in-line with Nduhukaire et al (1998) who pointed out why pupils succeed or fail in schools as one of the most enduring questions which teachers ask themselves while teaching pupils how to read and write. As salient fin dins from traditional research on both adult education and early childhood intervention programmes that the mothers' level of education is one of the important factors influencing children's reading levels and other school achievements. Generally, traditional research has revealed that more highly educated mothers have greater success in providing their children with the cognitive and language skills that contribute to early success in school.

Muwonge K (1989) points out that integrated approaches involve linking various aspects of social studies and even some from outside the subject to make learning complete and meaningful, they also involve linking what is already known to new knowledge to create logical progression in learning; the subject is taken as one and treated as such since this approach involves various aspects in the teaching of the reading skills.

Similarly, and McDonald (1998) also found out that there are many methods of making pupils learn effectively. Their observations were that children of mothers with high levels of education stay in school more than the children of mothers with low levels of education. The National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP)(2004) data provide some evidence supporting the traditional interpretations of children's academic success that focus on gross measures of parent's education attainment.

5.3 Possible means and ways of improving quality and quantity of teaching English language aimed at improving on the performance

The study finding is in line with the researcher's observation that the effectiveness of teaching methods applied by teachers is associated with teacher's ability to classrooms if you want to help students with their skills of reading English, it is important to help them to read books that are appropriate to their levels and abilities.

However, the effectiveness of the methods depends on the learners' attendance and the kinds of rules and regulations in secondary schools. Secondary schools whose administration policies are tight, teachers teach reading skills more frequently as compared to schools which have loose administrations Ijioma (2002).

Furthermore, the researchers found out that the learning atmosphere in the secondary schools has a say on both the teachers and the students. In schools which have enough reading materials, students and teachers use them more than in a situation where the reading materials are not available Griffin, (1998).

At times to allow students to read books that are relatively easy for them, conceivably the ones that they have read earlier than the recent. This will give them a feeling of contentment and confidence especially if they can manage to read a whole book by themselves. Check on the confidence of the students especially those in Forms 1, 2, as it is vital in helping their reading skills. Students just like adults, like to look at a book before deciding whether to read or not to read it. Even after the student has started, he or she may find it too difficult or simple for him or her and so discards it and looks for another.

5.4 Summary

During the study it was observed that different mother tongues have a great impact on the students' academic performance as it was discovered at Griftu Boys secondary school, Hon. Khalif Girls' S.S, Waso Mixed S.S, Waju Girls S.S and Furaha Mixed S.S, Kenya especially at lower levels that is; Form 1, 2, 3 where it is frequently used.

5.5 Conclusion

Steaming on the study findings, the researcher concluded that English has many aims; for instance it is a medium of exchange in Uganda, an official language used by students in answering examinations both internal and external but its teaching has not been so effective as the study revealed

Many methods that exist are necessary for teaching reading skills to students in secondary school but teachers of English do not use all of them. Parents in socio economic status in Wajir district could enable them to meet their students' requirements at school but due to the fact that they have low levels of interest in investing in education, some parents or guardians completely fail to provide students with the necessary school requirements.

5.6 Recommendations

5.6.1 Teachers should ensure that they use a variety of methods to make reading skills more effective in the education system.

5.6.2 More emphasis should be put on the teachers on the teaching of reading skills to students in Forms, 1, 2, 3 because of its role in education.

5.6.3 Parents or guardians should always work together with the teachers in secondary schools to ensure that students are provided with the necessary school requirements because absence of such materials affects their performance.

5.6.4 Teachers should also put more interest in learning how to read because no child can be in position to pass when he or she can not read or interpret the set questions.

5.7 Areas for further research

The study explored the effects of mother tongues in relation to the students' performance in Wajir district. The structure of the study was infra-firm, as it focused on the students and teachers of the school.

To expand the scope of teaching materials on students' learning of reading skills in English as language aimed at improving on the performance in science subjects in Kenya there is need to conduct other studies in the following thematic areas:

i.   A study on the kind of teaching materials being used as product of modern instructional components of the teaching skills.

ii.   A comparative analysis of the costs of teaching and learning skills.

