LANGUAGE EDUCATION POLICY AND MULTILINGUAL LITERACIES
IN UGANDAN PRIMARY SCHOOLS

by

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ABSTRACT

This thesis reports on a study on multilingual language policies conducted in two primary schools in two communities in eastern Uganda, one rural and one urban, from 2005-2006. The study focused on stakeholders’ responses to the new Uganda language education policy, which promotes the teaching of local languages in the first four years of schooling. The policy states that the medium of instruction is the relevant local language for Primary 1-4 in rural schools, and thereafter it is English. In the urban schools, English is the medium of instruction in all the classes and a local language is to be taught as a subject. The study was premised within the framework of literacy as a social practice. Accordingly, the context in which multilingual literacy develops is important to the implementation of Uganda’s new language education policy. The key stakeholders identified in the implementation process included: the ministry representatives at the district level, the school administration, the teachers, and the community. The study used questionnaires, individual interviews, classroom observations, focus group discussions, and document analysis to collect data from the two communities, each of which was linked to a local primary school.

Although the findings show that in both communities the participants were generally aware of the new local language policy, they were ambivalent about its implementation in their schools. While they recognized the importance of local languages in promoting identity and cultural maintenance, a higher priority was their children’s upward mobility, and the desire to be part of wider and more international communities. Further, while area languages like Luganda and regional languages like Kiswahili were perceived to have some benefits as languages of wider communication, it was English that received unequivocal support from both communities.
The study concludes that parents and communities need to be better informed about the pedagogical advantages of instruction in the local language, and that communities need convincing evidence that the promotion of local languages will not compromise desires for global citizenship. Therefore, drawing in particular on the work of Stein in South Africa, I argue that we need to consider "re-sourcing resources" to create space in which teachers and other stakeholders can enhance children’s multilingual literacy development.
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List of Acronyms

BRPS - Bugagga Rural Primary School
BTL - Breakthrough to Literacy
CCT - Center Coordinating Tutor
DEO - District Education Officer
DLB - District Language Board
EFA - Education for All
ESA - Education standards Agency
FGD - Focus Group Discussions
GoU - Government of Uganda
GWP - Government White Paper
IUIU - Islamic University in Uganda
LLA - Lunyole Language Association
LPP - Language Policy and Planning
MOES - Ministry of Education & Sports
NCDC - National Curriculum Development Center
NGO - Non-Government Organization
PLE - Primary Leaving Examinations
PTA - Parent Teacher Association
R & W - Reading and Writing
SMC - School Management Committee
TUPS - Tiriri Urban Primary School
UACE - Uganda Advanced Certificate of Education
UCE - Uganda Certificate of education.
UNEB - Uganda National Examination Board
UPE - Universal Primary Education
USE - Universal Secondary Examination

COM/BRPS, FGD/date - Community/ Bugagga Rural Primary School, Focus Group Discussion/date

COM/TUPS, FGD/date - Community/ Tiriri Urban Primary School, Focus Group Discussion/date

COM/BRPS, Qn/date - Community/ Bugagga Rural Primary School, Questionnaire/date

DEO/BTLJ, I/date - District Education Officer/Butaleja district, Interview/date

DEO/TRRO, I/date - District Education Officer/Tororo district, Interview/date.

ESA, FGD/date - Education Standards Agency, Focus group Discussion/date

HM/BRPS, I/date - Headmaster/Bugagga Rural Primary School, Interview/date

HM/TUPS, I/date - Headmaster/Tiriri Urban Primary School, Interview/date
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DEDICATION

To 'ABALYALWOBA', present and future.
CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

1.0 Background

This research dissertation, “Language education policy and multilingual literacies in Ugandan primary schools”, sought to understand how a new language education policy was implemented, particularly within language minority communities in eastern Uganda. A case study approach to understanding current practice was undertaken. The views of stakeholders towards the implementation of the new language policy on the use of the mother tongue as the medium of instruction as well as the teaching of the local languages in primary schools in Uganda were investigated. For this study, the language education policy referred to is the 1992 Uganda language education policy. The focus of this study is on the use of the mother tongue as the medium of instruction in the first four years of formal school in rural areas and the teaching of local languages in both rural and urban primary schools.

1.1 Uganda’s new language education policy

Uganda has over sixty indigenous languages (Ladefoged, 1971) none of which is spoken by a majority of the population. Since the introduction of formal education in 1889, this linguistic diversity has posed a challenge in regard to the medium of instruction in schools. It is not possible to use any of the indigenous languages as a medium of instruction at the national level because of the fear that it would fuel ethnic rivalry (Ssekamwa, 2000). When Uganda was a British colony, the government of that time considered using English as the medium of instruction as they argued that it was easier to recruit teachers who were native speakers of English. However, after attaining independence, the government designated six languages for use
in education as mediums of instruction. These languages included: Luganda, Luo, Lugbra
Runyankole/Rukiga, Runyoro/Rutoro and Ateso/Ng’akarimojong. These languages were chosen
as they were deemed to have a wide regional coverage of either first or second language speakers.

However, the question of language of instruction has remained a challenge. Since the
attainment of independence in 1962, Uganda has had a series of education reviews (Wakholi,
1983) which have supported the use of indigenous languages in the early years of schooling. The
most recent education review of 1989 made recommendations that became part of the
Government White Paper (GWP) (Government of Uganda, 1992) on education. One of these
recommendations resulted in the launching of a new language education policy in 1992 that
emphasized teaching local languages in primary schools. Indeed this policy is consistent with
UNESCO’s position on languages and education in its report, *The use of vernacular languages
in education*, (UNESCO, 1953), and restated in a position paper (UNESCO, 2003). The new
language education policy, which is included in the GWP advocates for the use of a child’s first
language as the medium of instruction in his/her first years of schooling. Briefly, the 1992
Uganda language education policy states that:

In rural areas the medium of instruction from P.1 to P.4 will be the relevant local languages; and from P.5
to P.8 English will be the medium of instruction.

In the urban areas the medium of instruction will be English through the primary cycle.

Kiswahili and English will be taught as compulsory subjects to all children throughout the primary cycle,
both in rural and urban areas. Emphasis in terms of allocations of time and in the provision of
instructional materials, facilities and teachers will, however, be gradually placed on Kiswahili as the
language possessing greater capacity for uniting Ugandans and for assisting rapid social development.
The relevant area language will also be taught as a subject in primary school; this applies to both rural and
urban areas (GoU, 1992, p.19).
Through the Government White Paper (GWP), Uganda education system recognizes a basic right: to become literate in one's first language. The two volumes of the Primary School Curriculum addressed the national aims of education as specifically stated in the GWP, 1992. One aim which is directly relevant to this study states: "To eradicate illiteracy and equip the individual with basic skills and knowledge to utilize the environment for self development, as well as national development, for better health, nutrition and family life and the capacity for continued learning" (p.viii).

Similarly, Volume One states the aims and objectives of primary education as articulated in the GWP and the report of the Curriculum Review Task force (Appendix A). One of the aims, which relates to this study is "to enable individuals to acquire functional, permanent and developmental literacy, numeracy and communication skills in English, Kiswahili and, at least, one Uganda language" (p.x). Furthermore, the National Curriculum Development Center (NCDC) states that it adopted only one theme for the entire primary local language course, which was "effective expression in local language/area language" (p.iv). To this end, the new Uganda language policy strives to address this theme particularly in the provision of basic education through its primary school curriculum. This is demonstrated from the fact that the promotion of the mother tongue education is generally associated with recognition of the needs of minority or marginalized groups.
Table 1.1: Summary of language policy for education

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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>P1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Local language</td>
<td>MI+S</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>S</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kiswahili</td>
<td></td>
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Source: Uganda Primary School Curriculum: Volume Two (2000, p.284)

Key: MI = Medium of Instruction; S= Subject; P1-7 = Primary level, 1-7

Although the policy for Universal Primary Education (UPE) introduced in 1997 had increased enrolments in primary schools (discussed later in this chapter), it was also noted that the dropout rates were high, particularly in the lower grades. Thus, it was envisaged that the new language education policy would serve three purposes: to retain the pupils once they enrolled in school, to enhance the quality of education, and to improve the literacy levels in Uganda. Therefore, within the context of Uganda’s multilingual situation, the implementation of the new language education policy of teaching the local languages continues to be a pedagogical challenge. The privileged position of the English language further complicates the situation. It is thus not surprising that the new language education policy, concerning the benefits of teaching the mother tongue, sparked off heated public debate in the media.

1.2 The Ugandan Context

Uganda is a land-locked country located in East Africa. It borders the Democratic Republic of Congo in the west, Sudan in the north, Kenya in the east and Tanzania and Rwanda in the south. It has an area of 241,039 sq kilometers with a population of 30 million, (CIA, July 2007est.) of which about 90% live in rural areas and are engaged in agriculture. It has diverse
cultural groups speaking over sixty different languages. These languages fall into four major
language families: the Bantu, the Sudanic, the Eastern and Western Nilotics (Ladefoged, et al.,
1971). Approximately 70% of the people in Uganda speak one of the Bantu languages. Nearly
16% of the total numbers of Bantu speaking people in Africa live in Uganda. Other language
groups include Western Nilotic (principally the Acholi, Lango, and Alur) who live in the north
(15% of the population). The Eastern Nilotic (mainly the Karamojong, Pokot, Teso, and Turkana)
live in the northeast (10% of the population). Finally, are the Sudanic people (the Lugbara) who
live in the northwest (5% of the population) (Gordon, 2005). There are nine ethnic groups with a
population of more than one million. These include the Baganda, Basoga, Banyankole, Bakiga,
and Bagisu. Others are the Iteso, Langi, Acholi, and Lugbara (cf.Uganda

Figure 1.1 has been removed due to copyright restrictions. The information removed is the map
of Africa showing the location of Uganda.

Figure 1.1: Map of Africa
Source: Bureau of Statistics (2005, p.12)

Figure 1.2 has been removed due to copyright restrictions. The information removed is the map
of Uganda showing the location of districts including Tororo and Butaleja

Figure 1.2: Districts of Uganda
Retrieved December 16, 2007 from
English is the official language in Uganda although it is spoken fluently by less than a quarter of the population. Kiswahili, a non-indigenous language spoken by a very small population as a first language but widely used in the East African region, was recently made the second official language (GoU, 1992).

Uganda became a British protectorate in 1894 but obtained national independence from Britain in 1962. In the period between 1970 and 1985 it experienced political instability, which led to serious economic decline. However, since 1986, when the current government came into power, there has been a noted recovery and stability.

1.2.1 Overview of Uganda's education system

The education system adapted in Uganda in the period prior to independence reflected the thinking and practices of the colonial administration. There was more emphasis on academic rather than agricultural and technical education (Odaet, 1990; Ssekamwa, 2000). Later any attempts made to reverse this trend of providing a purely academic education met with resistance from most Ugandan people for whom going to school meant ‘learning of a little English’ (Ssekamwa, 2000). This scenario remained very much the same even after independence, the emphasis continued to be on formal education from the primary level through to university. The demand for education at that time was to provide the work force needed in administration, such as clerks, teachers, artisans and catechists to replace the Europeans who were leaving (Ssekamwa 2000). The current Uganda government continues to recognize the role of education in the overall development of the country. A landmark legislation was the introduction of Universal Primary Education (UPE) in 1997, aimed at increasing access to education for all school going age children. The government further demonstrated its commitment to enabling all children access to education by introducing Universal Secondary Education (USE) in January 2007.
The current education system has been in force since 1967. It consists of seven years of primary education followed by four years of secondary education, two years of higher secondary (A Level) and then three to five years of university education. After successful completion of the primary cycle, one can either go to a lower secondary school or take a three-year program in one of the vocational and technical training institutions. On completion of the first four years of secondary education, one can proceed to (i) high school (Advanced Level), (ii) two to three year technical institutes for advanced craft courses that take six, (iii) a two-year course for primary teachers or (iv) join the various government-training colleges. Those completing ‘A’ level proceed either to university, national or technical training colleges or other higher education training institutions. The national examinations at the end of each cycle of formal education are: the Primary Leaving Examination (PLE), Uganda Certificate of Education (UCE) and the Uganda Advanced Certificate of Education (UACE). After each cycle, a credit in English is mandatory in order to obtain a certificate that permits a student to proceed to the next level of education.

The Ministry of Education and Sports is responsible for primary and other levels of education in Uganda. In the government-aided schools, it is the ministry’s responsibility to train, register, employ and supply all public schools with the required teachers. It also provides textbooks, administrators and inspectors. In addition, it constructs schools, teachers’ houses, sanitary facilities and provides furniture. The community and parents participate where possible by providing bricks, land and labor. In addition, the parents provide scholastic materials for their children (Bitamazire, 2005). The Ministry, through the National Curriculum Development Center (NCDC) prescribes a national curriculum which all schools, government or private, have to follow.
1.2.2 Primary education in Uganda

In Uganda, pre-primary education (for ages 2-5) is the responsibility of parents and is not part of the formal education system. Education at this level is in the hands of private agencies and individuals. More so, most of the nursery schools and kindergartens are in urban areas and so many children in the rural areas enter primary school with little preparation for the required intellectual tasks. The age set by the government for children starting formal primary education is six years and above. It is at the primary level that the government’s responsibility for the provision of formal education begins.

The first seven years of primary education provide the basic education leading to the Primary Leaving Examination (PLE) certificate in four Core Subjects: English, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies. There are two categories of primary schools, private or fee based and public schools which have no tuition. Most children enroll in the public, government-financed schools, as these are affordable for the majority of the population. Because of the introduction of UPE, schooling is available for free. However, the parents continue to provide scholastic materials such as pencils, pens and exercise books. Although uniforms are theoretically optional, most schools make it compulsory for all the pupils to wear them. It is also the responsibility of the parents to provide school lunch for their children. As the government does not pay for lunch, or uniforms, parents have to provide that money.

1.2.3 The new Primary School Curriculum

A major Education Review commissioned by the government in 1987 led by Sentenza Kajubi and culminating in 1992 with the publication of the Government of Uganda White Paper on education set into motion major education reforms. Emphasis in the White paper was on providing educational opportunities for all the country’s children. One of the key developments
of the reform process, directed towards promoting equity in education, was the introduction of Universal Primary Education (UPE) in 1997. Although this was initially meant to benefit only four children per family, the practical difficulties of monitoring this legislation led the government to open it up for all interested school age children (Eilor, 2004). Thus, due to UPE, school enrolment dramatically increased from less than 3 million to 6.8 million in 2003 to about 7.5 million in 2005.

As a result of UPE, one of the reform sub-components that followed was the development of the learning curriculum. The National Curriculum Development Centre (NCDC), established in 1973, was responsible for reviewing and re-structuring the education system to match with the country’s realistic needs as contrasted to the colonial type of education that Uganda inherited at independence. With this mandate, NCDC was at the helm of the review, updated the primary school curriculum, and the result which resulted in the launching of the new Uganda Primary School Curriculum Volume One in September 1999 which became operational January, 2000 in all primary schools. The subsequent Volume Two was phased into the primary education system in January, 2001 (NCDC, 2000). The new curriculum included an expansion of subjects from four to ten, including the introduction of local languages for the first four years of primary schooling. In an address during the launch, the Minister of Education pointed out the objective of the new curriculum as:

The new Primary School Curriculum focuses, inter alia, on the provision of knowledge and skills to the learner in an integrated practical approach and deliver [...] considers the knowledge, skills, values and attitudes which are promoted by the subject areas in Volume Two of the curriculum to be of particular relevance and value for these young learners in particular and Uganda in general (NCDC, 2000, p. v).

Thus Volume Two, as mentioned in the foreword was expected to contribute tremendously towards producing practical and functional primary school graduates with an all
round education The six subject areas (Agriculture, Integrated production skills, Kiswahili, Local languages, Performing Arts, Physical Education and Religious Education) were to be given all the attention they deserved. The introduction of these subjects into the education system was to be in phases. Local languages and Kiswahili were to be introduced in 2003 according to the Ministry timetable of implementation (NCDC, 2000, p. vii). Accordingly, one of the interventions geared towards improvement of the quality of education in Uganda was the new Uganda primary school curriculum (Eilor, 2004). As a result, the Instructional Materials Unit distributed 130,000 copies of Volumes One and Two (syllabus and teacher’s guide) to schools in 2002/2003 (Eilor, 2004).

It is also important to mention here, in connection with UPE, that government undertook to provide instructional materials with the aim of ensuring quality and equity through improved access and usage of scholastic materials, as one of the strategies to promote basic education. These instructional materials in primary schools included: Core text books, teacher guides, supplementary text books and basic teachers’ professional references and pedagogic materials, pupils’ basic reference books (Atlas and Dictionaries), supplementary reading books and learning aids, such as wall charts.

Still, even with the introduction of UPE, the government has acknowledged a number of challenges. Low retention and completion rates, lack of due consideration to reading and writing and lack of adequate follow up and inspection were of concern. As a result, some intervention measures undertaken by the Ministry to ensure quality education included setting up new timetables to address reading and writing, putting books in the hands of learners and use of local languages in Primary 1-4. For example, the periods allocated to local language and English were as indicated below:
Table 1.2: Weekly allocation of periods per subject

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subjects</th>
<th>Classes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>P1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Language</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kiswahili</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Uganda Primary School Curriculum: Volume Two

In Table 1.2, the periods presented refer to a single class. For example, in Primary 1, the children have six classes of English and five of the local language. Each lesson is 30 minutes in Primary 1-4 and 40 minutes in Primary 5-7. Teaching of the Local Language is only up to Primary 6.

Furthermore, in pursuit of assuring quality education, another related key education reform was the creation of the Education Standards Agency (ESA) in 2001, an improved and independent school inspection body whose mandate is to ensure the quality of education. According to the education and the sector-wide report, staffing and budgetary limitations notwithstanding, ESA has been able to carry out inspections in a number of educational institutions at all levels and monitored the implementation of Volumes One and Two of the Uganda Primary School Curriculum. It has also monitored learning achievements through the ‘Break Through to Literacy’ (BTL) methodology (Ministerial Policy Statement, financial year 2003/2004). The BTL is a teaching methodology based on the local language designed to teach children life skills and to read and write in their mother tongues. In June 2001, five districts piloted the BTL methodology.

The White paper on the implementation of the new language policy prescribed that the medium of instruction for learners from Primary 1 to Primary 4 be their local language while at the same time English was to be taught just like any other subject in the curriculum (Ministry of
Education and Sports, 1992). The EFA 2005 report recognized Uganda for the positive move towards achieving the Millennium Development Goal 2 (Achieve Universal Primary Education). This success was because of the government’s introduction of UPE in 1997 and the subsequent reforms in curriculum such as the use of mother tongue in primary schools. However, Wolf (2006) says that the implementation of language in education policies especially in post-colonial Africa often meets with negative attitudes by stakeholders. They question the feasibility of multilingualism in education and in particular, the value of the indigenous African languages for quality education. The tendency is often to look at the situation as a polarized one of either choosing the official/foreign language or the mother tongue/national language. Nonetheless, both the African political and administrative elites and the affected public, particularly the teachers, parents and pupils, hold such uninformed attitudes. However, Bamgbose (2000) contends that the question of the benefits of using a local language in education is a foregone issue. What remains as a major concern is the practicality of implementing such policies that foster the use of local languages for instruction.

Although the Uganda education language policy was passed in 1992, it was only in 1999 that policy guidelines for its implementation were availed through the launching of the “New Primary School Curriculum” (September 21, 1999). The guidelines stated that developing materials and training teachers was initially to be for the six regional languages (mentioned above). It further stated that the school administration and a District Language Board (DLB) comprised of members from the community would select an appropriate local language to use as the medium of instruction. Therefore, there emerged a need for a study to establish the views of such community stakeholders about the policy and understand their role and support in its implementation. As Porter (1990) points out, “many parents are not committed to having the
schools maintain the mother tongue if it is at the expense of gaining a sound education and the English-language skills needed for obtaining jobs or pursuing higher education” (p. 8).

1.3 Purpose of study

In Uganda, related studies have revealed the effects of developing literacy skills in a language other than the child’s mother tongue. A study by the Uganda National Examination board (UNEB) showed poor performance in the national examination at the end of the primary cycle (UNEB, 1999). This was attributed to poor comprehension skills in English, which in turn was blamed on not using the mother tongue for initial literacy development (UNEB, 1999). Another study in Uganda focused on the implementation of the language education policy in a Complementary Opportunity Primary Education (COPE) program in Bushenyi district. In this study, Brock-Utne (2000) observed that the teachers in COPE disregarded the policy on using the local language. This was interesting given that Bushenyi is one of the regions where one of the six languages selected for use in education was spoken as a mother tongue by the majority of the population. Another study by Muthwii (2002) focused on the major languages (Acholi, Luganda, Lugbara, Rusinga and Ateso) which are also among the six languages officially designated for use as mediums of instruction in education. These studies examined the implementation of the language policy in regions where the mother tongue was one of the six are languages. However, there were no studies regarding the implementation of the new language education policy in schools within minority language communities. This indeed was most unfortunate given that minority languages form 29.6 % of Uganda’s population (Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS), 2002). Given the historical perspective, where only a few selected languages have been used in schools, it was necessary to understand the views of the stakeholders, within the minority language communities, towards the implementation of this
policy. This was important especially as pointed out above, UNESCO was committed to supporting nations that encouraged linguistic diversity while respecting mother tongue education at all levels. Thus this study attempted to fill an existing void in the studies about the perceptions of stakeholders regarding the use of vernacular as medium of instruction in minority communities. Education in a mother tongue is recognized as an essential strategy for successful programs that aim to provide learners with multiple proficiencies and with access to academic content material (UNESCO, 2003). The plight of minority language children doubly disadvantaged was disturbing. Consequently, this study addresses three key questions (see section 1.3) in an attempt to illuminate the challenges of implementing the language policy in a minority language district and to gain understanding of how these challenges are being addressed.

As mentioned earlier, the new language education policy emphasizes the teaching of local languages in primary schools. Uganda’s children stand to gain from the development of such a bilingual policy if it is well implemented. The policy is based on the belief that it is best to first develop literacy in a child’s mother tongue. Scholars, including but not limited to Cummins (1993, 2000, 2008), Dutcher (1995), Krashen (1996), and Klaus (2003), have argued that when children come to school with a solid foundation in their mother tongue, they develop stronger literacy skills in the school language. They further assert that the knowledge gained in school can easily transfer across languages, that is, from the mother tongue to the school language. Likewise, bilingual children are said to perform better in school when the school effectively teaches the mother tongue. However, there is a common (though mistaken belief) that African languages are not equipped to deal with scientific and technical concepts (Bamgbose, 2004; Obanya, 1995; Prah, 2008) poses implementation problems of such a policy. Many parents refuse to have their children learn a national or local language presumed to be imposed for political rather than
socio-linguistic or demographic considerations (Muthwii, 2002). In addition, parents want their children to master the official or language of wider communication (LWC), which in the Ugandan context is English, early in the education process (Bergmann, 1996).

However, various studies have highlighted the need for parental and community support and involvement (Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA), 2001; Bamgbose, 2000; Khubchandani, 1974; Tucker, 1974) in the implementation of language policies. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to explore how the new Uganda language education policy regarding instruction in the mother tongue, and teaching of the local languages and English in primary classes (1-4) was implemented in two schools in a language minority community in the eastern region. It aimed at developing an understanding of the views of the ministry of education representatives, the school administration and the community towards implementation of this policy. However, recognizing that teachers are at the classroom level in the implementation process, interviews and classroom observations were conducted to establish their views and classroom practice.

1.4 Research questions

The study was guided by the following questions:

1. How is the multilingual language education policy in Ugandan primary schools interpreted and implemented by Ministry of Education representatives and school administration in one rural school and one urban school respectively?

2. To what extent do teachers’ pedagogical goals and classroom instruction practices in the two schools promote the development of multilingual literacies, as a central objective of the Uganda language education policy?
3. To what extent is the local language policy in rural primary schools supported by members of a rural community in eastern Uganda? How do urban perspectives on the local language policy compare and contrast with the perspectives of the rural community?

1.5 Significance of the study

Current research highlights the important role that basic education contributes to economic development and improved health and well-being for the people who access it (Watkins, 1999; UNICEF, 2000). Consequently, many governments in Africa that met in Dakar in 2000 reaffirmed their commitment to the Education for All (EFA) goal of ensuring that by 2015 free and compulsory primary education will be available to all children. African countries that are implementing universal or free primary education reported an increase in enrollments (EFA, 2000). However, the quality of education continued to be a major challenge, despite many of the important efforts accomplished in many countries (EFA, 2000).

Too many pupils still drop out of school before they complete their first four years of schooling, the minimum number of years needed to acquire basic literacy (Bamgbose, 2000; EFA Assessment report, 2000; UNESCO, 2002). Failure to recognize the role of the mother tongue in a child’s early learning is among the factors that contribute to the high dropout rate in third world countries (Bamgbose, 2000). Poverty and gender are other key factors contributing to this high dropout rate (Kakuru, 2006). In Uganda, the Education for All (EFA) report of 2000 confirmed that the dropout rates were high in primary schools. Further research indicated that a majority of pupils in primary schools were failing to achieve even the minimum level of English literacy (Makau, 2000; Uganda National Examination Board, 1999).

From a pedagogical perspective, there is evidence that children learn to read and write more easily in a language in which they are already familiar (Cummins, 2000, 2005; Klaus, 2003;
UNESCO, 2003). Unfortunately, opposition to instruction in the mother tongue continues to persist among Africans (Bergmann, 1996; Cazden, 2000; Muthwii, 2002). A USAID (2001) report, on the improvement of student learning conditions, called for a need to reconcile the use of former colonial languages, such as English in Uganda, with a variety of indigenous languages. In a report from the East African UNESCO office in Nairobi, Nkinyangi (2006) cautions that if the current trend of school dropouts continues Africa will account for two-thirds of children in the world missing school by 2015.

Currently, as noted by UNESCO, the necessity for quality education is inextricably bound up with the process and impact of globalization. For Uganda to compete favorably in the international arena, knowledge of an international language such as English is imperative. However, to realize this, effective implementation of the new policy that promotes use of the mother tongue to enhance the development of literacy skills that are subsequently beneficial to learning English is critical. In addition, learning English becomes even more feasible when the community is aware of the positive value of first developing their children’s literacy in their mother tongue. Given that language is fundamental to cultural identity and empowerment, lack of information on the views of the stakeholders in language minority communities is a serious omission that needs addressed.

To date research on implementation of language policy in education has mainly been in the form of surveys (Ladefoged, 1971; Muthwii, 2002). For example, Ladefoged’s (1971) survey in Uganda, while including sections on language use and attitudes, was too large in scope and did not specifically focus on the implementation of language education policy with regard to medium of instruction. In contrast, Muthwii (2002) only considered implementation of the policy with respect to the six major languages used in education and did not include the minority
languages. In my study, I focus on the minority community whose languages have not hitherto been used in education. I also adopted a case study in contrast to earlier studies which mainly used a survey approach (Ladefoged, 1971; Muthwii, 2002). A case study approach was appropriate in that it enabled me to draw upon data gathering techniques that allowed for an in-depth study of the targeted community. Details of the case study are discussed in Chapter 3.

The Education for All (EFA) conference in 1990 at Jomtien charged governments to provide basic education for all its citizenry by 2005. Subsequently, Uganda’s strategy in response to the EFA call was the provision of Universal Primary Education (UPE) in 1997. While the EFA monitoring report indicated that Uganda had made great strides in enabling children access to education, it became apparent that the next step was to focus on the quality of the education that was provided. UNESCO (2003), in reference to attainment of quality education, acknowledged that an appropriate language of instruction was imperative. In addition, Wolf (2006) suggests that a combination of four components is necessary in achieving quality education, one of which is an appropriate medium of instruction. My study is therefore of significant interest in that it highlights the views of minority language communities as stakeholders to the new policy whose aim is to improve the quality of education. Furthermore, the study provides valuable information for teacher educators, curriculum designers and policy makers in the implementation of similar programs in education in Uganda. The thesis also has wider interest and significance not just in Uganda and Africa, but elsewhere such as Asia where there are issues of medium of instruction and minority languages in education.

My interest in a study on language education policy goes back to my training as a teacher of English as a second language which I discuss in the next section.
1.6 Researcher background

My passionate interest in literacy development and education in the mother tongue is influenced by my background, growing up in a rural area in Uganda, and my profession, teaching in Uganda for the last twenty-eight years. Although I was born in a town in Uganda, I spent my childhood in both the urban and rural areas. It is not uncommon in Uganda to find that most of the families that live in the cities and towns often have homes or a strong link to the rural homes where they originated and tend to maintain their relationship with the people of the 'clans' they belong to. It is therefore common for such families to go back periodically to the rural homes during religious or public holidays. For some, they send children who would be studying in the urban schools to spend their school holidays with their relatives in rural homes. Others might work in town yet send their children to rural schools. Often people find it cheaper to maintain a family in the rural rather than in the urban areas. This moving back and forth between the rural and urban area describes my own experiences when I was growing up. Although my parents worked for a government organization in town, we had a strong attachment to the rural area where my paternal grandparents lived.

For my primary education, I studied in rural as well as urban schools. I went to an urban boarding school for secondary education. Yet, I spent most of my holidays during secondary education with my grandparents in a rural area. When I lived in the rural area, a typical evening pastime would be the folk stories, riddles and proverbs narrated by my grandmother. At the end of the day, when most of the family members were back at home and as the evening meal was being prepared, we would gather around the fireplace to listen to these stories. One person would begin

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1 Kinsmen and women who trace their descent from a common grandfather and are therefore related and share a common totem.
with a phrase such as ‘...kikoyiko’ or ‘mbaganireho’ upon which the others would respond either
as ‘kilete’ or ‘gana’ to signal a riddle or folk story respectively. My grandmother or the older
children would often tell the stories. In the years during my primary education when I studied at one
of the rural schools, the teachers would often call upon the children to share some of these stories
with others in the class. I recall vividly how on one occasion, in Primary Four (Grade 4) in the rural
school I had just joined, I was required to tell a folk story in my local language, which is Lunyole, in
front of the class – a practice I had not encountered in the urban school. In fact, in the urban school I
attended, which had been founded by the Asian community, Gujurati, one of the Asian languages,
was taught. During this time, those of us who did not speak Gujurati as our mother tongue
considered this free time and would happily go out to play. Thus the new language education policy
as described above is a reminder of this period in my educational journey.

It is with these experiences that I later graduated as a language teacher, and became
interested in issues relating to literacy development, particularly pertaining to the language in which
such literacy is developed. Graduating as a language teacher, I first taught English language at
secondary school level from Form 1 to 6. In Uganda, English is the official language and it is
also used as a medium of instruction from Primary 5 through secondary school to higher
institutions of learning. Therefore, those who teach English need to train as teachers of English
as a second language (ESL). My current job as a teacher trainer involves preparing pre- and in-
service teachers to teach English in primary and secondary schools. As a teacher of language, I
subscribe to the notion of using a child’s mother tongue in the early years of schooling.
However, it was disturbing to learn from classroom discussions that students in the Distance
Education teacher programs expressed a lack of knowledge about this policy. Many said they did

\(^2\) ‘kikoyiko’ – used by a speaker to signal she/he wants to engage the listener in solving a riddle. “Mbaganireho” –
translated means “May I tell you a story? “Kilete” or “gana” is the response indicating readiness.
not know what to do to implement the policy. This led me to want to find out how schools were implementing the policy. As well I wished to understand the views of the stakeholders, ministry and school administrators, teachers, and the community involved in the implementation of the policy. Were they aware of the policy? If so, how did this awareness translate into support for successfully implementing the policy for the benefit of their children’s literacy development? As a result of the personal and professional interests that I undertook the current case study.

1.7 Limitations of the Study

This study was about the implementation of Uganda’s language education policy of using the mother tongue as a medium of instruction in primary schools and was conducted in two schools in Eastern Uganda. The focus of the research was on the process of interpretation and the actual practices by the administrators and teachers in the interpretation of the policy. It was confined to the administrators, the teachers, and the community. Thus the findings described in this report are limited to the comments and opinions of the respondents who participated in this study.

1.8 Overview of thesis

In this chapter, I introduce the general background information regarding the topic as well as the context of the study. A broad overview of the education system in Uganda has been presented as well as the new primary school curriculum. The chapter has provided an outline of the new language education policy and a discussion of implementation concerns in general and in particular within language minority communities. This was followed by the statement of problem, the purpose, research questions, the significance, the limitations of the study, and the researcher’s background. Chapter 2 critically reviews literature on language planning and language policy, highlighting the traditional as well as the recent definitions of the
former. Language policy is discussed in relation to literacy development, globalization and minority indigenous languages. A theoretical framework that informs the study is also discussed. Chapter 3 describes in detail the overall methodological approaches and the instruments used for data collection. A thick description of the individual sites is presented as well as profiles of the participants in the study. I discuss the data analysis approach used and how I proceeded with the interpretation of the data while realizing that analysis, interpretation and data collection are intertwined processes. Finally the chapter outlines the ethical issues and how I addressed them. In the following three chapters, I present and discuss the findings based on the three research questions. Chapter 4 addresses the first question which touches on the views of different stakeholders with the mandate to implement the policy towards the new language policy. I present first the findings from the rural school, followed by those from the urban school. In Chapter 5 I discuss the findings pertaining to the second research question which concerns the community as the targeted beneficiaries of the policy. In addition, the chapter gives a description of home literacy practices within the language minority community in which the selected rural school is located. Again, as Chapter 4, the results are presented separately for each school involved in the study. Chapter 6 addresses the last research question. The teachers’ interpretation of the policy and how this is reflected in their classroom practices is presented Chapter 7 presents the conclusions of this study based on the analyses discussed in the previous chapters and provides the implications of the conclusions in the context of implementation of a language education policy. This chapter also outlines recommendations for the implementation of policy on the use of the mother tongue for instruction and the teaching of local languages in Ugandan primary schools in language minority communities. Lastly, a set of appendices is presented after the bibliography section.
As mentioned in the preceding chapter, the focus of this study is about the views of the stakeholders towards implementation of the new language education policy which aims at enhancing the quality of education and improving literacy development. A report by Uganda National Examination Board brief shows an increasing dropout rate of pupils at the primary level. There is also a concern for the poor performance in English in the national examinations. Failure to use the mother tongue for the initial development of literacy is an impediment to mastery of comprehension skills in English. However, these studies focused on the majority languages used for instruction. I argue here that there is need for a study that pays attention to the minority languages hitherto not used for instruction. Pupils from such language communities have to contend with two or even three languages, none of which is their mother tongue. Therefore in the next chapter, I review literature related to language policy and planning as well as the relationship between the development of literacy in mother tongue and second language acquisition.
CHAPTER TWO
LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.0 Introduction
There are two inter-related language questions that have preoccupied postcolonial Africa, particularly in the provision of formal education and the development of literacy. The first of these relates to the multiplicity of languages, whereby, of the estimated 6200 languages and dialects in the world, Africa alone claims to have 2582 languages and 1382 dialects (Lodhi 1993). The second question, which is connected to Africa’s colonial history, refers to the predominance of European languages which has resulted in considerable debate about language policies in postcolonial Africa whose goal is the development of literacy. Consequently, the question is often about literacy either in the local language or in the official language, which in most cases is the colonial language. Bamgbose (2000) says this is an area in which policies often result in exclusion of those who do not speak the colonial languages. Therefore, the question pertinent to language policy development is: to what extent should the languages of the former colonizers be retained in civic and social life, in the courtrooms, in the media, and in education? A review of literature indicates that little progress has been made towards the adoption of African languages as overall media of instruction in postcolonial African education in spite of what has been written about the importance of a familiar language in the learning process (Kamwangamalu, 2000; Omoniyi, 2003). While there is great concern about Education for All and the need to increase the literacy rate, very little attention is given to the language in which education and literacy should take place.

Uganda’s new language policy (GoU, 1992) aims at the development of children’s literacy in more than one language, that is, the mother tongue, English and Kiswahili. Research that addresses implementation of this type of policy is important and provides useful frameworks that
will inform my study. Therefore, this chapter presents a review of previous studies and their theoretical underpinnings in order to situate my study. I particularly focus on issues pertaining to discourse on language planning, policy, and literacy development within multilingual contexts, as Uganda is multilingual in nature and therefore has had to address issues related to choice of language of instruction in the development of its language education policy. Thus, my study draws on a wide range of research on language policy and planning (Cooper, 1989; Kaplan & Baldauf, 1997; Mesthrie et al., 2000; Norton Peirce & Ridge, 1997; Rubin & Jernudd, 1971; Shohamy, 2006; Spolsky, 2004; Spolsky and Shohamy, 1999); the continua of biliteracy (Hornberger, 1989; Hornberger & Skilton-Sylvester 2000); social cultural perspectives of literacy (Barton, 1994; Barton & Hamilton, 1998; Heath, 1983; Kendrick, 2003; Martin-Jones & Jones, 2000; Norton, 1997; Parry, 2000, 2003; Prinsloo & Breier, 1996; Street 1984, 1993) and critical literacy (Luke, 1997; Norton, 2008; Norton & Toohey, 2004; Ramanathan, 2005).

In the next section, I discuss literature related to this study which includes the development of language planning and policy, bilingual education and the current debates and literacy and international development. The chapter ends with a discussion of the theoretical framework drawn from work in three related area, social cultural perspectives of literacy, multilingual literacies and the continua of biliteracy.

2.1 Literature Review

2.1.1 Language policy and planning

Research in language education has revealed increasing evidence that multilingualism and multicultural practices are worldwide trends with rich resources as well as complexities (Garcia, 1992). Monolingual states are, therefore, increasingly the exception rather than the norm. Even for the few, there may be issues of language varieties creating the need to select a standard
variety. These and similar situations therefore necessitate careful planning so that some majority languages or varieties do not develop at the expense of the minority languages (Cooper, 1989, Hornberger, 2003; Rubin, 1977; Skutnabb-Kangas, 2000). Planning as an activity is a response to a perceived need to control future events. Given that one way of acquiring language is through education, a review of language planning becomes a requisite to any discussion of language policy (Mesthrie et al., 2000; Rubin & Jernudd, 1971). However, while there may be no unified theory of language policy and planning (LPP) as observed by Ricento and Hornberger (1996), there are several frameworks elaborated to describe and explain why policies have certain effects in particular contexts (Ruiz, 1995; Tollefson, 1991). This case study aims to understand the implementation process in a multilingual context and therefore is informed by such frameworks as discussed in this section.

