LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION POLICY IN MAINLAND TANZANIA:
NEGOTIATING SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION AND SOCIAL JUSTICE IN
PUBLIC EDUCATION

by

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Language of instruction policy in Mainland-Tanzania: Negotiating second language acquisition and social justice in public education

This paper examines education policy related to language of instruction (LoI) in public schools in Mainland-Tanzania. The present policy designates Kiswahili (a local native language and Tanzania’s national language) as the LoI throughout primary education and then a change to English as the LoI at the post-primary level. Conceptualized by theories of second language acquisition (SLA) and social justice education, the paper frames this policy as problematic from the perspective of the lived experiences of students and teachers in Mainland-Tanzania and uses theoretical and empirical studies to present critical analysis.

I became passionate about LoI policy in Tanzanian education as a result of my lived experiences, both as a student and later as a secondary school science teacher.

Experiences with the language of instruction as a student

I attended public schools¹ for both primary and secondary education. I grew up in a multilingual household – both my parents speaking more than one Indigenous language, Kiswahili and English at advanced fluency levels, and both attained post-secondary education. My mother was a primary school English subject teacher while my father was a public servant partly educated abroad, an avid reader and a bibliophile with a collection of books, many of which are written in English. In my home and at a young age, I had access to English literature and televised English content which were rich sources of English vocabularies; comprehensive English to English and English to Kiswahili dictionaries which I laboriously consulted to find meanings of English words; and interlocutory parents to imitate and receive corrective feedback from on occasions that involved use of English. However, Sukuma, my paternal tribal language and Kiswahili were my simultaneous first languages, with the latter being the primary household language². Most of my verbal interactions with my siblings, peers at school and folks in community spaces, markets,

¹ In mainland-Tanzania, the public education system is organized as follows: 3 years of pre-primary schooling, 7 years of primary schooling, 4 and 2 years of ordinary and advanced level of secondary education, respectively, and 3+ years of higher education. English is used as LoI in post-primary education and it is used as LoI in private primary schools. However, the LoI in public schools is Kiswahili up to the end of primary education. Students from the latter can join public secondary schools and those from public primary schools can join private secondary schools. Thus, most secondary schools in mainland-Tanzania are composed of a mix of students from both backgrounds.

² My parents came from two different tribes, each with its own distinct tribal/indigenous language. As an inter-ethnic language, Kiswahili was preferred as it made communication easier between family members from both sides of my parents.
places of worship and the wider social environment were predominantly in Kiswahili. Thus, it is noteworthy that English was not the primary language and infrequently used in my own household and immediate surroundings such that it did not qualify as my second language. This draws from Ringbom (1987 in Brock-Utne, 2010b, p. 77) that:

in the situation of second language acquisition, the (second) language is spoken in the immediate environment of the language learner and in this environment the learner has positive opportunities to use the second language in natural communicative situations and that the language may or may not be supplemented by classroom teaching.

When English-as-a-subject instruction commenced in the later stages of primary schooling, I was relatively privileged compared to most of my classmates who did not have access to the same rich English environment of my family home and/or any extent of communicative interactions in the language. I already possessed a strong foundation to produce meaningful and complex English sentences that most of my classmates would agonize to construct. I recall most of the instruction for English-as-a-subject being conducted in Kiswahili with notes in English being copied on the blackboard. It is possible that our English subject teachers lacked advanced proficiency to facilitate communication solely in English. Retrospectively, I believe I may have been conflicted by this situation. On one hand, I was somewhat resentful, a feeling possibly shared by other students, of being taught English language using Kiswahili, thus making me linguistically underprepared for post-primary education which requires advanced English skills. On the other hand, I was cognizant and perhaps passively empathetic to the challenges, especially written and verbal expression, that many of my classmates endured when learning English. Most did not use the language beyond the English-as-a-subject class and/or lacked additional resources at home, potentially due to low financial resources to purchase English dictionaries, books, newspapers as well as lack of access to interlocutors fluent in English.

In secondary schools, the differences in English language fluency among students became more pronounced. Students from private primary schools, who were few in number, had a better command of the LoI and confidently expressed themselves in classroom interactions and beyond. With a few years of learning English as a subject in primary school and expansive resources at home, I felt less proficient compared to my counterparts from private, English-medium primary schools. Most of our teachers used code-switching (switching languages between sentences) and
at times literally translated the contents of their subjects into Kiswahili, only to write the notes on the blackboard in English. Teachers sometimes misspelled or misused English words which were copied by most students while few students, especially from private primary schools would correct teachers’ grammatical or spelling errors. This indicates that most teachers had command of English in so far as it applied to their subject area specialty but lacked broader English language skills. Our school required students to converse in English at all times. Students who were caught speaking in Kiswahili were punished. A few teachers did not respond to students’ interactions in Kiswahili and only responded when students conversed in English. I recall some students declining to approach their teachers for further clarifications, fearful of the incomprehension that would ensue if English were to be solely used. Over the course of secondary education, most students, myself included, resorted to memorization of notes and incorrect or inappropriate English words. It was an accepted belief, and it has been a longstanding practice that English is learnt through its use LoI. Most students, including me, conceded to their inability to comprehensibly write and speak English, yet none ever strongly questioned the use of English as the LoI and they actually favored English over Kiswahili for reasons that will be explained later.

While my teacher-preparation education at a private university effectively prepared me to become a secondary school science educator with respect to pedagogy, classroom management, assessment and teaching-subject content, I felt ill-equipped with English language instruction. The program offered very few courses focusing on English language skills which were helpful for teacher trainees to comprehend English-mediated instruction. For my fellow teacher trainees and me performance in English language was not at an advanced proficiency level and in most cases, comprehensible output was restricted to what I refer to as subject-specific fluency - spontaneous performance of a language restricted to one’s area of specialization and scope thereof. Additionally, most group-based activities, including in-class ones among teacher trainees were conducted in Kiswahili or a combination of chiefly Kiswahili and English. For most, this multilingual practice underscored that they can effectively express themselves using Kiswahili, a familiar language, but were not equally competent in English, a less familiar language and the LoI. These multilingual practices, formally unaccepted and discouraged, shifted my perspective. I began to understand that learning subject matter across all disciplines and being educated should take precedence over learning English and learning in it.
Although subjective, and not representative of all higher education programs and institutions in the country, these lived experiences and observations help to paint a picture that English language skills and fluency remain low among most student-educators and were a noticeable challenge among instructors and faculty members. For me and many of my university education peers, the use of two different instructional languages in the public education system was a source of unfairness and it triggered indignation. I felt deprived of critical, analytical, creative and innovative thinking due to rote learning fostered by a switch to an unfamiliar and foreign language.

**Experiences with the language of instruction as a teacher**

Through my university experience and as I transitioned to become an educator in public schools, I began to interrogate the language competence differences or inequalities between students and their broader, long-term implications such as ease with LoI change in secondary and post-secondary education, academic success in the latter and cognitive advantages associated with metalinguistic awareness.

As a secondary school teacher, I witnessed most of my students enduring struggles similar to my own. I partly coped by using code-switching, defined by Brock-Utne & Holmarsdottir (2003) in Brock-Utne (2010b, p. 79) as “a switch in language that takes place between sentences,” to facilitate comprehensible communication in a language familiar to all. Armed with subject-specific higher fluency, I paraphrased the concepts that were partly explained in Kiswahili (during code-switching) into English to expand students’ vocabularies. This enabled me to comply with the LoI policy while improving student comprehension of the content. While subject-specific fluency may help expand students’ vocabularies, the use of new words to construct meaningful sentences is cognitively demanding and may not be automatic such that in-depth and/or broader communicative interactions may not be spontaneous or even possible. Using pragmatics as an example, Lightbrown & Spada (2013) expound on this difficulty stating that:

> Even if learners acquire a vocabulary of 5,000 words and a good knowledge of the syntax and morphology of the target language, they can still encounter difficulty in using language. They also need to acquire skills for interpreting requests, responding politely to compliments or apologies, recognizing humor, and managing conversations. They need to
learn to recognize the many meanings that the same sentence can have in different situations (p. 66, my emphasis).

Although helpful to some extent, albeit anecdotally, I acknowledge that my approach to use code-switching to expand students’ vocabularies in English is unsatisfactory in that it does not necessarily help them understand synonyms and multiple meanings of same sentences in different contexts and how to appropriately use them. Thus, I argue that subject-specific fluency coupled with code-switching does not adequately help learners acquire and produce subject-matter ideas, concepts and knowledge in the target (English) language – an argument further elaborated in the section that discusses SLA.

The LoI change to English in post-primary education has attracted significant deliberation between and among teachers at my school and the district administrators. Overall, most teachers are in favor of teaching English language by using it as a LoI in post-primary education, few arguing for its introduction in public primary schools and fewer, myself included, favoring use of Kiswahili as LoI throughout the education system. Most teachers perceive themselves to be somewhat fluent in English and mostly in the content of their specific subjects. Many candidly admit and at times use humor to name verbal expression as their major challenge in English language due to their limited vocabulary in it. Most teachers use Kiswahili and code-switching outside of the classroom to offer academic and disciplinary feedback, and during informal conversations with students. Few use English in these avenues and resort to Kiswahili for clarification when they deem it necessary. Parent-teacher, full staff and most departmental meetings are always conducted in Kiswahili, although a few, English subject teachers insist on and model use of English. Meetings with district-level administrators are also conducted in Kiswahili, while internal and external official correspondences such as memos and directives from the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MoET) and its affiliated agencies use both languages at separate communications such that the latter were sometimes written in Kiswahili and sometimes in English. I do not recall any instance of a bilingual communication where the same communication was sent in both languages. Additionally, I do not recall any pedagogical support or professional development designed specifically to provide teachers with additional training on English language skills, except for a few that were restricted to English subject teachers.
Most teachers take issue with the LoI policy with the view to improve teaching of and providing resources geared to enhance students’ English language fluency, especially those from public primary schools. A few urge parents to buy dictionaries for their children which surfaces inequalities between students as most families could not afford them. As their own way of circumventing the LoI switch and its challenges, most teachers and administrators send their own children to expensive English-medium private schools. In this regard, the LoI policy incites inequalities and represents disunity within society about the expectations of public primary education.

