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**A STUDY OF THE IMPACT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE ON PUPILS
IN RURAL SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN BUHWEJU
COUNTY- BUSHENYI DISTRICT-UGANDA**

BY

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DECLARATION

I Mushabe Novice declare that the research report given is original and has never been submitted to any institution for any award.

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APPROVAL

This work has been done under supervision of Mrs. Esther Victoria Ssempe and she approved it for submission to the university.

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Date: *24th August, 2009*

DEDICATION

Sincere dedication goes to my brothers, Ngabirano David, Tumukunde Alex Ronnie and Ashabahebwa Rogers. My sister Mugabi Sylvia and my parents Mr. and Mrs. Bwemarire P

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Special thanks go to my parents Mr. and Mrs. Bwemarire Private, brothers, especially Mr. Ngabirano David and Tumukunde Alex Ronnie for their contribution financially, morally and socially during my education life. With pleasure I extend my thanks to my supervisor, Mrs. Esther Victoria Ssempe who not only supervised my work but also shapped my education career at Kampala International University. I also thank, Ashabahebwa Rogers who helped in data processing and collection. The headteachers and staff of, Karungu Senior Secondary School, Butare Senior Secondary School, Kayanja Vocational Secondary School and upland Secondary school especially Mr. Tukwatsibwe Alexander for allowing me to conduct the study.

ABSTRACT

The study provides the impact of English language in rural secondary schools. As a matter of fact, English language has both positive and negative impact to pupils according to the information obtained from the schools in which the study was conducted. It is true that if the lessons are conducted in local languages, learners can improve however, they can not perform uniformly. The information obtained shows that English language has, to a greater extent, been more advantageous than disadvantageous. The solution to the disadvantages are suggested including maintaining both languages (L1 and L2)

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Background of the Study

English language is the language of England, America and is used in Britain and in most common wealth countries. (Oxford Advanced Learners' Dictionary, 5th Edition page 382). English language mostly developed from Anglo-Saxon, Latin, Old Norse French, Greek and Worldwide – Oxford Advanced Learners' Dictionary – Study page (D8).

Language is a system of sounds and words used by humans to express their thoughts and feelings. PG. Penner, RE. MC Connell (1963) pages, 130-140, Oxford Advanced Learners' Dictionary page 662.

According to the definition above, language is a form of communication and because it is used in schools it influences academics and coherence in communication. Such cases led to the interest of examining the impact of English language in rural secondary schools in Bushenyi district- Buhweju county.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

According to the impact of English language and performance, most of the pupils said they were affected by English and would have performed better if papers were set and lessons taught in their mother languages. However, poor performance was found out not to be due to failure to understand English but the ability to learn, which is a natural cognitive factor. Therefore it was found out that on average good performers did well in all subjects including English language. However, not all those

who perform excellently in English do so in other subjects as mathematics and even humanities as their own L1, literature, history and geography. According to the reports given by their teachers, about seventy percent of pupils who perform well in English language are not very good in other subjects.

1.2 Purpose

The study aimed at critically examining the impact of English language as a second language in rural secondary schools in Bushenyi district-Buhweju County. This was because English language is a compulsory subject and all subject, tests and examination questions plus lessons are done in English. The study also aimed at analyzing possible solutions that may be suggested to solve negative effects of English language in the study area.

1.3 Objectives

1. To find out the impact of English language both positive and negative.
2. Also, the study was to examine whether English language had helped learners to speak fluently in English language and pass exams.
3. To find out if there was a difference in performance in English language in relation to gender.
4. To give suggestions or possible ways in which English language performance can be improved in rural secondary schools.

1.4 Significance

The study is helpful to teachers and other concerned people in effectively teaching of English language. It is also helpful to pupils to improve on their examination performance and avoid interference of the second language with first language.