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A) QUESTIONNAIRES FOR HEADTEACHERS and TEACHERS

Introduction

Dear respondent,

I am a student of KIU conducting a research study as a requirement for the award of a bachelors degree in Education. The purpose of the study is to *examine the relationship between mother tongue and performance of English language in some selected secondary schools in Wajir district*, I kindly request you to spare some time and fill this questionnaire. The information given will be used for academic purposes only and will be treated with utmost confidentiality. Your cooperation will be highly appreciated.

QUESTIONS

1) Gender?

    a) Female ☐

       Male ☐

    b) Age?

      16-20years ☐

      21-26years ☐

      27-34years ☐

      35 and above ☐

    c) Level of education?

Secondary level ☐

University level ☐

KCSE ☐

GATI ☐

2) Marital status

    1) Single ☐

    2) Married ☐

    3) Divorced/separated ☐

    4) Window ☐

3. Occupation

    5) Students ☐

    6) Civil servant ☐

    7) Self employed. ☐

4. What is your opinion about teaching materials towards students' learning reading skills in English language in relation to mother tongues in this school?

....

....

....

5. Is there lack of teaching materials in the instruction of reading skills in English language in your school? (Tick appropriately)

Yes ☐   No ☐

6. If yes in (2) above, does this affect students' grasping reading skills in the English language in relation to academic performance?

Yes ☐   No ☐

7. If yes in (3) above how?

....

....

....

....

8. Is your school sufficiently equipped in teaching materials used in instructing reading skills in English language? (Tick appropriately)

Yes ☐   No ☐   ☐

9. If no in (5) above, to which extent is this lacking? (Tick appropriately)

Slightly ☐   moderately ☐

Strongly ☐   very strongly ☐ ☐

10. Which suggestions do you have towards the boosting of teaching materials in the instruction of reading skills in English language?

....

....

....

....

11. Is there lack of teaching materials in the instruction of reading skills in English language? (Tick appropriately)

Yes ☐   No ☐

12. Does this situation affect students' learning of reading skills in English language?
If yes in (2) above, describe how?

....

....

....

....

13. Is there any effect on students' learning reading skills in English language due to lack of teaching materials in relation to their mother tongues? (Tick appropriately)

Yes ☐   No ☐

14. If yes in (4) above, to which extent? (Tick appropriately)

Slightly ☐   fairly ☐

Strongly ☐   very strongly ☐

15. Which instructional problem(s) are linked to lack of reading skills in English language in relation mother tongues by the students'?

....
....
....

16. Give some suggestion(s) towards overcoming the effect of lack of teaching materials on students' learning of reading skills in English language.

....
....
....
....

Thank you very much for your cooperation

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR STUDENTS IN WAJIR DISTRICT

1. Is there any link between effects of English language in relation to your mother tongue and performance?

2. Give reason for your answer.

3. Is there lack of teaching materials in the instruction of reading skills in English language in your class?

4. Give reason for your answer?

5. Do teaching materials assist learners in grasping reading skills in English language in relation to your mother tongue?

6. Give reason for your answer.

7. How does the lack of teaching materials affect students' grasping reading skills in English language?

8. What do think should be done so as to boost teaching materials that are used in the instruction of reading in English language in relation to your mother tongue?

BUDGET ESTIMATE

Budget item	Cost
Transport	50,000
typing	50,000
Printing and binding	50,000
Miscellaneous	30,000
Total	180,000

WORK PLAN

Activity	Duration(days)
Questionnaire design	2
Collecting data	3
Data analysis	2
Report writing	5

Office of the Director

24ᵗʰ April 2008

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: INTRODUCTION LETTER FOR MS/MRS/MR...... SYAD BARE ALI

REG. #...... BED /13719/61 IDF

The above named is our student in the Institute of Open and Distance Learning (IODL), pursuing a Diploma/Bachelors degree in Education.

He/she wishes to carry out a research in your Organization on:

MOTHER TONGUE AND PERFORMANCE IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE IN SOME SELECTED SECONDARY SCHOOLS - IN WAJIR -DISTRICT, NORTHE EASTERN PROVINCE - KENYA.

The research is a requirement for the Award of a Diploma/Bachelors degree in Education.

Any assistance accorded to him/her regarding research will be highly appreciated.

Yours Faithfully,

MUHWEZI JOSEPH
HEAD, IN-SERVICE