At almost all secondary schools, there are designated weekly student-organized English debates coordinated by the English language department and all teachers are encouraged to collaborate and participate. At my school, only a few teachers show sporadic interest. Some of the reasons put forth are lack of time due to academic and co-curricular priorities and possibly, although never stated explicitly, they may have fears of not being able to thoroughly and extensively argue in topics they lacked fluency.

In one distinctive case, I overheard fellow teachers’ incorrect grammatical use of the language with students and I later corrected them privately, which made them feel embarrassed and perhaps vulnerable. This instance and similar accounts from other teachers regarding their colleagues unsettled and deeply puzzled me: how many humiliating encounters like these do teachers endure? How do limited English fluency and corrective feedback, no matter how sensitive, sincere and empathetic, impact their professional identities, sense of self-worth, self-esteem and confidence? How unfair and burdening are the expectation and requirement for non-English language teachers to be un-/under-qualified English language interlocutors to students? To what extent is English language erroneously instructed and acquired by students from teachers who are non-native and less advanced speakers of the language? As a teacher, what is my moral duty and critical educative responsibility to students: is it to facilitate critical, analytical, innovative thinking?; to foster their academic excellence and help them become reflexive, participative and productive members of the society?; to raise awareness and enable them to critically navigate dynamics involving intersecting issues of power, privilege, inequality and different forms of oppression?; or am I to emphasize rote learning currently enabled by using an unfamiliar language of instruction and uncritically comply
of a LoI policy which perpetuates linguistic inequities among learners? Brock-Utne (2001, p. 118) posits that:

The language (of instruction) question is about power. Choosing as the language of instruction an indigenous language, a language people speak, are familiar with and which belongs to their cultural heritage would redistribute power from the privileged few to the masses.

In summary, my interest in this topic stems from firsthand experiences with mainland-Tanzania’s LoI policy, both as a student and later as a secondary school science teacher in the public education system. As a graduate student studying educational leadership in Canada, I deliberately and rigorously sought to deepen my inquiry into the LoI policy issue. This experience also calls for development of a LoI policy that should promote a better understanding and acquisition of both academic knowledge and foreign languages for all students.

**Historical background of the LoI policy**

Tanzania is a multilingual country with more than 150 tribal languages. However, Kiswahili has been the official language of instruction (LoI) for public primary schools since 1965 (Qorro, 2013). Kiswahili, a Bantu language borrowing from Arabic and originally the language of the coast, became the lingua franca during the nineteenth century because of the trade routes from the coast inland to the west (Barrett, 1994). Kiswahili is currently spoken by approximately 99% of the total population (Qorro, 2013) and functions as the national language as well as the language of wider inter-ethnic communication in parallel with all other ethnic community languages (Vuzo 2018). The LoI policy has historical roots in two different time periods, colonial and post-colonial.

**Colonial period language policy**

According to Rubagumya (1990), Kiswahili was used as a language of colonial government administration and instruction throughout the school system of the then German East Africa territory during the German colonial period which lasted between 1885 and 1918. He further reports that few of the German governors such as Rechenberg (1906 - 1912) spoke Kiswahili. The German East Africa territory included present-day Rwanda, Burundi, Mozambique and mainland-Tanzania. After Britain succeeded Germany as capitalist colonizers of mainland-Tanzania (then
called Tanganyika and excluded present-day Rwanda, Burundi and Mozambique) territory after World War I, Kiswahili was retained as the language of education in the first five years of primary school with English taught as an additional subject from the third year onwards. Subsequently, English became the LoI in the last three years of primary school and throughout secondary school and was introduced as the language of the British colonial government’s administration (Barrett, 1994). English became the main prerequisite for employment in white-collar jobs (Qorro, 2013).

Due to its wider use among the different ethnic groups, Kiswahili was instrumental in the course of the independence movements during the colonial period, unifying multi-ethnic peoples of present-day mainland-Tanzania (then Tanganyika), through to the achievement of independence in 1961. In 1964, Tanganyika and Zanzibar, a semi-autonomous archipelago state, united to form the United Republic of Tanzania. Education is administered independently by the Zanzibar and mainland-Tanzania jurisdictions. The scope of this paper focuses on mainland-Tanzania.

**Post-colonial language policy**

After independence and union in 1964, Kiswahili was adopted as the national language and enthusiastically promoted particularly during Tanzania's period of Socialism and Self-reliance inaugurated in 1967 (Barrett, 1994). Kiswahili was declared the official language of government offices and was also adopted as the medium of education in primary schools in the same year, leading to active discouragement of English usage, although positive attitudes towards the latter lingered (Barrett, 1994). Barrett further notes that, to effect the change of communication language in the aforementioned domains, Kiswahili terms and vocabularies that were previously nonexistent or unknown by most of the public were coined and standardized by the National Kiswahili Council (Baraza la Kiswahili Tanzania, BAKITA in Kiswahili) and the Institute of Kiswahili Research (Taasisi ya Utafiti wa Kiswahili, TUKI in Kiswahili). “Kiswahili was thus intimately linked with decolonization (Swilla, 2009, p. 3)”, although English was retained as the LoI in post-primary education.

In the early 1980s, a special commission headed by Mr. J. Makweta was appointed by President Nyerere to review the entire education system (Lwaitama & Rugemalira, 1990). The commission presented its report in 1982 which, according to Lwaitama and Rugemalira, recommended adoption of Kiswahili as a LoI in both secondary and tertiary education, setting dates for each as
1985 and 1990, respectively. However, after his appointment as Minister of Education in 1983, the former chair of the commission, Mr. Makweta, stated that the proposed LoI would not be implemented and English as the LoI in post-primary education would be maintained (Lwaitama & Rugemalira, 1990). According to Brock-Utne (2010a), the justification for the policy reversal provided by the Minister of Education was the perceived need for Tanzanians to be fluent in English, which is a language of international communication, noting that:

We must learn from foreign nations, and in order to do so we must use English to promote understanding (of what is learnt) in schools (Schmied, 1986, p. 109 in Brock-Utne, 2010a, p. 641).

In addition, the Ministry’s position was probably influenced by a study conducted by Criper and Dodd (1984) funded by the British government which found English language proficiency levels unsatisfactory among university and secondary students. Criper and Dodd (1984, p. 72), alarmingly stated that the level of English language proficiency in Tanzanian secondary schools is ‘so totally inadequate for the teaching and learning of other subjects…that it needs to be addressed as a matter of urgency.’” Based on a test administered to 2,410 learners selected from all levels of the education system, the researchers made the following observations:

. . . University students' level of English is substantially below that required for University English medium study (p. 15).

. . . less than 20% of the University sample tested were at a level where they would find it easy to read even the simpler books required for their academic studies (p. 43).

. . . we estimate that perhaps up to 75% of teaching, at any rate in Form 1 (the first grade of lower secondary school), is being done through Kiswahili (p. 34).

Lwaitama and Rugemalira further note that in July 1984, the Ministry of Education put forward its position, albeit vaguely and confusingly, stating that “both languages, English and Kiswahili will be used as media of instruction. English will be improved at all levels of education” (p. 37). The latter is indicative of the fact, or at least the perception, that English fluency was inadequate to facilitate equivalent teaching and learning processes in both languages.
Combined, these findings indicated that usage of English as a LoI resulted in ineffectual teaching and learning among Tanzanian students and educators. Teaching in Kiswahili to a larger extent than in English as required by the LoI policy signifies and underscores the prevalence of Kiswahili and draws attention to the scant English proficiencies among students and teachers as an underlying and a deep-rooted obstacle to education in the country. University graduates with significantly low mastery of standard academic English who subsequently become secondary school teachers compound the already poor English language skills in the public-schooling system, creating a vicious cycle.

The explanation put forth by the then Minister of Education principally equates learning from other nations to learning in languages of such nations. It suggests that what is learnt in schools is partly from foreign (developed) nations and should be instructed solely in English. This is unsubstantiated on two fronts. Mainland-Tanzania learns from non-English speaking countries such as China, South Korea, Italy, Germany and Scandinavian countries, often through scholarships offered in higher education institutions and programs instructed in the countries’ respective national languages. What we learn and teach in mainland-Tanzania’s schools and where we learn it from is not strictly related to English as a language. On the other hand, the explanation seemed to imply that what we learn from other countries cannot or should not be translated into Kiswahili. The explanation presupposes that Kiswahili, although widely understood by most of the population, is somehow inadequate to be used as an instructional language that can enhance local comprehension of what is learnt from foreign countries. To learn from other nations ought to be research-informed application of their key advances in education, science, technology, economics, agriculture, governance practices, inter alia within our existing structures, needs and contexts.