2.1.2 Definitions and perspectives of language policy and planning

Language policy has been defined as the “set of statements, objectives and/or commands explicitly or implicitly decreed by some agency, organization, or other body (usually government) with respect to the oversight over which that agency has jurisdiction” (Judd, 1992, p.169). On the other hand, language planning is “an attempt to systematize a course of action, or a direction, or a time sequence” (p.170) or “a deliberate effort to influence the behavior of others with respect to the acquisition, structure, or functional allocation of their language codes” (Cooper, 1989, p.169). Cooper’s definition restricts the planners to authoritative agencies, but neither restricts the type of target group nor specifies an ideal type of planning. It is, furthermore, couched in behavioral rather than problem-solving terms. However, Wiley (1996) argues that planning is not limited to those who share power or have armies at their disposal. Rather, influence often functions within a context of ideological control. Change may be explicitly forced, but influence
operates in a wider domain wherein consent can be manufactured rather than coerced
planning “to cover all cases in which authorities attempt by whatever means to shape a
sociolinguistic profile for their society” (p. 207). It is perhaps from this perspective that Kaplan
and Baldauf (1997) describe language planning as an activity, most visibly undertaken by
government and intended to promote systematic linguistic change by the promulgation of a
language policy by government (or other authoritative body or person). This is true of the new
language education policy in Uganda, which was set up by government on the heels of a review
commission. If pursued and implemented as stated, the introduction of Kiswahili will change the
linguistic repertoire of the people. While Kiswahili is commonly spoken in Kenya and Tanzania,
its use by the Uganda population is restricted to a few groups such as the army and market
vendors. Similarly, the emphasis placed on the mother tongue is aimed at addressing the current
challenges in education regarding language of instruction for literacy development for the
majority of the population.

More recently, Petrovic (2005) described language planning as the process of
determining the linguistic needs, wants, and desires of a community and seeking to establish
policies to fulfill them. Such goals might include cultivating language skills needed to meet
national priorities; establishing the rights of individuals or groups to learn, use, and maintain
languages; promoting the growth of a national lingua franca; and promoting or discouraging
multilingualism. However, in general, language planning is considered to be an official,
government-level activity concerning the selection and promotion of a unified administrative
language or languages. This level of planning is subject to the coherent effort by individuals,
groups, or organizations who wish to influence language use or development. Overall, language
planning generally entails formation and implementation of a policy designed to prescribe or influence the language(s) and varieties of language that will be used and the purposes for which they will be used.

Today, many researchers have tended to use “language planning” and “language policy” interchangeably, and some have begun to refer only to language policy (e.g., Shohamy, 2006; Spolsky, 2004; Spolsky & Shohamy, 1999). Spolsky (2004) explains how the term planning fell out of favor in the 1980s due to failed national planning efforts. Formerly, language planning and policy research was concerned with issues related to nation building and modernization in postcolonial third world countries. However, recent research is interested in language rights globally and the ways in which language policies perpetuate structural socio-economic inequalities (Hornberger, 1994; Luke, 1997; Phillipson 1988, 1992; Skutnabb-Kangas, 1991). Perhaps a consideration of Ruiz’s orientations model to language planning (see section 2.1.2) helps to pinpoint this failure, as it attempts to account for the role played by attitudes toward languages and their role (Ricento and Hornberger, 1996).

2.1.3 Developments in language policy and planning

Language policy is an interdisciplinary field that came into its own as a branch of sociolinguistics. Ricento (2006) contends that the domain of inquiry is a better way to approach the field than “theories of language policy”. Researchers have tended to ask questions about particular issues or domains which involve language matters rather than searching for data to prove some a priori theory. Linguistic theories adopted by the earlier language planners were detrimental to 1980s development of equitable language policies. Therefore, archaeology on language policy research reveals the topics that have attracted attention.
The work of Cooper (1989) and Tollefson (1991) which, called for or proposed new theoretical directions has greatly contributed to an understanding of LPP. For example, Cooper’s (1989) accounting framework which was organized around the question of “What actors attempt to influence behaviour of which people for what ends under what conditions by what means through what decision-making process with what effect?” (p.98) sums up the state of LPP as a descriptive endeavor while at the same time enunciates the need for a theory of social change in order to move LPP forward. On the other hand, Tollefson (1991) sought to “contribute to a theory of language planning that locates the field in social theory” (p. 8). Fettes (1997) envisioned the link between language planning and language policy as one where: “language planning …must be linked to the critical evaluation of language policy, the former providing standards of rationality and effectiveness, the latter testing these ideas against actual practice in order to promote the development of better … language planning models. Such a field would be better described as “language policy and language planning” (p. 14). Thus in response to the question of whether policy is the output of language planning, Fettes (1997) says this is not always so because “a great deal of language policy-making goes on in a haphazard or uncoordinated way, far removed from the language planning ideal”. Further, we learn from scholars in the field (Cooper, 1989, Rubin & Jernud, 1971, Tollefson, 1991) that policy is not necessarily the outcome of planning because language planning is first and foremost about social change.

Accordingly, Ricento (2000) identifies three phases in LPP development. Two of these primarily addressed the practical problems of new nations, for example, Kloss (1969) on status and corpus planning and Cooper (1989) on acquisition planning as well as policy and cultivation (Ricento, 2000). LPP is thus poised perpetually between theory and practice. Recent LPP
frameworks which consider ideology, ecology and agency are useful in addressing the exigencies of actual LPP practice. Ricento (2006) contends that language policy as an organized field of study is a relatively recent development, although the themes that are explored today in language policy research have been treated in a wide range of scholarly disciplines in the social sciences and the humanities. Therefore, he considers the kinds of topics that are explored and the way in which theory and practice interact leading to questioning of theoretical assumptions and generating new lines of research and models in order to position language policy as a field of research. Language policies are made, or are implicitly acknowledged and practiced in all societal domains.

Hornberger (1994) presents a language planning framework that integrates three decades of scholarly work in the field, including Cooper (1989), Ferguson (1968), Haugen (1983), Klos (1968), Nahir (1984), Neustupny (1974), in which two approaches and three types of language planning are identified. The two approaches are policy planning (on form) and cultivation planning (on function). The language planning types, status, acquisition, and corpus planning, are each linked to the uses, the user and language itself respectively (Hornberger, 1994). Policy planning at the macroscopic level involves matters regarding society and nation which mainly concern standard language. However, cultivation planning, which deals with issues related to language at the microscopic level, is mainly concerned with literacy language (Hornberger, 1994; Cooper, 1989).

Status planning

Status planning concerns the uses of language (Hornberger, 1994). It refers to raising the status of a language within society across as many language-domain institutions as possible. This includes initial choice of language, including attitudes toward alternative languages and the
political implications of various choices. Accordingly, it may involve changes in the functions of languages and/or language varieties, using sociolinguistic concepts and information to implement them (Cooper, 1989). There are several dimensions to status planning such as official recognition that national governments attach to various languages, especially in the case of minority languages, and to authoritative attempts to extend or restrict language use in various contexts (Cooper, 1989). Therefore, issues of status planning include designation of the language(s) of instruction in schools and decisions regarding whether (and in which languages) bilingual ballots may be used. In this regard, status planning concerns the relationship between languages, rather than changes within them. However, planning must take into account the position of different varieties of a single language – in which it becomes a function of corpus planning. Historically, standardization begins with selection of a regional or social variety whereby corpus planning again determines status planning.

Corpus planning

When a language is identified as appropriate for use in a specific situation, efforts are made to fix or modify its structure. Thus, corpus planning deals with language itself (Hornberger, 1994). Corpus planning begins once the status of a language has been determined to a more elaborate level of standardization or to an expanded set of functions. The most common process is the need for modernization and elaboration of vocabulary. Planning thus includes attempts to define or reform the standard language by changing or introducing new forms in spelling, pronunciation, vocabulary and grammar. This may include orthography planning, the creation and reform of alphabet, syllabi or ideographic writing systems.
Language acquisition planning

Language policy-making involves decisions concerning the teaching and use of language, and their careful formulation by those empowered to do so, for the guidance of others. Technically, status planning relates to increasing or restricting the uses of a language, not to increasing the number of its speakers. It thus concerns the users of language - hence Cooper's (1989) argument for a separate major category of language planning. Language spread is thought of as promoting the acquisition of a new language or as promoting a variety of a particular language as the standard. In multilingual situations, this could involve raising the status of minority languages.

Wiley (1996), for example, points out that in the case of the USA, the question is not whether education language policies have been successful or unsuccessful but for whom and under what circumstances they have been successful or unsuccessful. It is therefore important to look at the experience of specific groups in schools and elsewhere before we can conclude that language planning has solved communication problems or promoted social control. Language minority 'problems' - mostly defined by the majority and its institutions, without a minority voice in these institutions, is a problem (Wiley, 1996). The three types of planning - status, corpus and acquisition - thus have relevance to the present study in that designating particular functions to some language uses within the domain of education, the policy is inescapably involved in status planning. There are many languages spoken as mother tongue, but have not been used in such public spheres outside the home and family. If they are to be used in education, corpus planning is required to develop their orthographies. Likewise a great deal of acquisition planning, in which such issues of availability of resources to enable learning of the new codes,
has to be addressed by the new policy. The outcome of these different aspects of language planning results in different types of policies, which are discussed in the next section.

2.1.4. Types of language policies

Ruiz (1995) used the terms endoglossic and exoglossic coined by Kloss (1969) to distinguish three major types of language policies, each hinging on the great tradition and related to the twin goals of nationalism and nationism (also see Cobarrubias, 1983; Fishman 1971).

Endoglossic (community oriented) policies give primacy to and promote an indigenous language of the community. Where the indigenous languages are also the Language of Wider Communication (LWC) with high prestige value inside and outside native contexts, endoglossic policies pose no particular practical or political problem, such as French and Spanish in France and Spain respectively. However, in the Malaysian example, where Bahasa is associated with the ethnic Malay, there are tensions which are characteristic of pluralistic non-LWC states enacting exclusively endoglossic policies.

On the other hand, an exoglossic (externally-oriented) policy gives primacy and promotes a foreign language, frequently a former colonial language. The adoption of a language in a non-native context is a major indication of LWC status. This is typical in multilingual states where none of the indigenous languages are LWC and there is a history of prolonged contact with an LWC state. Ironically, even after independence, such states often found it necessary to adopt the former colonial language for official and public purposes given that the former colonial power and its institutions had pervaded the life of the colony. This has been true for most of the sub-Saharan states of East and West Africa as well as Southern Africa (Omoniyi, 2003).

The third type of language policy is a combination of the first two. The mixed language policies are essentially bilingual in nature. They accommodate the promotion of both indigenous
and foreign languages. For example, in Peru, Quechua and Spanish both function as official languages, yet there exists tremendous problems of policy implementation (Hornberger, 1988). In Paraguay, Guarani and Spanish are both official, but Spanish is used and recognized for higher prestige functions in all language communities.

Most of the ex-colonies of Britain and France adopted an exoglossic solution to their language problems. Many of them being linguistically heterogeneous found retaining the ex-colonial language for modern communication and national integration an easy option. In such instances, one or more local languages would be granted regional official status as in Nigeria, and Ghana. In South Africa, 11 languages have been given official status. India, like many of the other states in the region, has adopted a mixed approach, that is, partly endoglossic and partly exoglossic, where the national and official functions are split between indigenous and imported languages. Although Uganda seems to have a mixture, the practice is mostly exoglossic. English is the official language and six area or regional languages have been selected for use in education, none of which has demographic command over others. The development of Kiswahili as a national language in Uganda has not received much support in spite of being mentioned in various policy documents on language.

### 2.1.5 Language policy in multilingual contexts

In modern societies, education is the major means of promoting acquisition planning. Language-in-education planning is the primary form of language acquisition planning. We therefore need to discuss it within the context of socio-political issues because they are related to broader purposes in education such as socialization and are also an extension of overall government policy (Judd, 1991 p. 170 quoted by Wiley, 1996 p. 130). Language in education policies also include designating the language(s) of instruction, recruiting teachers, and
providing for first, second, or foreign language instruction. Other concerns involve developing curricula, syllabi and materials that are sensitive to the language and cultural backgrounds of the students (Ingram, 1991). As Hornberger (1994) explains, language planning, particularly literacy planning does not occur in a vacuum. For example, when learners acquire literacy in one language, it means that they may not acquire literacy in another. She thus points out that status and corpus planning “are usually (and most effectively) engaged in jointly” (p. 2). It is also noted that the national languages were the ones used by the masses during the anti-colonial struggle.

Thus in linguistically heterogeneous polities, language policy decisions need to consider the attitude of the public towards the use of the selected language(s) for various purposes. A good evaluation of language policies should therefore include an examination of the actual practices. In this regard, Wiley (1996) says there is need to look at specific groups in schools to determine if language policies have been able to solve communication problems. Both Oladejo (1993) and Wiley (1996) contend that educational language policies tend to be implicit as they result from institutional practices rather than official policies, which may lead to unsuccessful implementation. Furthermore, Bamgbose (1991) observes that language policies in Africa are generally characterized by avoidance, vagueness, arbitrariness, fluctuations and declarations. Language policies are thus treated with lack of serious concern or even downright levity. Bamgbose refers to this as ‘implementation avoidance strategies’ typical of language planning in Africa. Continued use of the pre-independence and former colonial language policies is catastrophic to many people who, because of the foreign languages used, are not in a position to participate in the democratic processes of their countries.

Alexander (2001) highlights three main consequences of the colonial era in Africa that relate to the question of language. The first is in the context of, for example, Southern Africa,
and the fact that the dominant languages of the government and the economy tend to be former
colonial languages. Second is the self-denigration of African languages by the speakers, who
believe that their indigenous languages are only fit to occupy the less prestigious primary
domains of family, church, and community. Third is, according to Alexander, a lack of political
will by a select group of individuals who have acquired linguistic cultural capital (Bourdieu,
1993; Heath, 1983; MacLeod, 1995) and who he claims neglect the pursuance of progressive
policies consistent with the aims of freedom and democracy.

According to Alidou (2004), three main factors – economic, political, and pedagogical –
trigger the problem of medium of instruction in African schools. The economic factors include
the retention of textbook markets for Western publishing companies (Bgoya 1992, 2001; Brock-
Utne, 2000; Mazrui, 1997). The political factors include African elites’ reluctance to implement
a language policy that may reduce the gap between two unequal social classes: a limited but
privileged minority of educated Africans who have access to economic and political power, and
the masses of Africans deprived of economic and political resources (Alidou, 2004). Lastly, the
pedagogical factors include inadequate preparation of school personnel in using a foreign
language as the language of instruction (Brock-Utne, 2001) as well as the codification of African
languages. However, Kaplan (1990) argues that any attempts by government to change language
policies, especially those with long histories in any institutional domain, without consent of the
affected parties or broad- based input, will always be problematic. Therefore language policy
must be evaluated by official policy as well as by language behavior and attitudes in situated,
especially institutional contexts. More recently, African states are making effort to introduce
multilingual language education policies, such as the case in Uganda.
2.1.6 Language policy and medium of instruction

There are three types of attitudes that can be discerned in relation to choice of language of instruction in Africa. First is the attitude of maintaining the status quo, which translates into a continuation of colonial policies and practices. This means that African languages are either not used at all or used in the early years of primary education. For example, Ghana, which was the first African nation to attain independence in 1957, has had a very fluid language policy regarding use of language in education. The policy has shifted back and forth over the years, sometimes emphasizing the role of Ghanaian languages in initial learning, but at other times stressing the need for all to learn English, the official language. Ghanaians, for example, speak over 60 local languages, of which fifteen have official status as languages to be used in education.

Second is the attitude that nations need to be modernized quickly (along Western lines) and the best way of doing this is through European languages. This has meant that the use of African languages is marginalized. Tanzania and New Guinea are among this group. Others are Kenya, Zambia and Congo. The third type of attitude favors pride in a nation’s cultural heritage and the need to make education an instrument of mass empowerment and participation. This means a departure from the use of the erstwhile colonial languages as a medium of instruction at all levels, to the introduction of African languages as teaching media in the lower classes of primary school, or an extension of an African language medium from these classes to the entire duration of primary education. So countries like New Guinea, Burkina Faso, and Togo fall into the former category while Tanzania and Somalia fall into the latter.

De Klerk (2000) contends that for South Africa, the legacy of apartheid left its indigenous languages particularly vulnerable and efforts have been made to change this in designing language in education policies. As Kamwangamalu (2000) further explains, South
Africa was considered an officially bilingual state with English and Afrikaans as the sole languages of the state. But with the demise of apartheid, the multilingual language policy now recognizes these two plus nine indigenous languages for use in education. However, this met with resistance owing to the past apartheid system, particularly the Bantu Education Act of 1953. The latter which involved the teaching of African languages to the Africans which were poorly facilitated and resisted to their use in the post apartheid era (Kamwangamalu, 2000).

Consequently, South Africa has a major challenge concerning attitude to African languages. There is need therefore, to find ways in which to combat such negative legacies of the past that underestimated the fundamental importance of these languages (African languages) as teaching media. In reflecting on the above situation as described about South Africa, Bamgbose (2000) concludes that language, which is a powerful instrument of identification and classification, can be manipulated for participation or exclusion.

It is observed that in most of the African nations, attempts have been made to develop initial literacy in the mother tongue. However, for a number of reasons, none can claim to have succeeded in providing mother tongue literacy. In many cases, the elites are reluctant to accept the policies in practice (Akinnaso, 1991; Bamgbose, 2000). Further still, the language minority communities often treat the policies with suspicion, and have been influenced by some countries like Tanzania and New Guinea which have abandoned such policies. But also the state of the economies and education in sub-Saharan Africa has not favored a proliferation of languages in education, due to the competing influence of the colonial or world languages. The symbolic value of these languages remains very powerful and so undermines the success of the policy on mother tongue literacy (Rubagumya, 1991). Francis (2005) speaks of the inescapable distinction between the official language-of-wider communication and the vernacular, which constrains the
linguistic rights applicable to all child language learners, and needs to be taken into account in multilingual contexts. However, as discussed below, there are studies that have been undertaken in some countries in Africa that have shown challenges of not using a language that is familiar to the children for teaching.

Alidou and Brock-Utne (2006) in a report of classroom observations carried out in several countries in Africa (Benin, Burkina Faso, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Mozambique, Niger, South Africa, Togo, Tanzania, Ethiopia, Ghana, and Botswana) reveal that the use of unfamiliar language forces teachers to use traditional and teacher-centered teaching methods which undermine teachers’ effort to teach and students’ effort to learn. It was noted that teachers do most of the talking while the children remain silent or passive participants during most of the classroom interactions. In addition, where children do not speak the language of instruction as their mother tongue, traditional teaching techniques such as chorus teaching, repetition, memorization, and recall, code-switching and safe talk are used. In such a situation, Alidou and Brock-Utne (2006) argue that no authentic teaching and learning takes place which accounts for the school ineffectiveness and low academic achievement experienced by students in Africa. This phenomena is not unique to Africa, see for example, Kam and Wong (2003) who describe a similar situation in East Asia.

However, studies in countries where languages familiar to the children are used as mediums of instruction indicate that teachers and students communicate better, leading to better teaching and learning. The new language policy in Uganda is multilingual in nature which means that learners have to cope with more than one language in formal education. Therefore, this case study needs to be informed by literature and research concerning multilingual language policies. A detailed discussion of bilingual education is given in the section that follows.
2.2 **Bilingualism and bilingual language education policy**

As mentioned above, Uganda’s linguistic diversity led the government to adopt a language in education policy that is multilingual, subscribing to a mixed type of policy (Ruiz, 1995). The mixed types of policies use an external language as the official language but also give limited status to indigenous languages. English continues to be the official language, an extension from the pre-independence period. However, in addition to the six languages earlier designated for use in education, there is emphasis on use of a mother tongue, some of which do not have an orthography developed. It is against this background that a review of bilingual programmes is imperative. I start with a definition of what bilingual education entails and what the current debates regarding bilingual education are, before considering different models of bilingual education. I adopt this approach because the goal of bilingual education is language acquisition, and therefore intend to discuss current perspectives of second language acquisition.

### 2.2.1 Defining bilingual education

There are many more multilingual than monolingual individuals in the world, with up to six thousand languages spoken worldwide (Grimes, 1992). Therefore being bilingual or multilingual is a necessity for the majority of the world’s population (Edwards, 1994). Bilingualism is often used as a cover term for multilingualism, just as some researchers referring to more than two languages sometimes use plurilingualism.

Bilingual education originally meant the use of two languages as media of instruction in the entire school curriculum, or part of it, and was organized in a variety of models. It included, but was not restricted to, the learning of two languages as subjects. In some instances, bilingual education involved two languages that are official in a country. Therefore, the term bilingual education often denotes a first language plus a second language as media of instruction. However,
within the multilingual contexts in Africa, it may include more than just two languages, as indicated from the new Uganda policy. Therefore, this study is inclined towards the use of the term ‘multilingual’ rather than ‘bilingual’ because learners are expected to learn more than two languages. But more relevant is also the fact that the Ugandan linguistic milieu renders most children to be multilingual as they grow up learning other languages within their neighborhood. The preference for the term “multilingual”, and therefore, ‘multiliteracies’ rather than ‘bilingual’ is well articulated by Martin-Jones and Jones (2000) based on a synthesis of the work of the various researchers reported in their book *Multilingual Literacies: reading and writing different worlds*.

Martin-Jones and Jones (2000) explain that the term multilingual rather than bilingual has been used to capture the multiplicity and complexity of individual and group repertoires. They identify four factors to justify this preference. First, the term multilingual provides the most accurate description of the communicative repertoires of many of the individuals and linguistic groups discussed in their book. Many of these individuals had more than two spoken or written languages and language varieties within their communicative repertoires. These included languages and literacies associated with their cultural inheritance, regional varieties of English spoken in their local neighborhoods and some form of Standard English. Second, multilingual signals the multiplicity and complexity of the communicative purposes that have come to be associated with different spoken and written languages within a group’s repertoire. Third, the term multilingual takes account of the fact that in any linguistic minority households or local group, among speakers of Welsh, Gujarati or Cantonese, there are multiple paths to the acquisition of the spoken and written languages within the group repertoire and people have varying degrees of expertise in these languages, and literacies. The degree of expertise that
individuals attain depends on how they are positioned with regard to access to different spoken
and written varieties (Norton, 2000, Norton Peirce 1995). The fourth reason why the term
multilingual is more useful than the term bilingual is because the term focuses attention on the
multiple ways in which people draw on and combine the codes in their communicative repertoire
when they speak and write. The term bilingual only evokes a two-way distinction between codes
whereas in multilingual settings, people typically have access to several codes which they move
in and out of with considerable fluency and subtlety as they speak and write. While a
monolingual norm may operate for the production of texts in an institutional context; the talk
around those texts may be multilingual, incorporating elements of the text and stretches of talk in
different language varieties.

The contrast of codes in a multilingual repertoire are often employed by speakers and
writers as a meaning making resource, now widely known as the metaphorical function of code
switching. The meaning making potential of code switching is infinite (Auer, 1990; Ramanathan,
2005).

2.2.2 Bilingualism and bilingual language education

An important distinction is often made between two major categories into which second
language programs are divided, that is additive and subtractive bilingualism. First is the additive
(also referred to as maintenance) bilingual model, which fosters acquisition of a second language
while maintaining and continuing to develop the first language. It aims at strengthening the
minority child’s sense of cultural identity and affirming the rights of an ethnic minority group in
a nation. A distinction is made between static and developmental maintenance bilingual models.
While in static bilingual education, language skills refers to a level at which a child enters school,
developmental maintenance means developing a student’s home language skills to full
proficiency, including biliteracy or literacy. In static maintenance bilingual education, loss of
home language is prevented but does not necessarily increase the skills in that language. In
contrast, the goal for developmental maintenance bilingual education is towards attainment of
proficiency and literacy in a home language equal to that of the target language (Otheguy & Otto,

The benefits of additive bilingual model are many. For example, it is suggested that when
both languages and cultures are valued and perceived as complementary, bilingualism
contributes positively to the cognitive, linguistic, and psychological development of children.
Other benefits of additive bilingualism include knowledge of two languages, enhanced self-
esteeem that often correlates with academic success, enhanced meta-linguistic development,
strong family and community relations, and communication between generations, among several
others (Cummins, 1993, 2000).

Second is the subtractive bilingual model whereby mastery of the second language is
achieved at the expense of proficiency in the first. The acquisition of a second language, usually
the language or official language, is given greater prestige while the native language is perceived
as having little value (Merino, Trueba, & Samaniego, 1993). In some cases, the issue of
bilingualism is further compounded when different languages are used within one school or
community, as it is the case in multilingual situations. It is with respect to this view that Brock-
Utne and Hopson (2005) question the models that are often mentioned in the African context of
bilingual education. The expression ‘bilingual’ is used in connection to using mother tongue as a
bridge to schooling in a European language, one that a child hardly ever hears outside the
classroom. Brock-Utne and Hopson argue that the bilingual education programs that are
designed, discussing structures where the former colonial language as a second language, reflect
the work of donor agencies (like the World Bank, USAID and the British government in particular), as well as educators working with children of the urban African elite. They disregard the reality of most African children who are usually bilingual or even multilingual, but in African languages. For example, for most of the children in Tanzania who do not have Kiswahili as their first language, Kiswahili is a second language or learnt simultaneously with the mother tongue. Wurm (2001) asserts that maintenance of bi- and multilingualism from very early childhood onwards, past the age of six years, is the most advantageous quality any person can possess.

2.2.3 Current debates in bilingual education

Language ecologies in which bilingual education occurs involve relations between minority and majority groups (Lo Bianco, 2008). The minority often include the regional, immigrant or indigenous languages, and the majority languages may be speaking and identifying with socially dominant or officially designated languages. Therefore, there is need to examine how bilingual education is tied to local realities of disputed histories and conflicting interests. Language planning for bilingual education should be understood as a situated practice through appropriate balance of educational effectiveness, social justice, opportunity or intellectual commitment. The challenges for research on bilingual education is accounting for the multiple functions and roles of languages, specifically the situated and therefore often non-transferable historically grounded reality of language education. The relations among the languages involved in bilingual education are a crucial challenge.

An increasing body of research (Baker, 2001; Cummins, 1993, 1996, 2000; Krashen, 1996) supports the significant pedagogical advantages of bilingual education. While there are variations in bilingual models and practices, including their results, a common factor is their use of the mother tongue, at least in the early years, so that students can acquire and develop
classroom proficiency (Benson, 2004). While there seems to be no agreement among linguists and policy makers as to what a mother tongue is, the following definition was arrived at by consensus during a UNESCO seminar “...a language the child can speak fluently before going to school...one in which the child can operate confidently in all domains relevant to the child’s life” (Dyken, 1990, p. 40).

Therefore, taking this definition of a mother tongue, Krashen argues that when schools provide children quality education in their primary language, the pupils receive two things: knowledge and literacy. The knowledge that children get through their first language helps make the English they later hear and read more comprehensible, and literacy developed in the primary language easily transfers to the second language (Krashen, 1996; Smith, 1994). Research demonstrates that the combination of first language subject matter teaching and literacy development that characterizes good bilingual programs indirectly but powerfully aids pupils as they strive for a third factor essential to their success: proficiency in a Language of Wider Communication. Robinson (2005) contends that children early schooling who learn in an unfamiliar language get two messages - that if they want to succeed intellectually, it will not be by using their mother tongue, and also that their mother tongue has little value.

It is further argued that the use of a familiar language to teach beginning literacy facilitates an understanding of sound-symbol or meaning-symbol correspondence (Diaz, 1999). This enables students to communicate through writing as soon as they understand the rules of the orthography or writing system of their language. Consequently, learning of new concepts is not postponed until students are competent in L2 when instruction in content areas is provided in L1. To a certain extent, systematic teaching of the L2, beginning with oral skills, allows students to learn the new language through communication rather than memorization.
Further, Cummins' (1993, 1996) 'threshold hypotheses and 'interdependence hypothesis' proposes that children must attain adequate levels of competence in their first language as this enables them to experience relative, cognitive and linguistic transfer in second language learning. As a result, once students have basic literacy skills in the L1 and communicative skills in the L2, they can begin reading and writing in the L2, efficiently transferring the literacy skills they have acquired in the familiar language. While the reverse is possible, it is said to be very inefficient and unnecessarily difficult. Accordingly, in his most recent article in which he further clarifies on the hypothesis, Cummins (2005) identifies five types of transfer that may occur depending on the sociolinguistic situation. These are: transfer of conceptual elements, of metacognitive and metalinguistic strategies, the pragmatic aspects of language use, transfer of specific linguistic elements, and transfer of phonological awareness.

A recent study conducted in the greater Toronto area (Cummins et al., 2006) exemplifies the instructional possibilities that emerge when bilingual students’ first language and prior knowledge are acknowledged as important resources for learning. The study reports how Madiha Bajwa authored with two of her friends Kanta Khalid and Sulmana Hanif, a bilingual Urdu-English book entitled *The New Country*. The three girls collaborated in writing the book with the help of the teacher. While Madiha’s English was minimal, her urdu was fluent, Sulamana and Kanta were fluent and reasonably literate in both Urdu and English. In composing the story, the girls discussed their ideas primarily in Urdu but wrote the initial draft in English with feedback and support from their teacher. The fact that instruction was conducted in English and the teacher did not know Urdu or the other home languages of students in her multilingual classroom was not an impediment to the implementation of bilingual instructional strategies (Cummins, 2008).
Cummins, therefore, reiterates that translation, appropriately used, is not an impediment to effective language learning. Cummins recognizes that extensive use of the target language within second language and bilingual programs is a useful and important instructional strategy. However, the strategy should not be implemented rigidly or in an exclusionary manner. The first language is a powerful resource for learning and bilingual instructional strategies can usefully complement monolingual strategies to promote more cognitively engaged learning. Thus the threshold and interdependence theories, which relate to cognition as well as to education, help us understand not only the apparent failures of some bilingual education programs but also why minority children may fail to develop sufficient competencies in the second language. The low level of proficiency in the second language limits their ability to cope in the curriculum. This is why maintenance, rather than submersion or transitional bilingual education, is recommended because it allows such children to operate in their more developed home language, resulting in superior performance (Baker, 2001; Cummins, 2000, 2005).

Further, the use of mother tongue allows children to develop their identities as well as their intellect. Therefore an important aspect of bilingual education often not considered is that of the affective domain, involving confidence, self-esteem, and identity that are strengthened by use of the first or familiar language, increasing motivation and initiative as well as creativity. However, in classrooms where an unfamiliar language or a second language is used, students generally sit silently or repeat mechanically, leading to frustration and often repetition, failure, and dropout (Bamgbose, 2000, 2004; Brock- Utne 2003, 2005). Cummins (2008) referring to Lambert and Tucker’s (1972) observation of how students in the French immersion program engaged in a form of contrastive linguistics, comparing French and English although the two languages were kept rigidly apart, says students in bilingual/immersion programs should be
systematically encouraged and supported in focusing on language and relating their first language knowledge to the second language. He further suggests bilingual strategies that can be used to promote engagement in both first and second language to include: creation of dual language multimedia books or projects and sister class exchanges. In the first strategy, students write creatively in the first and second language and amplify these identity texts through technology. With the second strategy, students engage in technology-mediated sister class exchanges using the first and second language to create literature and art and/or explore issues of social relevance to them and their communities (Cummins, 2008).

Bamgbose’s (2005) experimental study involving the Yoruba medium in primary school further augments the support of the use of a learner’s mother tongue as medium of learning and teaching. He shows that the transition from a mother-tongue medium to an English medium at the beginning of the fourth year of schooling perpetuates low school performance and general educational failure: high drop-out and repeat rates, poor attainment of content knowledge by graduates, and low end-of-high school certification examination grades. In another study that spanned three decades, Tucker (2001) concludes that language of instruction is very different from the language of home. The development of cognitive or academic language requires time (four to seven years of formal instruction) while individuals most easily develop literacy skills in a familiar language. It is easier to develop cognitive skills and master content material that is taught in a familiar language and these, once developed, transfer readily. He further postulates that the best predictor of cognitive or academic language development in a second language is the level of development of cognitive or academic language proficiency in the first language. Therefore, learning in the mother tongue has both cognitive and affective value.
Such studies suggest that the amount of formal schooling received in the first language is a key factor. If learners are schooled solely in the second language, especially from Grade 4 onwards, when academic and cognitive demands of the curriculum increase rapidly, they tend to progress slowly and show relatively less academic achievement. To develop academic language proficiency, there is need for a strong development through the first language of academic-cognitive thinking skills. In this way, thinking abilities, literacy development, concept formation, subject knowledge, and learning strategies developed in L1, transfer to the second language.

In sum, an effective bilingual education program needs to adopt a holistic approach that takes into consideration children, teachers, the community, the school and the type of program (Baker, 2001). For example, children have a wide variety of characteristics that need investigation and cannot be isolated from the classroom within which they work. Accordingly, in the classroom, there are a variety of factors that may make for effective education. Furthermore, outside the classroom, the different attributes of the schools, in turn, interact with children and their classrooms to make education for language minority children more or less effective.

Outside of the school, there is the community, which also plays an important role. The social, cultural and political environment in which the school operates will affect the language education of all children at all levels, but especially for the minority language group. This study is set in a language minority community and therefore such issues discussed above are of direct relevance. For example, the schema proposed by Ricento and Hornberger (1996) from their analysis of literature on LPP characterizes various components in which policy decisions and practices are realized. Such components include agents, levels, and processes that interact with one another in a variety of ways and to varying degrees.
2.3 Language policy and literacy development

Barton and Hamilton (1993) contend that a social account of literacy assumes that children’s progress in achieving literacy is strongly influenced by the cultural and linguistic experience they bring into school from their homes and the local community. The ways in which the wider community of a school makes use of literacy then provides the models and support that initiate children into literacy practices (Moll, 2000). In multilingual environments, we can learn from the ecological perspective of the learners (Gutierrez & Rogoff, 2003). While earlier views of literacy, focusing on the learners’ individual ability to read and write are still useful, there has been a more recent tendency to conceive of literacy in broader, socio-cultural and political terms. Such notions are highly relevant to the Ugandan context, and will be discussed with reference to language of instruction; theories of literacy as a social practice; and research on literacy and international development.

2.3.1 Literacy and language of instruction

Current theory and research in bilingual education suggests that generally, students’ poor academic achievement is due to the use of a language of instruction that is different from the one spoken at home (Krashen, 1996, 1999) or to the low status afforded the home language. For example, Krashen (1999) asserts that bilingual education in the United States of America is not the cause of students dropping out, but rather may be the cure. He states that, for example, 30% of Latino students compared to 8.6% for non-Latino whites and 12.1% of non-Latino blacks dropout of school. Similarly, in Kenya, Bunyi (2005) describes how children’s active participation in the classroom is hampered by use of an unfamiliar language. For example, students whose first language is different from the language of instruction in school may be prevented from expressing in L1 their thoughts about a story with a text in the L2. Thus,
linguistic differences are related to decreased opportunity to use existing language skills as the foundation for learning to read and write. Literacy practices of the individual children are the result of socialization practices in the home and community, which in turn reflect cultural values. Therefore, where the classroom language is different, students may have difficulty in learning.

On the other hand, encouraging students to use their home language in school helps to empower them as it raises their self-esteem and confidence is raised with the knowledge that the school respects their cultural identity. The status of the school language relative to the students' home language can thus influence the classroom interactions between teacher and student as well as among students. It is therefore imperative that in multilingual situations, the language and culture of the students is part of the school program to enhance literacy development. In this way, students are encouraged to participate in the construction of knowledge, and the role of the home language is critical.

In multilingual contexts the experiences students bring to literacy events (for example, the forms of their narratives) may depart significantly from teachers' expectations. It may reflect how schools devalue the cultural capital of students. A revaluing process includes teachers' acceptance of students as cultural beings. It also encompasses the manner in which teachers receive and extend students' literacy efforts and encourages students to interact with peers and with texts. There is need to acknowledge that a given set of learning opportunities may benefit students with prior knowledge of the language of instruction while working to the detriment of minority language students within the same classroom.

In addition, to overcome the barriers of exclusion posed by conventional literacy instructional practices, teachers must work with an expanded vision of literacy in school, so that school definitions of literacy are transformed. In this way, the possibility is created, not only of
helping students to become proficient in literacy but of enabling them to be empowered through literacy, to use literacy as a tool in bettering societal conditions (Au & Carroll, 1997). Therefore, literacy must be made personally meaningful to students in multilingual classrooms. To achieve this involves drawing on their interests and experiences. In this sense, it is important that language education provides students with the situational rationales for staying in school and engaging in literacy learning (Ramanathan, 2005).

Consequently, improvement of school literacy learning of students in multilingual contexts entails recognizing the importance of students’ home languages and that biliteracy is an attainable and desirable outcome. The assumption is that one only needs to learn to read and write once, and that this learning is transferable to another language (Krashen, 1996). However, literacy in the home language should not be treated simply as a means of becoming literate in a second language. Rather, literacy in the home language should be valued in and of itself, hence the support for biliteracy, the ability to read and write in two languages – the home language and a second language. Where biliteracy is the goal, students have the chance to use and extend literacy in the home language even after they have become literate in the second language. Hornberger (1990, 1994) says there can be different effective classroom strategies to make literacy tasks congruent with community culture and values of the children. Thus using students’ community based knowledge enables ‘connect and transfer’ to promote literacy and biliteracy. This is consistent with extensive research, such as that of Jim Cummins, which has found that the best way for children to learn to read and write is in the mother tongue. However, as noted by Lo Binco, Obondo (2007), Parry, Andema, & Tumusiime (2005), and Williams (1996), the challenge in promoting multilingual literacy within Africa has often been the acute shortage of instructional materials.
2.3.2 Language, literacy, and international development

Robertson (1992) and Kilminster (1997) both contend that globalization is a post-modern phenomenon that changes the conditions under which language learning takes place. As Cameron (2000) argues, linguistic skills in the postindustrial economy have taken on a new importance. That is, communication skills and the new literacies demanded by new technologies as well as competence in one or more second/foreign languages, all represent valuable “linguistic capital.” Languages are being treated more and more as economic commodities and so are replacing the view that languages are primarily symbols of ethnic or national identity. Therefore, commodification of languages affects both pupils’ motivation for learning languages and their choices about which languages to learn. But most critical is that it also affects the choices made by institutions (local and national, public and private) as they allocate resources for language education (Block & Cameron, 2002). Owing to globalization, there is a growing tendency to treat languages as economic commodities, with some languages, such as English, having higher value than others. English has a significant effect on the international, scientific and technological speech community. Among non-English speaking populations in many countries, English has become a symbol of social and political modernization. Citizens have been committed to acquire English. Phillipson (1992) thus contends that language policies sometimes can lead to cultural imperialism.