1.5 Scope /Delimitation

The study was conducted among four schools over six in Bushenyi District – Buhweju county. It obtained information from pupils of senior one to four where by ten pupils were interviewed, observed and others given questionnaires, five boys and five girls making a total of 40 pupils per school, and one hundred societies in all schools. Ten pupils in one school over one hundred sixty were interviewed orally and four teachers were interviewed in four schools (one in each school), making a total of one hundred seventy six.

Data collection and interviews took six month and an area of thirty kilometers was covered every time the study was to be conducted.

1.6 Limitations of the Study

More time was spent during data collection than it was expected. The study was to be conducted in about four months but took six months instead. Some interviewees would not be accessed since in some schools they had different programmes, for instance at Karungu Secondary School, the pupils were doing exams during the first visit and the study was conducted early during the next term.

CHAPTER TWO

RELATED LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

So many effects of English language have been put down by different writers, especially positive ones in Canada for instance. The research instead dealt with African rural community schools showing the impact of English language as a second language in the selected Bushenyi schools. The impact was mostly and nearly the same but to some pupils it was a different case.

2.1 Impact of English Language

According to various writers, the following positive and negative effects of English language exist;

2.1.1 Functions of English Language

The leading function is projecting language into Novel situations- it is mostly to children who use language addressing their dolls. However when they grow up, they project it into feelings, reactions and others, experience both real and imaginary (Terry Piper [1998],) "Language and Learning," page 200 (Shafer et al, 1983, page 103).

Language may also be used to assert and maintain social needs- asserting personal rights for instance "I want food". It can also be used to criticize ("your shirt is equally dirty").

To children, language is especially used for controlling the self and others. (Shafer et al – 1983 page 65), Terry Piper (1998 page 201).

Language informs and reports events as they appear in different situations. (That is a nice doll, Jim had one like this) language also makes generalization basing on events.

Language forecasts and reasons especially when expressing curiosity – (why does the world go round). It can be used to predict an event – “It is going to rain”. Terry P. (1998, 202). According to Terry, language functions may not be similar in all cultures and he calls off faulty assumption. Therefore this literature analyses language (English) in Canada.

2.1.2 Disadvantages of English Language

On the other hand, the study done by writers on Bi-lingual children show that there is negative effect of learning a second language.

According to Terry Piper-1998, 175. French children and English children who spoke more than one language revealed poor performance in tests of both languages while monolinguals did better in one (Saer (1922), Grabo, (1931), Barker and Parry Williams (1933). This can also be proved by some pupils who were interviewed, some of them complained that English was difficult for them and that if the papers were set and lessons taught in their local language, they would have had no problems in performance.

More recent research revealed that children who had difficulties in L₂ had them in L₁- Richards, Platt and Weber (1985), 293. Accordingly, a second language learner must attain proficiency. Children attain in a second language. “Depends upon the level of proficiency the child /learner has reached in L₁, Terry P. (1998) page 175-178. According to the researchers’ above they aimed at one problem (the difference in performance). The research obtained from the rural secondary schools in

the selected area shows that not only performance affects pupils due to English language but a number of them. Therefore in every culture the impact is sometimes different depending on usage and users.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN

3.0 Introduction

The research design used was systematic sampling. Samples were obtained from different schools. Four schools were selected in one county over six, and in these schools ten pupils were selected in two schools using systematic sampling where five were boys and others were girls. In other two schools, simple random was used but considering gender, so the method was applied on boys, choosing five from the rest and five girls from the rest in each school.

3.1 Tools /Instruments Used to Collect Data

Questionnaires both mailed and un mailed were used to collect data and answer to questions were written and given to the researcher. At one time a correspondent was used to return back the answered questionnaires.

3.2 Population and Study Sample

An average of forty pupils were interviewed/asked to give the required information in every school. However the number of pupils in the four schools was not uniform. In some schools, there were about eight pupils for instance Upland Secondary School, while others had between three hundred to six hundred. So the choice of samples was to cater for schools with least numbers of students and save time.