Statement of the problem

Based on my experiences as a student and a teacher and evidence discussed earlier, I purport that the current LoI policy in Mainland-Tanzania is problematic. Kiswahili is the official LoI in fee-free public primary schools; however, the LoI shifts to English in post-primary education. A paradox exists between usage of English in post-primary education and voluminous research evidence, conducted within the Tanzanian context, which asserts that English as a LoI is a barrier to effective communication and brings forth undesired schooling outcomes such as increased drop-
out rates (Vuzo, 2018), poor performance in high-stakes nationally administered secondary education completion standardized tests (national examination council of Tanzania, 2018) and academic achievement inequalities (Galabawa and Senkoro, 2010). The change in LoI in post-primary education has attracted an increasing establishment of expensive English-medium private pre-primary and primary schools which breeds inequality of learning conditions among students when they enter post-primary education. English is a gate-keeping device for children of the elite (Qorro, 2013) and contributes to and exacerbates socioeconomic stratification in the country. Punishment, at times punitive, is metered out to secondary school students who use Kiswahili instead of English to express themselves. I argue that this experience and the inherent reverence for English have negative implications for students’ cultural identities and their developing linguistic competences.

Guided by the theories of second language acquisition (SLA), I argue in this paper that English is fundamentally a foreign language in Mainland-Tanzania. Due to the moral dilemma caused by this LoI policy vis-à-vis research evidence and the inherent moral nature of any educational undertaking, this paper employs a social justice education (Shields, 2014) framework to strongly advocate for adoption of Kiswahili as a LoI throughout the entire education system. As a LoI, Kiswahili will facilitate effective communication in the teaching, learning and evaluation processes, prevent intensification of inequality of learning conditions and linguistic marginalization, and will be consistent with our national cultural identities.

**Research Questions and Methodology**

This study problematizes LoI policy in mainland Tanzania and seeks potential solutions. Questions that guide the inquiry are:

i. How widespread is English language usage across mainland-Tanzania?

ii. What are current English language fluency levels among secondary school students and teachers?

iii. What are the underlying reasons for the current LoI policy in public education? Namely, the use of Kiswahili in primary schools and English in post-primary education.

iv. What is the relationship between English as LoI and:
   - literacy levels among secondary school students?
- completion rates among secondary school students?
- effective communication in the teaching, learning and assessment processes between secondary students and teachers?

v. What can SLA theories contribute to an analysis of English as LoI in post-primary education in mainland-Tanzania?

vi. How can the social justice education framework shape future LoI policy in the mainland-Tanzania public school system?

This study used a review of the literature and document analysis as primary data-collection methods. Document analysis, defined by O’Leary (2017) is a research tool for collecting, reviewing, interrogating and analyzing various forms of “written text” as primary sources of research data. I reviewed the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training (MoEVT) 2014 Education and Training Policy document that guides the provision of public primary and secondary education in mainland-Tanzania. In the current government administration, MoEVT was renamed the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MoEST). Table 1 presents the policy document and reports prepared by MoEST as well as scholarly works focusing on the LoI issue which were thoroughly analyzed to elicit the progress made in the implementation of the policy, to depict the current situation in mainland-Tanzania’s public schooling system and to inform arguments and recommendations in this paper. The scholarly publications and official documents from MoEST are categorized according to the context in which they were conducted and further classified as either empirical or non-empirical. They are presented in a reverse chronological order. In this paper, the term empirical denotes “inquiry that requires actually observing and recording (as data) entities, events or relationships that appear to the investigator’s senses when they study a particular aspect of the world” (Locke, Silverman & Spirduso, 2010, p. 17). Scholarly publications on second language acquisition and social justice education were also carefully examined and used to propose solutions to the problem. These are not listed in the table, however they are included in the reference list at the end of the paper. I also acknowledge there are other factors other than the change in LoI in post-primary education not discussed in this paper that influence academic performance such as high teacher-student ratio, weak pedagogical repertoire, lack of adequate teaching and learning resources and learners’ home environments.
The review of the studies consisted of reading and examining the research objectives, the methods for data collection and analysis, the findings discussed, as well as the recommendations put forth by each of these studies. Findings of these studies were critically examined to assess existing factual information about, and various perspectives on, the use of English as the official language of instruction in mainland-Tanzania, and to demonstrate how the use of English as LoI affects education and educational outcomes. These reviewed written texts were “interviewed” – treating each document as a respondent who can provide relevant information to the study’s main enquiry (O’Leary, 2017) as a means of examining the current educational challenges caused by what Telli (2014) refers to as an ill-informed LoI policy from an educational leadership standpoint.

Secondary data extracted from the reviewed research reports, policy and education sector performance documents were hand coded in connection with the above predetermined questions. Themes were developed that answer the stated research questions. Quotations and specific evidence generated from the review were used to inform the arguments put forth across different sections of the paper. This paper intentionally sought and incorporated research reports and perspectives that are contrary to the researcher’s inclination and recommendations as a means to address researcher bias. These diverging perspectives are explicitly stated and critically interrogated throughout the thematic presentation of the paper. Overall, all the reviewed papers that focus on mainland-Tanzania acknowledge, demonstrate and concur that low English language fluency levels among secondary school teachers and students are obstacles to meaningful, constructive, engaging and comprehensible communicative interactions in classrooms.

Because of my lived experiences, I acknowledge my own bias towards adoption of Kiswahili as LoI at the post-primary level. My preference for Kiswahili is rooted in my cultural identity as well as the salience of the language in day-to-day lives of average Tanzanians and its symbolism and embodiment of our national unity, societal cohesion and decolonization efforts. As a critical, egalitarian and justice-minded educator influenced by Freirean perspectives to emancipate the oppressed communities, it is my deep conviction that Kiswahili can facilitate the latter for most Tanzanians who live in rural areas and catalyze their upward social mobility. I firmly believe that the whole society benefits when everyone is uplifted and not marginalized by usage of English as LoI. As one of the five faces of oppression, Young (2011, p. 53) defines marginalization as “the expulsion of people from useful participation in social life so that they are (potentially) subjected
to severe material deprivation and even extermination”. In this regard, those who are not fluent in English, but native in or familiar with Kiswahili, at no fault of their own, are denied an opportunity to learn, acquire knowledge and develop competences that will enable them to participate productively in and transform their societies. Institutional marginalization of a national language in academic and professional workplace settings discombobulates me considering the country’s yet to be successful endeavor to learn English by its use as LoI for over five decades.

I conscientiously scrutinized my bias and subjectivity by maintenance of a critical stance and open mindedness in reviewing, analysis and discussion of the examined research reports and policy document. This proved useful for developing nuanced understandings. This study is limited by the use of secondary data with implicit and inherent biases and subjectivities of the original authors.
Table 1: List of official documents and scholarly works reviewed

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<th>Author</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Context</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2017/2018</td>
<td>Education Sector Performance Report</td>
<td>A comprehensive report that details access and equity in the education sector issues; quality of education; strategies for improving the quality and financing for education.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ministry of Education and Vocational Training</td>
<td>2014</td>
<td>Education and Training Policy</td>
<td>A policy document which presents vision and mission; highlights statements that guide provision and scope of education in mainland-Tanzania; the legal and organizational frameworks which regulate, coordinate and oversee the education system in central and local levels.</td>
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<td>Joyce-Gibbons, A, et al.</td>
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<td>Successful transition to secondary school in Tanzania: what are the barriers?</td>
<td>An empirical study conducted in mainland-Tanzania to explore in greater detail what students and teachers perceive to be the key challenges to be overcome if transition to secondary school is to be successful including critical issues of bullying, disruption to the LoI and corporal punishment.</td>
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<td>Vuzo, M.</td>
<td>2018</td>
<td>Towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals: Revisiting language of instruction in Tanzanian secondary schools.</td>
<td>An empirical study conducted in mainland-Tanzania to examine the extent to which LoI contributes to school dropout and scrutinizes how the use of a foreign language for teaching and learning in Tanzanian secondary schools hinders the achievement of the United Nations’ SDGs.</td>
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<td>Hilliard, A.</td>
<td>2014</td>
<td>Tanzanian Students’ Attitudes Toward English</td>
<td>An empirical study conducted in mainland-Tanzania to investigate students’ and teachers’ attitudes toward English as an official language, as a LoI, their self-assessment of proficiency levels and future aspirations.</td>
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<td>Telli, G.</td>
<td>2014</td>
<td>The Language of instruction in Tanzania: Pertinent determining factors and stakeholders' perceptions.</td>
<td>Empirical study conducted in mainland-Tanzania to explore education stakeholders’ perceptions and concerns regarding the use of English or Kiswahili as language of instruction in Tanzanian schools.</td>
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Empirical studies conducted in mainland-Tanzania with a focus on the LoI policy