For example, globalization is the reason why Tanzania is reverting to English in spite of the fact that most of the press, the debates in parliament and in lower courts are in Kiswahili (Rubagumya, 2001). Market driven, capital-led reforms lead to the spread of major economic languages such as English, whose value as ‘linguistic capital’ often goes unquestioned despite its

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limited usefulness for the majority of the poor and marginalized (Benson, 2004; Bruthiaux, 2002).

In the informal sector, there is limited need for English, yet being able to speak, read and write in Kiswahili is essential. The informal economy of low-income countries involves 50% of the population and appears to be growing rather than shrinking. Here the languages spoken in the neighborhood or the indigenous lingua francas are used.

Ramanathan’s (2005) ethnographic study of English and vernacular medium education in Gujurat, India, highlights strategies whereby LPP can address issues related to global inequities. LPP, as Ramanathan argues, should pay attention to grounded, local realities that provides space to address how humans and institutions claim authority to re-think, re-envision, and re-enact their realms. Her study thus exemplifies how the use of such strategies as choral practice and code switching are part of the ideological and communal aspects of literacy and therefore demonstrate that literacy practices are saturated with ideology (Street, 1993, 1994). In this study, Ramanathan shows how educators and advocates of critical literacies scrutinize their actions and responsibilities through a discursive lens. Pedagogically, therefore, it is productive to consider that critical literacies, with oppositional readings, cross-examinations, and self-conscious, self-analytic orientations do occur in nonwestern realities, though not in the same way as in the west. This is possible when educationists or researchers distance themselves from “dominant text and discourse,” and open up to new sites and possibilities to engage in the simultaneous learning and unraveling central to literacy and international development.

In the African context, Omoniyi (2003) explains how literacy studies in Africa report a high rate of illiteracy deriving from definitions of literacy anchored to reading and/or writing competence in a European language. He argues further that UNESCO’s “functional literacy”
model does not necessarily preclude critical literacy, but can be considered as the natural and logical culmination of functional literacy drives, especially in the multi-nationality polities of sub-Saharan Africa and Asia. With the critical literacy lens, inequalities that may be glossed over by national averages and made difficult to redress are unveiled. Street’s (1996) ideological model thus becomes important in that it recognizes diversity in contexts and variation in the functions that literacy may be sought to perform from one society to another, making it a worthwhile model for the African multilingual contexts. As Omoniyi (2003) observes, any worthwhile literacy model in the African context must address diversity and relativity, with the implication that the pursuit and attainment of literacy skills must involve a variety of processes, each case being determined by the peculiarities of the community in question. This point is also reflected in UNESCO’s (2001, p.25) Literacy for All programs, which states that:

The success toward Literacy for All requires comprehensive yet context-specific and flexible actions rooted in countries and communities, with the involvement of every corner of society – government, communities, NGOs, schools, the private sector, media – in literacy actions linked to diverse spheres of social, cultural and economic activities.

Unfortunately, the exogenous standard of competence in the former colonial languages continues to be used as the yardstick for assessing literacy rate, and this undermines the effort put into promoting indigenous languages. Further, even when the literacy rate is determined by possession of skills in the indigenous languages, the picture still remains grim due to the very low linguistic capital that these languages have. Promotional programmes fail due to planning and implementation (Okedara & Okedara, 1992) and the negative attitudes of those to whom such programmes are targeted (Adegbija, 1994; Awedoba, 2001; Bamgbose, 1991; Omoniyi, 1994). In an overview of bilingual education in Africa, Obondo (2008) asserts that any policy that seems to deny the people access to a language which they perceive as important for their
advancement is likely to fail. This trend was noted particularly with implementation of projects in African countries such as Guinea, Cameroon and Nigeria that aimed at using indigenous languages in education. These are therefore important lessons for Uganda that is making effort to forge ahead with a new language education policy that seeks to promote use of indigenous languages as in media.

Another factor in support of the commodification of languages is the cost of preparing teachers and materials to change the language of instruction to indigenous African languages. For example, this was the case in Tanzania against continued use of Kiswahili and also in South Africa for using the African languages above the fourth school year in primary school. It is indeed the same reason given in the new language education policy in Uganda for continuing to develop materials in the six regional languages. However, such a cost has to be weighed against what it costs to have millions of school children drop out of school, repeating grades and barely learning. As Obondo (2008) observes, successful development of multilingual education in Africa requires sensitivity to the real needs of the communities and not remain a top-down political process as it has been in the past. There has been very little involvement and input from the people at the grassroots level such as teachers, applied linguists, researchers, and members of society as a whole. In addition, success will also depend on initiatives from the local communities and institutions such as nongovernmental agencies, linguistically heterogenous groups, small organizations, local departments of education and other local institutions (see for example Heugh 2003). This calls for an investment in these local initiatives not only in economic resources but also by researching and documenting such practices. Obondo (2008) asserts that it is such initiatives by civil society that hold the promise for the future of education of the African nations.
2.3.3 Multilingual literacies in Uganda

In Uganda, Muthwii’s (2002) multisite case study undertaken in the large language groups (Acholi, Luganda, Lugbara, Rukiga, and Ateso) investigating the views and perceptions of parents, pupils and teachers on language use as a tool for enhancing pupils acquisition of an all-round education, showed that while the policy statement on language education was theoretically plausible, in practice, it was faced with many problems. The dilemmas and contradictions of language in education that the teachers had to contend with resulted in their preference to teaching in English as the medium right from Primary one. The international function that English carried led the respondents to prefer it to the mother tongue which did not only lack the necessary tool and resources, but was unpopular among the stakeholders. In another survey of the perceptions of Kenyan and Ugandan parents, pupils and teachers Makau (2001) too cites evidence that supports the status accorded to English, “rather than visualize English as a foreign intrusion …most stakeholders in education see English as part of the current reality and an important tool in social-economic development” (p.4).

Such views are supported by Nsibambi’s (2000) observation regarding the role of English in Uganda. Nsibambi says that English’s functional utility, as an official language, a lingua franca, and as a medium of instruction continued to sustain its privileged status in Uganda. Most important, and from the views of parents, was the fact that English controlled entry into successive levels of Uganda’s highly competitive education system. It is for such reasons that Kiswahili or the African languages could not easily compete to assume a similar status that English had.

This situation is further elaborated on by Kiganda (2003) who noted that the work of African writers in English further continues to legitimize the status of English. For example,
Kiganda (2003) refers to one leading Ugandan poet, Cliff Lubwa p'Ochong who said that “We should be teaching English as the language to dream in, to swear in and ultimately the language to create in” (p. 12). In addition, Kiganda (2003) explains that English offers many opportunities which, in the view of stakeholders, gives it an edge over other languages in use in the education system. She identifies these as: its prestige as the language of the powerful first world, its well-developed, internationally acclaimed teaching methodologies and the ready financial and technical support by the English-speaking first world for the provision of instructional materials and facilities, and the preparation of teachers. However, all these, as noted by Bamgbose (1991, 2004), Omoniyi (2003) have a profit edge as all the publishing houses are in the western world (see section 2.4.2).

In spite of such views expressed by the users of English in Uganda, Mukama (1994) describes the methods used in teaching English in Uganda to be “a liturgical experience where pupils are restricted to one-word rejoinders lacking interactive activity” (p. 554). Mukama cites Kiwanuka (1967) who made a similar observation about recitation in English, a strategy commonly used in Ugandan classrooms, as leading to ‘deplorable art of talking without feelings’ (p. 565). As a result, the pupils do not have the opportunity to think in English. More recently, Kyeyune (2004), in her study of the use of English in secondary school classrooms in Uganda, described the frustration of students’ learning efforts arising from the teachers’ use of English as the medium of instruction. She noted that the actual status of English in multilingual classrooms is not appreciated, and that this was one of the major reasons why teachers were failing in their pursuit of better standards of English. In her view, she believes that the policy for bilingual training does not necessarily require teachers to be fluent in mother tongue but should function to raise consciousness about the merits and politics of the language of instruction.
It is perhaps in this regard that Kiganda (2003) suggests that in order to overcome the restrictive content of textbooks in English, it was important to adopt the rich use of English as the medium to access Ugandan and other oral literature that links with mother tongues while introducing outside cultures. The pupils thus become dual citizens – that is, as Ugandans and as citizens of the world. From the review of work on language education in Uganda, the status of English versus other languages thus takes center stage. Therefore, it is against such background that the implementation of the new language policy that seeks to promote the use of indigenous languages alongside English continues to be a challenge for educationists in Uganda. It is in this context that this case study attempted to understand the views of the different stakeholders, particularly within a minority language community, towards the new policy. The main focus of the research is on the use of the mother tongue or local language.

In the foregoing section, a review of literature on bilingual and multilingual education affirms the potential benefits of using the child’s mother tongue to develop literacy. As research cited in this review shows, pupils’ first language can be a powerful intellectual resource and bilingual instructional strategies can usefully complement monolingual strategies to promote more cognitively engaged learning. However, challenges, both local and global hinder implementation of policies that support such strategies in the development of literacy. This is particularly so in multilingual communities, where the functional utility of minority languages is limited. The focus of this study is to look at the promotion of multilingual policies within language minority communities. In the next section, I describe the theoretical frameworks that best informs this study. In particular, I draw on the view of literacy as a social practice (Street, 1995); language as a resource (Ruiz, 1995); and Hornberger’s continua of biliteracy model (2003) to situate my study.
2.4 Theoretical framework

2.4.1 Language and literacy as social practice

The theoretical framework discussed here is based on recent work in multilingual literacies (Martin-Jones & Jones, 2000; Street, 1995, 2008), which is centrally concerned with the intersection of research on multilingualism, on the one hand, and literacy, on the other. For many years, Goody’s (1977) universalizing theory which regarded reading, writing, and the mastery of grammar as separate individual skills influenced the views of many educators. Goody’s theory was also viewed as an autonomous technology of modernity, leading to the rational, psychological, and cultural transformation of people. However, a growing body of literature posits a divergent view of literacy embedded within a cultural context (Barton, 1994; Barton & Ivanic, 1991; Baynham, 1995; Gee, 1990; Heath, 1983; Scribner & Cole, 1981; Street, 1984, 1994). These studies have examined the literacy practices of individuals and groups, including people’s uses and meanings of literacy and the value it holds for them. As a result, they have contributed to a theory of literacy as a social practice and collective resource.

The theoretical roots of the social and cultural approach to literacy are in ethnography, and grounded in accounts of real practice. A ‘practice account’ of literacy was first proposed by Scribner and Cole (1976) as a result of their study of literacy practices among the Vai people of northern Liberia. Literacy development as observed among the Vai was practice-specific, embedded within their cultural environment. Within the Vai community, there were three different literacies operating side by side. Only one of these was school-linked, that is, English literacy acquired in school. The other two were an indigenous Vai script and an Arabic literacy used for religious purposes. Thus each of the three different literacies had a particular context of use. From this observation, literacy events, they argued, were culturally patterned into recurring
units which they termed literacy practices. Street (1984) explains that the term literacy practice has been used by researchers within the New Literacy Studies as shorthand to refer to the ‘social practices of reading and writing’ (p. 1). However, the New Literacy Studies researchers then move on to examine the wider context within which the literacy practices are framed. In addition to the concept of the cultural context of literacy, Scribner and Cole (1981) in their seminal work, *The Psychology of Literacy*, observed that a distinction existed between literacy as taught in school and literacy as used for other purposes.

Other theoretical perspectives of literacy as a social practice come from Heath’s (1983) and Street’s (1984) work. Street established a dichotomy between opposing ways of viewing literacy. He proposed an alternative to the autonomous (also unitary) model of literacy which imposes western or (urban) conceptions of literacy onto other cultures (Street, 2001). The new approach to literacy, the ‘ideological’ orientation, emphasizes the social nature of literacy as well as the multiple and sometimes contested nature of literacy practices. Accordingly, the ideological model is culturally sensitive as literacy practices vary from one context to another. Street argues that the meaning of literacy cannot be separated from the social institutions in which it is practiced or the social processes whereby practitioners acquire it. The actual examples of literacy in different societies that are available to us suggest that it is more often ‘restrictive’ and hegemonic and concerned with instilling discipline and exercising social order (Street 1994). From the ideological point of view, then, the focus on literacy development shifts from the individual, discrete skills to reading and writing as cultural practices. Literacy is a social practice, not a technical and neutral skill, embedded in socially constructed epistemological principles. This formulation is concerned with the extent to which literacy tasks are jointly
achieved and the implications of collaborative activities, in particular, social circumstances (Prinsloo & Breier, 1996).

Therefore, the ideological view of literacy calls for a conception of literacy that takes into account the people involved and the places in which it occurs. Under these terms literacy should be viewed both locally and historically, in terms of the individuals, histories, places, and the social relationships in which people find themselves (Barton & Hamilton, 1998). Kapitzke (1995) argues that an analysis of literacy should begin from an examination of the ideological assumptions, structures and interests of institutions charged with the official transmission and control of literacy. As such, understanding the specific context and the prevalent literacy practices is important to a study of language policy implementation, particularly in a language minority community.

The New Literacy Studies (Gee 1996; Street 1995) views literacy as a social practice whereby literacies are positioned in relation to the social institutions and power relations that sustain them. Education is identified as one such institution. Readers and writers have different conceptions of the meanings of what they are doing and these meanings are not just ‘individual’ or ‘cognitive’ but derived from cultural processes. Academic and schooled literacy of dominant western elites represents only one form among many, as the language variety used by such elites is only one dialect amongst many. Engagement in writing and reading varies considerably in everyday life in communities and neighborhoods, in workplaces, in rural and urban environments (Barton & Ivanic 1991; Hamilton et al 1994). In this regard, Street (2008) says engaging with social literacies is a social act. Therefore how teachers and students interact is already a social practice that affects the nature of the literacy learnt and the ideas about literacy held by participants and their positions in relations of power. Consequently, literacy is measured in terms
of how local people take hold of the new communicative practices being introduced to them as exemplified by Kulick and Stround’s (1993) ethnographic description of missionaries bringing literacy to New Guinea villagers. Literacy is thus already part of power relationship and how people take hold of it depends on social and cultural practices, not just pedagogic and cognitive factors (Street, 2008). This therefore raises questions for literacy programs such as the new language education policy in Uganda. For example: what is the power relation between participants? What are the resources? Where are people going when they take on one form of literacy rather than another? And how do recipients challenge the dominant conceptions of literacy? These and similar questions are pertinent to the present study.

Norton Peirce & Stein (1995) add to our understanding of this concept of literacy Vis-a-Vis power relations when they point out that, when reading for social change, people’s understanding of literacy and of particular texts depends on their perception of power relations and their own position within them. As a consequence, the challenge for literacy educators is to reconceptualize classrooms as semiotic spaces, which give opportunity to construct meaning from a wide variety of multimodal texts. Scaffolding then in classroom contexts becomes a theory of meaning-making in which students are both the users and makers of systems of communication. Norton (2005) argues that literacy is not only about reading and writing but also about the relationships between text and reader, student and teacher, classroom and community. Drawing on her work of literacy learners in Pakistan (2002) and South Africa (1995), Norton reminds us that material literacy resources are central to literacy development and transnational critical literacy. Others who espouse this view are Moll (2000), (“funds of knowledge”), Kendrick et al (2006) (multimodality), and Stein (2000) (re-sourcing resources). I expand on each of these notions in the next section starting with Ruiz’s description of language orientation.
2.4.2 Language and literacy as resource

Ruiz (1984; 1995) outlines three orientations to language planning that are critical for language policy: language-as-problem, language-as-right, and language-as-resource. He clarifies that "orientation" refers to a "complex of dispositions toward language and its role, and toward languages and their role in society" (Ruiz, 1984, p. 16).

The language-as-problem orientation involves the association of language and the languages of minority groups with social and economic status. "The importance of this coincidence lies in language issues becoming linked with the problems associated with this group - poverty, handicap, low educational achievement, little or no social mobility" (Ruiz, 1984, p. 19). The language-as-right orientation presents language and the languages of minority groups as a "God given right." Language provides "not only access to formal processes like voting, civil service examinations, judicial and administrative proceedings, and public employment which are influenced; the right to personal freedom and enjoyment is also affected" (Ruiz, 1984, p. 22). In particular, discrimination towards someone because of her/his language is a violation of her/his civil rights, liberty, and pursuit of happiness (Skutnabb-Kangas, 2002).

For Ruiz, the language-as-resource orientation is the best argument to defend linguistic pluralism. The language and the languages of minority groups benefit not only the capitalistic trade and global expansion missions of the dominant group, but also the maintenance of the primary languages and cultural identities of minority groups. Indeed, it has been argued that the latter requires the former. It is from this point that the earlier focus of language planning dwelt more on identification of language problems than on viewing language as a right or resource. Language planning is seen as an instrument for national development or as a remedy for social problems that are presumed to result from the linguistic mismatch between language minorities.
and the dominant society. Thus Ruiz’s language orientations, and in particular the language as a resource point of view is useful in harnessing the rich resources of multilingualism that can be explored in multiple ways in a school in order to enhance literacy development.

The relevance of these issues for language planning are found in the work of Cooper (1989) that highlights the three types of planning, status, corpus and language acquisition planning (see Section 2.1.3).

Moll (1990, 2000) uses the metaphor ‘funds of knowledge’ to refer to the cultural artifacts and bodies of knowledge that underlie household activities. Every household is an education setting in which a major function is to transmit knowledge that enhances the survival of its dependants from the elders. The ‘funds of knowledge’ are therefore the inherent cultural resources found in communities surrounding the school and are grounded in the networking that communities do in order to make the best of those resources. Moll and Greenburg (1990) describe the ‘funds of knowledge’ as the nuts and bolts for survival, and so they must be are wide-ranging, diverse, and plentiful. Thus in multilingual contexts, taking cognizance of the learners’ ‘funds of knowledge’ is fundamental in attaining desired levels of literacy, especially in a second language (Moll & Diaz, 1987; Moll & Greenberg, 1990). Teachers with similar background and linguistic skills can utilize these funds of knowledge as they prepare for academic instruction. Vaish (2008) contends that teachers need to encourage the creation of biliterate annotations in the texts because they use the first language as a resource in the classroom.

While the modes of drawings, photography and drama are not new pedagogies, systematically incorporating them into the school curricular offers innovative possibilities for validating students’ literacies, experiences, and cultures and supporting English language
instruction in the classroom. This brings in the notion of multiple literacies as they vary across cultures and contexts (Kress and Street, 2006). Street (2008) points out, how writing and speech have dominated discussions of literacy as central, salient modes of representation. However, other modes such as the visual, gestural, kinaesthetic three dimensional play a role in key communication practices. With this in mind, Mushengyezi, (2003) calls for communication planners to consider the importance of indigenous forms of communication such as popular theatre, drumming and storytelling for enhancing students’ learning at all levels.

As noted by Kendrick, et al (2006), Ugandan teachers spontaneously use multimodal pedagogies in their classrooms (through song and performance) as they strive to find new ways to help learners understand concepts. In a study of six schools in Uganda, Kendrick, et al, observe that multimodal pedagogies represent a hybridization of indigenous and contemporary forms of communication. In addition, Norton (2003) points out that ownership of meaning-making is crucial for the development of literacy which underscores the need to support teachers to work together to develop new pedagogical approaches to teaching in general.

However to transform such multimodal pedagogies for classroom application may be challenging for teachers. In other words, how do teachers, particularly in multilingual contexts help learners to transform what they know or remember to enhance their literacy development? In this regard I draw on a process of re-sourcing resources suggested by Stein (2000) to reclaim what is available within the local context, in this case the learners’ home knowledge, including language and systems of representation and communication to explore the new situation. Stein argues that such a process could begin by conceptualizing the classroom as a semiotic space where human beings as agents of their own meaning making produce multimodal texts – visual, written, spoken, performative, sonic and gestural. We need to recognize that language as a
channel for expression has limitations and yet there is need to engage in pedagogies that work with students’ diverse representational resources in a productive way. In developing literacy, we would remember that when making meaning, there are resources that we can draw on beyond oral or written language but can extend beyond to include gestures, sounds, images, and textures (Stein, 2007). As it happens, for socio-cultural and historical reasons, different communities privilege particular representational resources and background others. For example, as Kanu (2006) points out, preliterate African culture was characterized with an oral tradition that found expression in stories, folktales, anecdotes, proverbs and parables that provoked reflection. But we also need to note that modes do different kinds of work and this is the aspect that renders them a useful strategy to provide for learners opportunity to express themselves in multiple ways that are gratifying while at the same time enhancing their literacy in a target language. It is for these reasons that the recognition and use of path for the teaching of critical thinking and meaningful learning.

2.4.3 The continua of biliteracy model

In defining biliteracy, Vaish (2008) points out that in the 1970s, the term carried connotations of fluency or mastery in reading and writing of two or more languages. However, Hornberger (2003:35) defines biliteracy as: ‘any and all instances in which communication occurs in two(or more) languages in or around writing’. It therefore, includes varying levels of competencies, text, types (traditional and multimodal) and verbal and symbolic communication. In this regard the continua of biliteracy model as developed by Hornberger (1989) and revised by Hornberger and Skilton-Sylvester (2000), offers a comprehensive framework in which to situate research, teaching and language planning in linguistically diverse settings. It enables us to take account of the diverse dimensions represented by the continua, which has intersecting and nested
continua with respect to the contexts, media, and content through which biliteracy develops. The continua model offers a way of analyzing what is taught (content of biliteracy), in which languages it is taught (media of biliteracy), where it is taught (contexts of biliteracy), and what is the outcome of the teaching (developments of biliteracy). The model captures (inter alia) the development of biliteracy along intersecting first language-second language, receptive-productive and oral-written language skills continua, through the medium of two (or more) languages and literacies. All points on a particular continuum are not finite, static, and discrete, but highly interrelated.

Further, directions in the development of a “continua of biliteracy” in the past two decades, stemming from the work of Nancy Hornberger and her students at the University of Pennsylvania, is relevant to theories of multilingual literacies. Hornberger has sought to better understand the conditions that promote the development of biliteracy and multiliteracy in diverse communities across the globe. This research has resulted in the development of a model referred to as “the continua of biliteracy” (Hornberger, 1989, 2003) that has served to inform research on biliteracy and multiliteracy, not only at the University of Pennsylvania, but in key research sites such as Wales (Baker, 2003), South Africa (Bloch and Alexander, 2003) and India (Basu, 2003). Hornberger (2003) makes the case that further research is needed, in a wide range of settings and circumstances, to enhance the model in ways that promote greater understanding of biliteracy and multiliteracy. This study is yet another attempt to add to this expanding field in bilingual education, but from a non-western, non-dominant indigenous language community.

The complex linguistic milieu in Uganda calls for a consideration of its language policy within the context of multiliteracies which encompass bilingual education concepts and theories. It is therefore important to stress that the model is not restricted to contexts in which only two
languages are spoken and written. Indeed, Martin-Jones and Jones (2000) use the term multilingual literacies which is closely related to Hornberger’s definition of biliteracy. As Hornberger and Skilton-Sylvester (2003) note, biliteracy refers to a range of instances in which communication in written form occurs in two or more languages. Further, the continua model of biliteracy is premised on a view of multilingualism as a resource (see Ruiz, 1984, 1995) and on the metaphor of ecology of language. Multiliteracy assumes that language and literacy in one language is developing in relation to other languages and literacies (language evolution). Further, the model situates biliteracy development (whether in the individual, classroom, community or society) in relation to the contexts, media, and content in and through which it develops (i.e language environment), and it provides a heuristic for addressing the unequal balance of power across languages and literacies (i.e for both studying and counteracting language endangerment).

In recent revisions of the continua model, drawing on research by scholars such as Corson (1997, 1999), Cummins (1994), and Norton (Norton Peirce, 1995; Norton 1997) there has been greater attention to relations of power that privilege one end of the continuum over the other, and that recognize that some language practices have greater power than others. By extension, the model integrates findings from research that demonstrate how individuals and institutions are constantly negotiating changing relations of power with respect to biliterate contexts, development, media, and content. The challenge for teachers, administrators, and language planners is how this power can be transformed through critical reflection and human agency in the interests of greater social justice.
2.5 Summary

Benson (2004) points out that there is strong evidence that using a language that the learner does not master well as the language of instruction is highly inefficient, as well as wasteful and discriminatory. Ricento (2000) says LPP, as a subfield of sociolinguistics, needs to deal with issues of language behavior and identity, which in turn calls for attention to developments in discourse analysis, ethnography, and critical social theory. He further contends that agency, referring to the role(s) of individuals and collectivities in the processes of language use, is a key variable that separates the older, positivistic/technicist approaches from the newer critical/postmodern ones. Multilingualism is a fact of life in most African countries. As Peirce and Ridge (1997) point out, “what is at issue is the degree to which it is thwarted or developed or used, passed over or understood” (p. 181). The aim of this chapter was to provide a systematic review of such literature, and its relevance to the present study. Thus the literature I have drawn on includes language planning and policy, bilingual education, and literacy in the context of international development, with particular focus on the use of English language versus indigenous languages as media in multilingual contexts in general, and Uganda in particular. In the next chapter, I discuss the research design as well as the instruments used to gather data for this study.
3.0 Introduction

This chapter provides an explanation of the actual execution of this study. It details the research methodology, instruments of data collection, the data collection process and the problems encountered. Detailed descriptions of the research site and participants as well as the process of data analysis are also presented. As mentioned in the previous chapters, this study set out to investigate the views of the stakeholders towards the new language education policy in eastern Uganda and also sought to understand how the policy was being implemented in primary schools within the language minority communities.

3.1 Epistemological background and methods

A ‘case study’ is widely used in education research to refer to an intensive study of one instance, person, institution or place. Case studies are the preferred strategy when 'how' or 'why' questions are being posed and when the focus is on a contemporary phenomenon within some real-life context. It is thus considered an appropriate means to evaluate educational programmes and real-life situations, such as implementation of a policy interpretation (Yin, 1984).

This study was a qualitative instrumental case study (Cresswell, 1994; Stake, 1995) because it sought to form an in-depth understanding of implementation of a bilingual education language policy. I adopted an instrumental case study as the research was exploratory (Stake, 1995) seeking to gain insight into how the new Uganda language education policy was being implemented.
Patton, (1980) and Vulliamy (1990) recommend use of a method or a combination of methods suitable for a research problem under investigation. Vulliamy (1990) used multiple sites in a longitudinal study of educational programs in Papua New Guinea. The approach selected is well suited for the purpose of this study focusing on policy implementation in education.

Previous studies about language education in Uganda, such as Ladefoged, (1971) and Muthwii (2002) were mainly surveys in nature. Ladefoged used questions from the population census but did not focus directly on policy implementation. However, Muthwii’s study focused on the new language education policy. Nevertheless, while it used both quantitative and qualitative methods, it leaned more on the former and thus missed out on what Crossley and Vulliamy (1984) call “observations of the realities of schooling at the chalk face”. Vulliamy (1990) observes that the main contribution of a qualitative research strategy lies exactly in focusing on the actual implementation of policies in schools and thus assessing the points at which policy and practice converge and diverge. The use of survey questionnaires, for example, has a tendency to reproduce the rhetoric of policies. Likewise Holdaway (2000) argues that methods used must be designed to document adequately the richness and diversity of meanings people attribute to phenomena. Language is unique to human species and a study of language is inescapably intertwined with the socio-cultural views of the speakers. This study subscribes to the social constructivism approach in which understanding the world around us is based on the belief that reality is relative, local and specific in nature (Guba & Lincoln, 1998). The implementation of a language policy is specific to the community for which it is intended. Knowledge, according to the constructivist view, is socially generated through interaction between the researcher and the object of research. Both create the findings as the investigation proceeds. For the constructivist,
the standard for holding what is relatively true resides in community consensus (Guba & Lincoln, 1998).

In addition, case studies examine individuals or small groups within a specific context. This allows for an intensive and holistic description (Merriam, 1988; Yin, 1984) of the actual phenomena investigated. I, therefore, did reflect carefully on the methods that could redefine the phenomena investigated and found the case study approach most appropriate. The unit of analysis was the stakeholders: the school administrators, the teachers, and the community. Each set of stakeholders provided unique perspectives on the challenges and possibilities of implementation.

However, a frequently cited limitation of case study is that generalizing is difficult or impossible because one person or small group cannot represent all similar groups or situations. In this regard, Spindler (1982) argues that a single case study requires an in-depth study that gives accurate knowledge of one setting not markedly dissimilar from other relevant settings to which it is likely to be generalisable to a substantial degree. The in-depth, accurate knowledge of one setting is better than a superficial one which can possibly be skewed or give misleading information about isolated relationships in many settings. In addition, Lauer and Asher (1988) contend that the results of a case study may be transferable in that researchers "suggest further questions, hypotheses, and future implications," and present the results as "directions and questions". Similarly, Hamel et al. (1993) and Yin (1984, 1989, 1993, 1994) argue that the relative size of a sample, whether 2, 10 or 100 cases are used, does not transform a multiple case into a macroscopic study. The goal of a study should therefore establish the parameters to apply to all research. Stake (1988) further argues that in the case study, the focus may not be on generalization but on understanding the particulars of that case in its complexity. A case study
focuses on a bounded system, usually under natural conditions, so that the system can be understood in its own habitat. Thus, even a single case could be considered acceptable, provided it met the established objective.

Nonetheless, in adopting a case study type of inquiry for this study, multiple sources of data collection were used as detailed below. Denzin (1984) identified four types of triangulation as data sources: investigator, theory or methodological triangulation. The use of multiple data sources was necessary because the strength of qualitative research lies in its triangulation, which is collecting information in many ways, rather than relying on just a single one. Stake (1995) explains triangulation as being a process of using multiple perceptions to clarify meaning. Triangulations are the protocols that are used to ensure accuracy and alternative explanations. Brock-Utne (1996) points out that triangulations are a conventional way of treating validity in qualitative research. The need to triangulate therefore arises from the ethical need to confirm the validity of the processes and in case studies, using multiple sources of data is one possibility (Yin, 1984). Triangulation increases the reliability of the data and of the process of gathering it. It also serves to corroborate the data from other sources. It is more important in a case study to establish meaning rather than location. I therefore used multiple sources for data collection, which included questionnaires, in-depth interviews, focus group discussions; classroom observations, and document analysis between September 2005 and June 2006 (see Tables 3.1 and 3.2).

Table 3.1: Instruments and sources of data collection

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Question</th>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Instrument</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One</td>
<td>Ministry representatives- ESA</td>
<td>Focus group discussion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-DEO</td>
<td>Interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>School authority</td>
<td>Interviews, questionnaire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two</td>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>Interviews, classroom observations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three</td>
<td>Community</td>
<td>Focus group discussions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.2 Data collection and analysis

The study sites were two primary schools, Bugagga Rural Primary School and Tiriri Urban Primary School\(^3\), located in two districts in eastern Uganda. I collected data for the study between September 2005 and June 2006. The study began with an initial entry into the field in September 2005. Data collection was in two phases starting with a pilot study that was carried out with the community of the rural school in September-October 2005. I carried out a pilot study in order to confirm the consistency of the interview protocol and the questionnaires. The pilot study provided an opportunity for initial analysis and refinement of data collection procedures and instruments. The first phase of the study started in September 2005 with preliminary visits to the field. Such visits included going to Tororo district local council to seek permission to carry out my research in the district. The second phase of data collection was conducted from March through June 2006.

The interviews, focus group discussions and classroom observations were audio recorded and written up in field notes. Wherever possible I took video clips of the proceedings. The headmasters (principals) of the schools helped me to identify and access the participants from the community. In the focus group discussions, efforts were made to deliberately include members of the School Management Committee (SMC), the Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) and councilors at the sub-county level in the rural community, as their decisions, to some extent, influence the activities of the school.

Detailed and systematic data analysis began after typing and transcription of audio tapes and field notes were completed. I read classroom observation and interview transcripts over several times to get a feel of the whole (Creswell, 1998) while looking for emerging themes

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\(^3\) Pseudonyms are used for all names of places, (except the districts), and people.
(Glaser & Strauss, 1967). I examined and evaluated language policy documents, memos, circulars from the ministry and newspaper articles as a means of triangulating data. The FGDs for the rural school were carried out in Lunyole. One of the teachers at Tiriri Urban Primary School translated for me in the one instance where one of the participants was unable to speak English. The data from the FGD for the rural school was translated into English during the transcription stage. To ensure accuracy of translation, I went back to check with the participants as well as consulted some of the members of the Lunyole Language Association who were involved in translating the bible into Lunyole.

3.3 Study sites

The study was carried out in two primary schools in the eastern region of Uganda. One school was in a rural setting regarded as being predominantly ‘monolingual’ and the other was in an urban setting considered to be multilingual. The two schools were Bugagga Rural Primary School (BRPS) and Tiriri Urban Primary School (TUPS) respectively. These schools were selected because they fit the policy description of rural and urban schools. For example, in the urban schools, English is used as a medium of instruction beginning in Primary 1 while a Local Language would be taught as a subject. The reverse happens in the rural area where the mother tongue/Local Language is used from Primary 1 to 4 while English is taught as a subject. The specific schools were selected after meeting with the school’ district education officials. A detailed description of each school follows below, starting with the rural school.

3.3.1 Bugagga Rural Primary School profile

Bugagga Rural Primary School is located in Busolwe Sub- County in Bunyole County. The latter became a fully fledged district known as Butaleja District in July 2005. The district
borders with Budaka in the north, Mbale in the north east, Iganga to the west and now Tororo (from which it was split) in the south extending all the way to the east.

Figure 3.1 has been removed due to copyright restrictions. The information removed is the map of Tororo district before being split to form Butaleja

**Figure 3.1: Before Tororo was split to form Butaleja district**  
Source: Uganda Bureau of Standards, 2005

Figure 3.2 has been removed due to copyright restrictions. The information removed is the map of Butaleja district

**Figure 3.2: Butaleja district**  
Source: Uganda Bureau of Standards, 2005

Bugagga Rural Primary School established in the early 1950 is one of the oldest primary schools. It has 1148 pupils and, therefore, according to the Ministry guidelines, it falls into the category of a large (all schools with a student population of 700 and above).

The school is situated about 6 km from the nearest town council on the main road that links the district to the only railway line. Continuing on this road eventually leads to a tarmac road that goes into Kampala, the capital city of Uganda. The school is about 230km, from the capital city. Bugagga Primary school is a mixed day school with a population of 580 boys and
568 girls. There are 755 pupils in the junior section of the school of whom 395 are boys and 360 are girls.

Table 3.2: BRPS - Number of grades & pupils in each class

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Primary 1</th>
<th>Primary 2</th>
<th>Primary 3</th>
<th>Primary 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of grades per class</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Number of pupils</td>
<td>208</td>
<td>173</td>
<td>194</td>
<td>180</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The school was founded by the Church of Uganda (Anglican) and the parish priest is a member of the School Management Committee (SMC). The inclusion of a parish priest was stipulated in the guidelines for the formation of SMC. The founding bodies nominate members to the committee from among the community.

The school is built on a large expanse of land stretching over about ten acres. There is a borehole on the right as one approaches it from the north. This is the main source of water for the school as well as the villages that border the school. On the left of this borehole is an old building that appeared to be abandoned. I later learnt that it was used by the community as a cooperative society where they would sell their cotton. There was no evidence of any activity going on during the time of my field study.

A path leads from the borehole on the right to buildings surrounded by large trees. One of them, seemingly out of use, is the oldest building in the school. The foundation stone indicated that it was founded in 1954 by a previous governor. This was well before Uganda attained her independence from Britain in 1962. This building, together with four other blocks built behind it, is home to Primary 1-4 classrooms. The four blocks, built with burnt bricks and corrugated iron sheets, appear to have been recently built. The new buildings were painted maroon while the shutters were a deep blue. The block right behind the oldest building on the extreme right has two rooms, used for the Primary 2 classroom. In front, slightly to the left of this block there was
a big mango tree under which the pupils in Primary 2 go to practice their writing in the sand. The next block houses an office for the head of the junior section (Primary 1-4) of the school as well as the classroom for Primary 1. Next to the building for the Primary 1 classroom but slightly behind it is another block with classrooms for Primary 4. In between the blocks for the Primary 1 and 4 classrooms, about the same level with the old building, is the block that housed the primary three classrooms. All buildings faced the main road.

As one moved to the south from the junior section, there was a church, which was built of the same material as the oldest building described earlier. The church was half way between the junior section and the rest of the school. Next to the church was a long building in the shape of an L. This housed the office of the principal and the rest of the rooms for the Primary 5-7 classes. The office of the principal was divided into two rooms. The inner room, the principal’s office, was also used as a store. It was somewhat crowded with one table and two chairs. A huge mango tree where assemblies were held stood in front of this building. During my field study, I frequently saw teachers sitting under it, either preparing their work or marking students’ work. Farther on behind this building was a playing field with a football pitch. A hedge sheltered the school from the main road. Lined up across the main road were the teachers’ residences. The headmaster’s house was more conspicuous as it was the last to have been built.

The headmaster of Bugagga Rural Primary school was a university graduate with a degree in education. There were two deputies (both males) who assisted the headmaster in administration. The head of the junior section was a female. In total there were twenty teachers, nine males and eleven females. There were also two teachers for each class from Primary 1-4. Each class had two grades except for Primary 1 which had five. However, throughout the entire
period of my field study all pupils in Primary 1 were divided into two groups each managed by a different teacher.

There was no furniture except for the teacher’s table and chair inside the classrooms for Primary 1-4 classrooms. All the pupils sat on the floor in neat rows facing the chalkboard to the front. In contrast, from Primary 5-7 there were desks for all the pupils. Although the pupils had uniforms, pink dresses for girls and pink shirts for boys, a few did not wear them, most likely because they could not it.