For the case of teachers, only two were interviewed in every school since some had only two but the samples considered only English language teachers.

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS

4.0 Introduction

According to how the study was conducted, English language in rural secondary schools portrayed double impact. However in some cases the impact is slightly different from what other writers have putdown as Terry Pier since the impact depends on culture and circumstances. For most of the pupils, the following justifications, and relevance showed why English was taught and what English language had done or helped them in their school life and what they expected to use it for, after school.

4.1 Advantages /Positive Impact of English as a Second Language in Rural Secondary Schools

For the four schools over six visited, the following was what they pinpointed and emphasized in writing, verbally as they were interviewed and what was observed. According to most pupils, English language has socially, economically and politically imposed its impact positively.

Easy and fair communication in the area and outside the country. Where as Terry Piper (1998) says that language informs. The pupils in rural areas were able to express what they felt as easy communication with different people. "I as a student can now talk to all Ugandans and other outside people who use English language, I feel great when I find talking to students from other regions of the country in English and we discuss when we are in seminars" said Kamashaza Sylvia of senior four at Upland Senior Secondary School. Not only that, other pupils happily said they were now able to read all documents (literature) and posters that are

in English language, including News papers that would help them to know what is going on in other areas of the world.

"I like listening to BBC news (British Broadcasting services news) especially ports on Saturday at fourteen hours, I also like to listen to V.O.A (Voice of America) music mix and this has helped me to know much about what other people like outside there."

Said Nowe John of Butare Secondary School.

Other pupils said that they wished to conduct business and English was really helping them.

English language in rural secondary schools has helped learners to pass examinations. In the report given by most of the pupils, they said all papers were set in English language. They added that if one does not understand the question in English then it would mean failing the question, or if one gave a wrong sentence, he/she would not be marked right in other subjects like history and geography. Mugume Nicholas of senior four at Karungu Secondary school said that his good writing skills in English helped him to do well in art subjects, and in English and that he would not stop learning it since it is on Ugandan school curriculum. He said that he was not happy with the Ministry of Education's idea of conducting the lessons in local languages.

"If we study all subjects in our local languages at lower primary level, we are going to find it difficult to cope with English after primary and then the papers are to be set in English in secondary this can affect our question approach during the National Examinations since not all learners in the country speak the same language."

Language skills was another impact of the English language in rural secondary schools. For many students observed and interviewed showed improvement especially written English and spoken. For every level of class, there was a difference in skills, for instance, the senior four students at Butale Secondary School were more fluent and had no serious mistakes in grammar compared to the senior two's and one's. Also the writing skills helped the students in expressing themselves in their local language, when asked to talk about it-the senior three learners said they had so many sayings and idioms to translate from English language to their local languages in written form.

English language in rural secondary schools provides employment. Some teachers asked said that there are no jobs in school especially teaching that one can acquire without knowledge of English since it is a national language. Even the teachers of other languages like Kiswahili had to be good in spoken English to get jobs. Immaculate Karungi a Mistress at Kayanja Vocational School said that her good English speaking helped her to get a job, she added that she prefers even a house girl who can use English so that if she goes for shopping or one calls whether she is not there she can deliver the information to her. When asked whether there was at least any worker at the school who did not at least speak English, she said that none could not speak it since the school is a multicultural public place where people converge, all workers have to be good at addressing every person using the national language.

Whereas to some learners English language gave them chance to get jobs, others hoped to get/shape their future career, some pupils said that English language would help them become what they want in future as writers, journalists and politicians, since they hope to work in different professions. To some senior one student's asked said that they admired the news readers at school and the writers of the magazines and

school articles. They also said that they wished to speak good English and write it in future.

As a matter of fact and a worldwide used language, it helps schools to have uniform national language and education. To a large extent, these learners understand, speak and use English to answer uniform questions in schools since they are asked about the same content and the examinations are set in the same language.