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<td>An empirical study conducted in mainland-Tanzania to investigate students’ and teachers’ attitudes toward English as an official language, as a LoI, their self-assessment of proficiency levels and future aspirations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telli, G.</td>
<td>2014</td>
<td>The Language of instruction in Tanzania: Pertinent determining factors and stakeholders' perceptions.</td>
<td>Empirical study conducted in mainland-Tanzania to explore education stakeholders’ perceptions and concerns regarding the use of English or Kiswahili as language of instruction in Tanzanian schools.</td>
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<th>Author(s)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Tibategeza, E.</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Implementation of Bilingual Education in Tanzania: The Realities in the Schools</td>
<td>Empirical paper conducted in primary and secondary schools to examine bilingual education practices in mainland-Tanzania and proposed a 50/50 Dual Language model.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brock-Utne, B.</td>
<td>2007</td>
<td>Language of instruction and student performance: new insights from research in Tanzania and South Africa.</td>
<td>Empirical study conducted in South Africa and Tanzania (and summarizes three PhD theses in the latter) to experimentally test performance in English and Kiswahili among secondary (including high school) students using variability in student performance as a function of LoI.</td>
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<td><strong>Empirical studies related to LoI policy conducted in Zanzibar which provide comparative context</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Babaci-Wilhite, Z.</td>
<td>2013</td>
<td>Local Languages of Instruction as a Right in Education for Sustainable Development in Africa.</td>
<td>An empirical study which explores the consequences of linguistic choices for quality education, self-determined development and children’s rights in education following a curriculum change in Zanzibar. The change involves replacement of Kiswahili with English as LoI in the last years of primary school in Mathematics and Science subjects; reasons for the change, the extent to which schools were prepared for the change, and the consequences of the change for the learning environment.</td>
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<td><strong>Non-empirical studies conducted in mainland-Tanzania that explore the teaching and learning challenges associated with change in LoI</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ochieng, D.</td>
<td>2015</td>
<td>The revival of the status of English in Tanzania</td>
<td>A non-empirical paper that examines the use, spread and dominance of English language in mass communication, hospitality industry and professional roles in both private and public sectors and how the language stratifies the society.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qorro, M.</td>
<td>2013</td>
<td>Language of instruction in Tanzania: Why are research findings not heeded?</td>
<td>A non-empirical study which reviews studies done on LoI in Tanzania from 1974 aiming to eliminate or greatly reduce the negative effects of the policy on education in Tanzania; demonstrates students’ levels of proficiency in English and suggests reasons why governmental policy has over time ignored research findings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brock-Utne, B</td>
<td>2010a</td>
<td>Research and policy on the language of instruction issue in Africa.</td>
<td>Non-empirical study which examines the misalignment (illogical approach) between research findings and recommendations put forth as well as interventions regarding the LoI issue in select countries.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Author(s)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Brock-Utne, B</td>
<td>2010b</td>
<td>English as a language of instruction or destruction? How do teachers and students in Tanzania cope?</td>
<td>Scholarly paper putting forward the highlights of the Language of Instruction in Tanzania and South Africa (LOITASA) project focusing on how teachers and students Tanzania deal with challenges of teaching and learning in an unfamiliar language.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Galabawa, J. &amp; Senkoro, F.</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Implications of changing the language of instruction in secondary and tertiary education in Tanzania.</td>
<td>Scholarly paper breaking down the social, educational and economic costs of the use of English as a language of instruction (LoI) in post-primary education vis-à-vis the multidimensional benefits of a switchover to Kiswahili as LoI.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swilla, N. I.</td>
<td>2009</td>
<td>Languages of Instruction in Tanzania: Contradictions between Ideology, Policy and Implementation.</td>
<td>Non-empirical article which unpacks and examines the effects of contradictions and contentions between ideology, policy and implementation on LoI in Tanzania and emphasizes the imperative for proficiency in both English and Kiswahili.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barrett, J.</td>
<td>1994</td>
<td>Why is English still the medium of education in Tanzanian secondary schools?</td>
<td>A non-empirical paper which looked for the reasons why Kiswahili has not been officially established as the medium of education in Tanzania although English has in practice largely ceased to perform that function.</td>
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**Non-empirical studies across the sub-Saharan region that examine usage and implications of English as LoI**

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<th>Author(s)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Clegg, J. &amp; Simpson, J.</td>
<td>2016</td>
<td>Improving the effectiveness of English as a medium of instruction in sub-Saharan Africa.</td>
<td>A non-empirical study which describes relevant educational practices which can be successfully used extended in Sub-Saharan Africa region to improve teaching and learning in a second language (English) such as multilingual classroom practice, the pedagogy of language-supportive subject teaching, accessible textbook design, appropriate curriculum for learners working in a second language, language-appropriate assessment and the management of multilingual education.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kamwangamalu, N.</td>
<td>2013</td>
<td>Effects of policy on English-medium instruction in Africa.</td>
<td>A non-empirical study that examines the effects of policy on English-medium instruction in public schools in Africa, focusing on illiteracy and elite closure; argues for a dual-medium education system and increasing “value” of local languages.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brock-Utne, B.</td>
<td>2001</td>
<td>Education for all - in whose language?</td>
<td>A non-empirical scholarly work that critically presents the LoI relation to issues of poverty, power and partnership; interrogates the conflict between local and former colonial languages and the respective embedded interests of contesting camps in select countries in the Sub-Saharan region.</td>
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Findings and Discussion

This section thematically presents the key findings from an analysis of the policy documents and scholarly works.

The current language of instruction policy

The 2014 education and training policy of the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training (MoEVT) states that:

- 3.2.19. The national language Kiswahili will be used for teaching and learning at all levels of education.
- 3.2.20. The government will continue strengthening the use of English for teaching and learning at all levels of education and training. (MoEVT 2014, p. 38).

This signals that both English and Kiswahili can be used as languages of instruction across all education levels without offering clear guidelines and detailed plans of how this will be implemented. This ambiguity and lack of clarity on LoI warrants a critical and thorough investigation. Qorro (2013) persuasively critiqued and rejected arguments put forth in scholarly papers she reviewed which favour continued use of English as LoI in post-primary education. One of these arguments is cost, that: “it is expensive to change the LoI, being a poor country Tanzania, cannot afford the change” (p. 36).

This viewpoints are echoed in other studies. In a qualitative study to explore perceptions of education stakeholders regarding the use of either Kiswahili or English as LoI in Tanzanian schools, Telli (2014) reported that the policymakers view financial cost as the main issue to consider with respect to LoI policy: “we would like our primary schools to use English as LoI, but how are we going to cover the cost of overhauling the whole system?” (p. 13). This indicates that the policymakers recognize the challenges of LoI change in post-primary education. It also implies that the government/policymakers would like to change the LoI to English in public primary schools but the cost of doing so is a prohibitive factor and a legitimate concern. Countering the cost standpoint, Qorro (2013) stresses that it is costliest to invest and spend money in the wrong kind of education which produces graduates who are illiterate in, and alienated from their native language(s) and societies, respectively; passive learners who memorize their teachers’ notes to pass examinations which are forgotten immediately after the latter. She further argues that:
… students who are unable to question, discuss, communicate and think critically and creatively because their LoI constrains self-expression, self-confidence and self-advancement have no useful function to perform in society. The overall effect is that English as LoI is definitely more expensive because it makes education turn out graduates who are dysfunctional (p. 38).

I support this standpoint and further argue that the change to English as LoI in public primary education may be less costly than the change in LoI to Kiswahili in post-primary education. Beyond financial benefits, the latter has non-monetary and positive externalities such as cultural revitalization. The long-term indecisiveness of the policymakers to state clearly the LoI intensifies illiteracy, rote learning and is not arguably unjust. Galabawa and Senkoro (2010) argue that the current LoI policy is associated with the following costs: school drop-out and class repetition; learners’ classroom docility and lack of participation; cognitive destruction of Tanzanian children when they are taught using English and produces an ill-informed electorate. The current change in medium of instruction generates a net negative value in the educational investment as students drop-out and finish schooling without adequate competencies needed to tackle social problems, such as poverty, in their own societies, compounding a vicious cycle in the long run. Thus, the current LoI policy is costliest and its ambiguity must be clarified and be backed by scientific evidence.

**English paucity in mainland-Tanzania and current usage in schools**

According to Barrett (1994, p. 5), English is, the language of higher education, of the upper levels of the judiciary system (High Court and Court of Appeal), of diplomacy and international trade ... (giving) access to ‘world literature’ and technological information,” whilst Kiswahili “is the language of parliament, political rallies, post office, transport, banking, schools (throughout the primary level), and churches.” The privileging of English to meet the needs of advanced education, the higher judicial system, international trade and information technology has serious educational implications for the public-school system in Tanzania. The introduction of English as the LoI in post-primary levels burdens students with significant learning challenges. As a secondary teacher, I witnessed firsthand how English as a LoI becomes a communication barrier due to its unfamiliarity to most learners. Sole usage of English barred learners from engaging with the teacher and with each other, resulting in teacher-centered delivery and learners’ limited
comprehension of both the academic content and the language itself. This is in agreement with Galabawa & Senkoro (2010, p. 148), who assert that “in government secondary schools English is, to a very large extent, not being used as the medium of instruction and that teachers teach their lessons in Kiswahili and only give the notes for the same in English.” This trend underscores that English language fluency is limited in scope and use. It is barely used in the classroom and almost never used beyond the classroom by both students and teachers, although students are required to complete their assignments and are assessed in English throughout post-primary education.

Telli (2014), posits that English is the default LoI in private schools (at the primary and post-primary levels) which are mainly for the few elite members of the population and high-level government officials due to high cost of enrolment and other numerous prohibitive fees. This aligns with Barrett (1994), who states that English is the language of the privileged few and the bureaucratic bourgeoisie. According to the National Bureau of Statistics, NBS (2019), there are 16,149 public primary schools and 1,413 private primary schools in mainland-Tanzania with a total enrolment of 9,717,309 and 394,362, respectively. As English is synonymous with expensive private primary schools and Kiswahili synonymous with fee-free public primary schools, it is indicative that English is spoken by a very small section of the student body, and by extension, a small portion of the population. On these grounds, the current LoI policy in post-primary education disproportionately favors 4% of the current student population that has some degree of immersive exposure to English at the primary level compared to 96% who learn English solely as a distinct subject from grade four. The disparities in students’ investment in and exposure to English at young ages inculcate inequality of learning conditions and educational opportunities with a cascading effect that disadvantages the mass along the education system and beyond.