3.3.2 Tiriri Urban Primary School profile

Tiriri Urban Primary school was located within Tororo Municipality. It was well fenced with barbed wire and had only one main entrance (see appendix G). Although it was a big school by any standards, it appeared to be rather crowded with the buildings very close to one another. This school was formerly managed by the Uganda-Asian community until 1972 when it was taken over by the then ultra-nationalist government of Uganda. The physical set up was typical of similar schools formerly owned by the Asian community in Uganda. For example, there were several buildings and one was a large assembly hall or auditorium that was often used by the Municipal as well as the District Education Office to hold workshops for teachers.

There was a playground on the right as one entered the school from the main gate. Farther on, in the middle of the compound, was a tree under which vehicles parked (see Appendix G). Next to the tree on a small raised cemented ground was an open kiosk. The classrooms formed a V-shape that tapered towards the gas station to the west. This was where the classrooms for Primary 1-4 were located. There was a narrow entrance to the east, which led to the headmaster’s office and the rest of the administration offices. This part of the school that overlooked the district hospital also accommodated the remaining classrooms for Primary 5-7.
The headmaster’s office was quite spacious with a large table and several chairs. The school secretary had an equally big office situated before one entered the headmaster’s office. Straight ahead of the secretary’s office, was an inner room which happened to be the office of the school bursar. This room also served as the office for one of the deputy headmasters. The school headmaster had two deputies, a male and female. In all there were 39 teachers: 14 males and 25 females.

Tiriri Urban Primary school was a day mixed primary school. It had a large population of 1715 pupils, some of whom came from the rural area bordering the municipality. Each class was divided into a number of grades as indicated in table 3.4. In this school, the pupils spoke different languages as their mother tongue. However, the common ones included such languages as Dhopadhola, Ateso, Samia, Lugwere, Lunyuli, Lumasaba, and Lusoga. The first two belonged to the eastern and western Nilotic language family respectively while the rest were Bantu languages. However, the headmaster pointed out that when the pupils interacted with each other while at school, they tended to communicate mainly in Luganda and Kiswahili.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Primary one</th>
<th>Primary two</th>
<th>Primary three</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grades</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.4 The participants in the study

According to the National Curriculum and Development Center (NCDC) circular, it is the school authority together with the District Language Board that are responsible for the implementation of the language education policy. In a school system there are teachers,
administrators, pupils, parents and other support staff. However, in the implementation process of a policy on medium of instruction, it is the administrators and classroom teachers who make the government education policy operational within a school.

Similarly, the classroom is the grassroots level for language education planning, for it is at this level that the success or failure of education policies and their implementation can be evaluated. In my view, the classroom is the critical scene where the foundation for education in general and the development of literacy skills in particular takes place. It is here that the different players in the provision of basic education interact and consequently affect what happens. Furthermore, the classroom being the primary venue through which students learn is the place where the actual practices in policy implementation may be documented. Therefore, for a study about the implementation of the new Uganda language education policy regarding instruction in mother tongue and English, I focused on the people concerned mainly with these issues. These included the representatives from the line ministry, the school authority, the teachers and the community from which the school draws its pupils. It is important to note that the focus of the study was on stakeholders involved in the implementation of such a school policy. I therefore did not include pupils who are considered as recipients. In the next sections, I offer first, a general description of each category, to be followed by a detailed description of the participants according to the location of their sites.

3.4.1 The Ministry of Education representatives

In this category two groups of participants were identified for this study. One group was the Education Standards Agency (ESA), an autonomous quality assurance organ situated at the regional level, and the other group included the District Education officers. As a result of the restructuring process in the Ministry of Education, ESA was created as a special body to oversee
quality assurance issues. Although ESA complemented the district education office, they worked independently of each other (see description of ESA below). It was thus important that ESA participate in this study especially since one of the aims of the new policy was to improve the quality of education. As mentioned earlier, quality education was of concern in Uganda particularly after the successful introduction of UPE. The two districts, in which the two participating schools were located, were within the ESA eastern region office. Therefore, officials from ESA eastern region office were part of this study (see a detailed description below).

Likewise, following the decentralization process in 1997, the District Education Officer (DEO) became the key official linking the school principals and the ministry headquarters. The DEO therefore interpreted and supervised the implementation of government policies on behalf of the Ministry of Education. Together with the sub-county chiefs and chairpersons of local councils, they were responsible for the overall implementation of government policies in their areas of jurisdiction. Therefore, they were important key informants in articulating any problems and challenges experienced in the process of implementing the language education policy. Because each school was located in a different district, Butaleja and Tororo districts for the rural and urban schools respectively, profiles of the DEOs who participated in this study are given under the respective schools.

3.4.2 The school administration

The school headmasters and their deputies were in charge of the day-to-day running of the school. They, therefore, were better placed to describe how the policy was implemented, as well as discuss problems and challenges encountered. In addition, as school administrators, they were mandated by the policy to decide on the appropriate local language to use within their respective schools. They were expected to do this in consultation with the District Language
Board (DLB). For these reasons, I identified this group and included them in this study as important sources of information on the implementation of the new policy within their schools. Thus the headmaster of each school in the study was interviewed. A profile of each headmaster is provided later in this chapter under the respective schools.

3.4.3 Teachers

As mentioned earlier, the teachers were targeted because, ultimately, they were at the end of the implementation process. It is critical that any evaluation of the policy involve the teachers if we are to understand what happens in the classrooms. Teachers are the interface between policy and practice. Their attitudes and beliefs determine how policy is interpreted and subsequently implemented. Therefore, the teachers for 1-3 primary classes, charged with developing the children’s literacy skills in the first years of schooling, participated in this study. Only the teachers for Primary 1-3 (ages 6-8) in the two schools were selected. According to the policy, this is the level at which mother tongue is expected to be used as the medium of instruction in the rural school. Overall, eleven teachers from the two schools participated. Of these, two were males. Each teacher selected for the study was interviewed and seven were observed while teaching. Owing to the schools’ schedules, I had to cancel prior arrangements made to visit the schools to collect data. For example, on one occasion, I was told that the tutors from Primary Teachers’ Colleges were in the school to supervise the teacher trainees on practicum. This therefore meant that I was not able to observe all the teachers I had interviewed during the period of the field study. I describe in detail each teacher’s profile in this chapter under their respective schools.
3.4.4 Community members

The community was included in this study because their children are ultimately the beneficiaries of the policy, especially with regard to the development of literacy. As Bamgbose (1999) observed, implementation of language education policies can fail if the targeted population is not involved. In the policy guidelines from the National Curriculum Development Center, attempts are made to involve the community through the formation of the District Language Board. The latter was to include members from the community. In this study, I define community as those people within the area from which the school received its student population. This included not only parents who currently had their children in the school but also others who in one way or another in their day-to-day interactions were part of the school. People such as the elders and opinion leaders interested in issues of development in their community were considered. I also included members of the Parent Teacher Association and the School Management Committee. Therefore, in selecting participants for the focus groups, effort was made to include the different members of the community as outlined above. I conducted four focus group discussions, three in Bugagga Rural Primary and one in Tiriri Urban Primary school.

As mentioned above, the profiles of participants from the district education office, the school headmasters, the teachers, and the community will be presented under their respective schools. However, because Educational Standards Agency (ESA) eastern region includes the two districts in which the two schools were located, its activities cut across the two schools. Therefore, I offer a detailed description of ESA in the next section before presenting the profiles for the rest of the participants in the study under the respective schools, starting with Bugagga Rural Primary school.
3.5 Educational Standards Agency (ESA)

Broadly, there are three bodies involved in the educational standards at various levels in Uganda (see UNESCO Uganda Position paper, 2004). The first category includes the autonomous institutions, which includes the National Council for Higher Education (NCHE), Uganda National Examinations Board (UNEB) and the National Curriculum Development Centre (NCDC). The second category consists of the decentralized structures such as the pre-primary, primary and secondary education. The last category includes the sub-sector departments at the ministry of education headquarters. The ESA is in the last category. ESA was established because of a recommendation of the 1989 Education Policy Review Commission. The Government White Paper of 1992 implemented the specific recommendation to establish ESA. Thus, the former traditional inspectorate of the Ministry of Education was restructured and given a semi-autonomous status that resulted in the formation of this new body. Its mandate is to assess levels of the teaching and learning processes and activities as they relate to education curriculum goals and objectives. As a body responsible for quality education and given that the use of mother tongue is one of the strategies for achieving this objective, ESA was in position to assess the extent to which the new language education policy was being implemented in schools in their areas of jurisdiction. Their views and interpretation of the policy was important in a study that focused on implementation of the policy. ESA eastern region stretches from Iganga district to Soroti. Thus the districts in which the two schools were located were both under the ESA eastern region office. Therefore, when I interviewed the ESA officials, I was able to refer to both schools. The ESA eastern region offices, set up in 2004, were located within Mbale municipality next to the district education offices. The building housing the ESA offices was newly constructed and
within an enclosure with a gate and stood out conspicuously against the ageing district education
offices.

I first contacted one of the officials of ESA who was enrolled in an evening program at the Islamic University in Uganda (IUIU) where I teach. I explained to him about the study I was carrying out and I asked if I could have a meeting with the ESA officials in order to hold a focus group discussion with them, to which he readily agreed. However, given the inadequate staff plus the extensive area under their jurisdiction, my initial efforts to get an appointment were unsuccessful. They were out in the field most of the time. Although I went to their office several times, it was either locked or on one occasion, only the office attendant was present. Thus, although I had contacted them in October 2005, it was not until June 2006 that I was able to have a meeting with them. I was finally able to conduct a focus group discussion with ESA officials on June 8th, 2006 in the boardroom and it lasted for fifty minutes. At the time of the interview, I was told that there were nine members of staff at the ESA eastern region office. I had an interview with three of the ESA officials, one whose mandate was English Language and Literature. The interview was audio recorded with their permission to do so. I also took notes during the discussions.

3.6 The school routine and participants at Bugagga Rural Primary School

In this section, I describe the school routine as well as the profiles of the participants from Bugagga Rural Primary School who participated in this study. The participants included the education officer as a representative of the Ministry of Education and Sports at the district level, the school headmaster, the teachers, and the members of the community. I first present the profile of the district education officer (DEO) followed by the school headmaster, the teachers and lastly the community members. As I present the profiles, where necessary I also discuss the
process involved in identifying the participant(s), as well as the date and place of the discussions or interviews. The routine of the school is presented in the next section.

3.6.1 The school routine

A typical day at Bugagga Rural Primary school begins at 7am when the pupils trickle in from the villages surrounding the school. Between this time and the beginning of classes the pupils would be involved in general cleaning of the classrooms and the compound. There is a school assembly every day of the week at 8am and thereafter the pupils go to their respective classrooms. There is a tea break at 10-10.30am and lunch break from 12.30-2.00pm. Teaching ends at 3.30pm when pupils go for various activities such as sports and games depending on the season. I was told that during this time, there was remedial teaching for some pupils. For primary 1 and 2, the teaching ends at 12.30pm when they go back home for lunch. The older children return in the afternoon after lunch break. In all, for Primary 1-2, there were four hours of instruction in a day.

3.6.2 The District Education Officer - Butaleja District

The rural school was located in the new district of Butaleja. It was previously in Tororo district in which the different languages spoken were not mutually intelligible. These languages belonged to different language families (see Chapter 1). Dombo (2005) asserts that this was one of the reasons that led Bunyole County to achieve the status of a district status of its own. Thus, most of the officers in the new district had previously worked in Tororo and simply just transferred their services to the new district. Mr. Robert Tera, the district education officer, started his service as a classroom teacher. He moved through the different ranks to get to his current administrative position. Like the other officers in the district, he had transferred his
services from Tororo district to Butaleja when the districts were split. However, during the time of my field study, he was serving in an acting capacity.

I first contacted Mr. Robert Tera by telephone in April 2006 and briefly explained to him the purpose of my study. In particular, I was interested in learning the views of the Ministry of Education representatives in the district towards the policy as well as how the policy was implemented in the schools. We then made arrangements to meet for an interview. However, owing to his busy schedule, we had to reschedule our appointments on two occasions. I was finally able to conduct the interview on June 26th, 2006 in his office at the district headquarters. The interview lasted for an hour. When we were settled in his office, I once again stated the purpose of my study. I also requested his permission to audio record the interview to which he consented.

3.6.3 The headmaster

The headmaster of Bugagga Rural Primary School has a degree in education obtained through distance education. He was in his early 40s and had been in the teaching service since 1983. He taught Social Studies. I made several trips to the school prior to having the interview with the headmaster. I introduced myself and briefly mentioned the purpose of my study. He was very friendly and welcoming. I gave him the letter from the DEO stating the purpose of my study and thereby introducing me to the school authorities. In the letter, the DEO had granted me permission to carry out my study within the schools in the district. After signing in the visitor’s book, we discussed the best way I could proceed with my data collection and finally agreed on when I would return to be introduced to the teachers who taught in Primary 1 – 4.

On my next visit to the school, the headmaster introduced me to the teacher in charge of the lower school (equivalent to Junior school in Canada) which comprised Primary 1 – 4 (ages 6
In turn, the head of this section introduced me to the teachers in Primary 1 - 4. Once again, I explained to them the purpose of my study.

### 3.6.4 The teachers

Five teachers, Andrea Mudodo, Olivia Negesa, Eileen Biinda, Marcia Namulinda, and Joab Kalungana from Bugagga Rural Primary school participated in this study. While all of them were interviewed, only three, that is, Andrea Mudodo, Eileen Biinda, and Marcia Namulinda were observed teaching.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teachers’ names</th>
<th>Age range</th>
<th>Qualification</th>
<th>Duration in service (years)</th>
<th>Duration in current school(years)</th>
<th>Class taught</th>
<th>Subjects taught</th>
<th>MT spoken</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Andrea Mudodo 31/3/2006</em></td>
<td>31-40</td>
<td>Grade III certificate</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>Less than six months</td>
<td>Grade one</td>
<td>R &amp; W</td>
<td>Lunyole</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Olivia Negesa 24/3/2006</td>
<td>41-50</td>
<td>Grade III certificate</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Grade one</td>
<td>Science, math &amp; agric</td>
<td>Lunyole</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Eileen Biinda</em></td>
<td>31-40</td>
<td>Grade III certificate</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Grade 1&amp;2</td>
<td>Local lang., R &amp; W</td>
<td>Lunyole</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Marcia Namulinda 27/3/2006</em></td>
<td>41-50</td>
<td>Grade III certificate</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>Grade three</td>
<td>Science, Local language</td>
<td>Lusamia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joab Kalugana 27/3/2006</td>
<td>31-40</td>
<td>Grade III certificate</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>06</td>
<td>Grade three</td>
<td>Eng &amp; Math</td>
<td>Lunyole</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Teachers whose lessons were observed

Andrea Mudodo and Olivia Negesa both shared teaching in the Primary 1 class. However, I was able to observe only Andrea teaching. Andrea qualified in 1993 and had a Grade III Teacher Certificate. She had just joined Bugagga Rural primary school and spoke Lunyole as her mother tongue. Olivia Negesa had a Grade III Teacher Certificate obtained in 1991. She was sent to this school where she has taught ever since. Olivia was between 41-50 years of age. She spoke Lunyole as her mother tongue. Olivia taught science, numeracy, and agriculture in Primary 1. I interviewed Olivia on March 24th, 2006.
Eileen Biinda had obtained a Grade III Teacher Certificate. Lunyole was her mother tongue. At the time of the study, Eileen had been teaching for sixteen years, eleven at Bugagga Rural Primary School. She said she taught Local Language in Primary One and Two. The Local Language taught in this school was Lunyole.

Marcia Namulinda and Joab Kalugana both shared teaching in Primary 3, which was divided into two grades. Marcia spoke Lusamia as her mother tongue and she taught Local Language and Science in Primary 3. Marcia had been in the service for twenty nine years, and had spent twenty seven years at Bugagga Rural Primary school. She had a Grade III Teacher certificate. Joab Kalugana had spent six of his eighteen years in teaching service at this school. He had a Grade III Teacher Certificate and spoke Lunyole as his mother tongue. He was within the 31-40 age range. He taught English and Math in Primary 3. Joab and Marcia were both interviewed on March 27th, 2006. As mentioned before, I did not observe him teaching. However, he informed me that there were 80 pupils in his class, two of whom spoke Dhopadhola, one Lumasaba and the rest Lunyole as their mother tongue.

3.6.5 The community participants

Data for the study were collected between October 2005 and June 2006. For the rural community, I administered a questionnaire to 18 participants who responded to the headmaster’s invitation to participate in the study in early October 2005, and held follow-up focus group discussions (FGD) with all these participants plus an additional participant who arrived after the others had completed filling in the questionnaire. Thus for the FGD held in October 2006, there were 19 participants including the one who did not complete a questionnaire. Because of the large number and in order to maximize the contribution of the individual participants, they were split into two smaller groups of 11 and 9 (see tables 3.6 and 3.7 below). Another focus group
discussion was held in June 2006 with 9 participants, two of whom had participated in the October 2005 discussions. I did not administer a questionnaire to the FGD that was conducted in June 2006. Because the questionnaires were in English, not all participants were comfortable with the questionnaire format, thus the FGD provided participants with the opportunity to discuss their views in the familiar Lunyole language⁴. Interviews were then transcribed and translated into English. Of the 18 rural participants who completed the questionnaire, 3 were Councilors at the sub-County where the BRPS was located, 3 were members of the SMC, 6 were members of the PTA, and 6 were members of the Lunyole Language Association (LLA). Three of the participants were female and 15 were male (See Table 3.5).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Councillors</th>
<th>SMC</th>
<th>PTA</th>
<th>LLA</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>05</td>
<td>06</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>06</td>
<td>06</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Overall, there were a total of 28 participants in the rural community who participated in this study: three women and 25 men. As mentioned above, the headmaster made arrangements to invite the community members who participated in the study. He informed me that he sent letters inviting the parents through the children. The fact that there were more men than women could be because in rural areas the male parents are the ones who usually attend to the school issues. Further, it is possible that the SMC and PTA comprise of more men than women. The age of the participants varied from 20 and 64. They had all attained some level of formal education, the lowest level was Primary 3 and the highest was university graduation (see tables 3.5 and 3.6 below). There were two participants who were public servants. Both were teachers, one taught in primary (elementary), and the other was a headmaster of a secondary school. The rest of the

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⁴ As mentioned in chapter one, I speak Lunyole as my mother tongue.
participants were mainly peasant farmers. However, some were engaged in some small business enterprises such as tailoring, running village phone projects or managing retail grocery shops. In addition, they were active in their respective local councils. For example, some held such positions as treasurer, secretary, and chairperson at village or sub-county levels. Among them was a woman leader at the village local council. All the participants were heads of households. All participants except two spoke Lunyole as their mother tongue. One was a priest at the parish church where the school was located and the other was a housewife.

Table 3.6: Participants' characteristics for Focus Group One held in October 2005

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>LC 1 resident</th>
<th>Highest education level</th>
<th>Primary occupation</th>
<th>Office held (e.g. LC1 chairman, secretary)</th>
<th>Household head</th>
<th>Primary language spoken</th>
<th>Primary language written</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Usinga W</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>S 1</td>
<td>Peasant</td>
<td>chairman</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>LYNL</td>
<td>LGDA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guuna N</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>JNR 2</td>
<td>Peasant</td>
<td>chairman</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>LYNL</td>
<td>LGDA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aluye X</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>S 2</td>
<td>Peasant</td>
<td>LC 3 Secr education</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>LYNL</td>
<td>English/LGDA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hahya J</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>S 4</td>
<td>Peasant</td>
<td>LC 3 C’llor</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>LYNL</td>
<td>English/LGDA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maliza M</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>JNR 1</td>
<td>Peasant</td>
<td>LC 3 C’llor</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>LYNL</td>
<td>LGDA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singano S</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>P 7</td>
<td>Peasant</td>
<td>LC 3 Secr health</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>LYNL</td>
<td>LGDA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ndera K</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>S 4</td>
<td>Peasant</td>
<td>LC 2 C’llor</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>LYNL</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kate W</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>S 3</td>
<td>Peasant</td>
<td>LC 2 C’llor</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Lugwer e</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Syomere C</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>P 3</td>
<td>Peasant</td>
<td>C’tan LC 1</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>LYNL</td>
<td>LGDA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Busaba B</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>S 4</td>
<td>Peasant</td>
<td>LC 1 C’llor</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>LYNL</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kebba W</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>P 7</td>
<td>Peasant</td>
<td>LC 1 C’llor</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>LYNL</td>
<td>LGDA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

KEY: JNR= Junior; S= Senior Secondary; LC= Local council 1, 2, or 3 Councillor; LC 3 Secr educ = Secretary for education Local Council 3; LC 3 Secr health= Secretary for Health at Local Council 3; LYNL = Lunyole; LGDA = Luganda
Table 3.7: Participants' characteristics for FGD Two held in October 2005

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>LC 1 resident</th>
<th>Highest education level</th>
<th>Primary occupation</th>
<th>Office held (e.g. LC1 chairman, secretary)</th>
<th>Household head</th>
<th>Primary language</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wadada J</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>S 1</td>
<td>Peasant</td>
<td>treasurer</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>LYNL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saha M</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>S 4</td>
<td>Peasant</td>
<td>treasurer</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>LYNL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utenga E</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Bsc, Dip Educ</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>treasurer</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>LYNL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alonda P</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>S 4</td>
<td>Peasant</td>
<td>secretary</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>LYNL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muliro I</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>S 2</td>
<td>Peasant</td>
<td>chairman</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walyera J</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>S 4</td>
<td>Peasant</td>
<td>chairman</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>LYNL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gerwa A</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>P 7</td>
<td>Peasant</td>
<td>Publicity youth</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>LYNL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saha R</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>S 4</td>
<td>Taylor</td>
<td>Woman leader</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>LYNL</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.7 The school culture and participants at Tiriri Urban Primary School

As with the rural school, the participants whose profiles I present here included the DEO, the school headmaster, teachers of Primary 1 to 3, and some members of the community. There were five teachers and nine members of the community who participated in this study from this school.

3.7.1 The school culture

At Tiriri Urban Primary school, a typical day began with some lessons in reading and writing at 7am for the pupils who came early to school. Thereafter, teaching according to the set timetable began at 8am and continued until 12.30pm when they broke off for lunch. Between 10.00 -10.30am there was tea break. The day ended at 5pm with games and sports. I was told that for each school term, the co-curricular activities the pupils would be involved in depended on the program given to the schools by the MOES. All the schools in the country would be involved in the same activities as they prepared for the national competitions. I observed that Tiriri Urban Primary school had several trophies displayed in the headmaster’s office.
3.7.2 The District Education Officer - Tororo District

Owing to the busy schedule of the Chief Administrative Officer of Tororo district, I was unable to meet with him, instead, I was directed to the Education Officer as the person directly connected to my issue. I met the DEO in his office located within the District Local Council building in Tororo Municipality. The DEO gave me a letter introducing me to the headmasters of the schools where I was to do the study. He also suggested that I could undertake the research at Tiriri Urban Primary School. When we met, he was occupied with teachers’ transfers; however, he was able to grant me a 35 minute interview in his office. During this time he gave me statistics regarding the enrolments in the schools within the district.

The DEO, whose mother tongue was Lunyole, was in his late forties and had served in this position for eight years. He held a BA and a Diploma in Education.

3.7.3 The headmaster

My first visit to Tiriri Urban Primary School was on March 23rd, 2006. Although I did not meet the headmaster, I was able to speak to the deputy headmaster in his office. I met the principal on my subsequent visits to the school who told me that he was involved with work delegated to him by the municipal education office. So, for most of the time that I was in the school, it was the deputy principal that I interacted with throughout the period of my field study. He agreed to be interviewed and allowed me to audio tape the interview which took place in the headmaster’s office. The interview lasted for 50 minutes.

The deputy principal was in his early forties. He enrolled in a teacher training college where he obtained a Grade III Teacher Certificate after completing the ‘Ordinary School Certificate’. After teaching for a few years, he went for further training and obtained a diploma.
(Grade V Certificate) in teaching. At the time of my field study he was pursuing a degree through distance education.

As well as to seeking permission to carry out my study in the school, I informed the deputy headmaster that I would like to interview some members of the community that the school interacted with. These, I pointed out, did not necessarily have to be parents with children currently enrolled in the school and asked him to identify and then invite the community members for a FGD. He promised to contact them so that I would be able to meet them on my next visit to the school. On my subsequent visit, I met and held a FGD with some members of the community. A detailed profile of this group is given in the section after the teachers’ profiles.

In the next section, I present the profiles of the teachers from the urban school.

3.7.4 The teachers’ profiles

There were six teachers in Primary 1-3 at Tiriri Urban Primary school who participated in this study: Christine Ateng, Karen Abbo, Annet Ajia, Petrina Kakala, Helen Naigobya, and Gabriel Okong. Classroom observations were conducted with four of these teachers. These included Karen Abbo in Primary 1, Petrina Kakala in Primary 2, Helen Naigobya and Gabriel Okong both of Primary 3. All interviews took place in the headmaster’s office. The table below gives details of their qualifications, age, duration in teaching service, subjects they teach and their mother tongue language.
Table 3.8: TUPS-Teachers’ bio data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Names of Teachers</th>
<th>Age range</th>
<th>Qualification</th>
<th>Duration in service</th>
<th>Class taught</th>
<th>Subjects</th>
<th>Teacher’s Mother tongue</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Christine Ateng</td>
<td>31-40</td>
<td>Grade III Teacher certificate</td>
<td>19 years</td>
<td>Primary 1</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>Ateso</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Karen Abbo</td>
<td>31-40</td>
<td>Diploma (Grade V) certificate</td>
<td>13 years</td>
<td>Primary 1</td>
<td>All subjects</td>
<td>Dhopadhola</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annet Ajia</td>
<td>50+</td>
<td>Grade III Teacher Certificate</td>
<td>30 years</td>
<td>Primary 2</td>
<td>All subjects</td>
<td>Dhopadhola</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Petrina Kakala</td>
<td>31-40</td>
<td>Diploma (Grade V) certificate</td>
<td>23 years</td>
<td>Primary 2</td>
<td>All subjects</td>
<td>Lunyole</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Helen Naigobya</td>
<td>25-30</td>
<td>Grade III Teacher certificate</td>
<td>03 years</td>
<td>Primary 3</td>
<td>Science, R&amp;W, Religious Education</td>
<td>Gishu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Gabriel Okong</td>
<td></td>
<td>Grade III Teacher certificate</td>
<td>05years</td>
<td>Primary 3</td>
<td>R&amp;W, SST</td>
<td>Gwere</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Teachers whose lessons were observed

Christine Ateng was one of the teachers I interviewed who taught in a Primary 1 class. However, I did not observe her teaching. Christine, who had qualified in 1987, had spent only four years in her current school. She had a Grade III Teacher Certificate and spoke Ateso as her mother tongue. While she did not give me the breakdown of the different languages spoken by the pupils in her class, she said there were many, but the majority spoke Ateso. Christine had been sensitized in preparation for implementation of the new language education policy through workshops organized by the Mukuju Core Primary Teachers’ College in 2002. She also said that she had attended a workshop in 2005 whose purpose was to help teachers in the development of reading & writing skills for the pupils in Primary 1 – 4.

Karen Abbo had been in the teaching service for thirteen years and had a Diploma in Education, commonly referred to as a Grade V Teacher Certificate. She spoke Ateso as her mother tongue. She taught in Primary 1. The pupils in her class spoke a variety of local
languages, which included Dhopadhola, Samia, Lunyole, Lugwere and others from the western Bantu family. There were some Kenyan and Indian pupils in her class. I observed Karen teach on June 13th, 2006. There were seventy-six pupils in Karen’s class speaking 13 different mother tongue languages (Table 3.9).

Table 3.9: Languages spoken as mother tongue by Primary 1 pupils

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mother tongue spoken by pupils</th>
<th>Boys</th>
<th>Girls</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dhopadhola</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ateso</td>
<td>07</td>
<td>09</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kumam</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lunyole</td>
<td>06</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lusamia</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lugwere</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lugishu</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lusoga</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luganda</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Runyakole</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somali</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gujarati</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Annet Ajia, first qualified with a Grade II Teacher Certificate in 1976, was over fifty years of age, had gone back to college and upgraded to a Grade III Teacher Certificate. Annet was transferred to Tiriri Urban Primary School in 2005 from a rural school. She taught Reading and Writing, and Art & Craft in Primary 2. In her class, the pupils spoke different languages including Ateso, Dhopadhola, Samia, Lusoga, Lugwere as well as Somali, a non-Ugandan language. I was not able to observe Annet teach.

Petrina Kakala had a diploma in education and had been in the service for twenty three years. Petrina had so far taught for seventeen years at the present school. Although she spoke Lunyole as her mother tongue, she was only able to read and write in Luganda and English. She taught English, reading and writing, Physical Education, Art and Craft. She had attended workshops to introduce the teachers to the syllabus for Volume Two of the Primary School Curriculum.
Table 3.10: Languages spoken as mother tongue by the pupils in Primary 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mother Tongue spoken by the pupils</th>
<th>Boys</th>
<th>Girls</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jopadhola</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>09</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ateso</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Langi</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lunyole</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lusamia</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lugwere</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lugishu</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>06</td>
<td>08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luganda</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somali</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Helen Naigobya had recently joined the teaching service after obtaining a Grade III Teacher Certificate. She was between 25 -30 years and spoke Lugishu as her first language. She had been in the teaching service for only three years, all of which had been spent at Tiriri Urban Primary School. She taught Science, Reading and Writing, and Religious Education in Primary 3.

There were fifty-seven pupils in her class speaking eleven different languages as indicated in the table below.

Table 3.11: Languages spoken as mother tongue by pupils in Primary 3 B

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mother tongue spoken by the pupils</th>
<th>Boys</th>
<th>Girls</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jopadhola</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>05</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ateso</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acholi</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Langi</td>
<td>06</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lunyole</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lusamia</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lugwere</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lugishu</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lusoga</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luganda</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somali</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indian</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Helen was able to read and write in Luganda and Lugishu. The interview with Helen took place on March 23rd, 2006 from the headmaster’s office and lasted for twenty minutes. Helen was introduced to the new language education policy through workshops organized internally by the school.

Gabriel Okong qualified from a Primary Teacher Training College with a Grade III Teacher Certificate. Gabriel taught Reading and Writing as well as SST in one of the Primary 3 grades. He spoke Lugwere as his mother tongue which was not spoken by any of the pupils in his class. There were 55 pupils in his class speaking seven different languages as their mother tongue (see Table 3.12).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mother tongue spoken by the pupils</th>
<th>Boys</th>
<th>Girls</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jopadhola</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>08</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ateso</td>
<td>08</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lunyole</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lugishu</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luganda</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somali</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indian</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.7.5 The community participants

Urban communities in Uganda are known for being multilingual. This was true for Tororo municipality in Tororo district where Tiriri Urban School was located. At the same time, I present the profile of the community participants connected with Tiriri School; I shall describe the process I went through to secure their participation in the study. This is important because it helps to show the differences between the rural and urban communities. For example, as it was the planting season in the rural areas during the time of my field study, the participants who had been contacted by the headmaster of the rural school turned up at the appointed time. This meant
that they took time off from their chores (which at this time involved planting and weeding their crops, most of them being peasant farmers) to respond to the invitation from the school. This is usually a busy time as all the planting has to be done well before the end of the rainy season. However, this was not the case for the participants from the urban school. Here, not all the participants turned up at the appointed time for the focus group discussions. As a result, it was not possible to hold a focus group discussion that included all of them at the same time. The participants were very concerned about time and therefore did not want to spend a long time waiting for others to come before we could hold a focus group discussion. Those who arrived first suggested that I interview them in order to allow them to go back to their respective workplaces and continue with their tasks. Consequently, I first held a discussion with the first two people to arrive. They had been waiting in the office of the deputy headmaster for the others to come. However, after waiting for about an hour, I decided to hold discussions with them lest they decided to leave. Eventually, I conducted a series of face-to-face interviews with individuals or groups depending on the number that turned up at a particular time. In all, I held individual interviews with four participants and five others were involved in two focus group discussions.

Overall, there were three men and six women who participated from the urban school community. The mother tongue languages of these participants were: Dhopadhola, Ateso, Lusamia, Lugwere, Lunyole, Lugbara, and Somali. The interviews were conducted primarily in English. One participant did not speak English and because I do not speak Dhopadhola I requested one of the teachers to translate for me. In the first FGD, there were two participants, a stay home mother and a man was a peasant farmer. The next participant that I interviewed was a businessman. This one was followed by a woman who said she had a business in the market within Tororo municipality. The next participant was a public servant in Tororo and spoke Ateso
as her mother tongue. Others included two women who were stay home mothers. The last two
were a woman who worked as a secretary and a man who was a public servant. As mentioned
earlier, this study sought to understand the views of the stakeholders towards implementation of
the new language education policy. For the urban school, the policy stipulated that a local
language should be taught as a subject. In the next section I discuss the tools used to collect
information from the different participants described above.

3.8 Instruments for data collection

In order to address the research questions I posed for this study, I used multiple sources
of data collection and kept comprehensive field notes throughout the data collection period. This
practice is not new in qualitative traditions. In fact scholars of qualitative research argue that
multiple methodologies provide the researcher with a better understanding of the topic under
examination (Creswell, 1998). Guided by this understanding I used the following instruments to
gather data: questionnaires, interviews, focus group discussions, classroom observations and
document content analysis. A detailed description of each instrument is given below.

3.8.1 Questionnaires

The purpose of using questionnaires was to elicit the biographical data of the participants
and at the same time establish their views about the new policy. The design of the questionnaire
provided the participants with space for filling in their biodata. It also had both open and close
ended questions with adequate space provided for the responses. The questionnaire was
comprised of questions that sought to obtain information regarding the participants’ biodata,
their knowledge about the new policy, and their views towards its implementation (See
Appendix B, C, and E). Other questions were about the language(s) spoken in the community, in
the home and in school classrooms. In addition, questions were asked about the language(s) preferred for teaching the pupils at school. The questionnaire was self-administered. However, a great deal of time and care were taken to go through the questions and explain the intention of the study before the participants completed the questionnaire.

Because the questionnaires were written in English, I first established whether all the participants from the community were able to respond to it. I was aware that not everyone in the community was able to read and write in English. I did not have to do this for the headmaster. By consensus it was decided that I go through the questionnaire item by item to check for understanding. I did this using Lunyole, which everyone understood and was the common language spoken in the community. As mentioned earlier, there was no Lunyole orthography developed until 2003. Therefore, most people were not able to read and write in Lunyole. The area or relevant area language that had been used in this community was Luganda. After going through the questionnaire, all the participants said they would be able to complete the questionnaire, except one lady who said she was unable to read and write in any language. On consultation with the other participants, we agreed that I could go ahead and help her complete the questionnaire as she offered her responses.

In addition to the verbal explanation, there was an introductory section that sought the participants’ consent, explained confidentiality and the purpose for the research. There were altogether eighteen participants from the community of the rural school who completed the questionnaire. Two were councilors at the sub-County where the school was located. There were three members from the SMC and seven PTA. The last six were from members of the Lunyole Language association (LLA). I remained nearby while the participants were completing the questionnaires. This is because it would not have been easy to collect them once they took

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5 Administrative unit at Local Government level
them to complete from home. There would also be no way of knowing if the responses were from the participants selected for the study or some other people. However, I did observe that they consulted each other as they filled in their responses. After the participants had completed filling in the questionnaires, we had a discussion about the items they had just responded to.

A preliminary analysis of the data gathered from the questionnaires completed by the community members revealed that some participants had detailed responses while others left some questions unanswered. Although some questions that did not make sense were rewritten, the main problem with the community participants was that they did not write with ease in English or for that matter even in Lunyole. I therefore later decided that the best way to elicit the information I wanted would be through focus group discussions with the participants from the community. This, with the right probing, would enable the participants to freely express themselves without being impeded by language difficulties as we would use one that they were comfortable speaking. On the other hand, for the teachers and the headmaster, the questions were clear and I felt the questionnaire would be able to elicit the desired information according to the purpose of the study.

3.8.2 Interviews

Interviews are one of the most important sources of case study information. This study used in-depth interviews as a tool for gathering data on views of the ministry representatives, the school headmasters, and the teachers regarding the new language education policy. This tool comprised an open-ended interview schedule consisting of items that allowed the participant to talk freely without constant interruptions (see Appendix D). However, they were guided to specific areas of thematic concerns and special interest to the study, and where a new perception

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6 I speak Lunyole as my mother tongue. In addition I am able to speak and write in Luganda and I have good working knowledge of most of the eastern Bantu languages, i.e Lusoga, Lumasaba and Lugwere. Others are Lusamia and Lugwe.
arose; it was pursued on the spot (Cf. Denzin and Lincoln, 1994). All interviews were audio recorded using a digital voice recorder and later transcribed. The teachers were interviewed prior to the classroom observations as a way of understanding their views concerning the new policy. A total of eleven teachers and the two headmasters from the two schools were interviewed for this study. In the case of the teachers, the interviews were followed with classroom observations with the aim of verifying some of the issues referred to during the interviews.

3.8.3 Focus Group Discussions (FGD)

There are several definitions of focus group in literature. However, features such as organized discussion (Kitzinger, 1994), collective activity (Powell et al., 1996), social events (Goss & Leinbach, 1996), and (Kitzinger, 1995) characterize the contribution that focus groups make to social research. For example, Powel et al. (1996) refer to focus groups “as a group of individuals selected and assembled by the researcher to discuss and comment on, from personal experience, the topic that is the subject of research” (p. 499).

Focus group discussions can be used in conjunction with quantitative as well as qualitative methods. Focus groups usually explore specific issues and bring together individuals chosen to meet a specific profile. This technique is often used to confirm data collected from another source. Unlike individual interviews, focus groups provide the added dimension of the interactions among members. In this study, I used FGDs to obtain information from the community members as well as from the Education Standards Agency officials. This method was chosen because it encouraged a wide range of responses. Given that the ESA officials worked as a team, the FGD was the best suited method of getting them to voice their views about the new policy. With focus group discussions, a wider range of response is elicited since a discussion can go in many unanticipated directions. Besides, grouping the community addressed the views of
members of the community who would otherwise not respond to the self administered questionnaires. This was feasible because as pointed out by Morgan and Kreuger (1993) focus groups are particularly useful when there are power differences between the participants and decision-makers of professionals and when the researcher wants to explore consensus on a given topic.