So, to many learners confirmed that they were the same despite the schools they attend since they all study in one language. "I don't mind when I am discussing with my fellow pupils from other schools, in English language, I feel they know what I say and I understand what they say I think it is a special interaction done by English language how would we have discussed such matters?." Said Tumubone a senior four student at Upland secondary school.

English language in rural secondary schools has been a centre of innovation. To some pupils, it helps them to compose poems and to learn new words especially in science. Pupils of senior one proved that so many words in Biology were new to them and helped them how to understand their environment. Some of them said they did not know how some plants and animals were called in their language but found them in English science books - these included different types of mushroom, eucalyptus trees, flowers as daisy and clasping plants on other trees. Christine, one of them said that whenever she came out of class, she would look for the flowers and try to see the different parts of it as they had studied in class as petals, anthers, pollen grains and ovules. This she said was not done at home or if she did it, she did not know various parts in her local language.

For most school pupils, friendship and harmony was noted. Pupils, with pleasure said that they enjoy talking to their friends in English from other schools and during debates they carry. Despite being different in mother languages, they said even when visitors from far came, they would converse with them, or even when they went for seminars in other schools they talk to them freely in English Language. "It makes you confident and smart when speaking and feel you are herd unlike if you are to use your mother tongue to a stranger" said Nimanya of senior three at Karungu secondary school.

In relation to the above, English language has helped in self expression in public and among different races it has therefore acted as a centre of unity where different cultures share the same language at school.

Business and advertisement has been a great impact of English language in rural schools. The teachers admitted that all the school advertisements were in English. A fact that has helped the schools to increase on its population according to the new school of Kayanja Vocational School. The Director of studies of the school said that there were few news papers that would advertise in local language yet the school needed people from all areas who wished to join. They had therefore to advertise with other news papers in English. On the other hand, pupils admitted that English language helps them for adventure since they want to know more about the world. They said that it was not sometimes because they wanted to pass exams but also to learn English for enjoyment. Since English speaking gives pride to speakers, it feels good to speak in a foreign language a fact that shows that one is informed and knows much around him/her.

Other learners study it because it is used worldwide, so as a matter of being safe and adventure to the world, one has to study English in case

they want to go abroad. This international language is good for one to study. These and more others were the pupils interests in studying English language, some others revealed that they enjoyed studying it even when it was not their best subject according to Nimpamyia a senior four student at Butare Secondary. She said, her best subject in performance was Christian religious education but felt all the time to study English. This otherwise portrayed the impact of English language.

4.2 Disadvantages of English Language in Rural Secondary Schools

Double reactions over the negative impact of English language was portrayed by pupils. Despite some giving maximum respect to English language on one hand, on the other hand they felt like prisoners of the world problems due to English language.

Some pupils reacted that English language was to blame for some failures they get. They said that English language like other Languages has some difficult vocabulary that cause them trouble to interpret during examination time. Others said that they performed better in other subjects and wished they would have been performing far better in other subjects if questions were set in their mother language. However, when asked if they were performing well in local languages when they were in primary, some of them said they were not very good but at least they performed far better compared to English set papers. Mr. Tukwatsibwe Alexander the headteacher at Upland New School indicated that the general poor performance among pupils was not only due to poor performance in English but sometimes natural. He pointed out that some students were excellent in English language but poorly performed in other subjects, however, some pupils would lose marks due to poor grammar in their exercises. He gave the rules they followed as far as grading is concerned according to UNEB (Uganda National Examinations

Board). That if a candidate failed English, even if he/she had passed other subjects with distinctions, that candidate would not get first grade. To some pupils who performed poorly in English said that English language was difficult and foreign though it was not perception and being foreign, they said it was also late to study it since they were used to their mother languages.

"I like using my mother language because it's the one I know best and I am sure of not making mistakes after all when I make a mistake they laugh at me"

said Charity Mbabazi of Upland secondary school, with much seriousness. She added that even her old parents don't understand what she says if she uses English.