**Literacy, inequality, socioeconomic stratification and language of instruction**

English as LoI gets in the way of spreading literacy throughout the populace in mainland-Tanzania and other parts of Anglophone Sub-Saharan Africa region. Kamwangamalu (2013) asserts that the use of English as LoI in Anglophone Africa leads to illiteracy of the masses. A study that compares the use of English as LoI in Kenya, Zimbabwe, and Uganda, reported that “35 per cent, 54 per cent, and 87 per cent, respectively of pupils in grade 6 perform under grade level because they are not proficient in English” (Makau, 2001 in Kamwangamalu, 2013, p. 332). These findings are echoed in a quasi-experimental study conducted in Tanzania which compared performances of two
different groups of students in the first year of secondary education when Kiswahili and English were respectively used as sole media of instruction at different times (Brock-Utne, 2007). In this study, when Kiswahili was the LoI, the teaching resources originally in English were translated into Kiswahili. Based on the same assessment tool developed by the same teacher in the same subject for the two different groups, the average score of the students assessed in Kiswahili was much higher (75%) than that of those assessed in English (45%) (Vuzo, 2007 in Brock-Utne, 2007). Brock-Utne (2007) reports that a smaller standard deviation (13.18) was found when the students were assessed in Kiswahili compared to the higher standard deviation (18.01) when they were assessed in English. These results show that there is an overall higher performance and a lower achievement gap represented as the standard deviation from the average between secondary school students when Kiswahili was used as LoI compared to the wider gap and a lower average performance when English was used as LoI. I argue that these findings denote how the change to English as LoI in post-primary education, notwithstanding other potential factors, leads to low academic performance. Students from public, Kiswahili-medium primary schools tend to be most affected by the change in LoI as they are not adequately equipped with a strong foundation of the language. Conversely, the use of Kiswahili as LoI indicates students’ comprehension of the subject content reflected in their higher average score and small achievement gap (standard deviation between group scores) due to its familiarity. The higher achievement gap among students taught and assessed in English implies that the change to English as LoI contributes to and exacerbates learning inequalities among students in post-primary education. It benefits the affluent few who attended primary English-medium schools and/or those, primarily in urban areas, with additional resources and means to learn the language beyond the classroom, such as hiring private tutors. The majority, coming from low socioeconomic backgrounds and rural communities, usually do not have access to and/or cannot afford these supplementary resources.

Diverging from these findings and analyses, some studies indicate that some students favor English as LoI in post-primary education. These students view the use of English as LoI as a means of acquiring the language and eventually harnessing the opportunities for higher education and white-collar jobs associated with it. In part of her study which examined high school students’ attitudes towards English as LoI, Hilliard (2014), points out that over 50% of the high school students prefer English as a LoI, 5% favor Kiswahili as a LoI and 35% prefer both Kiswahili and English as
instructional languages in post-primary education. In a study involving mostly adults with professional jobs which require English proficiency and only one high school student, similar attitudinal preference for English as LoI in post-primary education is reported by Mohr & Ochieng (2017, p. 15): “76.7% of the research participants said they would favor English while only 13.9% expressed a preference for Kiswahili and 7% voted for both Kiswahili and English.”

All participants of both studies are in and/or have completed high school and nearly 50% of the 45 participants in the latter study attained a university education. The findings are skewed towards the perspectives of high school students and university graduates, exclude and do not represent the voices of a larger section of the population that is rural-based whose highest attained education is below high-school level. These positive attitudes towards English as LoI overlook the educational and social inequalities associated with it and are uncritically rooted in instrumentalism of English as a prerequisite for higher education, lucrative employment prospects and hence upward mobility accorded to few. These attitudes reify a pervasive misconception in mainland-Tanzania that a foreign language is learnt through its use as LoI. This misconception will be critiqued in a later section of this paper focusing on theories of second language acquisition.

Ochieng (2015, p. 30) states that “English proficiency functions as a segregating agent and as a gate-keeping tool between the lower and upper classes in Tanzania.” I argue that the change in LoI in post-primary education in unison with varying immersive exposure to English language among secondary school students also acts as a form of linguistic capital which privileges some at the expense of many. Linguistic capital is defined as “fluency in and comfort with a high-status, worldwide language which is used by groups who possess economic, social, cultural and political power and status in local and global society” (Morrison & Lui, 2000, p. 473 in Swilla, 2009, p.9). Hilliard (2014, p. 262, my emphasis) posits that “most students seemed confident in their English abilities and … claiming to understand classes taught in English and to feel that their English abilities gave them a competitive advantage over other Tanzanians.” In this regard, English both as LoI in post-primary education and a foreign language in mainland-Tanzania privileges a minority of students; distorts equitable provision of education; structures and enables societal stratification and disunity among mainland-Tanzania educational stakeholders, systemically and institutionally. Qorro (2013, p. 40) points out that “the LoI in Africa, and in Tanzania in particular, is an instrument used
to make education inaccessible to the poor; and as a gate-keeping device for the children of the elite.”

**Classroom interactions, high-stakes assessments and language of instruction**

In most mainland-Tanzania’s post-primary education settings, English as LoI hinders critical and analytical thinking, disrupts comprehensible written expression, and limits verbal interactions between teachers and students. In a secondary school classroom observation, Brock-Utne (2007) reports that students were silent, grave, looked afraid and guessed answers to questions posed by the teacher as students did not fully understand the teacher’s instructions and communicative inputs in English. These findings are in agreement with Qorro’s (2013) who stated that unclear instructions by a teacher coupled with the students’ inability to communicate in English lead to students’ silence and less engagement during lessons. Brock-Utne (2010b) cautions that this situation breeds rote learning, parroting, memorization and cheating at exams. This is consistent with Babaci-Wilhite’s (2017, p. 389) classroom observations in Zanzibar schools and states that:

> teachers were not able to communicate the content of their lessons in English: instead they copied the vocabulary for the lesson onto the blackboards from their teacher guidebooks. The students repeated the words and then the teachers added more English words in order to build sentences. ... learning was based on students’ memorizing words, not on interactions with the teachers; teachers were not contributing deeper explanations of contexts and meanings.

Students’ prolonged silence during lessons and regurgitation of teachers’ notes in examinations are symptomatic of limited conceptualization and comprehension of the academic content due to lack of fluency in the LoI. In turn, the resulting uncritical learning acts as a serious and pervasive deterrent to their success and advancement in mainland-Tanzania’s predominantly memory-based education system. According to the 2017 Candidate Item Response Analysis Report for the subject of English prepared by the National Examination Council of Tanzania, NECTA (2018), a total of 317,626 candidates sat for the English Language examination, out of which 1.27% scored A, 5.69 scored B, 30.42% scored C, and the overwhelming majority performed poorly (30.49% at the D level and 32.12% at the F level) in mainland-Tanzania’s high-stakes Certificate of Secondary Education Examination (CSEE). The NECTA report further points out that students scored an
average of 38.55 % in Comprehension and Summary and it cites partial knowledge of the topic and lack of mastery of the English language as possible explanations for such low performance. The report’s analysis of Speech Writing further ascertains that “… some candidates performed poorly due to poor mastery of the English Language which barred them from expressing the points logically, fluently and appropriately” (p. 36). This breakdown was echoed in the report’s analysis of Creative Writing that “candidates with a low score had points but failed to express themselves well by using proper English language” (p.40).

I argue that failure of students to express their points and arguments comprehensibly in a written format is due to their unfamiliarity with, and low proficiencies in the LoI. Performance, writing in this case, of a language is a complex skill that extends beyond having expansive vocabulary that students may have developed over the course of their schooling. To reiterate Lightbrown and Spada’s (2014, p. 66) point: "even if learners acquire a vocabulary of 5,000 words and a good knowledge of the syntax and morphology of the target language, they can still encounter difficulty in using language.” The students’ inability to express their points using standard academic English likely metastasizes to other subjects and undermines comprehension; intuition; reasoning; logic; thinking critically, innovatively and creatively; as well as intelligible expression. Possibilities for further education, professional aspirations and upward social mobility among most rural, low-income Tanzanians are eclipsed due to their limited fluency in the LoI and poor performance in English language which acts as a hidden filter. Admission for high school graduates into most degree programs requires a pass (D and above) in lower secondary education (Tanzania Commission for Universities, 2020). A minimum score of D (30% - 44%) (NECTA, 2016) in English language examination in a secondary education completion certificate is a key requirement for admission into most universities and professional and semi-skilled jobs in mainland-Tanzania. For the 2017 CSEE alone, 32.12% (over 101,000) of the candidates do not meet these minimum requirements.

Most students’ existing knowledge, their subjective engagement with academic content and success in it, the larger political and socioeconomic contexts they navigate, the tensions therein and their self-expression are not activated because of low proficiency in English. One of Vygotsky’s propositions is that the origins of both language and thought stem from conversations that children have between themselves and adults surrounding them and that a thought is an
internalized speech and speech emerges in a social interaction (Lightbrown & Spada, 2013). By extension, lack of “internalized” conceptualizations and mental constructions due to limited English vocabularies, fluency and communicative interactions in standard academic English among learners and teachers imply and explain scarcity of critique, analytical and inquisitive learning in many public mainland-Tanzania secondary schools. In turn, students’ self-expression in both social and academic contexts is underdeveloped.