However, I was also mindful of the effects of negative group dynamics, which could distort the data. I used the probing method to ensure that everyone’s views were heard and recorded, therefore, effort was made to listen to all the contributions, and. The focus group discussions consisted of members of the community served by the primary schools. It is argued that implementation of language education policies may be doomed to fail if the community for whom they are intended is not sensitized and subsequently involved in its implementation (Bamgbose, 2000). Through focus group discussions, I sought to establish the community’s awareness of and views towards the policy. The FGDs for the community were conducted at the schools.

3.8.4 Direct classroom observations

Direct observation occurs when a field visit is conducted during the case study. It could be as simple as casual data collection activities or formal protocols to measure and record behaviors. This technique is useful for providing additional information about the topic being studied. Glesne and Peshkin (1992) recommend that researchers should be as unobtrusive as the wallpaper. I made great effort to accommodate the natural flow of the activities by keeping to the back of the classroom.

Specifically, I used an observation schedule whereby observations were limited to instruction practices related to the medium of instruction, and the teaching of the local language.
as stipulated in the language education policy (see Appendix F). My role as a researcher was limited to that of observer. For the most part, I remained seated at the back of the classroom except when I occasionally stood up to take some pictures or video clips. I had two audio recorders, one I would place at the teacher’s table and the other I kept in my possession. The duration of the observations depended on the length of the lesson, usually 30 minutes in a single or 60 minutes for a double. The observations are presented through a detailed description of the data for each school.

Observations were carried out for the first three classes of primary school, that is, Primary 1-3 in each school. According to the policy, the medium of instruction in these classes is a relevant local/area language for the rural schools. In Bugagga Rural Primary school, there were three classroom observations in Primary 1-3 (see Chapter 5). In Tiriri Urban Primary school, four teachers were observed teaching. Prior to the observations, I had interviews with the teachers and in some instances it was on the same day as the observations. This sequence gave me an opportunity to follow-up on some of the assertions made by the teachers. All observations, except for one in Bugagga Rural Primary school, were carried out in the mornings. This was suitable as children in Primary 1-2 only attend the morning sessions and then go home for the rest of the day. I also always telephoned the headmaster beforehand to inform him of my visits to the schools.

Strauss and Corbin (1990), referring to recording and storing observation data, recommend use of an instrument most suited for the question under study. All instruments, they contend are selective and are used to freeze behavior, events and processes for later analysis. For the present study, I used a combination of instruments. I took still pictures and made some video clips (these were without sound). I also audio taped the entire lessons observed. I transcribed the
audio recordings, which were used as raw data, together with the field notes for analyzing the observations. Using a combination of these instruments was useful as I was able to go back to the recording several times after the observation while conducting the analysis.

### 3.8.5 Document analysis

Documents included letters, memoranda, administrative documents, newspaper articles, or any document that is germane to the investigation. In the interest of triangulation of evidence, the documents serve to corroborate the evidence from other sources. Documents are also useful for making inferences about events. Information that has been previously collected is analyzed or secondary data is reviewed, to gain a better understanding of the topic. This information is part of the organization’s history and can be a valuable key to understanding the past. In this study, a review of the documents helped to situate the history of language teaching in the formal education system.

The documents used consisted of school memoranda, circulars from meetings, ministry of education documents and school curriculum materials. In addition, documents as articles in the daily newspapers were analyzed. This was necessary as the object of my study touched on the social fabric of society and as such generated much debate from the public. As a result, there were several news articles in the two major daily newspapers (*The New Vision and Daily Monitor*) specifically concerning the government’s decision to use the mother tongue for instruction.

### 3.9 Research process

As a requirement for conducting research in Uganda, I obtained and filled in forms for submission to the National Research Council to be allowed to carry out the research. In addition, I visited the Local Council offices in Tororo and Butaleja, the districts where the research sites
were located, to discuss with the officials my intended study and to get permission to carry out the study in their area. This was necessary as District and Municipal Local Councils, following the decentralization process in Uganda, are autonomous entities with their own power structures. After securing permission from the two local councils I made preliminary visits to the schools in order to become familiar with the school routine and be able to establish rapport with the intended participants. I first visited Bugagga Rural Primary school in September 2005 and then Tiriri Urban Primary school in March 2006. However, in August 2006, the government, through the Ministry of Education, announced that they were launching the teaching of the mother tongue. This came after the publication of the New Primary School Curriculum Volumes One and Two in September 1999 and August 2000 respectively.

3.10 Ethical considerations

This study was part of a larger research project addressing issues of literacy and development in sub-Saharan Africa, with a focus on Uganda. Therefore, under this umbrella research project, permission was sought from and granted by the ethical review board of UBC by the principal investigators. In addition, I obtained and filled in forms from the Uganda National Council of Science and Technology as is the requirement in order to carry out the study in Uganda. I also sought and was granted permission from the District local governments for the two districts in which the selected schools were located. Informed consent was sought from all participants.

Furthermore, participants were informed about the option for them to withdraw from the study at any time and that this action would not result in any punitive measures. I further explained to them that only the research team would have access to the raw data and that their privacy would be protected. I also informed them that in the event of any publications resulting
from the data collected, their privacy would still be assured. We discussed and agreed that anonymity as a measure to protect their identity would apply and therefore pseudonyms for people and local places would be used throughout the research report. Thus as I interacted with the participants during the data collection, I constantly reassured them of the confidential nature of my work and their anonymity their confidentiality and anonymity.

3.11 Summary

In this chapter, I have presented the research design and methodological tools that I used in gathering data for this study. I discussed the case study as a research strategy and looked at its attributes and challenges. Throughout I have endeavoured to provide a detailed description of the study sites, the participants’ profiles, as well as the research tools used for data collection. In addition to the general discussion of the overall research process, specific information pertaining to the individual schools was given. The chapter also discusses the approach undertaken for data analysis, the limitations of the study and ethical issues. In the next three chapters, I present the data gathered, and analysed with respect to my three research questions.
CHAPTER FOUR

POLICY IMPLEMENTATION: MINISTRY OF EDUCATION REPRESENTATIVES AND SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the answer to the first research question: How is the multilingual language education policy in Ugandan primary schools interpreted and implemented by the Ministry of Education representatives and the school administration in a rural and an urban school respectively? In order to answer this research question, analysis involved interpretation of the data corpus derived from questionnaires, documents and, focus group discussions with the target participants. This triangulation of the data sources is consistent with the qualitative method of checking and verifying the data. By also examining the data so gathered with respect to the different categories of stakeholders, I looked for consistencies, inconsistencies and contrasts in relation to their views about the new policy and its implementation in the rural as well as the urban school.

I will first present the findings for the rural followed by those for the urban school. The same organization will be followed for the analysis as well as the discussion. However, as mentioned earlier (see Chapter 1 and 2), there were four categories of stakeholders, that is, the Ministry of Education representatives, the school authority, and the teachers who were mandated to implement the policy, and the community were the target beneficiary of the language education policy. Within the Ministry of Education representative category, I identified two subdivisions of stakeholders whose roles directly relate to overseeing the implementation of government policies in education. This mandate included language education. The Education Standards Agency (ESA) and the District Education Officer (DEO) were both representatives of the Ministry of Education. The ESA eastern region oversees the districts in which the two selected schools were located while each district has its own Education officer. I will first present
the findings from ESA in the next section as the information cuts across the two schools. The findings for the other stakeholders, the district education office and the school administration will be presented for each respective school starting with the rural and progressing to the urban school. The other of the stakeholders, that is the teachers and the community will be addressed in relation to research questions 2 and 3 in Chapters 5 and 6 respectively.

4.1 The Education Standards Agency (ESA)

The key question that formed the basis for the FGDs concerned the extent to which the new language education policy was implemented in the schools. Thus, the following questions were raised in discussion with ESA officials: What is the current language education policy in Uganda especially concerning the medium of instruction? What is the situation in schools as far as implementation of the 1992 language education policy is concerned? In response to the first question, the officials said that English was the major language for instruction from Primary 1-7. However, in the rural areas, they stated that the language of instruction was expected to be the mother tongue while in the urban setting English, was the language of instruction in the primary classes. The ESA further pointed out that there were four major languages which were supposed to be used as media of instruction where such languages were commonly spoken. These languages were: Luo, Lugbara, Runyakitara and for the Bantu speaking languages, Luganda. Regarding the implementation of the policy, the ESA stated that every district was expected to establish a Language Board to ensure that the mother tongue is implemented in Primary 1. This policy is explained in the following quote:

A District Language Board would consist of teachers, education officials, and those people who are well versed in the language. You see in every community there are people who are authorities in their languages. So the idea was that in the long run every place would have
developed its own literature for the mother tongue, which is applicable in the area (ESA, FGD/06.08.2006).

However, as the ESA pointed out, no district in their region had yet established a Language Board, as explained below:

They have not conceived the idea very much because efforts have been made in some places to get together but it has not really been taken up to full completion (ESA, FGD/06.08.06).

The teaching of the mother tongue according to the ESA was not effectively implemented because from the ESA officials’ observations, the teachers did not have a good understanding of the written form of the local languages, in spite of the fact that the teachers spoke the respective languages as their mother tongue. Another factor mentioned, pertaining to language teaching, was the shift from vernacular to English teaching in the last 20 – 30 years. However, the ESA pointed out that the preliminary results of a survey on literacy and numeracy between Primary 1 – 5 in 2005 by the World Food Program revealed an ‘appalling’ (ESA, I/06.08.06) situation in reading. According to this document, the pupils could neither read in their mother tongue nor in English and there was a disparity between the rural and urban schools in terms of pupils’ reading abilities. Furthermore, this disparity was evident even within the town schools. The location of the school, that is, the peri-urban, as compared to the centrally located schools showed marked differences in reading skills.

In the following sections, I present the findings from the other stakeholders expected to implement the policy. I begin with Bugagga Rural Primary School to be followed by Tiriri Urban Primary School.
4.2 Bugagga Rural Primary School

4.2.1 The District Education Officer, Butaleja District

As a ministry representative charged with overseeing the implementation of government policies in education, the DEO was in a position to understand the extent to which the policy was being implemented in the schools within the district. Therefore, when the question of whether he was aware of the new language education policy was put to him during the interview, the DEO said he was aware of the new policy concerning the use of the mother tongue in teaching. He went on to explain that:

Formerly, Bunyole County as such has been using Luganda. Until recently, I should say a year or so back that we are now trying to turn to the local language which is Lunyole. Otherwise all through these years most of our students have been learning in Luganda, that was the local language. That is the local language they have been using. But of late with this emphasis by government and Ministry of Education & Sports, that now our children should be taught in local language, the mother tongue. They are trying to change but the change is very minimal (DEO/BTLJ, I/June, 2006).

According to this DEO, implementation of the policy in the district had not effectively taken hold in spite of the government’s emphasis on the use of local languages and the mother tongue.

The reason for the slow pace in the implementation of the policy is captured in the following quotation from the interview:

[...] One problem we have had is that we have been teaching these children in Luganda. We are now in a transition which is a bit difficult in that now we have to move away from the teaching of Luganda. They were supposed to be teaching some local language up to
even P7. But now that this policy has come we are trying to address ourselves such that we start teaching in Lunyole (DEO/BTLJ, I/June, 2006).

Nevertheless, the DEO was optimistic that with the new policy it would be possible to teach the mother tongue. In his opinion, he felt that pupils in those districts where the mother tongue is used performed well in the Primary Leaving Examinations (PLE).

When asked about how he planned to ensure the implementation of the policy in his district, he said thus:

I am happy to inform you that an association, which is in connection with Lunyole bible translation project, has helped us a lot. Other than translating the bible into Lunyole, it is also doing a lot of work as far as the local language is concerned (DEO/BTLJ, I/June, 2006).

He explained that the Lunyole Language Association had organized workshops for the teachers. It was also through the efforts of this association that pamphlets and primers had been made for the teachers to use in teaching the mother tongue.

The DEO further pointed out that a District Language Board (DLB) was not yet formed for the district. According to him this was considered to be the most important organ in the implementation of the policy, particularly regarding the teaching of the local language.

However, I pointed out to him that in my earlier interactions with the teachers they expressed their concern about not being prepared to teach using the local language. In response to this concern, the DEO said:

That is very true as I mentioned before we have been teaching in Luganda, so if those who have been there say so, it is not a surprise (DEO/BTLJ, I/June, 2006).

However, with the help of this organization, several workshops had been organized in an effort to prepare the teachers for teaching the local language. Consequently, there were some
teachers within each sub-county who were now trained to teach the mother tongue. Two people from this Association spearheaded this arrangement. The DEO explains below the process of training teachers:

The training of teachers has already started because I talked of some sub-county Center Coordinating Tutors, there are about two at each center. Each center has two teachers who have already gone through a number of training workshops by the help of this association I mentioned to you earlier. At these centers, there are some tutors who I liaise with as a Department of Education and we hold workshops (DEO/BTLJ, I/June, 2006).

Thus, with such arrangements, the DEO was very optimistic that within a period of five years, the teaching of Lunyole in schools would have taken root as according to him the ground had been laid. However, during the FGDs with the community members, fears were expressed concerning the teaching of Lunyole, which in their views was taking them backwards. Regarding such concerns, the DEO said that contrary to the views expressed by the community, the policy was good and forward looking. He therefore argued that the policy:

[...] cannot take them backwards. Compare our performance with the districts in the west, such as Runyakole, they are teaching in the local language. No it cannot take us backwards (DEO/BTLJ, I/June, 2006).

Thus when asked what the general attitude of the people towards the policy was, he reiterated that:

The attitude was not very bad. I would say, think that any citizens of a country are happy when they hear anything about their local language. I want to say that the Banyole are happy about that. The only problem is that Lunyole as such is a bit difficult to read. You find that even
It is thus observed that the findings from the interview with the DEO of Butaleja district indicate that as a stakeholder in the implementation of the bilingual language policy he was aware of the new language education policy regarding the teaching of the mother tongue. However, in implementing the policy in his district, there was more reliance on a non-government community organization for the training of teachers and construction of instructional materials. The next section is about the views of the school administration regarding the new language education policy and how the policy is being implemented.

4.2.2 The headmaster, Bugagga Rural Primary School

The headmaster was aware of the new language education policy and had attended sensitization workshops for the first time in 2005. These workshops were organized by the Center Coordinating Tutor (CCT) as well as the school inspectors. Some teachers from his school had also attended these workshops. The headmaster mentioned that besides workshops, they also held meetings about the teaching of local languages and the creation of instructional materials. The purpose of these meetings, as he pointed out, was because the teachers did not know how to implement the policy. According to him, teachers at this school were not conversant with using the mother tongue with the exception of two who had attended the workshops. So far only two teachers were now conversant with the policy.

In fact, as mentioned by the headmaster, one of the teachers was very enthusiastic about the policy, particularly the use of the mother tongue. This teacher, Eileen Biinda taught in Primary 2 and was therefore among those I interviewed and whose class I observed. As pointed out below, the headmaster explained that following the workshops:
Teachers then come and make instructional materials and schemes. We do not have books for Lunyole. We have to get resource persons to go through (HM/BRPS, I/03.27.06).

From his point of view, the policy was good, especially as he observed that after they had started using it, the pupils in his school were able to read and write. In his explanation, he said that:

Formerly they were not able to read and write in English. Now that they are being taught [...] Now that they can read, we can print more materials in Lunyole to enable them to read well. It has encouraged liking reading. They improve on reading and writing it. This is a good thing. It makes them to explore the language. Knowing the language gives them a quicker avenue to learn other languages (HM/BRPS, I/03.27.06).

According to the headmaster, BRPS started teaching in Lunyole in 2004 and as a result, there were pupils who were now able to read and write in it. However, he considered the appointment of untrained teachers as one of the limitations behind the success of the policy. As all teachers are employed by the government, their training should fit the new policy. In each district, there is a District Service Commission, which advertises the available vacancies for teachers in primary schools. The teachers who have completed their training apply and those shortlisted are interviewed. The successful ones are then sent to the various schools where there is need. The quote below explains what happens at this school once teachers are posted to it:

The District Service Commission interviews teachers after their training in college then posts them to schools. We organize from here internally. We have teachers who do not speak Lunyole. Such teachers, who do not speak Lunyole, are not allocated those classes (HM/BRPS, I/03.27.06).
However, he pointed out that there was a need for training teachers in the teaching of the mother tongue. Regarding the resources available to facilitate the teaching of the mother tongue, the headmaster’s comment was that:

Resources are not available. Someone to make books for us and [I have] even made an order but we do not have any yet. With time since it is now a policy we might get them (HM/BRPS, I/03.27.06).

In summary, the headmaster was aware of the new bilingual language education policy of using the mother tongue as the medium of instruction in the lower classes. As far as he was concerned, his school had started implementing the policy and he felt that the results were positive. However, there were constraints such as unavailability of instructional materials in the mother tongue. In addition, the teachers needed to be further trained to teach in the mother tongue. In conclusion, he stated that, he was aware that not all his teachers were familiar with the new language regulations.

In the next sections, I present the findings from Tiriri Urban Primary school which was located in an urban setting. As with the rural school, the findings are from interviews with the District Education Officer and the headmaster of the school. As in the rural school, the major question was whether these different groups of stakeholders were aware of the new policy, what views they held towards it, and how was the policy implemented.

4.3 Tiriri Urban Primary School

4.3.1 The District Education Officer, Tororo District

Findings from the interview data with the DEO indicate that he was familiar with the new language policy as he mentioned that teaching should be in the mother tongue. According to him, with the 1992 language education policy, the teaching that was previously in the local language now changed to English for both the rural and the urban schools. Thus, English was the language
used in the urban schools and there was no teaching of the local language whatsoever. He also
said that in his district there was a problem because of the two major languages spoken, which
were Ateso and Dhopardhola. While there was an orthography developed in Ateso, none existed
for Dhopardhola. I asked him whether the Breakthrough to Literacy (refer to Chapter 1) pilot
study carried out in his district in the rural schools helped develop the orthography in the
languages where it was undertaken. However, he said that the Breakthrough to Literacy project
took place in very few schools.

[...] we identified three sub-counties and we were picking two schools in
every sub-county. In each school, we would pick about two teachers only
so that it did not have any impact and we were not aiming at producing
orthography, this is something that must be attended to by so many
stakeholders (DEO/TRRO, 1/10.12.06).

In his view, implementation of the new policy was envisaged to begin with the formation of a
DLB. However, a DLB had not been formed because whenever council convened meetings, it
was not tabled for ratification. There were always other urgent issues to be considered. Without a
DLB, implementing the policy was hampered. Nevertheless, the DEO felt that the policy would
be difficult to implement this policy in the urban schools and he could not immediately think of
how best this could be done.

I also raised the issue of the thematic curriculum that was planned by the government to
start at the beginning of the first term of 2007. In response, the DEO said that the thematic
curriculum in which the teaching of the local languages was emphasized was to be introduced in
all primary schools in Uganda. This was to be implemented in phases starting with Primary 1 and
then move on such that each year a new class would be added. However, using the local
language as the medium of instruction would stop in Primary 3 while Primary4 would be a
transition class. Thereafter, from Primary 5 onwards, English was to take over as the medium of instruction. Having explained the process of implementing the thematic curriculum, I asked him about the difference between the Uganda Primary School Curriculum Volumes One & Two in which guidelines were given about the teaching of local language and the recently announced Thematic Curriculum. To this, he said:

I think that one was discarded. [...] By the introduction of the thematic curriculum, that was left, we have also been asking about that one. The ministry left that one and switched onto the thematic curriculum (DEO/TRRO, 1/02.26.07).

The DEO said that implementing the new policy in the urban areas was a problem because of the many tribes/languages, so instruction has been left to English. According to him there was no program whatsoever of teaching the local languages in the urban schools even as a subject. He identified five factors as constraining the implementation of the new policy. These included: (1) the issue of orthography which was not yet developed for Dhopadhola (2) lack of finances to manage the DLB (3) limited finances to develop teaching materials in the local languages (4) the attitude of the people who felt that their children ought to be taught in English rather than in the local language, and (5) the problem of teachers who are teaching in places other than where their mother tongue is spoken. Regarding the last factor, I asked the DEO whether it was not possible to post teachers to schools where they could teach their mother tongue. He explained that:

There could be a way but there is a problem when a teacher is already on the pay roll in a particular school, they may not want to move to another place. Secondly a teacher in a certain place may be transferred to another where there is no accommodation; we have no accommodation in schools, so it becomes a problem for that teacher to be transferred.
Otherwise, transferring them in that direction would have been okay, but problem of accommodation and one of getting off the pay roll. Getting back to the pay roll when one is transferred to a new place is usually a problem. Moreover, when such a teacher is teaching in the new school but continues getting his/her salary from the former school, it will not be possible for that school to access another teacher unless that name of the teacher who was transferred gets off the pay roll to create room for a new teacher (DEO/RR, 1/10.12.05).

In so far as teacher preparation was concerned, the DEO referred to the use of the coordinating centers which he said were located in particular catchment areas. All primary schools were attached to these centers each of which was run by a Center Coordinating Tutor (CCT). The CCTs were helping the teachers who were already in service to handle the new curriculum. Yet they expected the teachers graduating from the teacher training colleges to come out well prepared to implement the new curriculum. In summary, according to the DEO from Tororo District, the new language policy in education was not fully implemented in the urban schools in his district which included Tiriri Urban Primary School. The local language was not taught in the urban school and English was being used as the medium of instruction. This was majorly due to the difficulty of selecting an appropriate language from those that were spoken in the area. The unavailability of funds to operate the DLB further curtailed the implementation of the policy. The next section focuses on the views of the headmaster towards the implementation of the new language education policy in Tiriri Urban Primary school.

4.3.2 The headmaster, Tiriri Urban Primary School

This school was located within Tororo Municipality. Because of the cosmopolitan nature of the municipality, the headmaster pointed out that the pupils spoke different languages as their mother tongues. The common languages included Dhopadhola, Ateso, Samia, Lugwere, Lunyuli,
Lumasaba, and Lusoga. The first two belonged to the eastern and western Nilotic language families respectively while the rest were Bantu languages. However, the headmaster pointed out that when the pupils interact with each other at school, they tended to communicate mainly in Luganda and Kiswahili.

Although the headmaster said he was aware of the new language education policy, having been informed about it through workshops, he confessed that they were still operating according to the old one. He attributed this to the fact that the DLB that would guide them was not yet operational. He also pointed out that even though the teachers in the school were familiar with the new policy they were challenged as to what particular local language would be used in their school given the multiplicity of languages. The headmaster interpreted the policy as requiring them to use the local language in the lower classes, he argued, the children joined the school after attending nursery schools where English was used. In such a situation it would therefore be difficult to switch from English to a local language. He explained their predicament thus:

The policy states that we get a language, which we can use to communicate with a number of children within that area. We get one local language that can be understood by the majority. Now if you analyze it becomes difficult because we have different cultures. For each group there are many children so it becomes a little difficult. Which one will be taken as the major local language though the majority would go in for Luganda since in the past for us we used Luganda, so they would opt for Luganda (HM/TUPS/1/03.24.06).

However, he felt that this policy could only work in the rural schools and not for them in the urban schools. According to his understanding of the policy, it meant that a local language would be used as medium of instruction at a certain level in the lower classes. I pointed out to him that in his school, which was in an urban setting, the local language was supposed to be
taught only as a subject. He still felt it was not feasible due to the many different languages spoken by the pupils.

He lamented the absence of the DLB which, in his view, would help decide on the language to be used in such a school. He also pointed out that the teachers in his school had a negative attitude towards the policy due to the mixture of languages within the urban community. He seemed to see no advantage to implementing the policy in his school as he explains below:

I am saying that I think it will not be very effective. I can say it is good but maybe it requires more guidance by may be the district officials on how to arrive at the local language that will benefit the mixed tribes (HM/TUPS, 1/03.24.06).

In spite of this constraint, the headmaster admitted that there were advantages in teaching the local language. Thus his response as to whether the teaching of the local language was necessary was:

It is necessary because the local language also helps in times of communication. The child will not stay in a particular society all through. It can create a job opportunity because a child can leave this place, going maybe to the north and while you are there, they advertise for a job and they want you to be able to communicate in this particular language. Therefore, if you are in an area where they speak to you that local language so it is good because it can be a job opportunity (HM/TUPS, 1/03.24.06).

As far as he was concerned, the limitations of the policy were mainly implementation especially as the DLB had not yet been formed. Therefore, because of this, he pointed out that:

The school cannot be blamed because we expected the language board to have taken off and maybe guided the schools. May be they could have
summoned us to go and give our views there, held workshops to sensitize (HM/TUPS, l/03.24.06).

However, in his opinion, they had not received adequate guidance on how to implement this policy. The only information they had received was from the circulars from the municipal Education Officer who had not provided further guidance. Similarly, the DLB that was expected to spearhead the implementation was yet to be formed.

It would come from up to tell us that the Language Board has been formed to give us further guidance basing on communication from up. The language Board has been formed so maybe you mobilize your - I think that is how it would run (HM/TUPS, l/03.24.06).

In summary, the headmaster interpreted the new policy as one that required the schools to use the local language as the medium of instruction. However, in his view, the headmaster felt that this was not possible in Tiriri Urban Primary School due to the multiplicity of the languages spoken by the pupils. The headmaster and the teachers were in a dilemma as to which of the various languages spoken within the community would be selected. The fact that the DLB, which would provide guidance in this regard, was not formed, further complicated the implementation of this policy. Consequently, the school continued to work with the old policy as far as language teaching was concerned. Given this complex situation, I sought to establish the views of the new policy from the community that is part of Tiriri Urban Primary School. In particular, I wanted to know what the community’s interpretation of the policy was as well as their views towards its implementation. As pointed out above, this will be presented in Chapter 6. In the sections that follow I offer the analysis and discussion of the data presented in the three sections above.
4.4 Analysis and discussion

In the analysis of data three major themes emerged regarding the implementation of the new language education policy in the primary schools in the rural as well as the urban setting. These themes cut across the two schools except for subtle variations in the focus of particular issues of concern among the stakeholders. These themes included the following: (1) contradictory pronouncements about the policy (2) a disconnect between formal policy as stated and stakeholder interpretation, and (3) inadequate infrastructure to facilitate implementation of the policy. A detailed discussion of these themes follows below.

4.4.1 Contradictory pronouncements concerning policy implementation

The government through the ministry of education had at different times made pronouncements of instruments that aimed at giving direction for the implementation of the new language education policy. However, analysis of some of these instruments, which included curriculum documents as well as circulars from MOES and NCDC revealed a lack of clarity as to what instrument was to be followed. For example, the new Uganda Primary School Curriculum Volumes One and Two which were launched in 1999 and 2000 respectively included guidelines for teaching Local Language\(^7\) as well as the use of mother tongue as the medium of instruction. On January 10\(^{th}\), 2005 the Ministry of Education and Sports issued seven circulars and associated press releases to provide information about changes to be introduced and implemented immediately. In circulars on Language policy (MOES circular No 3/05 of 10\(^{th}\) January) the government announced revisions to the implementation of the language of instruction policy effective from February 2005. In this circular it was stated that only the main area languages already approved by the MOES could be used as LOI without approval from the MOES. The languages listed included: Lugbara, Luo (including Alur, Acholi/Langi and Dhopadhola), Ateso,

\(^7\) Local Language is used to refer to the subject on the curriculum
Luganda, Runyoro/Rutoro, Rukiga/Runyakole. Other local languages besides these had to seek approval from MOES if they were to be used as LOI. Another related circular, (MOES circular No.2/05 of January 10th) announced the intention of introducing a new thematic curriculum in 2006 for Primary One.

The thematic curriculum where the approach was to use the local languages as the vehicle for the rapid achievement of literacy in Primary 1 was to be implemented nationally in 2007. According to the headmaster of Bugagga Rural Primary School, prior to the launching of the thematic curriculum, there had been workshops and seminars organized to sensitize teachers about the teaching of the mother tongue. Thus, as he pointed out, Bugagga Rural Primary School had started teaching the mother tongue in 2004. The DEO in Butaleja too confirmed that the teaching of the mother tongue had started in the district although it was slow. In effect the stated revisions as indicated in the circular did not change the status quo of teaching the local languages in the school. In the thematic curriculum, it is stated that wherever possible, the child should learn in the home language or at least a language that is familiar. With this approach from the MOES about the implementation of the policy and given that there are more resources in English than in many of the local languages, as the findings of this study show it was likely that English would be used more as the LOI.

On the other hand, Tiriri Urban Primary School was implementing some aspects of the policy. English was used in this school as the medium of instruction from Primary 1 -7. However, there was no teaching of the Local Language whatsoever. Yet according to the policy, a local language was supposed to be taught as a subject in the urban schools. In spite of the launching of the thematic curriculum, this situation did not change. The school continued to operate as usual, that is, using English as the medium of instruction without any effort made
towards teaching the Local Language as a subject. Section 4.4.1 of this report further illustrates the confusion surrounding the implementation of this policy in particular when the DEO of Tororo pointed out that the difference between the new Uganda Primary School Curriculum Volumes One and Two and the thematic curriculum was not made clear even to them as MOES representatives. In his view, the MOES was not able to clarify the difference between these two curriculum instruments, both of which referred to the implementation of the new policy.

Literature shows that this laissez faire approach to the implementation of language policies that seek to promote use of local languages in education is typical of many African countries (Alidou, 2004; Bamgbose, 2000). Fettes (1997) contends that a great deal of language policy-making goes on in a haphazard or uncoordinated way, far removed from the language planning ideal. The findings of this study thus reflect what Bamgbose (1991, 1999) observes about language policies in Africa as being generally characterized by avoidance, vagueness, arbitrariness, fluctuations and declarations. He refers to this as ‘implementation avoidance strategies’ typical of language planning in Africa. Alidou, 2004 contends that reluctance to implement language policies that may reduce the gap between two unequal social classes may be politically motivated by African elites who, because of their education, have access to economic and political power. Further, Alexander (2001) and Bourdieu (1993) argue that lack of political will by individuals who have acquired linguistic cultural capital leads to neglect of pursuance of progressive policies consistent with the aims of democracy. Indeed Uganda’s language policy may be described as being of a subtractive bilingual type since the emphasis is mostly in the first years of literacy development. However, Brock-Utne and Hopson (2005) contest the use of the term ‘bilingual’ within the African context because it refers to using mother tongue as a bridge to schooling in a European language thus further perpetuating the status quo of the elites. Thus
government attempts at providing mother tongue literacy may be frustrated in a subtle way because the elites are reluctant to accept the policies in practice (Akinnasso 1991, Bamgbose, 2000).

4.4.2 A disconnect between formal policy as stated and stakeholder interpretation

   The second major theme relates to the apparent disconnect between formal policy and its interpretation by the stakeholders. As mentioned above, the ESA officials said that the policy was applicable only to the rural areas. They seemed to be oblivious to the fact that according to the policy, the urban schools were expected to teach a Local Language as a subject even when English was being used as the medium of instruction. Thus their concerns were only directed to the rural schools.

   Findings from the other stakeholders from the rural and urban schools revealed the inconsistency in the way in which the policy was interpreted from. For example, although both the headmaster and the DEO in the rural area said the policy was being implemented, there was no mention of continuing to teach it beyond the first four classes.

   In the urban school, the headmaster’s response, as given in Section 4.3.2, is a good illustration of this disconnect. As the person in charge of the daily activities in the school, the headmaster is expected to give guidance to the teachers regarding the policies to be implemented within the school. When the question about the new policy was raised with the headmaster his response was that the policy required them to use the local language as a medium in the lower classes which was contrary to what the policy stipulated for the urban schools. There seemed to be no concerted effort on his part as the head of the school to try to understand the policy and seek out possible strategies of applying it in his situation. At no point did he see his role as the person mandated by the policy to decide on the local language to be used in the school. Nor did he
envisage himself, as the headmaster and therefore the head of administration, giving guidance to
the teachers by engaging them in discussions of how best they would enable pupils in their
school to learn a Local Language. The headmaster’s views were not different from those held by
the DEO, who also felt that this policy was applicable only to the rural schools.

4.4.3 Inadequate infrastructure to facilitate implementation of the policy

The third major theme that emerged concerned the views expressed by the ministry
representatives and the school administrators linked to the two schools about lack of or
inadequate infrastructure to facilitate the implementation of the policy. Such infrastructure
mentioned included issues related to the orthography and availability of instructional materials,
professional development and teacher distribution, and the District Language Board. Each of
these is discussed in the following paragraphs.

Orthography and instructional material

In both schools the work on orthography was just being undertaken at the same time as
the schools were expected to be implementing the policy. In a report from the NCDC, the
director pointed out that:

"the selection of the local languages to be taught would be based on a community-based
orthography, a variety of written material already in use and organizations responsible for their
further development" (Monitor Online, 7/10/2006).

At the time of this study, Butaleja district seemed to meet two of these criteria. The
Lunyole Language Association (LLA), in partnership with SIL, had developed the Lunyole
orthography. Thus, this association took care of criteria one and three as mentioned by the
director of NCDC. Through the efforts of this association there were some pamphlets and
primers developed for the teachers to use in teaching the mother tongue. However, even with this
effort, Lunyole was short of meeting the criteria of a local language with “a variety of written
material already in use”. Therefore, there were limited instructional materials developed in Lunyole that the teachers could use.

Similarly, the DEO of Tororo and the headmaster of Tiriri Urban Primary School cited lack of resources as one of the impediments to the implementation of the new language education policy. According to the headmaster books were a prerequisite for the implementation of the program. Interestingly, while the headmaster lamented about the lack of resources for teaching the Local Language, the teachers’ concern of inadequate materials was not only limited to the local language but included other subjects such as English.

In sum, while the stakeholders appreciated the government goal for instituting this new policy on language education, the only way it would be implemented was to plan for the necessary resources. Therefore, the local initiative by the LLA whose efforts enabled schools in Butaleja district, among which is Bugagga Rural Primary School, to start implementing the new policy were highly applauded. This was indeed a very important development as literature shows that the involvement of the beneficiaries contributes to the successful implementation of the policy.

*Professional development and teacher distribution*

Inadequate preparation of the teachers was an issue that came up from both schools. The teachers in both schools were concerned about not having been prepared for teaching with the local language. For example, teacher Andrea of Bugagga Rural Primary School complained about not having gone for these sensitization workshops and yet she was expected to teach in the mother tongue. More so, for those who had attended workshops, the headmaster said that they were expected to go back to their schools and make their own instructional materials especially as there were no books in Lunyole. This therefore highlights the dilemma that the teachers faced
in implementing this policy at Bugagga Rural Primary School. In addition, the headmaster surmised that the posting of trained teachers was one of the limitations of the policy. There was an urgent need to train teachers. Analysis of the findings shows that the majority of pupils in this school spoke Lunyole as their mother language. For example, in Primary 3 only one pupil did not speak Lunyole. Therefore with careful planning it would be possible to post teachers who speak Lunyole to such a school.

Although there was no restriction in the posting of teachers, there were hiccups to contend with when it came to transfers. For example the DEO of Tororo district referred to posting teachers as one of the challenges in the implementation of the policy. It impacted on successful implementation of the policy in two ways. First, the government did not give accommodation to the teachers in schools where they are posted. It therefore meant that they had to find their own accommodation. Second, there was the issue of access to the government pay roll. He pointed out that once a teacher accesses the pay roll; it takes time to get back to it once someone is transferred to another school. This was a challenge especially when the DEO wanted to transfer teachers to a school that would need the service of such a special teacher for the teaching of the mother tongue.

**The District Language Board (DLB)**

The purpose of the District Language Board (DLB) was to ensure the implementation of the new language education. This board was to consist of teachers, officials from the district education office, and members of the community who were experts in their respective languages. The objective was that the board would give guidance to the implementation of the policy especially in codification and developing materials in the language for use in schools. The ministry of education representatives and the headmasters from the two schools considered DLB
as the most important strategy in the implementation policy. Yet, there was no DLB in Butaleja district and one had just been established in Tororo district. But, as the DEO for Tororo hastened to add, while it was good that the DLB had been formed in Tororo, there were still no funds to operate it which was a setback to the implementation of the policy. This meant that the development of materials remained on paper, further inhibiting the implementation of the policy.

According to the headmaster of the urban school, their failure to implement the policy was due to lack of an operational DLB. With the DLB in place workshops could be organized to sensitize them fully about the policy.

Although language policy involves codification (Cooper, 1989) Rubagumya (1991) contends that the state of the economies in sub-Saharan Africa has not favored a proliferation of languages in education due to the competing influence of the colonial or world languages. Thus codification of languages whose symbolic value was not as powerful lagged behind, which in turn, limits the implementation of mother tongue literacy.

Further, such economic factors as the retention of textbook markets for western publishing companies have impacted on medium of instruction in African languages (Alidou, 2004; Bgoya, 1992; 2001; Brock-Utne, 2000; Mazrui, 1997). This is further entrenched by the new demands of linguistic skills exerted by the post-industrial economy resulting in the commodification of languages (Cameroon, 2000; Kilminster, 1997, Robertson, 1992). Consequently, this has impacted on the implementation of a language policy promoting a local language due to the low linguistic capital of many African languages but more so for the minority languages. This is because the cost of preparing teachers and materials is made prohibitive. However, Benson, (2004) argues that not using a language of instruction familiar to the learner is highly inefficient and wasteful. Given evidence from experiments conducted in
Mozambique and Guinea Bisau, Benson (2004) says the cost of materials is small in comparison to those costs resulting from pupils who drop out of school due to the use of an unfamiliar language for instruction.

