

A Comparison of the Cultural Policies on Language Development in Tanzania and Uganda: A Reflection on the Teaching of Kiswahili in Uganda

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“Language policies in Africa have been formulated and implemented through a number of instruments, the most important of which are schools”

(Makoni, Makoni, Abdelhay and Mashiri, 2012: 534).

Abstract

In Uganda and Tanzania, culture policies are among the key documents that provide for the statuses and educational functions of languages in these countries. Tanzania’s culture policy (famously known as *Sera ya Utamaduni*) explicitly postulates the statuses and the development of languages in its multilingual contexts. In Uganda, while Kiswahili is a foreign as well as the second official language, Uganda’s culture policy provides no references for its teaching in schools. This paper argues that the silence by Uganda’s culture policy to postulate the teaching of Kiswahili in schools contributes towards the further deceleration of its teaching in the country. Using Bowen’s (2009) proposals on text analysis, this paper reviews, compares and evaluates purposely selected texts on language development (mainly, in terms of teaching) from the *Sera ya Utamaduni* and Uganda National Culture Policy (UNCP). It intends to provide highlights on the Kiswahili (language) teaching gaps in the UNCP with possible solutions to be drawn from Tanzania’s cultural policy. In general, it advocates designing of a comprehensive and viable culture and/or language policy that can benchmark the teaching of Kiswahili (and other languages) within multilingual Ugandan classrooms.

Ikisiri

Nchini Uganda na Tanzania, sera za utamaduni ni miongoni mwa nyaraka muhimu zinazobainisha hadhi na dhima za lugha katika mifumo ya elimu ya nchi hizo. Sera ya utamaduni ya Tanzania (maarufu kama Sera ya Utamaduni) inaeleza wazi kuhusu hadhi na maendeleo ya lugha katika miktadha ya wingilugha nchini humo. Nchini Uganda, wakati Kiswahili ikiwa ni lugha ya kigeni na lugha rasmi ya pili, sera ya utamaduni ya taifa (ijulikanayo kama Uganda National Culture Policy [UNCP]) haitoi

maelekezo thabiti ya ufundishwaji wa lugha hiyo shuleni. Hivyo, hoja kuu inayoibuliwa na makala hii ni kwamba, ukimya wa UNCP katika kubainisha ufundishaji wa lugha ya Kiswahili shuleni unachangia kwa kiasi kikubwa kudhoofisha ufundishwaji wake nchini humo. Kwa kutumia mapendekezo ya Bowen (2009) yanayohusu uchambuzi matini, makala hii inapitia, inalinganisha na kutathmini kwa makusudi matini teule kuhusu maendeleo ya lugha (hasa katika ufundishaji) kutoka katika Sera ya Utamaduni ya Tanzania na UNCP. Makala inakusudia kuonesha pengo lililopo katika ufundishaji wa lugha ya Kiswahili katika UNCP na kupendekeza mikakati madhubuti kwa kujifunza kutoka katika Sera ya Utamaduni ya Tanzania. Kwa ujumla, makala inapigania kubuni na kuhakikisha kuwapo kwa sera ya utamaduni na/au sera ya lugha ambayo inaweza kuwa mhimili wa masuala ya ufundishaji wa lugha ya Kiswahili (na lugha nyinginezo) katika mifumo ya elimu nchini Uganda.

1.0 Introduction

This paper employs Bowen's (2009) proposals on document analysis procedures to constitute its methodology. It reviews, compares and evaluates texts on language teaching and development, as exhibited in policy documents on the culture of Uganda and Tanzania. In both documents, language-related texts (quotations, excerpts or paragraphs) were deliberately selected for analysis purposes. For corroboration purposes, personal communications in form of Short Message Services (sms) with officials, from the ministries in charge of culture in Tanzania and Uganda, with the knowledge in terms of the review processes of the two polices, were contacted. While the personal communications confirmed the findings on the delayed review of the *Sera ya Utamaduni* and UNCP, the two documents provided rich data to make an informed conclusion on the overall purpose of this paper, as demonstrated by Bowen (2009).