Implications for schooling completion rates and punishment

In recent years, there has been an increase in secondary education completion rates in Mainland-Tanzania. According to the Education Sector Performance Report for 2017/2018, the “survival rates” from the first grade of primary education to final grade of lower secondary education are 33.7% and 48.4% for 2016/2017 and 2017/2018, respectively. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) (n.d.), defines survival rate as the percentage of a cohort of students enrolled in the first grade of a given level or cycle of education in a given school year who are expected to reach a given grade, regardless of repetition. A report of the Joint Education Sector Review Working Sessions also illustrates that secondary education completion rates have increased from 23% to 37% in the year 2013 and 2016 respectively (MoEST, 2017). These statistics may be indicative of deliberate efforts by and between mainland-Tanzania’s education stakeholders to expand access to education. However, the shift to and use of English as LoI in post-primary education continues to be correlated with school dropout, thus constraining the sustainability of improved survival and completion rates. Vuzo (2018) reported that the use of a foreign language as LoI, English in this case, is a major contributor to student dropout. The use of an unfamiliar LoI contributes to students’ disengagement from learning, which ultimately pushes them out of the school system. Joyce-Gibbons, et al. (2018) argued that English as a LoI is a major challenge for both students and teachers to be overcome if student transition to secondary school is to be successful, underscoring that English was a barrier to the students’ overall schooling experience. These authors quote one student’s translated comment:

In primary school we were taught about English. After reaching secondary school we must be taught in English. So, it becomes difficult to talk with our fellow students and even to negotiate with teachers becomes a problem (Joyce-Gibbons, et al., 2018, p. 1146).
The school where this study was conducted (and many other secondary schools in Tanzania) has a campaign or rule dubbed “No English, no service” or signs stating “Speak English,” denying students any service if they do not communicate in English. In addition, students’ communication in Kiswahili was reported to result in harsh punishment. Punishment for speaking in Kiswahili is also reported by Tibetgeza (2010). I argue that punishment, in turn, contributes to less classroom engagement, truancy and unsuccessful schooling experiences. These circumstances resemble the “learned helplessness” concept for both teachers and students which Dweck (2000, cited in Joyce-Gibbons, et al. 2018, p. 1160) describes as:

For learners, their failure to make the required progress attracts punishment; they find that further effort does not bring success which results in demotivation and more punishment; eventually they lose confidence in their own ability and give up. Teachers … recognize that some of their students are not making progress, but they have not been trained adequately in a range of pedagogic strategies to teach in the medium of their students’ second or third language.

In the context of mainland-Tanzania, secondary school teachers have not only been inadequately trained to teach in English as LoI, a medium that is foreign to most of their students, they lack advanced and/or native proficiency in the same. I contend that the forceful approach to language learning in these “no English, no service” campaigns is counterintuitive, unsubstantiated by research evidence, rooted in uncritical reverence of English over the importance of communication in languages that both students and teachers are familiar with, and will not amount to substantial linguistic progress in English.

Positive affective conditions such as empathy and encouragement are necessary for second language acquisition to be effective and successful (Marx & Pray, 2011). The punitive approach is contrary to the role of emotions in learning languages and plants seeds among students to resent their developing linguistic repertoires. On one hand, their limited English fluencies deter them from communicative classroom academic engagement and failure to produce meaningful and comprehensible outputs in text and speech, and fear of being ridiculed if they incorrectly do so.

On the other hand, students’ native or additive fluency in Kiswahili and their cultural identities are disrupted and assimilated in school contexts. The use of English as LoI not only distorts and hinders the teaching and learning process in Tanzanian post-primary schools but may also trigger
identity crises as students are punished for exercising their cultural capital which they revert to when unable to express themselves in a foreign language. The latter draws from W.E.B Du Bois’ scholarly work on African Americans’ conflict of identity – a double consciousness which he described as “one feels his two-ness — an American, a Negro, two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings, two warring ideals in one dark body” (Robert, 2009). This two-ness reflects punishment against, and devaluation of comparatively stronger Kiswahili language competences on one hand, and mandated use of, yet limited and inadequately instructed skills for English language, on the other. English as LoI in post-primary education operates as a communication barrier between students and teachers, as students do not understand what they are being taught and their teachers also have a low proficiency in English. This conundrum together with a linguistic sense of ‘double consciousness’ – two underdeveloped, unreconciled and clashing linguistic mechanisms in one body, in turn, contribute to students’ disengagement and eventual dropping out of school.

Guided by the theories of second language acquisition (SLA) discussed below, I argue that the English colonial language continues to be a foreign language for most people in contemporary mainland-Tanzania and using it as LoI is erroneous.

**Theories and Critical issues in Second language acquisition**

In this section, I employ four theories of SLA including behaviorism, innatism, cognitive and sociocultural perspectives as theoretical frameworks to deepen understanding of how second languages are acquired and to demonstrate the foreignness and erroneousness of teaching English language in mainland-Tanzania. I highlight how such foreignness makes transition into secondary schools difficult for students from fee-free Kiswahili-medium public primary schools due to the new LoI.

Noteworthy, the theories and critical issues raised in this section are based on critical syntheses of SLA knowledge and development informed by empirical studies conducted in the EuroAtlantic regions of the world. An examination of the unique limitations of each perspective are beyond the scope of this work, but despite their limitations, these studies are nonetheless applicable lenses to investigate the mainland-Tanzania context since the current LoI in post-primary education originates from Anglophone countries.
I. The behaviorist perspective

This theory of language acquisition is guided by the relationship between the linguistic input from the learner’s environment, the linguistic response of the learner and the reinforcement that follows, either a reward which positively reinforces the response or a punishment which negatively deters the specific response. According to Lightbrown & Spada (2013), in acquisition of the first language, the behaviorists viewed imitation and practice as the primary processes in language development hypothesizing that when children imitated the language produced by those around them, their attempts to reproduce what they heard received ‘positive reinforcement’. Thus, encouraged by their environment, children would continue to imitate and practice these sounds and patterns until they formed ‘habits’ of correct language use. According to this view, the quality and quantity of the language the child hears, as well as the consistency of the reinforcement offered by others in the environment, shape the child’s language behavior. As extension of imitation and practice, this theory employs mimicry and memorization (Lightbrown & Spada, 2013) as key processes to form habits necessary for successful SLA. In this light, I argue that habit formation as a result of memorization and mimicry presupposes the presence of the necessary learning conditions. Lightbrown & Spada (2013, p. 44) summarize these learning conditions as ample time spent learning a second language, corrective feedback for grammar, punctuation, meaning and word choice as well as modified input. Corrective feedback and modified input require a competent interlocutor, either native or highly proficient nonnative parents, language and other subject matter teachers to interact communicatively and for longer periods.

In mainland-Tanzania public secondary schools, such learning conditions are woefully lacking as students use Kiswahili in their small group discussions, in the playground and at home (Babaci-Wilhite, 2017). Hilliard (2014, p. 255) states: “Kiswahili has been referred to as the de facto language of instruction because teachers must use code-switching and code-mixing to cope with students’ low command of the English language, sometimes resorting to outright translation to teach the material.” As interlocutors, the majority of teachers have a low English proficiency, including English subject teachers (Babaci-Wilhite, 2013), which in turn paves the way for memorization and mimicry of incorrect usage of the English language. In her analysis of classroom interactions in English between a teacher and secondary students, Qorro (2013, p. 34) states:
the teacher uses incorrect English sentences and does not make any effort to correct pupils’ incorrect sentences either because s/he may not be aware of the errors, or s/he may not be sure of what the correct forms of the sentences are.

The way English is instructed in mainland-Tanzania’s public schooling system seems to draw from the behaviorist perspective. The country’s approach is, however, deficient in that students have limited exposure to the language which is restricted to the classroom and they lack corrective, or rather, they are offered incorrect feedback for grammar, punctuation, meaning and word choices as interlocutors are themselves less proficient in the language. Therefore, we can conclude, based on the behaviourist approach, that instructing English by its use as LoI is an erroneous approach as it leads to imitation, mimicry and memorization of incorrect English that worsens intergenerationally and is further eroded by the lack of the necessary learning conditions.

II. The Innatist perspective

This theory was developed in response to the failure of the behaviorist perspective to account for the logical problem of language acquisition, namely, the fact that children come to know more about the structure of their language than they could reasonably be expected to learn on the basis of the samples of language they hear. According to Lightbrown and Spada (2013, p. 29, my emphasis), the innatist perspective hypothesizes that:

children are born with a specific innate ability to discover for themselves the underlying rules of a language system on the basis of the samples of a natural language they are exposed to and contains principles that are universal to all human languages. This universal grammar (UG) would prevent the child from pursuing all sorts of wrong hypotheses about how language systems might work. If children are pre-equipped with UG, then what they have to learn is the ways in which the language they are acquiring makes use of these principles.

Researchers in this UG framework have proposed differing hypotheses, most arguing that UG may be present and available to second language learners, but that its exact nature has been altered by the acquisition of first/other languages. It is further argued that the second language should also be naturally available to the learner’s environment for meaningful engagement in the language to
occur and for such linguistic interaction to be sufficient to trigger the acquisition of the underlying structure of the language.

Within the context of mainland-Tanzania, natural availability and meaningful interactions in English are exclusive to a small section of the population and naturally unavailable to the masses. Swilla (2009, p. 8) asserts that “English is not the mother tongue of any segment of the population, and access to the language is limited.” Beyond mainland-Tanzania, this is echoed by Clegg and Simpson (2016, p. 359) that “in African countries in which English is the MoI (medium of instruction), many learners in primary school and beyond do not have sufficient ability in English to achieve grade-appropriate subject knowledge.” According to the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) (2019), the population of Tanzania has increased more than four times from 12.3 million in 1967 to 54.2 million in 2018. A large percent of this population resides in rural areas for whom Kiswahili is either their second or simultaneous first language. Thus, in the innatist perspective, the absence of English in the natural world of typical Tanzanians makes it a foreign language for them. It means that they are marginalized and disadvantaged by the use of English as LoI in post-primary education as they mostly communicate in their local and Kiswahili vernaculars.