English language results to a mixture of languages, according to some of the Pupils asked, they said they used words from both languages to make some statements. It was found out that among the pupils of senior three and above, no one would speak twenty sentences of Runyankore language without using at least an English word. They gave an excuse that it was because some words existed in English and not in their mother language yet they have to be used during communication, they said that words like chairman, radio, tap, president, minister, chalk and pipe can't be avoided. Not only that some words (joining) words like 'so' are simple to use in their local language than the original words.

In connection to the above, English language has resulted to forgetting the first languages. They said that since most of the time is spent at school, and they are practicing only English, it leads to forgetting their mother language as proverbs, idioms and sayings, some have problems with grammar in their own mother languages due to lack of practice. To other pupils they called this erosion of culture, language is supposed to be passed on to new generation but instead they resort to English

language. This has also created communication barrier between pupils and their parents who did not go to school to study English language.

There is also increased expenditure according to different sources. For the case of teachers asked, they reported that English language teaching materials were expensive especially text books and that at least the school was forced to buy a text book for every pupil per class. In related issues it takes a lot of time to force pupils to learn it, cards for the pupils who don't use English language when speaking at school and delayed time when punishing such pupils.

For some pupils who are patriotic, English language in rural schools has acted as a form of neo-colonialism; they said that instead of promoting and using their local languages to international level, the government is forcing them to use a foreign language in schools and offices. Apart from this, the language acts as a barrier to job seekers at local level yet they would do such jobs well, as cleaner and cooks, if they were to use local languages.

In other few cases reported by pupils, English language has been used by some people to cheat other people especially in business. They said that bargaining is difficult when one uses English to a person who does not know it. Also, some administrators and leaders can use the language to charge items needed at school yet some parents do not know English to know if the items listed are suitable for the money asked. To some cheating - pupils, they sometimes choose some English terms to get money from their parents. They gave an example of a pupil who had been expelled the previous year for such cases. He had been sent home for the money for a trip, he told his old father to give him as twice as ten thousand they had asked for the trip to make it twenty thousand. After that he excused him self and said that the week after they would send

him for another money for “mitosis” and therefore the parent would better give him more ten thousand for that “event” the parent gave him the money and followed him on the next day to discover that he was lying to him. So in that case pupils admitted that English language was the cause of the problem. When one of their teachers was asked at Karungu, Secondary School, he did not deny it.

“It’s true some pupils are stubborn and they steel money from their guardians who don’t know, almost every term we get cases of parents seeking for clarification about the fees structure and extra charges the pupils add on their own”

said Kamuhangire Innocent, the bursar and Mathematics teacher.

All these and other disadvantages were given by pupils and their teachers. However when asked about the subject they liked most, more than half of the pupils said they liked English language despite the performance since it has been adopted as a national language and used worldwide. On the other hand they admitted that it has helped them to perform well since it is the only language used in teaching and in the books of education.

4.3 Suggested Solutions to the Challenges

Some pupils suggested to be taught in their mother languages when they are very young and argued the government to keep the language culture and at least provide translated books in their mother language, Sylvia Kamashaza of senior four at Upland secondary school said that, if the Bible is translated, how about other books of education she suggested that translating the books would help to understand the difficult words and then English books should be read for foreign benefit but not to

complicate it by making the whole syllabus of education be taught in English.

In related cases, others suggested setting simple questions to help learners understand more. However, others said it would not help them when they are outside the country but they would come up with better results for the case of grading like at senior four where one is not given first grade despite having required points because she/he has failed English.

Pupils should use their languages in society correctly to avoid mixture of languages especially at school and homes. On this matter, though they had earlier said that some words don't exist and more suitable, they attributed this to lack of enough creativity and research in their local languages. The senior three pupils at Butare secondary school suggested that for every new word from the rest of the languages for a new thing had to be named in their mother language other than borrowing the real words.