In the last two decades, the founding countries of the East African Community (EAC) have somehow been able to consider addressing language-related issues in their respective countries. For example, in addition to the language provisions, as established in the respective constitutions (see Republic of Kenya, 2010 and Republic of Uganda, 2005), 'major' language concerns have formally been adopted in the cultural policies of these countries. These policies are (i) Kenyan, *National Policy on Culture and Heritage* (Republic of Kenya, 2009), (ii) Tanzanian, *Sera ya Utamaduni* (Wizara ya Elimu na Utamaduni, 1997) and (iii) Ugandan, *Uganda National Culture Policy* (Republic of Uganda, 2006). In these policies, (mainly that one of Kenya and Tanzania), provisions on developing (teaching) these languages in the education systems in a particular country, are clearly outlined.

Nonetheless, from comparisons between Kenya's *National Policy on Culture and Heritage* and the *Sera ya Utamaduni* of Tanzania, this paper finds Tanzania's culture policy having detailed provisions on language teaching and development. This is because *Sera ya Utamaduni* outlines statements in support of educational purposes for specific foreign languages in its education systems, something hardly provided for in Kenya's *National Policy on Culture and Heritage*. Subsequently, this paper draws on the language provisions as found in the *Sera ya Utamaduni*. This is intended to serve as a basis on which the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development (MoGLSD) of Uganda can contemplate during this period of the UNCP review.

Section 9.0 of the UNCP states that, "...this policy shall be reviewed after every five (5) years" (Republic of Uganda, 2006: 33). Nevertheless, from the MoGLSD it has been disclosed that the review processes are on-going (personal communication with an official, 6th June 2020). Importantly, while the UNCP has been in existence for over a decade, there is a scarcity of scholarly studies that have attempted to address the gap(s) that it exhibits as this paper will show.

This paper is important because of the gradual increase in calls (e.g., Msanjila 2009, 2011; Kanana, 2013) to review and update the current culture policies as a result of the existing deficiencies being manifested in these policies. The paper aims at contributing to and reflecting on the teaching Kiswahili as a foreign language given its official status in Uganda as will be demonstrated later while reviewing *Sera ya Utamaduni* of Tanzania.

An attempt to review and compare *Sera ya Utamaduni* and UNCP shows the existence of other language-related documents in Tanzania and Uganda. These include, (i) the *Sera ya Elimu na Mafunzo* (Education and Training Policy) of Tanzania (Jamuhuri ya Muungano wa Tanzania, 2014) and (ii) the Government White Paper on educational policy review commission of Uganda (Republic of Uganda, 1992). Since the focus of the current paper is on culture policies, these documents will briefly be explored later to provide simultaneous perspectives of the paper's focus. However, it is equally important to first define and differentiate some of the synonymously used terms in the literature of language planning drawn on in this paper.

2.0 Defining and Differentiating Language Planning Terms

Some of the synonymously used terms in EAC are applicable given that, language planning as a field is still a developing phenomenon. During the rise of Pan-Africanism movements in Africa, much of the efforts were directed towards

political and economic unity than on cultural aspects in which languages are considered (Senkoro, 2019). Since then, aspects of language planning relatively receive minimum attention from different stakeholders as summarised by the Commissioner of Family Affairs in the MoGLSD that, “the ministry is usually disappointed by the national treasury, which [*sic*] don’t take social matters as language, culture as a priority” (quoted in Tugume, 2019: n.p). Thus, as it has earlier been stated, some of the synonymously used terms include culture policy vis-à-vis language policy, and the official language vis-à-vis national language. The next two sub-sections provide clarity for the use of these concepts.

2.1 Perspectives on Culture Policy and Language Policy

The governments of three founding EAC have used the concept of cultural policy as primarily and generally a document that reflects a national identity. For example, according to the UNCP, culture policy encompasses mainly social aspects in terms of their identification, organisation, preservation, sustainability, and expressions that distinguish a particular country from the rest of the world (Republic of Uganda, 2006). In these aspects, languages which are used for expressional purposes are crucial given that they create ‘national’ cohesion among citizens from different societies within and outside a given country.