III. The Cognitive perspective

Several cognitive models have been put forth to account for some of the limitations of the innatist perspective. According to Lightbrown & Spada (2013, p. 101), from the cognitive psychology perspective:

first and second language acquisition are seen as drawing on the same processes of perception, memory, categorization, and generalization, with the difference being in the circumstances of learning as well as in what the learners already know about language and how that prior knowledge shapes their perception of the new language.

This perspective offers numerous models that explain SLA, but I have chosen to focus on information processing theory because it is especially applicable to how English language is instructed in the context of mainland-Tanzania.
Information processing theory

Proponents of this model (DeKeyser, 1998 & Schmidt, 2001 in Lightbrown & Spada, 2013), assert that SLA is a graduated process which builds up knowledge that can ultimately be automatically recalled and used in understanding and speaking the specific language. One model that relates SLA to automaticity is “skill learning”. Championed by DeKeyser (1998, 2001, 2007 in Lightbrown & Spada, 2013), this model suggests that:

most learning, including language learning, starts with declarative knowledge, that is, knowledge that we are aware of having, for example, a grammar rule. The hypothesis is that, through practice, declarative knowledge may become procedural knowledge, or the ability to use the knowledge. With continued practice, the procedural knowledge can become automatized knowledge and the learner may forget having learned it first as declarative knowledge (p. 101, my emphasis).

Automatized knowledge is characterized by seamless and eventual fluency in the second language. As previously stated, the majority of post-primary education students from Kiswahili-medium public schools and their larger social worlds lack both the necessary learning conditions such as native/proficient interlocutors, corrective feedback and modified inputs such as paraphrasing and slow speech rate, and the natural availability of the English language. Acquiring the English language in these circumstances is next to an impossible task as meaningful and natural opportunities for sustainable practice are absent. In other words, English language learners in mainland-Tanzania’s public schooling system lack exposure to meaningful corrective interaction and communicative input to cultivate strong declarative knowledge. Ample time and practice necessary for development of procedural knowledge that leads to automaticity in English are limited or nonexistent for most learners due to lack of interlocutors native or with advanced proficiency in the language and scarcity of English-mediated resources such as texts and audiovisuals for reading and listening. I argue that these circumstances technically render the English language in Tanzania a foreign one and thus an unsuitable LoI.

Additionally, the information processing model helps to explain the excessive demand that is placed upon the cognitive resources of the second and foreign language learners when automaticity has not been fully developed. It is likely that language acquisition is not a linear process as the
model theorized and retrieving meaning of words is not always spontaneous when performing the second language. Lightbrown & Spada (2013) assert that the lack of automatic access to meaning helps to explain why second language readers need more time to understand a text, even if they eventually do fully comprehend it. This also raises profound concerns over how Tanzanian students and teachers are accommodated to cope with the use of a foreign language as a LoI. For one, what are the implications of assessing students who have differing levels of necessary English language learning conditions (see above), fluency levels, and by extension, differing automaticity competences using the same assessment time and tool in high stakes standardized national examinations?

IV. The sociocultural perspective

Sociocultural theory holds that people gain control of and reorganize their mental processes as knowledge is internalized during social activity. According to Lightbrown and Spada (2013, p. 109):

This internalizing is thought to occur when an individual interacts with an interlocutor within his or her zone of proximal development (ZPD) — that is, in a situation in which the learner can perform at a higher level because of the support (scaffolding) offered by an interlocutor.

Scholars of this theory extend the Vygotskian theory that language development, like any cognitive development, develops and results from social interactions. Building on Swain’s (1985) observation that French immersion students were considerably weaker in their spoken and written production than in their reading and listening comprehension, Swain and Lapkin (2002 in Lightbrown & Spada, 2013) developed the term collaborative dialogue to describe how second language learners co-construct linguistic knowledge while engaging in production tasks (i.e. speaking and writing) that simultaneously draw their attention to form and meaning. Also, Swain (2000), as reported in Lightbrown & Spada (2013), considers collaborative dialogue to be the context where language use and language learning can co-occur; that is, where language use mediates language learning and the process is simultaneously social and cognitive.
In the context of mainland-Tanzania, most post-primary students from public primary schools and the largest section of the entire population lack interlocutors native or with advanced proficiency in English who can scaffold their learning experiences. Since most instruction in public secondary school occurs in Kiswahili, opportunities for students to simultaneously use and learn English language (collaborative dialogue) are lacking. Reiterating the salience of incorrect usage of English, collaborative dialogue, even if it were to occur to a larger extent, the form, meaning and performance aspects of the language would likely be of poor quality and unsatisfactory for both basic interpersonal communication skills (BICS) and cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP). “It is widely agreed … that the language needed for academic discourse (CALP) is more difficult for children to acquire than the informal language of day-to-day interaction (BICS)” (Cummin, 2000 in Lightbrown & Spada, 2013, p. 39).

I argue that the teaching and use of English as LoI in mainland-Tanzania’s public schooling system impedes effective teaching and learning of the language and subject-matter content. For instance, Galabawa and Senkoro (2010, p. 150) report “avoidance of spoken contributions in class by students on account of inadequate fluency in English as a LoI … and uncritical and undigested presentation of concepts by teachers whose fluency levels in English as a LoI is low.” This indicates lack of scaffolding and collaborative dialogue needed to enhance acquisition of the English language. Thus, sociocultural perspective also demonstrates that English is quintessentially a foreign language in mainland-Tanzania due to lack of scaffolding and collaborative dialogue, thus making it unsuitable to be used as LoI at any level of the public education system.

The following excerpt based on the comparison of written expression of the same story in Kiswahili and English (Table 2) will be useful to encapsulate the foreignness and unsuitability as LoI of English in the public post-primary education settings and the larger social worlds of their students. The excerpt from a form one (first year of secondary education) student and the poorest from all the study participants is based on Vuzo’s (2002) thesis cited in Brock-Utne (2007). This researcher replicated a similar study conducted in South Africa by providing Tanzanian secondary students at different levels with an already sequenced cartoon. This part of the study asked students to write a story based on the cartoon, first in Kiswahili (top left cell) and later in English (bottom cell). The Kiswahili sample has been translated by the researcher into English (top right cell). The
researcher’s interest was to assess the consistency in the flow of the story and the amount of detail the students were able to come up with depending on the language used, grammar (tense, spelling, punctuation, sentence construction), vocabulary, meaning and clarity of the story.

Table 2: Comparison of expression in Kiswahili and English. Source: Brock-Utne (2007, p. 518)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kiswahili</th>
<th>Literal translation into English</th>
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<tr>
<td>Siku moja mzee mmoja alikwenda uwanja wa ndege. Akatokea kijana mmoja akamuambia yule mzee kuwa angaria hire ndege. Kumbe alikuwa ni mwizi akachukua mizigo ya yule mzee. Akakimbia vichakani akafungua ule mizigo wa yule mzee akakuta nyoka kwenye ule mizigo. Yule mzee akaanza kutafuta mizigo wake. Akatokea kijana mmoja akamwambia panda gari langu nikupeke kwa yule kijana aliyu kuchukulia mizigo wako. Akaenda mpaka kwa yule kijana akamkuta anafungua mizigo wake akamuonyesha ule mizigo wake yule mzee akakuta ameshafungua. Hakamuhuliza kwa nini humefungua mizigo wangu akamwambia hebu angaria ulicho kiweka kwenye mizigo wako. Akamwambia kwa nini ulihiba mizigo wangu. Akamwambia yule kijana kama hulikuwa hunalitaka sinhunge sema nikupe sio kuhiba je hunge kuta mbwa hungesemaje. Akampereka polisi kufungwa.</td>
<td>One day a certain man went to the airport with his luggage. Then there appeared one boy who told the man: Look at that plane. But he was a thief and he took the man’s luggage. He ran to the forest and opened the bag and he saw a snake in that bag. The man started looking for his bag. Then one boy appeared and told him get into my car and I shall take you to the boy who has taken your bag. He went where the boy who stole the bag was and he found him opening the bag and he showed the man his bag and the man found that it was already open. He did not ask him why he had opened his bag but asked him to look at what he had put in the bag. The man asked him why he stole his bag. He told the boy if you wanted the bag you should have told me to give you and not steal, what if you found a dog what would you have said? And he took him to the police to be jailed.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Written in English

One day is not mather is going to market.
Balind of thit man student.
I am father is going to charch and children too.
the market are the Box,
Beg, fotball, is money.
father is big than children.
one day father is going to fotball.
cry when to shool.

The contrast between the two linguistic outputs in Table 2 is remarkable. Despite minor errors due to the student’s vernacular language interference such as the l/r interchange common in the student’s mother tongue, the Kiswahili version demonstrates a high degree of comprehension, clarity, vocabulary, linguistic systems and meaning. Conversely, the student’s own English version (bottom cell) lacks any relation to the original story and is characterized with incomprehensible
sentences. To most Tanzanians, English as a language is not *autopoietic*. According to Larsen-Freeman (2015), autopoiesis of a language implies the seeds the language contains for its own development as learners are able to learn a new language by referring to what they already know, and what they already know constantly changes with meaningful language use. But such seeds and meaningful language usage are nonexistent for English learning in the learners’ public-school communities and their home environments.

Examined through the SLA theoretical lenses I have presented here, the argument that English is a foreign language to the majority of Tanzanian students is a plausible one. Schools and larger social worlds lack the necessary conditions and linguistic opportunities for it to be learned as a second language and even more problematic as the LoI. The use of English as the LoI simultaneously defeats the purpose of learning English as a language and other subject content as well. Furthermore, it is inconsistent with social justice education, which may offer a way of reframing the problem, a discussion that I turn to below.