English language users should be sensitized on how to use it, some suggested that some of them use it for pride and not to communicate, instead of asking for what they want from the people in their languages they understand, they want to "show off" and end up not being understood. Some pupils reported that their parents ever talked about the meetings they attend as centre of miscommunication since the chairpersons and speakers instead of using the local languages they use English to "show off". They suggested that radio programmes like "Yega Kandi Orinde Orurimu rwawe" (learn and keep /protect your language) on radio west would be of great importance if followed by learners.

Practicing and using both languages in a proper way was also a measure to be taken to reduce divisions between the educated and non educated class. This to some pupils would help to make all people aware of both languages to avoid communication barriers. Literature books and newspapers in local languages are not selling a lot because people don't like them, according to sources as pupils were asked. They added that there were no Runyankole books in their library and even the newspapers, magazines and articles were all in English as a result of not loving and practicing local languages.

The general blame was put on the government for making English a national language and a medium of communication in all class work. However, the information and suggestions were good one must not avoid international languages because it makes the world a global village where we have to listen and get information from all over the world via English. A more close solution to that was to make both languages compulsory from primary level to senior four. For the pupils must follow what the Ministry passes out. To the teachers interviewed, the reaction was of double standard, though one may be patriotic but he must go with new styles, how do you go abroad without knowledge of other countries' language. The problem prevails as it is in some cases and pupils perform poorly but mostly, those who totally fail have to fail even if they are taught in their language. Mr. Tukwatsibwe Alexander the Director of Upland senior secondary school confirmed that some pupils are very dull in all subjects and this is due to their past poor performance even in their own mother language subject during primary. He admitted that there were a few cases of pupils who had grave mistakes in English and would perform well in other subjects except English language.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The impact of English language in rural secondary schools is more constructive to their welfare, though there is a fear and challenges in the process, they can't do without English language since it is a national and international language. To stop studying it is to cut off communication with the outside world. When it comes to gender, girls show better writing and speaking skills in English language than boys. However, not all who have good speaking skills can do well in written grammar. Very few cases of pupils who perform best in all other subjects but not in English language were reported but most of the poor performers in English language had similar problems in other subjects according to the report given by their teachers. This therefore refutes the idea that English language leads to failures however, the local languages should be made compulsory and if possible translate the content into local languages then English language can be taught together with local languages to avoid most of the negative impact of English language.

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APPENDIX A

GLOSSARY

Anglo-Saxon	-	English language developed from old English, it was brought to Britain by Germanic tribes (Angles and Jutes) in the fifth century AD. They named England its name and introduced terms as man, woman, eat, shire, house, work and breed.
Old Norse	-	These were invaders from Scandinavia in ninth and tenth centuries who occupied large parts of England, they introduced most modern English words that end in -by or y as sky, whitby, call, leg dirt and take.
Gender	-	Refers to a condition of being female or male.
Mitosis	-	Process of cell division in animal production.
Show off	-	Proud as used by the pupils.
Humanities	-	Subjects of study concerned with human culture As literature, history philosophy and other languages.
L₁	-	First language or mother language
L₂	-	Second language one studies after the first one.
Daisy	-	A flower
Classping	-	Type of plants that grow on other plants
Bi-lingual	-	More than one language (two languages)
Monolingual	-	Speak or study one language

APPENDIX B

STUDY QUESTIONS USED FOR INTERVIEW AND IN THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Pupil's questionnaire

1. Give and briefly explain any six advantages of studying English language as a second language in your school.
 - i).....
 - ii).....
 - iii).....
 - iv).....
 - v).....

2. What are the disadvantages of studying English Language as a second language
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3. Suggest ways to reduce the challenges brought by English language teaching as a second language.
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SET QUESTIONS FOR TEACHERS

1. Briefly give the impact of English Language to you as a teacher, your learners and the school at large?

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2. What measures can be used to treat the negative impact of English language in your schools?

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End!