4.5 Summary

In this chapter I examined how the new policy is interpreted by each of the stakeholders, the Ministry representatives, the Educational Standards Agency and the District Education Officers as well as the school headmasters, who are mandated with its implementation within their jurisdiction. While each one of the people who participated in the study was aware of the policy, there were subtle variations in the way they interpreted the policy. I categorized these variations into key themes which included a mismatch between the policy as stated and as interpreted and the inadequate infrastructure to facilitate successful implementation. The findings show lack of consistency in the guidelines that should help in the implementation. Consequently, it was difficult to ascertain exactly what direction the policy was being developed. This, coupled with the inadequate infrastructure to facilitate in the teaching, further compounded the implementation process. Thus, I discerned a kind of laissez faire attitude from the implementers particularly at the school level and more so in the urban school. As elaborated by Bamgbose (2000) policies that promote use of African languages often meet with negative attitudes from the people expected to implement them. This perpetuates poor products that seem to indicate that bilingual education programs are ineffective and so call for concentrating on only the foreign language. The delay in instituting an instrument such as the DLB, meant to expedite the implementation process, became a point of reference for not having implemented the policy in the urban school. A lot of hope was placed in the mandate of the DLB, especially as I learnt that in Tororo it had recently been formulated but was not yet operational due to limited finances.
The second research question that this case study addressed goes further in this quest into the implementation of the new policy by examining what happens in the classrooms. This study underscores the critical role of the teacher who is at the end of the implementation process. This forms the focus of the discussion in the next chapter.
CHAPTER FIVE

LANGUAGE POLICY AND CLASSROOM TEACHERS

5.0 Introduction

Language education policies with clear objectives are considered to stand a better chance of being successfully implemented (Bamgbose, 1991, 2000). However, Bamgbose (1991), who advocates of the use of African languages in education, is critical of many language policies in Africa whose objectives are never clear and therefore difficult to implement. In this chapter, I address the second research question which was: To what extent do the teachers’ pedagogical goals and classroom instruction practices in the two schools promote the development of multilingual literacies, as a central objective of the Uganda language education policy? Pedagogy refers to the activities of educating or instructing. Specifically, it relates to the strategies or style of instruction adopted in a particular situation. In the context of this research, the intent was to observe the strategies employed by the teachers in imparting literacy skills to the pupils in their charge. This was in an attempt to understand the way teachers interpreted the new language education policy in relation to the use of the local language in developing pupils’ literacy. According to the new language education policy, the local language should be the medium of instruction in the first four years of primary school in rural schools, while it is taught as a subject throughout the primary classes in the urban schools. The medium of instruction in urban schools is English starting from Primary One. In the rural schools, English only becomes a medium starting from Primary Five. Before that it is to be taught as a subject. The findings are from the two schools, one rural and another urban, that were selected for the study. The specific schools were Bugagga Rural Primary School and Tiriri Urban Primary School. The teachers selected for the study were those who taught in Primary 1-3 as teaching in the mother tongue was specifically at this level. Details of the teachers’ profiles are found in Sections 3.6.4 and 3.7.4 of this report. The data gathering tools
used included questionnaires, in-depth interviews and classroom observations with the teachers as well as document analysis. Data was analyzed from the different classes based on the audio and video clip recordings and the field notes. In the next sections, I present the data collected starting with Bugagga Rural Primary School and then Tiriri Urban Primary school. The analysis, discussions and conclusion follow respectively.

5.1. Bugagga Rural Primary School

I had preliminary visits to the school in order to become familiar with the school routine and be able to establish rapport with the intended participants. The questionnaires and classroom observations were thus carried out between March 24\textsuperscript{th} and April 13\textsuperscript{th}, 2006. In total, I interviewed five teachers and conducted four classroom observations (cf. teachers’ profile section 3.3.3 chapter 3). The findings of the interviews and observations are presented below, starting with Primary One class.

5.1.1 Primary 1 – Teacher Andrea Mudondo

Two teachers taught the Primary 1 class, that is Andrea Mudondo and Olivia Negesa. However, I observed Andrea because both were teaching during the time I was at the school. Andrea was teaching reading and writing in Primary 1 when I went to observe her lesson. There were eighty-six pupils in her class. Apart from one pupil whose mother tongue was Dhopadhola, the rest spoke Lunyole. In the classroom, apart from the teacher’s table and chair, there was no other furniture. All the pupils sat on the floor in neat rows facing the only chalkboard. In the right hand corner at the back of the classroom was a pile of exercise books lying about on the floor other exercise books were piled in cardboard boxes.
The walls were generally bare except for three charts hanging on the right hand side of the classroom. The observation lasted for thirty minutes. Lessons at this level were thirty minutes each. For most of the time, the teacher confined herself to the front of the classroom and remained standing throughout the lesson.

At the beginning of the lesson, Andrea wrote on the chalkboard letters from the Lunyole alphabet. She read them aloud and then asked the pupils to read after her in chorus. This was followed by calling upon individual pupils to practice writing them on the chalkboard while reading them aloud for the rest of the class. The rest of the pupils were told to watch, listen, and clap their hands to acknowledge a correct answer. Next the teacher asked the pupils to read aloud the letters they had so far learnt to check if they remembered them. The pupils responded in chorus. She then introduced the next letter ‘r’ to be learnt that day. She demonstrated to the pupils how it was written by writing it on the chalkboard then pronounced it for the pupils as they listened. All instruction was in Lunyole until the teacher interrupted the lesson with a prompt in English thus:

Teacher: P One?

Pupils: Yes please. (AM/BRPS, CO/03.26.06)
After getting the pupils’ response she then continued with the lesson by reading through the Lunyole alphabet (cf alphabet). This ended in a song in Lunyole and again another of the prompts in English:

Teacher: Hello P One?

Pupils: Hello Teacher (AM/BRPS, CO/03.26.06)

The teacher used these prompts throughout the lesson whenever she felt the class was getting rowdy. Throughout the lesson, the pupils used the title of “madam” to address and get her attention.

The lesson proceeded by asking the boys to read aloud the letters assigned to them while the girls listened and were asked to clap for the boys if they read everything correctly. Then the girls too were given their turn to read and likewise the boys were told to clap for them. At this point one of the pupils reported being beaten by another student to the teacher. The teacher responded in Lunyole by referring to one of the teachings by Jesus.

Teacher: What does Jesus tell us to do to others?

Pupils: That we should not beat our friends.

Teacher: To whom does the one who beats others belong?

Pupils: Belongs to Satan (AM/BRPS, CO/03.26.06)

As the reading by the pupils progressed, the teacher would punctuate it with phrases in English acknowledging their performance such as: “very good” or “sorry” for the correct or incorrect answers respectively.

The teacher would from time to time randomly call on a single boy and alert the other boys to their participation in the task. She would then turn to the girls and do the same. After this exercise, she began to sing and the pupils joined in. The song, in Lunyole, signaled this difference between male and female. In trying to make the instructions clear, she said and wrote
in English “boys” and “girls” above each list to be read by each group respectively. When one of the pupils read correctly but not loud enough the teacher told the rest of the class to advise the pupil to read loudly on subsequent occasions. At one point, a pupil shouted out in Lunyole when a wrong letter was read by another selected pupil. Further, a pupil at the back of the class alerted others in Lunyole of an insect crawling on the floor. Still using Lunyole, another pupil sought for permission from the teacher to go out to the washroom. Once again, the teacher started singing, this time in Lusoga (one of the eastern Bantu languages) and all the pupils joined in after which she referred to the motto of the class.

Teacher: P One “motto?”

Pupils: Learn, Learn. (AM/BRPS, CO/03.26.06)

The class motto was recited in English by the teacher and the pupils.

To draw the pupils’ attention, the teacher would use phrases in English, such as “Listen” and then proceed to give instructions in Lunyole. About the middle of the lesson, the pupils were told to go out to practice writing in the sand the letter they had just learnt.

![Figure 5.3: Pupils practice writing the letter 'r.' Figure 5.4: Teacher checking pupils' work](image)

The teacher moved around to check on the pupils’ work. When she sensed that many of them were not writing it correctly, she called the class around her by the verandah and using a slate once again demonstrated to them how to write the letter they were practicing.
When the lesson ended it was time for the mid-morning break.

I had another interview with the teacher after the lesson. Andrea told me the letters that they practiced were from the Lunyole alphabet. She also said that although in college they had been trained how to teach reading and writing, it was in respect to teaching English and not any local language. They were instead told to translate into the local language. Andrea learnt about the new policy through the head teacher in her school. Prior to the launching of the new policy, she said they taught using English and Lunyole. However, they were now required to use mainly Lunyole in spite of not having been prepared for it. This situation posed some challenges.

**Researcher:** What challenges have come up?

Andrea: We were not trained to teach reading and writing in Lunyole yet we are now forced to teach these skills in the mother tongue. It is difficult to pronounce some letters. We were told that we would be trained as we continued teaching but it seems they are not taking it as a serious matter.

**Researcher:** Why do you think they are not taking it as a serious matter?

Andrea: Because since we were told we have not been trained. They tell us instead to make our level best and yet there are no textbooks, not trained so we just gamble. (AM/BRPS, 1/03.26.06)
Although there were workshops to train teachers in the necessary skills for teaching in the mother tongue, Andrea had never been selected to go to them.

Researcher: Have you had workshops or seminars?
Andrea: Yes, but they take some people and me as a person I have not participated. And yet I have to teach reading and writing. (AM/BRPS, I/03.26.06)

Andrea also confessed she was not very good at reading and writing in Lunyole as she was in Luganda, which she had learnt while at school. One of the challenges she encountered was in the way the letters were pronounced. There were no books written in Lunyole except for one copy in the school, which was kept in the headmaster’s office, and some charts of the Lunyole alphabet. Although there was a promise of buying some more books this had not been done. According to her, there was need for more reading materials and refresher courses for teachers to enable them to teach in Lunyole. She also pointed out that some parents had negative attitudes towards using the mother tongue and instead preferred that their children are taught in English.

5.1.2 Primary 2 – Teacher Eileen Biinda

I had an interview with Eileen on March 26th, 2006 at the school. I asked Eileen about the language used as medium of instruction for Primary 1. In her response, she hesitantly said it was:

Lunyole from P 1-4 that is what they say. We should teach it (EB, I/03.26.06).

She had come to know about the new language education policy through the Center Coordinating Tutor (CCT) of the area in which her school was located. The CCT held workshops for the teachers in which Eileen had participated. When asked about the challenges encountered in teaching in Lunyole, she cited the fact that they were using Lunyole and mixing it with
Luganda words. She also pointed out that when they used to teach in Luganda, the pupils would not understand well but that it was now better since they were using Lunyole, which was the pupils’ mother tongue.

As these children know their mother tongue and when you teach them using it they can understand quickly rather than using Luganda. Still when you speak English, they do not understand (EB, 1/03.26.06).

I asked Eileen what in her view was required by the policy of using the mother tongue as a medium of instruction in schools. According to her, this meant using both English and Lunyole.

I observed Eileen teaching on two different occasions, March 26th and April 13th, 2006. The first classroom observation was carried out on the morning of March 26th, 2006. When I entered the class all the children, who were sitting on the floor in neat rows, stood up to greet me. The greeting was in English. There was only one chair and table in the room and these were in the front in the corner to the left of the chalk board. This was for the teacher. However, an extra chair had been placed at the back of the classroom for me. There were sixty five pupils in this class, which was half the total number of pupils in the whole of Primary 2. The other half of this class was taught by another teacher.

The lesson began with a review of the letters of the Lunyole alphabet they had learnt earlier. These were written on the chalkboard and different pupils were asked to pronounce the letter ‘I’. They spent time reading through the letters of the alphabet that they had practiced. The teacher then wrote another letter which they were to practice during the lesson. They were set to practice the letter ‘N’. This was to be practiced together with the five letters of the alphabet, that is “a, e, i, o, and u”. The rest of the lesson proceeded with the pupils in a sing song manner read
the different combinations. For example they would combine ‘n + a = na’. The others that followed were, ‘ne, ni, no, and nu’.

The second classroom observation of Eileen’s class was on April 13th, 2006. This time the two grades of the Primary Two class were combined. There were in all 120 pupils. The lesson began with Eileen writing some sentences and phrases in English on the chalk board. The focus was reading in English. All verbal instructions were in the local language, Lunyole, though the reading of words was in English. All the instructions were in Lunyole. However, Eileen used a song in English to transition between tasks. Also Eileen tended to repeat the question with emphasis in Lunyole each time the pupils did not respond to her questions immediately.

Later, the pupils were divided into small groups and each group was given a card to read from. Eileen disciplined the pupils in Lunyole just as the corrections were given in Lunyole. However, when one of the pupils wrote numbers instead of words, the teacher repeated the instructions, shouting in English “I want words”. Thus there was a lot of code switching in English and Lunyole. The pupils were asked to read the words on the chalkboard. Individual pupils were called upon to read the sentences written on the chalkboard. The pupils at the back of the class conversed in Lunyole as the teacher was teaching and when the teacher noticed she disciplined them in Lunyole. Throughout the lesson the pupils used Lunyole to report any cases of lack of discipline to the teacher who also responded in the same language. However, the prompts to draw the pupil’s attention were all in English just as were the praises in acknowledgment of a correct answer. A lively class when the teaching was in Lunyole suddenly became clouded with uncertainty when it changed into English.
During writing practice, Eileen asked the pupils to get into groups and then distributed some work books for the pupils to read from and do the set tasks. There were about 10-15 pupils to a book. They were asked to work through the set tasks in the work book and to write the answers in their exercise books. Eileen picked up and distributed the pupils' exercise books which were kept in a box at the back of the classroom. The pupils placed the books on their laps in order to write. Those without exercise books were given slates to use. Although the subject taught was English, more than 50% was in Lunyole. Eileen would read the sentences from the book and then translate for the pupils. Individual pupils were asked to answer the questions set in the text book. After a correct answer was given by an individual pupil, the rest of the pupils would repeat in chorus. The pupils were generally alert and actively participated without any inhibition whenever Lunyole was used.
5.1.3 Primary 3– Teacher Marcia Namulinda

I interviewed Marcia on March 27th, 2006 in the morning and carried out the observation in the afternoon on the same day. Marcia speaks Lusamia as her mother tongue and she taught Local Language and Science in Primary Three (see profile Section 3.6.3). Lusamia is closely related to Lunyole. Marcia said she had attended workshops in 2003 where she was given guidance in how to teach in Lunyole, the predominant local language in the area. Marcia pointed out that although she did not speak Lunyole as her mother tongue she had now learnt it because it was similar to Lusamia (one of the Bantu languages). However, later during the interview she confessed that she was not fully competent in reading and writing Lunyole.

The classroom observation of Primary 3 was done in the afternoon after lunch break on the same day. The classroom setting was the similar to the others described above in terms of furniture. The room was bare. There were no charts on the walls or any other materials anywhere in the room. There were eighty pupils and only three did not speak Lunyole as their mother tongue. While two spoke Bantu languages, one spoke Dhopadhola, an eastern Nilotic language. When I entered the classroom, all the pupils stood up and greeted me in English. I responded in Lunyole, which is the main language spoken in the area. However, they continued their response in English.

The lesson, which lasted fifty minutes, was conducted in the afternoon. It was on reading and writing in the Local Language, focusing on letter combination to form words. The teacher used a song in Lunyole to start the lesson. She made reference to the previous lesson and wrote the letters that were to be learnt on the chalkboard. After practicing the letters using choral responses, individual pupils were asked to write short words on the chalkboard using these letters.

According to the Ethnologue (2005), there is lexical similarity of 70% to 80% with the Saamia dialect of Luyia, and 82% with the Lugwe dialect of Luyia.
The rest of the pupils would then read aloud the words written on the chalkboard. Occasionally the teacher would point out the correct pronunciation by reading the words aloud for the pupils. Later, the pupils were told to form words using the letters they had been practicing and to write them in their exercise books. After working on their own for about twenty minutes, individual pupils were asked to write the words they had formed on the chalkboard while the rest checked to see if what they had written was correct. There was a lot of enthusiasm from the pupils who wanted to write their answers on the chalkboard and all of them freely participated. The pupils used the word “madam” in English when they wanted to draw the teacher’s attention to select them to do the set task. Occasionally the teacher used such words as “good”; “okay” in response to the pupil’s answers but these were minimal. The pupils interacted with each other in Lunyole. There was no translation done for the pupil who did not speak Lunyole. The pupils in Primary 3 interacted freely with the teacher and actively participated during the reading and writing lesson in Lunyole. With the support of the teacher they also helped each other. For example, two pupils did not have pencils to write with during a writing task. The pupils sitting next to them helped and gave them pencils to use. All this interaction was in Lunyole.

5.2. Tiriri Urban Primary school

The interviews with the teachers in this school conducted on March 23rd, 2006 lasted the whole day were. I interviewed six teachers of Primary 1-3 and conducted four classroom observations (cf teachers’ profiles section 3.7.4). A description of the findings follows.

5.2.1 Primary 1 - Teacher Karen Abbo

Karen Abbo who taught in Primary One, spoke Ateso as her mother tongue. Although she was aware of the new language policy, according to her it was not being implemented in her school. They had not decided which language would be used, because of the multiplicity of
languages. When asked about who was supposed to decide this, she mentioned the Municipal Education Office. That is, if a language was decided upon for use in all the municipal schools, the teachers in these schools provided they were trained would implement the policy. She also mentioned two possible languages that could be selected. These were Kiswahili and Luganda. Karen felt that these languages could work because as she explained:

Most of the children around here speak Luganda.
Now this school is also near the Kenya border
that is why I mentioned Kiswahili. (KA, I/03. 23. 06)

However, she pointed out that the policy was good especially in the rural areas where the pupils spoke the same language as it made it easier to teach them reading. In her class she taught using the vowels in vernacular to introduce reading to the pupils. She also cited lack of books as a hindrance to implementing the policy in addition to proper training as well as the fact that no particular local language had yet been selected to be taught.

The classroom observation in Primary 1 was carried out on June 13th, 2006. The classroom for Primary 1 was located at the extreme corner on the left as one entered the school compound. Behind it was a fence that separated the school and the neighboring gas station.

There were seventy-six pupils in the class speaking 13 different languages as their mother tongue (see details in table Chapter 3). As expected, given the location of this urban center, the majority of the pupils spoke the two predominant languages in this area. These two languages were, Dhopadhola and Ateso, with 29 and 16 pupils respectively. The pupils sat on small chairs arranged around two tables (see Appendix G). Both girls and boys wore uniforms with a necktie. The boys wore white shirts and khaki shorts while the girls had blue pinafores with white blouses.

The lesson began at 10am and lasted for 30 minutes. To keep order in class the pupils were told at the beginning of the lesson to keep their ‘hands in the box’ (which meant folding the
hands onto their chests while keeping their eyes on the CB) and the teacher kept referring to this throughout the lesson to maintain discipline.

Figure 5.9: Pupils with hands folded onto chest whilst looking at the CB

The teacher wrote sentences in English on the chalkboard and asked one of the pupils to read aloud for the rest of the class. The whole class then repeated the sentences in a chorus. However, some pupils simply kept quiet. At one point, to get all the pupils to respond, the teacher said thus to the class: 'look at me' and the pupils repeated the same phrase. A song in Kiswahili was used in the middle of the lesson to gain the children's attention and most of the pupils participated. Apart from the flash cards, no other teaching aids were used. However, the room was full of charts on the wall as well as cards with letters of the alphabet hanging on a string across the room. During the lesson, the pupils interacted with each other in English. For example, in one incident, I overheard one pupil reporting to the teacher while pointing to another pupil thus, "Teacher, this one is touch, touching me". Likewise, the teacher used English throughout the lesson except for the song, which was in Kiswahili.

Christine Ateng was another teacher who taught a Primary 1 class. Although I interviewed her, I did not observe her teaching. Christine did not give me the breakdown of the different languages spoken by the pupils in her class. However, she said that although the languages were many, the majority of the pupils spoke Ateso. Christine attended sensitization workshops to prepare her to teach the new language education policy. The workshops were
organized by the Mukuju Core Primary Teachers’ College in 2002. Other workshops whose purpose was to help teachers in the development of reading & writing skills for the pupils in Primary 1 – 4, were held in 2005. In these workshops, the teachers in the urban schools were told to first introduce the five vowels, that is “a, e, i, o, u” before using them to build words. These are vowels common in eastern and central Bantu languages in Uganda. I asked her about the language she would be using to teach the pupils to read. Her response as indicated below was:

Researcher: Which language would you be using to teach them how to form words and be able to read?

Christine: Vernacular. For example, when I use words such as “Zaala”, this is in Luganda. Or words like “Kata” which is in Kiswahili (CA, 1/03. 23.06).

I further asked whether in using the vernacular she took into account the fact that the pupils spoke different languages. Christine argued that she used the vernacular to help the pupils to be able to pick up the basic sounds. She spoke strongly about the need to have books in the vernacular to develop the basic sounds as well to offer interesting stories for the children. She argued that if the pupils first read the stories in the vernacular, they get familiar with the sounds which make it easy when it comes to learning English.

Researcher: According to you, what would be the benefit of such books especially those in vernacular.

Christine: They develop or broaden a child’s reading ability. Therefore, by the time you get into English, they will have discovered a lot of words and sounds. (CA, 1/03. 23.06)

In response to the question about who would prepare or write such books, Christine felt that the teachers could do so. She explained saying that:
The government could organize centers where teachers would go and create stories within children’s reach and environment, come out with simple books in poor English to help the children learn. (CA, I/03.23.06)

She acknowledged the fact that pupils generally had a problem in learning to read but there was also a need to organize in-service training for the teachers as one strategy that would make it possible to implement the policy.

If the teachers are put together and are facilitated with materials from different levels as we handle these children, I think we will come up with a solution to language problems or reading problems. (CA, I/03.23.06)

According to Christine, the government would be expected to take this initiative of organizing teachers in order for them to prepare the instructional materials. Christine also decried the teachers’ negative attitude to their profession as an impediment to the implementation of the policy. In her view, many teachers did not seem to love their profession and therefore appeared to have been forced into it.

So you go with all the love you feel that I am going to train as a teacher and when I come out I have to do something. The fruits of my work will be or has to be seen. (CA, I/03.23.06)

During her training, she said they were well prepared to teach language but she was rather skeptical about whether this was still being done in the colleges.

5.2.2 Primary 2 - Teacher Petrina Kakala

Petrina had been in the service for 23 years and Lunyole was her mother tongue (refer to details in (Section 3.7.4 Chapter 3). I observed Petrina teaching during the first lesson of the day.

The lessons started with a song in one of the local languages. The song was about the English alphabet in which the words in the chorus referred to the pupils’ ability to read.
Teacher: Ani amanyi okusoma? [Who knows how to read?]

Pupils: Ye nze, basoma bati. Eno ‘a’, ‘e’, ‘i’ basoma bati. [It is me. We read like this. This is ‘a’, ‘e’; ‘i’, we read like this…]

The language used was Luganda, one of the six regional languages from the Bantu family. Half the pupils (27) in her class spoke the two dominant languages in the area that is Dhopadhola and Ateso. These belong to the western and eastern Nilotic language families respectively.

![Image of a Primary Two class](image)

Figure 5.10: A Primary Two class

However, the song was used as a warm up to stimulate the pupils’ motivation for reading. The rest of the lesson was in English. The lesson involved forming words using the “a” sound and one example the teacher used was the formation of a word “jaja” in the same local language as the song, that is, Luganda. However, when asked about the possibility of teaching a local language, she said it was not possible in that school. During the lesson, the pupils mostly participated when responding to the teacher’s directives, thus the interaction in class was based on ‘Initiation, Reply and Evaluation’ (IRE) and answering in a chorus. The individual pupils who were called upon to give an answer were either ridiculed or praised for a wrong or correct answer respectively by the rest of the class, with the encouragement of the teacher. While the praise was by clapping, Kiswahili words were used to ridicule those who would give a wrong answer. Some sentences were written on the CB to practice the sound they were learning.
These remained as the focus throughout the lesson for both the reading and writing tasks that the pupils had to do. There were no other instructional materials. However, there were many charts posted on the walls as well as hanging on string crisscrossing the room. Half way through the lesson, the pupils were asked to work out the answers in their exercise books. This task involved filling in the blank spaces in the sentences that the teacher wrote on the chalk board. As the teacher distributed the books to the pupils, she again sang in Luganda and the pupils joined in. The pupils used English to interact with the teacher in class as well as among themselves. For example, one pupil reported to the teacher another pupil who had beaten him.

Teacher, you see Mayende is beat, beating me.

(PK, CO/03.23.06)

5.2.3 Primary 3 B - Teacher Helen Naigobya

The interview with Helen took place March 23rd, 2006 from 2.00 – 2.20 pm in the headmaster’s office. There were fifty-seven pupils in Helen’s class speaking eleven different languages (see profile Section 3.4.4). Helen had been introduced to the new language education policy through workshops organized internally by the school. She spoke Lugishu as her mother tongue and said she was able to read and write in Luganda and Lugishu. Generally, she said
reading and writing was a problem for the pupils in the school and that the policy had a good effect for the lower classes. She also pointed out it was difficult to teach as that there were no textbooks to facilitate teaching reading and writing. Yet, she felt that reading and writing were key skills. However, to Helen, her concern was with the teaching of English. While she appreciated the benefits of using the pupils’ mother tongue in developing these skills, she said this was not feasible in their school due to the multiplicity of the languages. It was thus clear that she understood the policy as requiring them to use a local language as a medium.

5.2.4 Primary 3 C - Teacher Gabriel Okong

There were 55 pupils in Gabriel’s class speaking seven different languages as their mother tongue (see section 3.4.4). Similar to in the other classrooms, there were pictures and charts spread out on the wall around the class and all the writing was in English. As one entered the classroom, there was a table with boxes full of teaching aid materials on the immediate right hand corner including a nonfunctional old television screen.

Figure 5.12: Inside Primary 3 classroom

Gabriel’s mother tongue, Lugwere, was not spoken by any of the pupils in his class. Although he was aware of the new language education policy, he said it was difficult to implement it in this school. However, from his experience in another school, he felt that this was possible in a rural school where there was one predominant language spoken. He also
acknowledged the fact that teaching in a mother tongue in the lower classes was useful as the pupils seem to understand better and interact more. The following quote sums up this view by Gabriel.

Pupils find it difficult to express themselves in English (GO, 1/04.12.06).

However, because pupils in the present school spoke a multiplicity of languages, Gabriel felt that the policy of using the mother tongue to teach could not work. Nonetheless, in teaching sounds, there was a tendency for teachers to associate them to the local languages in order to make it easy for the pupils to understand. Thus, the use of a local language, according to Gabriel, occurs where they have failed to get the pupils to understand a particular sound in English. For example, when a teacher identifies a pupil who does not appear to understand, the local language is used with for that particular pupil. So the mother tongue is used simply to aid in the teaching of English.

Regarding the question on how the use of the mother tongue could be made effective, Gabriel was of the view that in his school, it would require using teachers who spoke the different languages, especially the common ones in the area. Then the pupils would be grouped according to their mother tongue languages so that the teachers speaking these languages would be assigned to the different groups. Although the idea of using parents as resource persons was useful, he said parents often shied away from participating in school activities.

Gabriel’s lesson, which lasted for thirty minutes, began with a review of the previous work that involved reading sentences written on a chart. The sentences had included sounds that they had already practiced such as “u, a, o and e”. Individual pupils were called upon to read from the chart and then the whole class would repeat the same sentence in a chorus. Then the boys were asked to read the odd numbered sentences and the girls the ones with even
numbers. However, some pupils did not respond during the group reading. They kept quiet and the teacher did not attempt to get them to participate.

The teacher then presented the new sounds that were to be practiced in the lesson, which was ‘Ch’ as in chair. Later, the pupils were told to match the pictures to the words an activity they seemed to enjoy. The lesson ended with a written task based on the sentences they had practiced.

5.3 Analysis and discussion

Sociolinguists now view the ever increasing spread of multilingualism worldwide (Edwards 1994; Grimes, 1992; Okech, 2001) as a rich resource to draw on in education (Garcia, 1992). However, in order not to privilege a few languages, there is need for careful planning that is inclusive (Hornberger, 2003; Skutnabb-Kangas, 2000). In this way the mixed type of policies (Fishman 1971), described as being bilingual in nature, in that they promote both indigenous as well as an external language can be seen to take into account this concern. Thus the recent perspectives on language planning (Petrovic, 2005) reflect the linguistic needs, wants, and desires of a community and seek to establish policies to fulfill them. While the specific goals of language planning may vary, in general, they entail formation and implementation of a policy that prescribes or influences the languages used and the purpose for which they are used. In bilingual education, the two basic goals of classroom instruction are to transition a learner from a familiar language to another and to add a language. This instruction takes place usually in formal settings.

The objectives stipulated in Uganda’s new language policy seem to reflect the latter type of bilingual program, which is additive or developmental maintenance since it seeks to develop a child’s literacy skills to become proficient in a local language and English, an external language.
Literature abounds with the benefits of bilingual education. For example, it is suggested that when a child’s first language is valued and perceived as complementary to the second language, bilingualism contributes to cognitive, linguistic, and psychological development (Cummins, 1993, 2000). The latter involves the affective domain whose attributes of confidence, self esteem and identity are strengthened by the use of a child’s familiar language. Not only is motivation to learn increased but personal initiative and creativity is encouraged. Thus in classrooms where the child’s first language is not used, they may be left to sit silently or repeat mechanically as observed during the classroom observations. (Bamgbose, 2000, 2004; Brock-Utne, 2003, 2005).

Therefore, to determine whether language policies have been able to solve communication problems in heterogeneous polities, Wiley (1996) says there is need to look at specific groups in schools. The data presented above examined classroom observations to better understand how the teachers in multilingual classrooms implemented the new language policy in the development of literacy. In analyzing the data, there were four key overlapping linguistic practices that provide insight into the multilingual classrooms in both the rural and urban schools. While there were many commonalities between the two schools, differences were also evident. The linguistic practices include: (1) use of mother tongue as a resource, (2) use of songs, (3) code switching, and (4) specific linguistic strategies for classroom management. I describe each one of these in the next section.

5.3.1 Mother tongue as a resource

The classes were large in both schools. In such a situation it was not easy for the teacher to monitor what each pupil was doing. However, at Bugagga Rural Primary School Ms. Mudondo and Ms Biinda were able to draw on the common mother tongue, Lunyole, as an oral resource for the purposes of explanation and elaboration in the teaching of both mother tongue
and English literacy. Although Ms Biinda was teaching English, she used Lunyole to issue classroom instructions relating to both the content and the pupils’ behavior. However, there was no translation done for the pupil who did not speak Lunyole in Ms Biinda’s class. The teacher was the main source of information, given that there were very limited other resources. She thus falls back onto the only resource there was in abundance, the pupils’ mother tongue. The pupils in Primary 3 interacted freely with the teacher and actively participated during the reading and writing lesson in Lunyole. This shows that teachers could explore further the use of the pupils’ mother tongue in the development of their literacy. Indeed this corroborates with a study from the greater Toronto area in which the students using their home language and English were able to author a dual language text (Cummins et al., 2006).

Cummins (2008) asserts that translation is an integral part of creating dual language identity texts as it enables bilingual pupils to participate actively in instruction. Similarly, Bismilla, Cummins, Leoni, and Sandhu, (2006) report on students views about using their first language in writing and reading in English. Their responses highlighted the transfer of concepts and strategies across languages further confirming the need to allow students access their first language as a resource for learning.

At Tiriri Urban Primary school, the pupils used English to interact with the teacher in class as well as amongst themselves. However, I also observed that there were pupils who remained quiet in the class. The teachers mostly employed the ‘Interaction Response and Evaluation’ (IRE) discourse pattern (Cazden, 2001) by posing known-answer questions which did not allow for creative thinking and responses. In this way, the teachers controlled and evaluated the pupils’ specific responses. Thus, emphasis on literacy development was on recall and response of correct answers.
It was clear that in Tiriri Urban Primary school, there was no conscious effort made to teach the local language as a subject in response to the new policy. The teachers did not see the need to do so although they seemed to appreciate the advantages of the child’s home language in the development of literacy skills. Their argument, and indeed that of the headmaster, was that there were too many languages and therefore it was difficult to decide on any one to be taught.

In the rural school, the teaching of literacy in Lunyole, however, still presented a range of challenges. The teachers did not feel comfortable using Lunyole for reading and writing purposes, as they themselves had received initial literacy training in Luganda. Further, there were few instructional materials in Lunyole as the Lunyole orthography had just been developed by a local organization in partnership with SIL. While the initial intent of this Association was to translate the bible into Lunyole, because of the new policy, they were developing primers for use in schools. However, these materials were inadequate in aiding the teachers to develop literacy in Lunyole. The single word strategy used by Biinda did not progress to the use of language in meaningful contexts which is necessary to help the learner to make sense of what is being taught.

5.3.2 Use of songs

In the data from the classroom observations in both the rural and urban school, there was repeated use of songs by teachers. For example, at Bugagga Rural Primary School, Andrea set an oral practice exercise for the pupils where they were required to work as a team of boys and girls. In order to give the pupils time to prepare for this exercise, she began to sing and the pupils joined in. The song, which was in Lunyole, is usually sung during the rainy season by young children to implore termites to come out of their hiding places in the ground. This was therefore a familiar song to the children in Andrea’s class and so joined the teacher in singing. At the same
school, Eileen Biinda, whose lesson focused on letter combination to form words, started her lesson with a song in Lunyole.

Teachers at Tiriri Urban Primary School also used this strategy in their classrooms. As an urban school, the local language was supposed to be taught as a subject. During the interviews, the headmaster and all the teachers said they did not see the possibility of teaching a local language in their school. However, in the English medium classes observed, the teachers constantly used songs in local languages to punctuate their teaching. Perhaps this was done in recognition of the children’s funds of knowledge (Moll & Diaz, 1987; Moll & Greenberg, 1990) that could be tapped through familiar language as well as a useful way to lower their affective filter (Krashen, 1996) in order to facilitate learning.

In Karen Abbo’s case, a song in Kiswahili was a useful resource to get the pupils on track after a lengthy explanation in English seemed unsuccessful. In an effort to get the pupils’ attention, Karen had said to the pupils: “look at me”, and the pupils, in response, had simply repeated the same phrase. This is when she started the song in Kiswahili. The pupils gladly joined in the singing and thereafter the teacher continued with the lesson.

In the same school, Petrina Kakala introduced her lesson with a song in one of the local languages. The song was about the letters of the alphabet. As indicated above, the language used was Luganda, one of the six regional languages from the Bantu family. This Bantu language was used despite the fact that half of this class of 54 pupils spoke the non-Bantu languages of Dhopadhola and Ateso. Earlier, the headmaster had mentioned that although the pupils spoke many different languages, they used Luganda and Kiswahili to interact with each other while out in the playground. In this situation, the song was used as a warm up to stimulate the pupils’ motivation for reading. The rest of the lesson was taught in English.
Continuing with the lesson, Petrina set a task for the pupils which involved working out the answers in their exercise books. The task involved filling in the blank spaces in the sentences written on the chalkboard. The teacher used a song to transition between activities. Again the song used was in Luganda and the pupils joined in the singing. Thus, songs were a common strategy in the two schools. They were used for motivation or warm up at the beginning as well as during the lesson. For Tiriri Urban Primary school, all the songs were in the local languages which was not necessarily the one spoken by the majority of the pupils, particularly in Tiriri Urban Primary School. In the latter school, the songs were in Kiswahili or Bantu languages in spite of the fact that most of the pupils spoke either Dhopadhola or Ateso, both non-Bantu language.

5.3.3 Linguistic strategies for classroom management

The inadequate infrastructure was evident in both schools, regardless of the medium used for teaching, and the teachers repeatedly mentioned this during the interviews. This, coupled with the large classes, did not allow for individual assistance. The demands of keeping order in the crowded classrooms limited the opportunity for pupils to interact with the teacher and with one another. For instance teachers used the ‘known-answer questions’ that focused on pupils providing one specific answer to the question provided. Even the use of small groups was not as effective because the groups remained large (8-10 pupils). Thus the known-answer questions limited the pupils’ choice, voice and agency in the learning goal. The recitation drills, especially in the urban school, were to enable the teacher to fulfill their management roles rather than the pedagogic one, given the lack of opportunity for meaningful interaction. The mode of interaction was thus between teacher and class as a whole. This regulatory use of language, also observed by Arthur (1996) in Botswana classrooms, helped to exercise control in the classrooms.
The teachers' use of gender to get the pupils to participate in the oral exercises was common in both schools. This was done by giving the boys and girls different tasks, some of which set up competitions between the genders. For instance, at Bugagga Rural Primary School, Andrea constantly employed this strategy during her lesson. In trying to make the instructions clear, she said and actually wrote in English “boys” and “girls” above each list to be read by each group respectively. The use of the words “boys and girls” in English was for emphasis. This strategy of using gender was observed in other classes as well. Likewise, the same strategy was employed by the teachers at Tiriri Urban Primary School, particularly during oral practice. Whenever the teachers wanted to reinforce what had been taught through practice, they used choral responses. The boys and girls would be called upon to respond in separate teams of either boys or girls.

While the large classes made it prohibitively difficult for teachers to help individual learners, there was greater ease when pupils shared a common language. In the rural school, use of the local language enabled the pupils to communicate freely. Certainly, the teachers relied a great deal on the use of the mother tongue for the purposes of explanation, even when the subject they were teaching was English, as in the case of Eileen Biinda’s Primary 2 class. In such situations, where there were no books either in the mother tongue or English, there was no option but to use the mother tongue. Tollefson and Tsui (2004) contend that in the classroom, effective medium of instruction policies require attention to daily concerns of teachers and students. Some of these concerns include: curriculum and materials, class size, pre-service and in-service training of teachers, all of which affect the quality of education. These concerns were also observed to apply in both schools and therefore needed to be addressed for successful implementation of the new policy that aimed at improving the pupils’ language proficiency. It was believed that these concerns would lead to improved quality of education. In a comparative
study of bilingual classrooms in India, Singapore and South Africa, Hornberger and Vaish (2006) show how teachers use linguistics resources that children bring to the classroom to teach a language of power.

On the other hand, at Tiriri Urban Primary School, the teachers spent much time explaining the concepts in English, oblivious of the fact that not all pupils were fluent in it. There was a lot of repetition and use of choral practice in English. Arthur (1996) citing Stodolsky et al (1981), says recitations through whole-class question and answer routines are linked to lack of curricular materials which would enable the teachers to provide pupils with a variety of instructional methodologies. The sentences that Ms Kakala used for practicing reading served to encourage rote learning. This practice led pupils to repeat the correct answers and as Olson (2007) points out this serves to socialize the pupils to the notion that competence in literacy is about providing the exact, correct response to elicit questions. Nonetheless, as pointed out by the headmasters and the teachers, the two schools faced problems of obtaining suitable instructional materials. Again, with the large numbers, several pupils just listened and did not participate, and their lack of participation was not addressed. The practice exercises were artificial as they involved a few isolated sentences written on the chalkboard, which had little real meaning for the pupils. In all the classrooms observed, except in Ms. Biinda’s class, there was no instructional time devoted to collaborative group work. Therefore the teachers missed the opportunity to support the pupils in their learning through exploratory talk (Barnes, 1976).