**A way forward: social justice education**

As I have argued throughout, the change in LoI to English in post-primary public education leads to rote learning, school drop-out and lack of linguistic growth in the language itself. English fluency, widely anticipated but not created by school engagement, exacerbates inequities in academic, social and professional spheres of life in mainland-Tanzania. As a foreign language to majority of Tanzanians, it leads to social injustice in education and the larger cultural and socioeconomic contexts. To redress these injustices, I propose not only education that is *socially just*, but *social justice education*. Shields (2014) distinguishes between the two: a socially just education is heavily associated with test-passing and focuses on minimally ensuring that all students have a similar opportunity for equitable access and equitable educational outcomes, whereas social justice education is education that commences with, stimulates, and necessitates a holistic understanding of the social (in)justice issues in the school, the community, and the world in which students live now and in which they will navigate as thoughtful and contributive adults. Social justice education then is more applicable in mainland-Tanzania not only to reduce learning challenges and inequalities rooted in the unfamiliar LoI, but also to sensitize and enable students
and teachers to interrogate the injustices inherent in it that span beyond schooling and cascade into larger social, economic, political and cultural contexts. She posits that:

a social justice education offers similar opportunities for intellectual development and high achievement … to students from rich or poor families to those from mainstream or marginalized social groups, to those from powerful and well-positioned families, and to those whose families, appear to have little political or social power, whose voices are rarely heard (p. 328).

In mainland-Tanzania, the change to English as LoI in post-primary education and its exclusion to a very small section of the population chiefly marginalizes students and communities less fluent in it and segregates the haves and have-nots. Social justice education aims to provide similar opportunities to all students; empowers them and their communities to counteract emerging marginalization, and address power dynamics and narratives that unscientifically embrace the status quo. To create and offer similar opportunities and equality of conditions involves “an educational system devoted to developing equally the potentials of every member of society” (Lynch, 1995, p. 25 in Gerwitz, 1998, p. 472). It is imperative for the educational system in mainland-Tanzania, thus, to adopt a LoI policy that develops the potentials and human capabilities of every member of society. In this regard, social justice education is a prerequisite to build and sustain a just society which is critical of and combats oppression. I argue that inherent and implicit in social justice education are human capability approaches posited by Sen (1992) and Nussbaum (2000) as reported by Larson and Murtadha (2005). The principal question researchers and educational leaders might ask from a capabilities perspective is: “What is child X actually able to do and to be?” (Larson & Murtadha, 2005, p. 153, my emphasis). Central to social justice education, then, is to help all learners reflect and encounter their individual and collective selves as relational beings; develop academically in areas aligned with their strengths, interests, curiosities and values; and become productive and participative members of society. This calls for a LoI that all students can command fluently, one in which they are actually able to successfully engage in and with education.

Social justice education should and ought to precede education policymakers’ responsibilities for education and to the state, which is fundamentally and democratically, to the Tanzanian people,
both rich and poor, English- and especially non-English speakers. Larson & Murtadha (2005, p. 148) assert that: “that leaders working within a context of inequity must be capable of and willing to confront grave injustice in their school communities (I add across the entire education system)”. The moral courage and ethical consideration incumbent upon education policymakers is emphasized by Qorro (2013, p. 41, original parentheses) that “indeed it is unethical and immoral to (pretend to) ‘‘teach’’ students in an incomprehensible language, and then examine and judge them as having ‘‘failed’’ when they struggle in exams.”

For nearly six decades English as LoI in post-primary education has been marginalizing most students in mainland-Tanzania and subjecting their communities to poverty. A change in the LoI policy is not only necessary, but central to fostering social justice education in the country. I argue that a change to Kiswahili as LoI in post-primary public education (already so for public primary schools) and as an official language of communication in workplaces is a right of Tanzanian citizens (Babaci-Wilhite, 2013); provides equality of (learning) conditions to all members of society; frees us from cultural imperialism; revitalizes our cultural identity; excavates marginalization of learners and facilitates an education that according to Freire (1990 in Larson & Murtadha, 2005, p. 145) “puts the primary needs, interests and concerns of poor people at the center of their own learning and liberation” using a language familiar to them. Spencer (1985, p. 390 in Kamwangamalu 2013, p. 327) asserts that “no developed or affluent nations, though many of these have minority languages, utilize a language for education . . . which is of external origin and the mother tongue of none, or at most few, of its people.”

To facilitate that change in LoI policy in public post-primary education and subsequently in workplaces, I urge policymakers and the society at large to move away from the misconceptions that focus on what is feasible, practical, politically demanded and popular with Anglo-donors and, instead, center on addressing the deprivations rampant in our society. Sen (1992 in Larson & Murtadha, 2005, p. 152, my emphasis) argues that:

\[ \text{first step is to diagnose deprivation and determine what we should do if we had the means.} \]

\[ \text{Our actual policy choices must be in line with the deprivations we see. In this sense, the} \]
\[ \text{descriptive analysis of poverty or inequality has to precede the policy choice we make.} \]
Informed by robust research evidence, our language of instruction policy in public education should, thus, promote and sustain equity within, between and beyond schools; be consistent with the needs of the masses preceded by, and antecedent to their empowerment over the deprivations they experience; enhance academic excellence and cultivate democratic citizenry.

**Conclusion**

As the neoliberal forces of market fundamentalism continue to shrink the global space in demand for human capital, the need for locally groomed educated and democratic citizenry is timely and a must. Brock-Utne (2001) underscores that the forces working for the strengthening of the colonial languages are strong. This paper has examined the unsuitability of English as LoI and how incorrect usage is taught in post-primary public education. The second language learning theories discussed herein demonstrate that English is a foreign language in mainland-Tanzania and it is a major contributor to school-drop outs, diminished criticality among students and a large section of the populace, scarcity of local innovation and creativity to solve local problems and a mechanism for inequality intensification. Social justice education has been applied as a framework to propose a way forward: to reawaken and galvanize policymakers and all educational stakeholders to be morally driven to reexamine the “de-schooling” of the mass that transpires due to English’s uninterrogated hegemony, its unfamiliarity and unscientific LoI policy tied to it. At stake here is education of and for all the citizens to ensure they become future productive members of the society as they lead individual and collective worthwhile lives. Schooling that is student-centered, pedagogically responsive, critical, inquisitive, engaging, participative, intellectually stimulating, and holistically relevant to the students’ larger worlds using a language cognitively comprehensible to and competently performable by the students, Kiswahili, as the language of instruction is the bedrock to education as a common good and for the commons.
Recommendations

i. Adoption and use of Kiswahili as a LoI across all levels of education. Revisiting the information processing model detailed earlier, Kiswahili resembles the procedural knowledge of most Tanzanians located in rural areas. With coinage and wider usage of translated, adopted or Kiswahilized terms, automaticity in communication will be spontaneously developed, communication barriers will be removed and enriching, contextual learning facilitated. This is in agreement with Babaci-Wilhite (2017), who proposes a radical view of education that it should be regarded as a set of processes intended to enhance local learning.

ii. Distribute the financial costs and human resources needed to translate and/or coin technical terms into Kiswahili by enlisting the expertise and assistance of industries, professional associations and volunteers in a project-based manner jointly coordinated, standardized and centralized by the National Kiswahili Council and the Kiswahili Research Institute.

iii. Use Kiswahili as an academic and workplace language in tertiary education and in all places of work, respectively. Concerted efforts are necessary by the government to convince and incentivize researchers, academicians and practitioners to translate their existing publications into Kiswahili and publish new scholarly works in Kiswahili thenceforth. This will foster the development of the language and bridge the academic context with the larger world as more Tanzanians will be able to access and be equally incentivized to keep abreast of new insights and discoveries.

iv. Provide effective teaching of additional languages, English included, as separate subjects substantiated with adequate reading and listening resources and availability of the necessary learning conditions previously discussed. This will help to remove the incorrect English that students may pick up from non-English subject teachers and to unburden the latter as simultaneous English and specific subject matter teachers. Brock-Utne (2013, p. 95), stresses that “it is actually an insult to teachers of English to think that anybody (a teacher of science, mathematics, history, etc.) can also be a teacher of English, while Babaci-Wilhite (2013) emphasizes that education policies in developing countries need to be context-sensitive while also allowing those countries to be partners in global society.
v. Elevate Kiswahili’s social prestige and academic status. Informed by the foreignness of English, the elite closure\(^3\) it attracts, and principally committed to the common good, the Tanzanian society must promote Kiswahili’s social prestige, including its status as a language appropriate for academic and workplace settings, in order to strengthen the language domestically. The goals should not only be to curb illiteracy, increase school completion rates and prevent further commodification of education, but also to enhance heritage revitalization, catalyze local innovation and unshackle the society from her colonial legacy and misconception that a language is learned through its usage as a medium of instruction.

Internationally, there are economic, cultural and sociopolitical advantages of Kiswahili. Kiswahili has official language status in both Tanzania and Kenya, and is also spoken widely in Uganda, The Democratic Republic of Congo and Comoros islands. It is spoken in smaller sections of Rwanda, Burundi, and Northern parts of Malawi, Mozambique and Zambia. It is also one of the official languages of the African Union. The national/federal broadcasting services of the United States, Britain and German each have specific departments that broadcast their programs in Kiswahili in these countries. This indicates a rising value of Kiswahili across the continent that can be tapped for economic, cultural and sociopolitical benefits through literature and audiovisual contents that will simultaneously spread the language, break communication barriers between countries and strengthen economic and cultural ties across the region.

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\(^3\) Elite closure is defined as the “isolation of the elites with their preferred language, English, from the lower strata of the population and their indigenous languages” (Scotton, 1990 in Kamwangamalu, 2013, p. 330).
References