5.3.4 Code switching

At Bugagga Rural Primary School, where instruction was predominantly in the mother tongue, English was often used either as a way of motivating the pupils or clarifying a point. For example, in Andrea’s Primary One class, her lesson had progressed in Lunyole until she
suddenly halted and interrupted the lesson with a prompt in English. The teacher used these prompts throughout the lesson whenever she felt the class was getting rowdy.

Still at the same school, there was much code switching in Eileen Biinda’s class. All the prompts to draw the pupil’s attention were in English, and she resorted to English in order to drive home her point. As indicated above, for example, during a practice exercise in an English class, in which all the instructions were given in Lunyole, one of the pupils wrote numbers instead of words. Frustrated by this act, Ms Biinda repeated the instructions, shouting in English “I want words”.

Further, praises in acknowledgment of a correct response were expressed in English. For example, in Ms Mudondo’s class, as reading by the pupils progressed, she would punctuate the reading with phrases in English, acknowledging their performance with expressions such as: “very good” or “sorry”, if the answer was not correct. To draw the pupils’ attention, she used phrases in English, such as “Listen” and then proceeded to give instructions in Lunyole.

At Bugagga Rural Primary School, I noted that pupils used English to welcome and greet strangers. Indeed, in all the classrooms I observed all the children stood up and greeted me in English. Even though I responded in Lunyole, which is the main language spoken in the area, they continued their response in English. I also noted that the pupils used the word “madam” in English when they wanted to draw the teacher’s attention to select them to do a set task. Thus “madam” was used as a form of address for the teacher and at all times was said in English.

In the urban school, where there were multiple mother tongues, code switching took on a different form, and teachers used a variety of local languages for different purposes. For example, when Petrina Kakala was teaching sounds in Primary 2, the lesson involved forming words using the “a” sound, and an example the teacher used was the formation of a word “jaja”.

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This word was in Luganda just as the song she used to start the lesson. Further, in this class, Petrina encouraged the pupils to clap for those who would have given a correct answer, while those who gave incorrect answers were ridiculed in Kiswahili. For example, when the teacher called upon one of the pupils to read aloud the sentences on the chalkboard, and the pupil read it incorrectly, the other pupils said, with their fingers pointing down: “chini, chini”, which is a derogatory term in Kiswahili meaning “down, down”.

Further, in teaching sounds in the urban school, there was a tendency for teachers to relate the sounds to the local languages in order to make it easy for the pupils to understand. For example, when a pupil appeared not to be following the lesson, the teacher would use the local language with that particular pupil. In so many instances the mother tongue was used to aid in the teaching of English. Thus to a certain extent, this confirms Diaz’s (1999) argument that the use of a familiar language to teach beginning literacy facilitates an understanding of sound-symbol or meaning-symbol correspondence.

5.4 Summary

There was evidence in the rural school of implementing the new language policy of using the local language in the lower grades. However, instruction in the local language was greatly hampered by limited reference materials for both the teachers and the pupils. If the objective of effective communication in the mother tongue is to be realized, there is need to provide practice reading materials for the pupils. From the observations, it appeared that the teachers were using the local language only to teach the relationship of sounds to letters. The teachers relied on the material written in English, which they had to translate into the mother tongue. In essence, the policy of local language instruction seemed to be interpreted to mean teaching it as a subject and not using it as a medium of instruction. As Bamgbose (1991) reiterates, the inability to
implement the language policies with respect to African languages is partly due to the lack of clarity in the way such policies are stated. There is always an escape clause that allows different interpretation by those who are responsible for implementing the policy. There seemed to be no congruency between the practices as observed in the classrooms and the stated objectives of the policy. Yet, the way teachers view and interpret the policy for implementation in their classroom is critical to its success.

Further, one way the use of mother tongue could be made effective would be to identify the teachers who speak the different languages, especially the common ones in the area. Then the pupils would be grouped according to the languages they speak as their mother tongue and the teachers speaking these languages would be assigned to the different groups.

As mentioned above, a social practice approach that framed this study takes the view of literacy as a social practice (Barton 1994, 1995; Gee 1990; Scribner & Cole 1981; Street, 1984, 1994). It is widely accepted that knowledge can be negotiated and acquired through social interaction. Teachers need to acknowledge and tap into the knowledge creation that can take place in a classroom as a social grouping and so enhance their objectives for literacy development. In the urban school, there was a contrived use of the learner’s familiar language in spite of the mechanically chanted monotonous and repetitive drills. This strategy does not go far enough in instructing children in literacy skills. A social account of literacy takes the position that children’s progress in achieving literacy is strongly influenced by the cultural and linguistic experience they bring from home (Barton and Hamilton, 1993). Further, Gutierrez and Rogoff (2003) direct us to explore the ecological perspective of learners in multilingual environments. The teachers from both schools needed therefore to take this expanded view of literacy in order to overcome the conventional literacy instructional barriers such as were evident through their
literacy development practices. For example acknowledging the learners home language by engaging them in creative talks or narratives would greatly enhance their active participation and subsequent acquisition of English in meaningful contexts. As I observed, in the classroom displays were only in the second language, English, which automatically sent a message to the pupils that their respective languages have no role within their classroom community. However, in the literature, Cummins (2008) proposes bilingual strategies that can be used to promote literacy engagement in both the first and second language, which are creation of dual language multimedia books or projects as well as sister class exchanges. Well as these are within the context of the western setting, some elements of the strategies could be adopted in the Uganda context. Other strategies from literature involve providing opportunities for students to develop ideas in their stronger language and then work collaboratively toward expression of these ideas in their less proficient language (Cummins, 2008). Coelho (2006) further points out that the work in the first language can be a preliminary step toward producing work in the second or target language, and will ensure a better product at the end.

Further, literature shows that the teaching of local languages in both the rural and urban schools could also be greatly enhanced by drawing on Vygosky’s (1978) concept of modeling and Dewey’s direct experience. Through the Zone of Proximal development’ (ZPD), the learners do not just repeat sentences or ideas mechanically when they imitate as in a behaviorist manner. Rather, the ZPD adopts strategies in which learners model whole manners of processing information, conversing with ideas and approaching the entire world around them. On the other hand, Dewey calls for learning starting with direct, concrete, real life experience to help connect learning to their world and so a familiar language would be the most suitable way.
As mentioned in Chapter 1, the community members were among the key stakeholders that this study focused on. Data was collected using FGD. The next chapter reports on the findings of the community views toward the new language education policy.
CHAPTER SIX
LANGUAGE POLICY AND COMMUNITY RESPONSE

6.0 Introduction
In this chapter, I address the last of the three research questions and examine another group of stakeholders who are direct beneficiaries of the language policy. The question is: To what extent is the local language policy in rural primary schools supported by members of a rural community in eastern Uganda? How do urban perspectives on the local language policy compare and contrast with the perspectives of the rural community? I define the community in this study as those people within the area from which the school draws its student population (see chapter three). The community was an important stakeholder as it became the target beneficiary of this new policy. Thus the research sought to investigate the extent to which participants from the community, both rural and urban, were aware of the new language policy and the extent to which they supported it. This is because their views were crucial if understanding how the bilingual policy was being implemented in schools was to be achieved. With this in mind, using questionnaires and focus group discussions, I collected data from the community regarding the extent to which they were aware of and supported the new language education policy of using the mother tongue as the medium of instruction and the teaching of a local language as a subject in rural and urban schools respectively (see details of policy, Section 1.2).

In the next sections, I present the findings, analysis and discussion, starting with the rural community and followed by the urban school community.

6.1 The rural community of Bugagga Rural Primary School
In order to understand the extent to which the local language policy in rural primary schools was supported by members of the rural community it was necessary to establish the languages used
for communication. Therefore, in the questionnaire administered to the rural community, participants were asked the following specific questions regarding the different uses of their language and the preferred language for teaching their children. (i) What is the main language that you use to interact with your children? (ii) What languages are used for homework for your children in Primary 1-4? (iii) What languages do you prefer teachers to use in teaching your children the following subjects: social studies, science and math? (iv) What other language would you like your children to be able to speak, read, and write? (See Appendix E) Responses to these questionnaires were tabulated, but additional insight was gained through the focus group discussions that followed the administration of the questionnaire. The findings are presented in the following section.

6.1.1 Language profile and practices of the community

From the questionnaire and FGDs, I learnt that all participants, except one, spoke Lunyole as their mother tongue. The participant who did not speak Lunyole as mother tongue was married to a Munyole man, and spoke Lugwere as her mother tongue. As indicated by all participants, Lunyole was also the common language spoken in the villages they came from. Furthermore, for all participants, Lunyole was the language used at home to speak with their children. However, English and Luganda were the languages commonly used for reading and writing, and a few indicated that they were able to read and write using both English and Lunyole (see Table 6.1 below).
Table 6.1: Language use by the community participants for rural area

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Languages used</th>
<th>Lunyole</th>
<th>Luganda only</th>
<th>English only</th>
<th>Eng &amp; Lunyole</th>
<th>Eng &amp; Luganda</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Language used for writing</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>07</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>04</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language used for reading</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>05</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>05</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother tongue/L1</td>
<td>17</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>* 01</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Lugwere-one of the Bantu languages spoken by the neighbours to the north of Butaleja district

The participants were also asked to indicate the languages they commonly used for the different activities within their community. This is indicated in table 6.2 below.

Table 6.2: Languages commonly used for different activities in the community group A, FGD

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Languages Used as</th>
<th>Primary</th>
<th>Secondary</th>
<th>Tertiary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Village meetings</td>
<td>Lunyole</td>
<td>Luganda</td>
<td>English</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health centres</td>
<td>Lunyole</td>
<td>Luganda</td>
<td>English</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church</td>
<td>Luganda</td>
<td>Lunyole</td>
<td>English</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mosque</td>
<td>Arabic</td>
<td>Luganda</td>
<td>Lunyole</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ceremonies-weddings/funerals</td>
<td>Lunyole/Luganda</td>
<td>English</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6.1.2 Awareness of language policy

I read the new policy to the participants in order to establish if they were aware of it. As indicated in Table 6.3 below, there was general awareness of the new language policy by most participants. In the FGDs, the participants said they had heard about the new language education policy through school meetings, the media, and during burial ceremonies. It was only the secondary school teacher who said that he had personally read the policy.

Table 6.3: Awareness of the new language education policy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Councillors (only 2 responses)</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Management Committee</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent-Teacher Association</td>
<td>05</td>
<td>01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lunyole Language Association</td>
<td>06</td>
<td>00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>03</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
However, with respect to their specific understanding of the new language policy, there was some uncertainty. For example, four members of the LLA responded as follows in response to the question: *Are you aware of the government’s language education policy? If yes, what does it say?*

a. It says Kiswahili language should be taught as a national language
b. Go to school all of you.
c. Mother tongue should be taught as subject in primary or as a medium of instruction for P1-4
d. Every person should learn and promote his mother tongue to ease learning/communication (COM/BRPS, Qn/10.26.05)

Another example was from a councilor whose response was: *all children should go to school* (COM, Qn/10.26.05). However, this response was more in relation to another government policy of Universal Primary Education (UPE). Again it was not surprising that it came from a councilor given that part of his role was to sensitize the community about government policies and there had been many messages in the media about UPE. Nevertheless, given that the language policy was an equally important policy that actually augmented UPE, one would have expected the councilors to be well versed about it.

In addition, the six members of the PTA who participated in this study were all on the Executive committee. As such they were expected to be knowledgeable about the different school programs and to ensure that the interests of the groups they represented were taken care of by the school management. In fact, such a pedagogical issue, particularly with regards to literacy development for their children, would be of interest and concern to this group. Thus one would
expect them to be knowledgeable regarding a policy that would ultimately facilitate the learning of an international language by their children. However, four of the five who indicated that they were aware of the new language education policy gave such responses as indicated below when asked to say exactly what the policy stated:

To improve the standards
It’s national language in Uganda (COM/BRPS, Qn/10.26.05)

The responses given by the participants indicated only partial information about the policy statements.

In focus group discussions, participants noted that the purpose of the mother tongue policy was aimed at facilitating easy understanding, identity, and maintenance of their culture, as well as to not forget their mother tongue. As one of the participants pointed out:

You see we normally say that the English (omuzungu) is intelligent. Why is this? This is because right from the beginning, the child is taught in his language. In this way they learn quickly. But for us here, we want to teach English to our children and at the same time they are learning Lunyole. It becomes a bit of a problem to the child. (COM/BRPS, FGD/06.21.06)

They further pointed out that when the school administration informed them about the policy at one of the PTA meetings, they had agreed, as parents that Lunyole be used for teaching in the lower grades. One of the participants explained why this was important:

This is because we have some children at home, you bring them to Pl[...], at times some of us a child may grow up to the age of five without having taught that child how to count from 1-10, so that it is the teacher who begins by teaching it to the child. Mr. Wandya, you were saying that children should learn the two subjects in English. But how

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9 'Muzungu' is the common word used in Lunyole and other Bantu languages in Uganda to refer to a European.
can you speak English to a very small child who does not know anything in order for that child to learn, without speaking to the child in Lunyole, how can she learn? That is why I say that Lunyole should be taught. (COM/BRPS, FGD/06.21.06)

The participants further argued that when a child is first taught in their mother tongue, they would still be able to learn English. After all, as one of the participants noted, many countries that have developed, such as China and Japan, do not teach in English but have advanced greatly technologically.

In the implementation of language policy, the participants also raised the issue of the language of assessment, especially for the children being taught in Lunyole. According to the policy, when the mother tongue ceases to be used as a medium of instruction in Primary 4, it would continue as a subject up to Primary 6. During this period, the participants were concerned that the language of examination should also be that one used as the medium of instruction. However, the following quote highlights what often happens in schools, and was a major cause of concern for the participants:

There are some teachers who try to teach in Lunyole and Luganda. But at the time of examinations, they examine in English. So the child who would have performed well, but because the examinations are in English, which he may have not quite grasped well, that child performs poorly. Therefore, examinations should be in the language in which they would have been taught, that is from P1-4, this should be Lunyole. (COM/BRPS, FGD/June, 06)

6.1.3 Insights on school language practices

With respect to languages used for homework in Primary 1-4, data from the questionnaires showed that 15 participants indicated that English was the language in which
homework in science and social studies was set for their children in Primary 1-4; two said that it was in both Lunyole and English; and one said that it was in English and Luganda. With respect to the languages parents preferred teachers to use in teaching social studies, science, and math, there were varied opinions. Eight of the 19 participants in the October 2005 FGDs indicated that Lunyole was the preferred language to use for teaching all the subjects to their children in lower primary, as the child would be able to learn concepts in their own language. As these parents reasoned, science begins with things in the immediate environment which are known in the mother tongue. Therefore, by using Lunyole, the children were able to apply their knowledge and share it with the parents. The same would apply in social studies. The parents further explained that by using Lunyole to teach reading and writing, the children are able to write what they read, learn about the environment through reading, and then explain it to others through writing. Therefore, by using Lunyole, the children were able to apply what they have learnt and share this knowledge with their parents. The parents felt that the home is a learning environment. For the other 11 participants in the October 2005 FGDs, however, while they indicated that for mathematics, science and social studies, Lunyole was preferred, Luganda was the language preferred for reading and writing. The reasons given for their preferences varied. On the one hand, while Lunyole was the language most commonly used and therefore facilitated easy understanding, they preferred Luganda for reading and writing because they believed spelling and combining sounds was easier in Luganda than in Lunyole. In addition, according to them, Luganda integrated many languages.

6.1.4 Language as resource

One of the questions the participants were asked concerned their preferences for languages other than the mother tongue. Although Luganda and Kiswahili were mentioned,
English was the predominant “other language” that the participants wanted their children to be able to speak, read and write (see Table 6.3).

**Table 6.4: Language preferences other than mother tongue**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language use</th>
<th>Luganda</th>
<th>English</th>
<th>Kiswahili</th>
<th>Not definite</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Speak</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Write</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Read</td>
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It is interesting to note the different resources that participants associated with each of these languages. Some of the participants felt that there was need to teach students in English, because for them a child able to speak English is proof that learning is taking place. As one parent said,

> If you get a child of P2 speaking English, it pleases you, or a Pl child speaking English. Then you actually prove that the child is actually learning. (COM/BRPS, FGD /06.21 06).

To many rural parents, then, knowledge of English demonstrates progress on the part of the child and satisfies the parents, who make many financial sacrifices to send their children to school. In addition, the participants’ desire was that their children should be able to speak English at an early age, just like those children who come from urban areas. As one of the participants commented:

> I usually admire children who come from outside this area; you can see a child of Pl speaking English. Therefore, they should teach more of English first, then the other languages after that. (COM/BRPS, FGD /06.21 06).
The issue of learning Kiswahili also came up in the discussions. It was pointed out that while it was good to learn English, there were situations that required knowledge of Kiswahili. The participants cited an example of when one travels to other parts of the country and might encounter security personnel. During such times, as they pointed out, people in the past have encountered trouble if they had not been able to speak Kiswahili to the army or police, since Kiswahili is a lingua franca among security personnel. One of the participants explained thus:

Kiswahili is very important. You may study but if you do not speak Kiswahili, then you have learnt nothing. Because when traveling you might meet someone in the security [police, army] who may ask you something in Kiswahili, and if you happen not to understand - my friend you are in trouble, because you have not understood what he has asked. My friends, there are times when knowing Kiswahili is helpful. (COM/BRPS, FGD/06.21.06)

Finally, Luganda was also seen to be a useful resource. For many participants, Luganda had been used in their schools for instruction, and therefore, according to them, was easier than Lunyole to use for reading and writing. They noted further that if a child went to live with a relative such as a paternal uncle or auntie (a common practice) and their mother tongue, Lunyole, was not the majority language spoken, the child would feel isolated. In such situations, some of the participants argued that it was therefore necessary to learn another language like Luganda. As one participant reasoned:

My reason is that, a child may leave this place and travel to another place like to Buganda where Luganda is spoken. So if a child has learnt Luganda, then it becomes easy for the child to cope. (COM/BRPS, FGD/06.21.06)
However, I asked them if the same should apply to a child who traveled to Gulu and whether such a child would also have to learn Luo, the language spoken by the Acholi people who live in Gulu (Luo belongs to the western Nilotic language family, very different from the Bantu languages, see chapter one). In response to this, the participants said:

No, he should learn English as well, because there one uses some English because it is at least common. But these three languages should be taught, that is the mother tongue, Luganda and Kiswahili (COM/BRFS, FGD /06.21 06).

In summary, then, the community of Bugagga Rural Primary School was aware of the new language education policy. While they were happy that the new policy would promote language and literacy in the mother tongue, they had a strong desire for their children to be able to speak English at an early age. The participants also acknowledged that Kiswahili and Luganda were important languages in their community and that their children needed to learn these at school. The former, they pointed out, was particularly important for security purposes; however, some were supportive of Luganda because most participants had learnt it when they were at school and took the position that it was easier to develop literacy in Luganda than in Lunyole.

6.2 The community of Tiriri Urban Primary School

As mentioned above, there was a rural/urban divide apparent in the new policy. In the urban areas, a local language was to be taught as a subject from Primary 1, while English was used as a medium of instruction. I therefore sought to gain comparative views from the urban community towards the teaching of a local language. To this end, I focused on the second part of the research question, which was: How do urban perspectives on the local language policy compare and contrast with the perspectives of the rural community? The findings are discussed with respect to
the participants’ preference for English; their ambivalent support for local languages; and their
general resistance to Kiswahili.

6.2.1 Preference for English

In the urban community, all nine participants had heard about the new language
education policy. However, they were generally opposed to teaching a local language at school.
While a local language was appropriate for use in the home and community, they expressed a
preference for the use of English at school. The following examples illustrate this point of view:

I use my language Lunyole. However, when he goes to school he
should begin with English. (COM/TUPS, FGD/2006)

For me I say as the child grows, from 2 -5 years, it should use the
mother tongue, but at school - no it should be English. Because a
child knows where it belongs by learning the mother tongue at that
age, and then adopts another one. (COM/TUPS, FGD/2006

For me we are not from the same language background with my wife. So we
use English right from childhood for my family. I am Lugbara [from the
Central Sudanic language family] and she is a Musoga [from Bantu language
family]. I have told my wife to let the children learn whatever language,
Kiswahili, Luganda, Lusonga etc. These are for communicating to our people in
the village. But I say English is preferable. (Com/TUPS, FGD/2006

The participants noted, in particular, that the multiplicity of languages within their
environment made the choice of a designated local language at school extremely difficult.
Consider, for example, the following participant’s linguistic history:
We speak - both of us speak Ateso. I am from Soroti and my husband is from Tororo. However, we moved to Kenya and the children picked up Kiswahili from the house help we had, so they forgot the mother tongue. After three years we came back to Uganda, they again picked up Dhopadhola from the neighbours. So, right now they speak English, Kiswahili, Dhopadhola and a little of the mother tongue, that is Ateso. (COM/TUPS, I/2006)

For many of the parents, English provided an enhanced set of opportunities for the future. The following quote captures the views of these parents:

Children [...] should learn a language which helps them in the future. Not put them in brackets of second community. (COM/TUPS, I/2006)

Recalling their experiences while in school, the participants were happy that they had been encouraged to use English, and had not resisted punishment for speaking the mother tongue.

We used to carry a badge in primary schools for speaking the mother tongue so that at the end of the day if you had the badge you would be punished. So this was used to encourage us to speak English. (COM/TUPS, FGD/2006)

This, according to them worked well and they were able to learn to speak English. They therefore felt the same practice should still work for their children. Indeed, there were some who felt that parents could support their children by introducing English in the home. As one said,

Try to introduce English even at home. The emphasis here we are saying that let mother tongue be taught from home. Meanwhile the child is picking English from home partly from parents. However, at the school level let it be English. (COM/TUPS, FGD/2006)
For this group of parents there was no place for the mother tongue for their children in the school. Teaching the mother tongue at school would mean that the children continued to use it all the time, thus from the parent's point of view jeopardizing the children's chances of learning English quickly.

6.2.2 Ambivalent support for local languages

Although for this group of parents there was much resistance to the use of the mother tongue in the school, some ambivalence was detected as community members continued to debate the relative merits of local languages and international languages. For example, one participant observed as follows:

There are languages that are international then our own local languages as Ugandans. Learning our own languages would not matter. However, at the same time we need to know the future of the child. Use international language so that the world can get closer to you by communication, French, Arabic, and English. Nevertheless, at the same time we should also encourage them with our own culture, local languages. We should not say we do not need our own languages. No, we need them. (COM/TUPS, I/2006)

In addition, as exemplified in the following quote, the participants recognized that a child's mother tongue is an important mark of identity:

[The mother tongue] puts them to where they belong in the community. They come to know about their roots, who they are. They do not go back and start looking for our roots after 40 or so years of our life. (COM/TUPS, I/2006)
They argued that in Uganda, there were places where one may find people who speak the same language living together which was different from other countries, such as Zimbabwe. They gave the example of Busoga.  

We are in a global village. In Zimbabwe the rich people stay in the village the poor without land live in the towns. Nevertheless, for our situation here in Uganda, it is possible to get places where you have a majority speak one language, like in Busoga (COM/TUPS, FGD/2006)

Nevertheless, the Basoga were not particularly in an enviable situation because from the participant’s observation they were not proficient in English. As one participant explained:

Basoga have stuck to Lusoga that English has become a problem. Even in other areas where they use vernacular it is very hard to switch to English. They keep switching from English to vernacular. They are addicted to using vernacular (COM/TUPS, FGD/2006).

With this viewpoint towards the policy, I further probed their views to the teaching of the local languages in school. One participant responded by saying that:

If that chance would be there, I would not oppose. Because it is worth, they should learn their own languages. I am saying that Arabic, French, English because they are the international languages, they are the main languages today. I am not opposing that our own local languages should not be taught. No. If there are funds and time, then it is okay, they should be taught in the local languages (COM/TUPS, FGD/2006).

One participant said that although he could read better than write in his mother tongue, he would love to have his child learn how to read and write well in it. Referring to his experience, he said that he was born and raised in Karamoja, in northeastern Uganda where the main

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10 Busoga region extends from east of Lake Victoria towards Lake Kyoga and includes districts of Jinja, Kamuli, Iganga, Bugiri and Mayuge. The people are called Basoga and the language is Lusoga.
language Nga’karimojong is used in primary schools. Both these languages, that is, Nga’karimojong and Ateso are among the six selected regional languages used in education (refer to chapter one). This was unique as he was able to speak, read and write in two other languages apart from his mother tongue. The two languages were, Nga’karimojong, and Ateso (both from the eastern Nilotic language family). However, when asked if he would be willing to support the schools if requested to help in the teaching of the local languages, his view was that:

[Though]I am proud of my mother tongue but we should learn other things important in our lives. Moreover, a language is one of the things (COM/TUPS, FGD/2006).

Apparently, learning a mother tongue is not as important as a desire for economic advancement.

6.2.3 Ambivalence towards Kiswahili

Uganda, together with Kenya and Tanzania form the region of East Africa. The three countries have a common past in that they were closely linked to Britain, which led to the adoption of English in commerce, government, administration, and education. Given this shared history, the participants were aware that both Kenya and Tanzania had attempted to implement a policy to make Kiswahili the medium of instruction. However, the participants argued it had not benefited these countries. For example, they pointed out that the Kenyans were unable to make ‘good’ public addresses due to the fact that, according to these participants, they did not speak good English.

Look at Kenya, Kiswahili is their [basic right] from childhood, so it is easier for them to learn. But it has brought them problems - they cannot address people properly because they have been brought up in Kiswahili. (COM/TUPS, FGD/2006)
According to the participants, Uganda was privileged in comparison to the other East African states, particularly Tanzania, in that the colonial administration had introduced the use of English in schools. They remarked on the high standards in Ugandan education and stated that the other East African states admired these standards.

Even our standards in east Africa are the best - Kenyans and Tanzanians are coming to Uganda because of the language we are speaking. (COM/TUPS, FGD/2006)

Further, the participants were of the opinion that Kiswahili was not sufficiently international as a language to attract their interest for it to be chosen to be taught in schools. As one noted,

For me I prefer English. Kiswahili is like a local language the way I see on my side. (COM/TUPS, FGD/2006)

At the same time, however, the participants did note that if a mother tongue was made a national language, then it could perhaps be used in their school community. As one noted,

Why not use a national mother tongue like either Kiswahili or Luganda, where it can be general. (COM/TUPS, FGD/2006)

The participants did recognize that the use of a local language had helped to unite Tanzanians of different linguistic backgrounds. Nevertheless, according to these participants, the Tanzanians were now struggling to learn English and catch up with the rest of the world. It was therefore advisable that English be taught to Uganda children right from the beginning. As one said,

They say we are Africans and we should speak our African languages but now it is also causing them problems. Those are practical examples from Kenya and Tanzania. Why don’t we go straight to something that is international? (COM/TUPS, FGD/2006)
According to some of the participants, the other East African countries had made the mistake of teaching in the local language. Therefore, Uganda should take heed and not fall into a similar trap.

In summary, the findings from the urban school community suggest that, in general, community members were aware of the education policy promoting local languages in primary schools. However, the participants were opposed to the implementation of this policy, saying that the teaching of a mother tongue was the responsibility of the parents at home. The schools ought to be concerned with the teaching of an international language such as English, for the future of their children.

The fact that there were many languages spoken in the community further complicated the possible implementation of the policy. The government, for example, had not been able to decide on a national language to unite the country, although it hoped Kiswahili might informally serve this role. The participants mentioned Luganda because it was formerly taught in schools and so some of them had personally learnt it. The language problems experienced in the neighboring countries, which had implemented local language policies, were not desirable, and offered lessons that were relevant to Uganda. After all, the participants argued, the syllabi were transferable; therefore the use of the mother tongue would mean taking the participants backwards rather than forwards.

6.3 Analysis

Batibo (2005) observes that speakers of minority languages are in a dilemma, particularly in relation to the choice of language of instruction. On the one hand, there is the desire to maintain their linguistic, cultural and ethnic identity. On the other hand, the wish to access education in a language that will enable them to interact at international level is equally strong.
The ADEA (1996) working group makes the case that if European children are faster and more assertive in learning than African children, it is not due to race or culture, but linguistic and economic conditions. As Skutnabb-Kangas, (1988) and Phillipson (1992) contend, it is the responsibility of education to boldly advocate the use of indigenous languages, and to offer practical strategies. Similarly, Fishman (2000) and Tsui and Tollefson (2003) argue that the medium of instruction is the means by which languages and culture are maintained and revitalized. At the same time, however, Bamgbose (2000) observes that because language policies in Africa were inclined to ignore minority languages, speakers of these languages tended to devalue them, and assume that they were not useful for social and economic advancement. Perhaps, as Batibo (2005) points out, this was because the minority languages were used within the confines of their speakers’ territories, and speakers were forced to learn and use one of the dominant area languages or an ex-colonial language for purposes of wider communication. The findings presented in the preceding sections, which focussed on the community as stakeholders in the implementation of the new language policy, support Batibo’s assessment of the ambivalence of minority language speakers.

Analysis of the data corpus revealed five key themes that highlight the support for the teaching of local languages from both the rural and urban communities. In the sections that follow, these themes, which include: (1) Ambivalence towards teaching local languages (2) English as an international language (3) The hegemony of Luganda (4) Kiswahili as a national language, and (5) The language for assessment in language planning, are discussed in greater detail.
6.3.1 Ambivalence towards teaching local languages

There was ambivalence in both the rural and urban school communities with respect to the promotion of local languages in Ugandan primary schools. The community of Bugagga Rural Primary School was concerned that a local language policy was a regressive step to the past, rather than a progressive step to the future. Because of their past, in which Luganda and English were promoted, the participants in the study had mixed feelings towards the implementation of a language policy that would promote the minority Lunyole language. For example, the participants told of stories of the past when speakers of Lunyole denied belonging to their ethnic group after they had migrated to places where languages such as Luganda were perceived to have a high status. Therefore, while some appreciated the policy now promoting the use of Lunyole as a language of instruction, there were those who were concerned about the potential benefits for their children.

Similar sentiments as those expressed by the rural community were prevalent among the stakeholders of the urban school. Indeed, the urban community participants observed that because of the many languages spoken by the pupils in the school, selecting one to be taught would be difficult. Therefore, for these participants, there was no place in their school for the local language policy. The participants were adamant that it was the role of parents, and not the school, to teach the mother tongue to their children.

However, the issue of identity and cultural maintenance was also an important consideration for parents in both the rural and urban community, though the rural community held stronger views in this regard. To the rural participants, it was important that they spoke Lunyole and identified themselves as such. Therefore to have their children study in Lunyole was one way they would be proud of their language and consequently identify with their ethnic group, a position
supported by current research on language and identity (see, for e.g. Norton, 2000). From this point of view, the participants did appreciate that the government had sanctioned the teaching of their language. Not only would it promote their language, but their culture as well, something they considered to be of great significance for their children and for development in their area.

6.3.2 English as an international language

Both the rural and urban community were particularly concerned about the need to expose their children to an international language, and English in particular. They had observed problems with local language policies in other countries within the region, which according to the participants, now faced the challenge of reversing negative effects associated with this policy. In the literature, Bamgbose (2000) observed that using African languages as a medium of instruction has been notoriously unstable in several African countries. He identified dissatisfaction with the practical outcome of a particular policy as one of the reasons for this instability. Furthermore, such factors as the status of English as an international language, internal and external migrations, and the need for economic survival are raised as constraints to the use of African languages in education.

The participants, referring to their personal experience, appreciated the methods that were used to teach them English. The fact that as adults they were able to learn and speak ‘good’ English today was a result of these methods which, they argued, could still be effective if applied to their children. Commenting on such strategies in the acquisition of English, Mwaura (2003) notes how practices used in the past such as those mentioned by the participants are now glorified and even commended.

Participants also argued that due to ongoing globalisation especially as a result of technological advances, there was no need to insist on using their mother tongue. To catch up in this fast
moving world, children needed to compete in an international language, English. The place for
the mother tongue was the home and the parent was the rightful person to handle that. Further,
English was also viewed by these participants as a lingua franca within the country, given the
multiplicity of languages in Uganda. English was a social economic necessity and therefore it
was to everybody's advantage that the colonial administration to promoted English.
In the Ugandan context, language policy is therefore perceived from the point of the role of
Uganda referred to its role as a world language "English will prevent the development of
emotionalism, sectarianism, reactionary tendencies and prejudice which hinder progress" (p 147).
In addition, he argues that English is used to foster regional cooperation, national unity, pan-
Africanism and internationalism through language policy by way of medium of instruction and
official language. This goes back to an earlier statement made on the eve of preparations for
Uganda's independence in 1931, by Kulubya, one of the delegates: "English is the key to
everything as it is" (p. 148), a statement that would be contested by Skutnabb-Kangas, (2000,
2002) in advocating for linguistic rights of minority languages.
6.3.3 The hegemony of Luganda

The findings highlight the hegemonic relationship between minority languages and the
more dominant "area" or regional local languages. As mentioned above, the colonial government
used Buganda agents as administrators in eastern Uganda. Consequently, when formal education
was introduced in the eastern region, Luganda, in which the Bible had already been translated,
was the medium of instruction. Thus in Butaleja district, Luganda continued to be used until the
launching of the new policy. This confirms what Batibo (2005) observed as the fate of minority
languages in the face of the area languages used in education. The rural school community
preferred the use of Luganda to teach reading and writing, arguing that this was the language that had been used in the past and that they were now accustomed to. The participants failed to see the possibility of their own language taking a similar position if introduced in schools as a medium of instruction.

Like the community of the rural school, the use of Luganda was often mentioned among the urban community stakeholders at TUPS. As the participants pointed out, Luganda was their school language. It was therefore interesting that even for TUPS, where a large number of people within the municipality spoke languages that were predominantly from the Nilotic language family, Luganda was regularly mentioned as a possible compromise if the policy of teaching a local language was to be enforced. Perhaps it is necessary to point out here that historically during the colonial rule, Tororo district was part of ‘Bukedi’ district formerly under the Kakungulu administration. Luganda was the language in which formal education was introduced. Thus, as with the participants from the rural school, Luganda was preferred because of its connection to the past. As Batibo (2005) notes, a historical legacy of domination by the dominant area languages tends to make speakers of minority languages feel inadequate in comparison to those who speak the widely used languages. This observation is true for the speakers of Lunyole as a minority language, given the experiences narrated by some of the participants. However, although speakers of Luganda account for 17% of Uganda’s population (UBOS, 2002), Luganda has failed to attain national status. Nevertheless, its hegemonic influence now seems to constrain the implementation of the new policy, especially within the communities in which minority languages had hitherto not been used in education, and therefore did not have written resources.
6.3.4 Kiswahili as a national language

One of the key findings of this investigation shows the ambivalent status of Kiswahili, a language that is extensively used within the Great Lakes region (Uganda, Burundi, Rwanda, and the Democratic Republic of Congo), and serves as a national language in Kenya and Tanzania. Several attempts were made from 1903 to 1971 to develop Kiswahili in Uganda, both as a national language and a medium of instruction, but as Kasozi (2000) explains, there were no strategies for implementing such policies. Thus the use of Kiswahili in Uganda was mainly in the security forces.

Kiswahili also became a language of commerce as a result of its use with traders from the coast of Kenya, and developed into a kind of lingua franca, particularly among those poorly educated, just as English was for the well educated. Thus while Uganda has no national language, according to the new policy, Kiswahili has been introduced as a subject in both rural and urban schools with a view to eventually developing it as a national language.

It is against this background that the community of the rural school acknowledged that although it was good to learn English and the mother tongue, Kiswahili was also a useful resource. However, to some of the stakeholders in the urban community, Kiswahili was also regarded as a local language and therefore not acceptable to be taught to their children. Others, however, would be supportive of the teaching of a local language that was designated a national language. In regard to a preferred national language the two possible choices were Kiswahili or Luganda. Ruiz (1984) draws a useful distinction between the diverse orientations that a community has towards particular languages, their speakers, and the roles that the language plays in society. The three fundamental orientations address language as a resource, language as a problem, and language as a right.
6.3.5 Language of assessment

The language of assessment was raised particularly by the rural school community. The community was greatly concerned about the language that was used to assess their children. It would defeat the objective of teaching in the local language if assessment is carried out in another language. But for as long as the available materials were in English, and the teachers translate these when teaching in the mother tongue, there was a concern that the examinations would be conducted in English. Furthermore, even though the language policy was being implemented in the lower classes; there was no mention by the school administration of continuing to teach local languages in the upper classes as stated in the policy. Continued teaching of local languages as a subject to the upper classes would compel the administration to work out appropriate strategies for assessment, yet this solution was not evident.

6.4 Discussion

When Uganda’s new policy promoting local languages was launched, it generated much debate in the media, and there was general concern that the policy was misguided. Comments by the journalists Mbekiza and Kamanzi, whose 2006 articles appeared in one of Uganda’s leading daily newspapers, the New Vision, are illustrative of the Ugandan public’s concerns. Mbekiza, for example, attacked the policy on the grounds that parents, rather than schools, should be the guardians of the mother tongue. As he said,

Mother tongues are vital, but they should be developed independently. And this lies primarily on parents (Mbekiza, July 12, 2006).

Kamanzi, on the other hand, focussed on economic considerations, particularly with regard to the ‘Kyeyo’ sector (Ugandans in the diaspora), who are a major contributor to
Uganda’s national income. The local language policy, according to Kamanzi, was “inward looking” and “cannot sell”, because, as he said:

In order for one to qualify for a “Kyeyo” job, he or she must be fluent in one of the three international languages. These are English, French and Spanish (Kamanzi, July 12, 2006).

The data findings presented in this chapter highlight the extent to which the participants in the rural community supported the new local language policy, and compared their views with the urban community. As mentioned in Chapter 2, this study was framed by theory supporting the view that literacy must be understood both locally and historically, and with reference to the social relationships in which speakers, readers, and writers find themselves (Barton & Hamilton, 1998, Prinsloo & Breier, 1996; Street, 1995). In this view, a language policy needs to be supported by families and communities if it is to be successful.

Although the findings indicate that the participants were generally aware of the new local language education policy, there was ambivalence concerning the implementation of local languages in the school context. The participants’ desire to have their children learn a local language for purposes of identity and cultural maintenance was often overshadowed by factors considered to be more urgent and important. Among these was the parents’ desire that their children be part of the international community and thereby increase their opportunity for employment. In this regard, learning an international language such as English was considered very important, and there was concern that learning a local language was a regressive step, compromising their progress. In addition, many participants, especially from the urban community, took the view that the mother tongue could be relegated to functions in the home. These findings reflect similar views in literature regarding implementation of African languages for instruction particularly related to the value attached to the functions and roles that languages
play. For example, Block & Cameron (2002) describe the commodification of languages such as English which places a high value onto them and so have become symbols of social and political modernization. A similar stance is described by Adegbija (1994), Awedoba (2001), Muthwii (2002), and Okedara & Okedara (1992) concerning the attitudes of the target communities towards promoting indigenous languages as media. It also confirms Nsibambi’s (2000) observation in relation to the functional utility of English in Uganda, as an official language as well as media of instruction at almost all level of education. It is thus held in high esteem and regarded as the gateway to economic emancipation by many parents.

There were important differences in orientation in the two school communities. In the rural area, unlike the urban area, the community shared a common mother tongue, and so there was little problem regarding the selection of a relevant local language for instructional purposes. However, the community appreciated that the learning of other, more widely spoken languages would facilitate mobility across the country, observing that they would not be able to communicate easily outside of their area if they spoke only their mother tongue, Lunyole. In the urban community, the linguistic diversity prevalent in the Tororo District was a major challenge for the community, as no one language could be identified for instructional purposes. Further, the urban community tended to be more mobile and cosmopolitan, looking beyond local borders for personal and professional advancement. Hence they were in favor of their children learning languages of wider communication like English, French, and Arabic. Such views held by the community need to be taken seriously because as pointed out by Obondo (2008) policies that deny the people access to a language which they perceive as important for their advancement are likely to fail. Obondo cites examples of such programs in Guinea and Nigeria that were initiated but failed due to among other factors, their insensitivity to the desires of the target groups.
During the colonial period in Africa, the acquisition of literacy in the colonial language was the main tool for upward mobility and economic gain, and this view has survived the colonial era. As Prah (1995:1) convincingly argues, "the acquisition of literacy and numeracy facilitates social mobility. It provides a competitive edge to people anxious to escape socio-economic limitations of the lower rungs for the social ladder". The views of the urban community, in particular, can be traced back to the colonial education system, in which only a tiny minority of Africans who attended the colonial education system gained access to European languages. Success in this education system placed them in a better position in their own society (Alidou, 2004; Wolff, 2006), creating sharp divisions within African communities. Further, Benson (2003) notes the inequalities in schooling, within the development context, between rural and urban areas, elite and subordinate social groups. These inequalities, as she demonstrates, correspond to ethnolinguistic heritage and conditions of language access.

The new language policy empowers rural communities to select a relevant local language to use as a medium of instruction, and directs urban communities to teach it as a subject in their schools. However, from the findings of this study, it was clear that the community was not adequately informed of the pedagogical advantages of using a mother tongue or local language as the medium of instruction, particularly in the first years of developing their children’s literacy skills. This therefore confirms what Obondo refers to as the top-down political process of policies without taking into consideration the real needs of the communities. She contends that, for many of the policies promoting use of indigenes languages, there has been little involvement of people at the grassroots.

In addition, the lack of instructional materials in the local language was a major impediment to the success of the policy. Indeed, English materials were often translated by
teachers for instruction but not for assessment, disadvantaging non-English proficient children. There was some support for the use of Luganda and Kiswahili as languages of wider communication, but it was English that received unequivocal support.

6.5 Summary

In this chapter I presented data from the community participants form the two schools. Although the community was familiar with the new policy, the attendant benefits of instituting such a policy were not clear to them. In view of these findings, it is therefore important that the community be adequately informed about research that demonstrates not only that mother tongue literacy promotes effective learning, but also that it enhances second language acquisition as well. Without adequate resources in the local language, as well as appropriate teacher training, local language policies are greatly compromised. It may well be the case that enhanced performance on national examinations for children taught in their mother tongue during Primary 1-4, will prove to be a powerful selling point for parents and communities. It is clear that parents and communities need convincing evidence that instruction in local languages will not compromise desires for participation in global economies and Ugandan citizenry. In the next chapter, I offer a summary of the findings as presented in chapters 4, 5, and 6, and their implications to policy, theory, and practice. The chapter ends with recommendations.
CHAPTER SEVEN
SUMMARY, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.0 Introduction

This case study, which was largely informed by recent work in literacy, bilingual education, and language planning (Barton, 1994, 1995; Barton & Hamilton, 1991, 1998; Heath, 1983; Luke, 1997; Martin-Jones and Jones, 2000; Norton & Toohey, 2004; Scribner & Cole, 1981; Shohamy, 2006; Spolsky 2004; Street 1984, 1994), investigated how the new Uganda language education policy is implemented in two primary schools in Eastern Uganda, one in a rural area and one in an urban area. As discussed in Chapter 1, the current language education policy set out in the Government White Paper on Education (1992) and operationalized in the Uganda Primary School Curriculum (NCDC, 1999) makes a distinction between the medium of instruction for rural and urban schools. While the urban schools are mandated to use English from the first year of primary school, rural schools are expected to use the local language. This rural/urban difference articulated in the policy is attributed to the multilingual nature of Uganda’s population. This case study, therefore, specifically examined the views of the stakeholders (the Ministry of Education representatives, the school administration, the teachers, and the community) towards the new language education policy in Uganda. In this chapter I summarize the central findings from the study. I then discuss the implications of the study for theory, policy, practice, and research. I conclude with a series of recommendations for the future.

7.1 Summary of findings

In chapters 4, 5, and 6, the analysis of data relating to each of the guiding research questions revealed a wide range of issues that gave insight into the implementation of a language education policy with a multilingual focus. The findings reveal the complexity of implementing a
language policy that promotes use of African languages as medium of instruction within a language minority environment. Indeed the findings of my study speak to similar studies about use of first language, in particular African languages, for literacy development in multilingual contexts (Bamgbose, 1991, 2000; Kamwangamalu, 2000; Muthwii, 2002; Obondo, 2007; Omoniyi, 2003).

The first research question in this study examined the views of the Ministry of Education representatives at the regional and district level and the school administration in each of the two schools selected for the study. The data showed three key themes in relation to how this group of stakeholders interpreted the policy. First, a mismatch existed between the ways the policy was stated and how it was interpreted by this group of stakeholders. For example, the ministry representatives saw the policy as requiring that the mother tongue be taught only in the rural area. The same view was held by the headmaster of the urban school. However, while the policy required that a local language be used as a medium of instruction in the rural area, it provided for the teaching of a local language as a subject in the urban areas. Thus, the findings corroborate the earlier study by Muthwii (2002) and Makau (2001).

The second theme emerging from the data concerned the fact that the guidelines for implementation of the policy tended to be contradictory, making it difficult for the people who were expected to implement the policy. Such unclear or ambiguous policy statements and guidelines accentuate the otherwise already low regard that the general public has for the indigenous languages especially those belonging to the minority ethnic groups such as the one in which the rural school was located. Several researchers, among them, Bamgbose (1991, 2000), Kamwangamalu (2000), Obondo (2008), and Omoniyi (2003) likewise observed that this was
characteristic of many African countries trying to implement language policies that promote use of indigenous languages.

The third theme arising out of the data was the inadequate infrastructure in support of the policy. In particular, this included the poorly developed orthography of the mother tongue languages, the inadequate preparation of the teachers, and the sluggish manner in which the formation of the District Language Board was handled. Development of orthography is part of corpus language planning which involves the creation of an alphabet (Hornberger, 1994). This factor is often cited as an impediment to use of African languages in education by those who would rather continue with the use of the colonial languages (Bamgbose, 1991). Codification of African languages and inadequate preparation of teachers (Brock-Utne, 2001) are among the pedagogical factors Alidou (2004) identifies that make the use of African languages as medium of instruction problematic. For this reason many educators and policy makers decide to limit African languages to oral use only. Such people also argue that the proliferation of the indigenous languages is prohibitive with respect to training of the required teachers for each of the languages to be used. Interestingly, in the guidelines for implementing the new policy, NCDC (1999) discouragingly states that due to the large number of languages in Uganda, the development of materials would start with the six languages that have been used for teaching. This, however, serves to further deny pupils from the minority language communities the opportunity to learn in their mother tongue.

The second research question thus sought to understand the teachers’ interpretation of the policy and whether their pedagogical classroom practices promoted the development of multiliteracies. The question raised was: To what extent do the teachers’ pedagogical goals and classroom instruction practices in the two schools promote the development of multilingual
literacies, as a central objective of the Uganda language education policy? The findings revealed that the teachers had reasonable knowledge of the new policy. However, their interpretation of the policy in rural and urban areas seemed to suggest that in essence the local language was to be taught as a subject and not as a medium of instruction. While this could be attributed to their negative views, there were other factors. Such factors, included for example, not having been well prepared for the teaching of a mother tongue, and inadequate instructional materials to support their teaching. Literature related to the medium of instruction in Uganda shows that a lot of emphasis is placed on the teaching of English (Kiganda, 2003, Nsibambi, 2000). Therefore, most of the resources are directed to the training of teachers for English. It is thus observed that most of the language teachers have been oriented towards teaching English rather than the mother tongue, hence their inability to adjust in view of the new policy (Tembe, 2006). The teachers’ limited skills in handling the teaching of the mother tongue was made even more difficult given that not all languages had a well developed orthography and therefore insufficient materials were available in such languages.

However, as observed from the classrooms, some of the strategies that the teachers adopted included use of songs and code switching, thus reflecting the multilingual nature of the classrooms. While songs were used by the teachers from both schools, code switching was only observed in the rural school. The teachers from Bugagga Rural Primary School tended to use mother tongue to give instructions and to introduce the lesson, even when the subject taught was English. A noted finding involved the language used for classroom interaction. In the rural school where the mother tongue was used, classroom interaction between the pupils and the teachers as well as among the pupils was comfortable and interactive. In contrast, in the urban
school, where English was used, there was limited flexibility in the classroom interactions between the pupils and the teachers.

Another significant finding was in regard to available infrastructure to support implementation of the policy. For example, it was noted that failure to institute the District Language Board (DLB), one of the strategies proposed by government to spearhead the implementation of the policy, was a setback. Although at the time of collecting data the two districts had just formed the DLB, they were not yet operational as no funds had been allocated for their use. Consequently, decisions concerning the teaching of local language were deferred, revealing a kind of laissez faire situation similar to what Bamgbose (2000, 2004) observed in relation to implementing African language policies in education. Further, it was anticipated that through the DLB the community would get involved in the implementation process of this policy. However, there was limited participation of the community in the implementation process. An important observation was the contribution made by a non government organization in the promotion of the mother tongue in the rural school. It also brought into prominence the role of religious organizations in the codification of the indigenous languages. The role of local communities and institutions has been noted as key in successful implementation of policies that promote use of indigenous language (Heugh, 2003, Obondo, 2008). Thus for the rural school, a local organization has been instrumental in implementing the teaching of the mother tongue at least in the beginning classes since they had started on developing the orthography. They also were actively involved in holding workshops to retool the teachers to enable them to teach in the mother tongue as well as in the production of materials such as the primers.

The third and last research question thus sought to highlight the community’s response to this policy. The specific question that I raised was: To what extent is the local language policy in
rural primary schools supported by members of a rural community in eastern Uganda? How do urban perspectives on the local language policy compare and contrast with the perspectives of the rural community? The findings revealed that there was ambivalence portrayed by the community towards implementation of this policy. The major issues that I identified from the findings, however, were the following: (i) Ambivalence towards teaching local languages (ii) English as an international language (iii) The hegemony of Luganda (iv) Kiswahili as a national language, and (v) The language for assessment in language planning.

While both communities acknowledged the importance of teaching the local languages for purposes of identity and cultural maintenance, much more pressing was the desire that their children learn an international language. The major reason for this preference was that English was considered to be the conduit for their children’s social mobility. English, which was viewed as having a wider functionality, was the preferred language, although Luganda followed by Kiswahili were also mentioned. The subtle differences between the rural and urban community participants regarding their response to the policy mainly involved their exposure to the outside world. While the rural community response to the policy was shaped by concern for a language that would enable them to be mobile locally and regionally the urban participants looked beyond the national borders. A language that would enable them to be part of the global community was more important to them than the mother tongue, with limited functions.

This view held by the participants is similar to Webb and Kembo-Sure’s (2002) observation that the speakers of African languages generally hold their own languages in low regard. In addition, this attitude held by the participants from the urban school reflects the global positioning of English due to its high ‘linguistic capital’ (Benson, 2004; Block & Cameron, 2002; Bruthiaux, 2002; Omoniyi, 2003). These findings confirm what Block and Cameron (2002)
observed concerning the impact of globalization and the attitudes people hold towards languages and language learning. While languages were previously valued as symbols of ethnic identity, globalization brought about by the postindustrial economy has resulted in some languages being valued more because of being a symbol of social and political modernization. This is reflected in the views held particularly by the participants from the urban school given their metropolitan world views, what Phillipson (1992) refers to as cultural imperialism. As Phillipson (1992) asserts, cultural imperialism works to the detriment of the most disempowered language groups. In the context of this study, these would include the minority languages such as Lunyole that have not been hitherto used in education or domains outside the family.

The findings of my study thus support what Obondo, (1996, 2007) observed about the language groups that Phillipson refers to. Such language groups often include parents with low economic and political power, who protest vehemently about the promotion of indigenous languages as languages of education. According to research, (Obondo, 1996, Skutnabb-Kangas, 1988), these parents often prefer to speak a foreign language despite limited competence, in the belief that the earlier their children have access to such a language, as English in Uganda, the more likely they will succeed in school and be able to compete in the job market. The findings corroborate the work of Kiganda (2003) and Nsibambi (2000) regarding the functional utility accorded to English in Uganda and thereby positioning it above the other languages in education, a situation that spells doom for the indigenous languages. It was also further revealed that the community participants, linked to the rural school, were concerned about the language to be used for assessment. Their concern was that teaching in the mother tongue would disadvantage their children when the examinations are set in a different language, which in this case would be English. Such concern as expressed by these participants can be linked to the UNEB (1999)
survey which showed that pupils’ proficiency in English was low, which in turn affected their performance in examinations. In view of the findings described above and the related literature cited, what are the implications of the study in the context of promoting multilingual literacies in Ugandan primary classrooms? The next section will thus focus on implications of these findings.

7.2 Implications of the findings

The findings of this case study have important implications for theory, policy, practice, and research. Each of these is addressed in the next four subsections.

7.2.1 Theoretical contributions

There are significant contributions to theory resulting from this study. As mentioned in chapter 2, this study was premised on a view of literacy as social practice. This framework incorporates social and cultural practices in an understanding of literacy and not just pedagogical and cognitive factors (Street, 2008). There is a small but growing body of research specifically from Africa that has significantly contributed to an understanding of literacy as a social practice (Janks, McKinney & Norton, Kendrick et al, 2006; Prinsloo; Stein). My study forms part of this body of research, drawing from it and extending its central ideas, particularly those of Stein (1998, 2000, 2004).

Stein’s (1998, 2000) conception of resources, and her notion of *re-sourcing resources* helps us to raise important questions in relation to new ways of thinking about our students’ resources within a diverse linguistic environment. The central concern arising from the study is how teachers in multilingual contexts can harness the rich resources of multilingualism in their communities, and validate the multilingual and multimodal resources that can support literacy development among their learners. Stein advances the notion of *re-sourcing resources* as a way of addressing pedagogies that work with students’ diverse representational resources, particularly
in multilingual contexts. Stein’s notion of re-sourcing resources means ‘taking the resources we have which are taken for granted and invisible to a new context of situation to produce new meanings’ (Stein, 2000, p 4). In this view, teachers need to innovatively and creatively reframe the range of resources that both the teachers and students bring into the classroom. Play, movement, song, and artistic activity, the indigenous multimodal ‘ways of knowing,’ according to Mushengyenzi (2003), are some of the modalities that children use to make sense of the world. While these have been integrated into non-formal learning contexts, they are not widely recognized as alternative modes of representing and communicating knowledge (Stein, 2004). Stein argues that multimodal pedagogies work with multiple entry points for meaning making, and have the potential to hold in tension access to dominant discourses, while incorporating the rich variety of representational resources that each student brings to the classroom. This helps promote multilingual literacies in both the indigenous languages and English.

My study extends Stein’s work in that it explores in greater detail the investments of the wider community in multilingual literacies. It demonstrates that a community’s investment in a particular language is best understood within the context of its particular location in time and place, and that rural and urban communities have different imagined identities, structured with respect to different experiences of multilingualism, and diverse visions of the future. The common desire, however, was access to wider regional, national, and international networks that offer greater possibility for an enhanced range of identities and possibilities for language learners. Thus theories of identity, investment, and imagined communities, particularly those associated with the work of Norton (see for example Norton 2000, Kanno & Norton, 2003; McKinney & Norton, 2008; Pavlenko & Norton 2007), provide an enriched framework for analyzing the ways in which community resources can be harnessed for enhanced language learning and teaching.
7.2.2 Implications for policy

This study has implications for the implementation of a language education policy at the macro level, particularly with respect to the three types of planning, defined as status, corpus, and acquisition planning (Cooper 1989, Hornberger, 1994). The three types of planning correspond to the uses of the language, the language itself, and the user respectively. First, planning for language education policies need to take into account the status of the languages involved. For example, policy planners need to recognize the status of the languages selected for education across the different domains. In order for Lunyole to be accepted as a viable language as medium of instruction, particularly with respect to such languages as Luganda, its status has to be raised beyond the familial use. This means that its functions need to be expanded to boost its status. This is important as it impacts the attitudes of the different stakeholders in the implementation of a policy. Second, corpus planning, which follows status planning, requires development of orthography as well as elaboration of vocabulary in order to respond to the expanded functions of the language being promoted. In this regard, the support of language agencies, such as the Summer Institute of Linguistics, would be significant. Third, in multilingual contexts, acquisition planning is important as this necessitates promoting the language through its use. To this end, policy makers need to be well informed of current research on language acquisition and the promotion of multilingualism. This study underscores the need for policy makers to seriously consider the three types of planning prior to promulgation of a new policy.

Although language policy and planning has been variously defined as a government level activity (Cooper, 1989; Kaplan and Baldauf 1997), the anticipated benefits take much time to be realized, if at all. While the bottom-up approach may be deemed difficult for government to
apply, it ensures ownership of policy by the target community as well as those mandated to implement it. My study found that the needs and investments of the target population are critical, and therefore policy makers need to collaborate actively with diverse stakeholders in policy implementation. Kaplan (1990) insists that consent of parties involved in changes of language policy is needed (see Kamwangamalu, 2000 on South Africa). Therefore, given the linguistic diversity in Uganda, the characteristics of the community need to be taken seriously (Omoniyi 2003). As my study found, and Lo Bianco (2008) notes, power relations in bilingual education need to be carefully negotiated, particularly with respect to relations between minority and majority languages. Hornberger (1994) reminds us that language planning, especially concerning literacy development, does not occur in a vacuum. Learners in acquiring literacy in one language might compromise literacy in another. Therefore, the social conditions that advance English, such as its symbolic value, may undermine promotion of the indigenous languages (Rubagumya, 1991). Findings from my study can be used to address this challenge.

7.2.3 Implications for practice

A transformative approach (Cummins, 1996, 2000; Norton & Toohey, 2004) that connects linguistic practice to larger educational and social change should be adapted to the Ugandan context. This requires making the classroom a “language-friendly place” (Obondo, 2007, p. 48), which uses the first language as a useful resource for developing the learners’ identity and intellect. The latter is important in developing confidence and self-esteem, which in turn increase the motivation and creativity of learners (e.g see Bamgbose, 2005, Bunyi, 2005, Cummin’s 2006). In this regard, Cummins (2008) recommends the use of bilingual instructional strategies that strongly promote cross-language transfer. Accordingly, students ought to be encouraged to use a variety of multimodal pedagogies, including songs, code-switching, and
translation as tools for promoting transfer across languages. This is also commensurate with the ideological view of literacy, which shifts from a concern with discipline and social order, to a more collaborative conception and language education (Prinsloo & Breier, 1996; Street 1994).

7.2.4 Future research directions

The study contributes to research on multilingual language policy, debates on development, and discourses on globalization, from the particular perspective of a developing country in which an oral culture has been predominant. Research on bilingualism and multilingual literacies has hitherto been associated with western, well resourced nations. This study underscores the richness of using local modes of communication, e.g. songs, code switching, and stories in the promotion of multilingual literacy in a developing country. At the same time, however, it provides insight into the challenges of incorporating indigenous languages and practices in both rural and urban classrooms.

This study thus suggests three areas that need further research. First, teacher training, particularly at the primary level, needs further investigation. How can teachers best be trained to implement a new language education policy, particularly in a multilingual language context? Curriculum development in respect of teacher preparation is particularly urgent, with a central focus on the promotion of mother tongue. Second, a comparative study including diverse countries would enrich our understanding of the challenges and possibilities for multilingual education in developing countries. What lessons can be learnt from innovations in other poorly-resourced countries? Finally, research that includes students’ perspectives as recipients of the multilingual policy is crucial. Such a study would specifically focus on classroom dynamics, and include extensive observations and evaluations, to better understand what strategies are most effective in promoting multilingual literacy development.
In the next section I propose a number of recommendations important in the implementation of a multilingual language education policy in Uganda.

7.3 Recommendations

The UBOS (2000) notes that a large percentage of Uganda’s population is 15 years and below. Therefore it is imperative that the educational needs of this group are addressed effectively. The language of instruction is critical as it forms the foundation of what can be learnt in the curriculum. Therefore, against the background of the findings presented in the preceding chapters, and from the literature cited that enumerates the benefits of using the mother tongue as medium of instruction, I make the following recommendations to enhance the implementation of Uganda’s new language education policy.

7.3.1 Professional training

Professional development needs to be incorporated in the promotion of multilingual education. It is imperative that teacher training includes in its core curriculum a specialization in bilingual education. The prevailing scenario in the rural school is that the teachers for mother tongue are regular classroom teachers trained essentially for English language. However, oral proficiency and competency in the local language does not necessarily translate into reading and writing proficiency. This was exemplified when one of the teachers at Bugagga Rural Primary School who taught reading and writing in Lunyole, which was not her mother tongue, confessed that she was not proficient herself in the language. Therefore, there is urgent need to intensify in-service teacher training to equip teachers with the necessary skills for teaching mother tongue, particularly for the rural schools with fairly homogenous language groups. Retooling of in-service teachers in order to address mother tongue education needs to be undertaken by the English-oriented teacher training colleges in Uganda. This remains an urgent priority.
7.3.2 Curriculum review and attitude change

Colleges need to review their curriculum in order to meet the skills training for pre-service teachers. Pre-service teachers need to be encouraged to participate in preliminary research and materials development particularly for promoting the teaching of local languages. This has the added advantage that in the process of involvement, attitudes may change. Teachers, especially in the urban school, expressed negative attitudes to teaching local language. Therefore there is need to promote positive attitudes to linguistic diversity in school and consider linguistic diversity as a resource to invest in. Teachers should create space within their classrooms for projects in the local language that can be developed by the pupils (see Stein, 2000, Vaish, 2008, Cummins et al., 2006). There is already time allocated on the timetable for teaching the local language, and this slot should not be appropriated for other subjects or activities. The teachers in consultation with the school administration can then arrange a period in the term when the projects can be displayed and parents invited. This will be an opportune time to bring in experts to inform the community about the attendant benefits of developing a child’s literacy in the mother tongue. It will also serve the dual purpose of boosting the pupils’ identity and self worth, as well as stimulating the parents’ desire to work with their children and perhaps, for those who can, contribute to writing the much needed instructional materials.

7.3.3 Materials development

As noted from the findings, there was a dearth of instructional materials, not only for the local languages but also the coveted English language. Given that there is little publication in support of local languages, there is need to encourage materials development and publication in local languages. The teachers and the community should be oriented towards writing materials. Government, especially local governments, should tap into the available resources within their
respective districts, such as the already trained but unemployed teachers, as well as those who have retired.

The work of the Lunyole Language Association (LLA) in the rural school is to be commended as it demonstrates what a non-governmental organization can contribute even with limited resources (see Heugh, 2003, Obondo, 2008). It should also be noted that most of the members worked as volunteers and had retired from public service. The idea of using parents as resource persons needs to be explored, especially in the production of materials. It is important that parents become actively involved in the implementation process in order to appreciate the benefits that accrue from use of a child’s mother tongue. Through active participation, parents would understand the complementary role of the mother tongue in the acquisition of the much preferred language of wider communication.

7.3.4 Status language planning

Given the rural community’s low regard for their language, there should be concerted efforts to promote use of local languages, especially the minority ones hitherto not used in education. This development would call for acceleration of codification of the local language to facilitate the production of writing materials. In addition, using the local languages in official spheres, so that it is not confined to the home domain only, would be another way of boosting the status of minority languages. As a matter of urgency, the community ought to be sensitized to the fact that use of mother tongue as a teaching medium is effective in the acquisition of a second language. Therefore, efforts should be made to involve stakeholders to appreciate this important finding, arising from much international research.
7.3.5 Public education

Related to the above factor, parents should be educated that learning takes longer in an unfamiliar language. A child must not only master the language of instruction, but also the content at the same time, which makes it particularly challenging. Use of a child’s mother tongue ensures easy access to content material being studied. It also helps to develop critical thinking and foster effective communication. This requires sensitization by people who understand the theory and can explain it in practical terms to stakeholders. There is also a need for clear guidelines that are unambiguous to those meant to implement policy. It is imperative that top-down policy-makers take seriously the local knowledge and investments of teachers, parents, and members of the wider community. This represents the best hope for the development of multilingual literacies in Uganda.
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Appendix A: Aims and objectives of primary education

3. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF PRIMARY EDUCATION

The Primary School Curriculum has been designed in such a way that it can provide practical mechanisms for fulfilling the national aims and objectives of Primary Education articulated in both the Government White Paper and the Report of the Curriculum Review Task Force. They are reproduced here for ease of reference.

(a) To enable individuals to acquire functional, permanent and developmental literacy, numeracy and communication skills in English, Kiswahili and, at least, one Uganda language;

(b) To develop and maintain sound mental and physical health among learners;

(c) To instill the values of living and working cooperatively with other people and caring for others in the community;

(d) To develop and cherish the cultural, moral and spiritual values of life and appreciate the richness that lies in our varied and diverse cultures and values;

(e) To promote understanding and appreciation for the protection and utilisation of the natural environment, using scientific and technological knowledge and skills;

(f) To develop an understanding of one's rights and civic responsibilities and duties for the purpose of positive and responsible participation in civic matters;
g) To develop a sense of patriotism, nationalism and national unity in diversity.

h) To develop prerequisites for continuing education.

i) To acquire a variety of practical skills for enabling one to make a living in a multi-skilled manner.

j) To develop an appreciation for the dignity of work and for making a living by one's honest effort.

k) To equip the learner with the knowledge, skills and values of responsible parenthood.

l) To develop skills in management of time and finance and respect for private and public property.

m) To develop the ability to use the problem-solving approach in various life situations, and

n) To develop discipline and good manners.

The syllabi are provided.
Appendix B: Questionnaire/interview guide for the headmaster
Uganda’s Education Language Policy in practice in Primary Schools

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE HEADTEACHERS

This questionnaire is designed to find out about the prevalent practices in implementing the Uganda Education Language in Primary Schools. This strictly for research purpose. Your confidentiality is guaranteed.

Date of interview (dd/mm/yy)........................................ Questionnaire Number.............

Section O: School particulars

District:........................................ Name of school....................................................

Total number of pupils in the school............ Boys .......... Girls.................

Indicate in the table below the number of pupils per class

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>P1</th>
<th>P2</th>
<th>O3</th>
<th>P4</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Boys</td>
<td>Girls</td>
<td>Boys</td>
<td>Girls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No of pupils</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How many grades do you have for each Class?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>P1</th>
<th>P2</th>
<th>O3</th>
<th>P4</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Total number of teaching staff ............... Male.......... Female..............

Section A: Respondent profile

1. Gender
   Male [ ] Female [ ]

2. Highest Educational Qualification

   1 [ ] Grade II Certificate 1 [ ] Lunyoli
   2 [ ] Grade III Certificate 2 [ ] Dhophadhola
   3 [ ] Diploma 3 [ ] Ateso
   4 [ ] Degree 4 [ ] Others (Specify)

   5 [ ] Others (specify)

3. What is your mother tongue?

4. What is your age group

   1 [ ] Below 25 1 [ ] Mathematics
   2 [ ] 25-30 2 [ ] Science
   3 [ ] 31-40 3 [ ] Social Studies
   4 [ ] 41-50 4 [ ] English Language
   5 [ ] Above 50 5 [ ] Others (Specify)
6. How long have you been in the teaching service?

Section 3: Language(s) used in this school

7. What are the main languages spoken as Mother tongue by the pupils in this school?

8. Please give a general comment on the catchment area of your school (i.e. socio-economic status of area and parents, occupations)

About 15 Years ago the government established a language policy that says:

'The first four years of primary education, the mother-tongue language prevalent in the local area is to be used as the medium of instruction, whilst English is studied as a subject. From Primary Five, English replaces the mother-tongue language as medium of instruction, and the mother-tongue language is then treated as another subject on the timetable.'

9. Are you familiar with this policy? Yes [ ] No [ ]

Tell me how you came to learn about it

10. Would you say that the teachers in this school are familiar with this policy?

11. Generally, what are their views concerning this policy?

12. Tell me how teachers who come to this school are recruited. Is their mother tongue a factor considered during recruitment?

13. What are your observations of the teachers who do not speak the mother tongue spoken by the local community in which your school is located?
14. When you communicate to parents in writing, what language(s) do you use and why?

15. What language(s) do you use to address parents during the general parents-teachers meetings in the school and why?

16. In what language(s) do you conduct the School Management Committee meetings and why?

17. What language(s) do you usually use to communicate with your pupils in Grade 1 & 2 and why?

18. Comment on the resources available in your school to support the use of mother tongue for instruction

19. In your view, how has this policy tried to address equity issues for the minority language speakers in your school?

20. Please tell me what you consider to be the strength and limitations of the current education language policy

Thank you for accepting to participate in this study!
Appendix C: Questionnaire for the teachers

Uganda’s Education Language Policy in practice in Primary Schools

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE TEACHERS

This questionnaire is designed to find out about the prevalent practices in implementing the Uganda Education Language in Primary Schools. This is strictly for research purpose. Your confidentiality is guaranteed.

Date at interview (dd/mm/yy).................................. Questionnaire Number.......... Time..............

Section O: School particulars
District:.................................................. Name of school..................................................

Section A: Respondent profile
1. Gender
   Male □   Female □

2. Highest Educational Qualification
   1 □ Grade II Certificate
   2 □ Grade III Certificate
   3 □ Diploma
   4 □ Degree
   5 □ Others (specify)

3. Indicate your age group
   1 □ Below 25
   2 □ 25-30
   3 □ 31-40
   4 □ 41-50
   5 □ Above 50

4. What is your mother tongue
   1 □ Lunyoli
   2 □ Dhophadhola
   3 □ Ateso
   4 □ Others (specify)

5. How long have you been in the teaching service.......................? (Number of years). For how long have you been in this school.................................?

6. What class(s) do you teach
   ______________________ P1 _______ P2 _______ P3 _______ P4 _______

   What subject(s) do you teach
7. Please indicate the main language spoken by the pupils in your class.

8. What language is used as medium of instruction in the lower classes in this school.

(show/give the policy)

About 15 Years ago the government established a language policy that says:

'In the first four year of primary education, the mother-tongue language prevalent in the local area is to be used as the medium of instruction, whilst English is studied as a subject. From Primary Five, English replaces the mother-tongue language as medium of instruction, and the mother-tongue language is then treated as another subject on the timetable.'

9. Are you familiar with this policy?

10. How did you come to know about it?

11. What challenges do you encounter in applying this policy in your teaching?

12. What do you consider to be the strength/advantage of this policy?

13. What is the limitation/advantage of this policy?

14. What would you need to make this policy work?
15. What languages do you use to teach Reading and Writing in your class?

16. What challenges do you face in teaching your pupils Reading and Writing?

Thank you for accepting to participate in this study.
Appendix D: Interview protocol for the teachers

Uganda’s Education Language Policy in practice in Primary Schools

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR TEACHERS

This guide is designed to find out about the prevalent practices in implementing the Uganda Education Language Policy in Primary Schools. This is strictly for research purpose. Your confidentiality is guaranteed.

1. What is the predominant language in this community.................................?

2. Are you able to speak it Yes [ ] No [ ]

3. Are you able to read and write it Yes [ ] No [ ]

4. Tell me how/when/where did you learn it (if one is able to R & W). If not, why not

5. Tell me about your training as a teacher

6. Tell me about any in-service you have received in the last five years in connection to the education language policy

7. From your observation, what would you say the social relations among your pupils in your class are based on

8. Are there any pupils to whom the language you use in teaching is not a mother tongue?

9. How do you manage in such a situation?

10. What challenges do you encounter in using mother tongue as medium of instruction and how do you deal with them

11. How active (their participation) are the parents about their children’s literacy development

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Appendix E: Community protocol

Uganda's Education Language Policy in practice in Primary Schools
Community Survey

This questionnaire is designed to find out about the prevalent practices in implementing the Uganda Education Language in Primary Schools. This is strictly for research purpose. Your confidentiality is guaranteed.

Section O: Community Particulars

Date of interview (dd/mm/yy).............................. Questionnaire Number..............................

County: ..................................................
Subcounty............................................... Parish(s)..................................................

Section 1: Respondent's Characteristics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>1. Sex Male=1 Female=2</th>
<th>2. Age</th>
<th>3. LCI Resident Yes=1 No=0</th>
<th>4. Highest Education Level</th>
<th>5. Primary occupation</th>
<th>6. Office (e.g. LCI Chairman, Secretary)</th>
<th>7. Household head Yes=1 No=0</th>
<th>Primary Language</th>
<th>8. Spoken</th>
<th>9. Written</th>
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Section 2: Community Linguistic Landscape

10. Indicate the language commonly used for different activities in your community

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Most commonly used</th>
<th>Commonly used</th>
<th>Sometimes used</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Village meetings</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health centers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Places of worship (Church/Mosque)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ceremonies (wedding/funeral etc)</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

11. What language(s) do you mostly speak with your children at home?
12. Indicate the language(s) you are able to:

   (a) Read

   (b) Write

13. How many of you help children in the lower primary classes with their homework?

   For those who do so, what language(s) do you use in helping them and why this language?

   The others who do not, please tell me why?

14. Have you observed the siblings in your homes help one another with their homework?

   If yes, what language(s) do they use and why?

15. Generally, what type of reading materials are found in your homes?

16. In what language(s) are these materials?

   Tell me why the material(s) you have are in these languages.
Section 3: Education Language Policy awareness and Community participation

About 15 years ago the government established a language policy that says
"In the first four years of primary education, the mother-tongue language prevalent in the local area is to be
used as the medium of instruction, whilst English is studied as a subject. From Primary Five, English
replaces the mother-tongue language as medium of instruction, and the mother-tongue language is then
treated as another subject on the timetable.”

17. How many of you are familiar with this policy? (write no) ...................................................
   Tell me how you came to know about it ........................................................................................................
   ..............................................................................................................................................................

18. What do you consider to be the strength of this policy?
..............................................................................................................................................................
   What are the limitations?
..............................................................................................................................................................

19. What activities are you involved at home in support of your children’s literacy development?
..............................................................................................................................................................
   Reading & Writing)........................................................................................................................................

20. What are your major concerns regarding your children’s literacy development at school
..............................................................................................................................................................

21. Do you go to school to speak to the teachers about these concerns? Tell me about your
discussions with teachers ..............................................................................................................................
   ..............................................................................................................................................................
   Where else do you go to express your concerns regarding your children’s literacy
development?
..............................................................................................................................................................
   Why do you choose to go there?
..............................................................................................................................................................

Thank you for accepting to participate in this study.
Appendix F: Classroom observation schedule

Classroom Observation Schedule

Date ........................................
Class ........................................
Learning Area/Subject ........................................
Duration of Observation ........................................

Purpose of the observation is to gather information about classroom practices versus the language of instruction following the categories below.

1. Language Distribution:
   - Greetings/instructions ........................................
   - Announcements/prayers ........................................
   - Introducing the lesson ........................................
   - Questions/explaining/recapping ........................................
   - Writing by teacher ........................................
   - Writing by pupils ........................................

2. Teacher’s language use and pupils’ language use:
   - Materials: ........................................
   - Assessment ........................................
   - Pupil participation: ........................................
Appendix G: A map of TUPS classroom blocks - Tiriri Urban Primary School

A map showing Tiriri Urban Primary School classroom blocks

Key:
- T: Toilet
- P.L: Pit Latrine
- N.C: Netball Court
- U: Urinal
- S.B: Sick Bay
- Adm: Administration
- MH: Main Hall
- Big Tree
- F.P: Football Pitch
Appendix H: Primary One grade A classroom plan (TUPS)
Appendix I: Primary Two grade C classroom plan (TUPS)
Appendix J: Primary Three grade B classroom plan (TUPS)
Appendix K: Primary Three grade C classroom plan (TUPS)
The University of British Columbia  
Office of Research Services  
Behavioural Research Ethics Board  
Suite 102, 6190 Agronomy Road, Vancouver, B.C. V6T 1Z3

CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL- MINIMAL RISK RENEWAL

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<th>DEPARTMENT:</th>
<th>UBC BREB NUMBER:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Maureen Kendrick</td>
<td>UBC/Education/Language and Literacy Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>Juliet Tembe</td>
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<td>Harriet Mutonyi</td>
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<td>Judith Eiyo</td>
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The Annual Renewal for Study have been reviewed and the procedures were found to be acceptable on ethical grounds for research involving human subjects.

Approval is issued on behalf of the Behavioural Research Ethics Board.