Thus, given languages are also provided for in the cultural policies of the three East African countries, as has been stated earlier in this paper, the concept of cultural policy has synonymously been considered as that of language policy. This is because, according to Msanjila (2005, 2009), language-related issues are formally outlined within culture policies (e.g, see *Wizara ya Elimu na Utamaduni, 1997; Republic of Uganda, 2006; Republic of Kenya, 2009*) of the respective countries. While Msanjila (2009) affirms that language-issues are required to be discussed under the umbrella of culture, nonetheless, he argues that for in-depth exploration and provisions on language-related concerns in a country, language policy should be separated from the culture policy.

According to Msanjila (*ibid.*), this separation offers an opportunity to easily identify language-related concerns when they are confined in a specific document (i.e. in the language policy) rather than when they are embedded in the culture policies (cf. Gafaranga, Niyomugabo and Uwizeyimana, 2013), as it is, presently the case in Tanzania and Uganda. In this respect, this paper considers, on one hand, the concept of cultural policy as a general document in which language-related issues ‘can’ be found, and on the other hand, the concept of language policy denotes a specific document that deals with only language-related issues and its support systems, as will be discussed in the subsequent paragraphs. Since there is the

absence of a 'definite' language policy documents in Tanzania and Uganda, in this paper, the two notions (i.e., culture policy and language policy) will be considered as synonyms. However, when a need arises, two concepts will be treated differently, as it has been pointed out in this paragraph.

In light of the above, Spolsky (2012) defines language policy as a product of language planning decisions. It is a set of official rules regarding language(s) forms and uses in a country. According to Ricento (2006), language policy is an interdisciplinary concept, constituted with decisions from several other disciplines including, geography, political science, economics, sociology, education and history (cf. Jernudd and Nekvapil, 2012). Relatedly, Grin (2006) is of the view that language policies are inherently and politically oriented in that such policies represent the choices that have been made by a given society. Accordingly, Schmidt, Sr. (2006) contends that politicians intervene in language policy issues to address the status and use of languages in the society, as summarised by Ricento (2006) that language policies are practised and acknowledged within the societies they operate.

In Uganda, there are mainly three documents with references to language issues in general and Kiswahili in particular. These include Government White Paper on education (Republic of Uganda, 1992), as will briefly be discussed in section 5.1 of this paper; the 1995 Constitution, as amended in 2005 (Republic of Uganda, 2005); and the UNCP (Republic of Uganda, 2006). This paper assumes that the above documents are by large politically oriented (cf. Swilla, 1992: 513) because they are principally not as a result of language planning processes but rather selected individuals with 'insufficient' knowledge of language planning theories and related principles (Kaplan and Baldauf Jr., 1997: 29). For example, these documents are indefinite in postulating the status of Kiswahili as a second official language with its subsequent, functions and rules governing its use or vice versa. As a result, different languages in Uganda have overlapped each other in their domains of use and functions.

Hornberger (2006) argues that language policies are implicitly made to specifically address questions such as which, when, and how to develop a language(s) and its purposes. While attempting to address the above *wh*- questions, Spencer (1974) argues that in the colonial era in Africa, language policies were characterised as follows; that is to say, either total rejection of indigenous language or an attempt to encourage some native languages especially in the education systems. The latter option was purposely employed mainly to identify few Africans who could function as administrators and interpreters in the colonial governments.

For example, in the Tanzanian and Ugandan contexts, the latter option was applied mainly on Kiswahili and Luganda languages, respectively. While employing the above options on languages, on one hand, as Kiswahili was considered as a national language of Tanzania, and in Uganda, according to Ssentanda and Nakayiza (2017), in different contested periods, Luganda became the official language of administration of the British colonial government in the country. In brief, from a historical perspective, as Makoni *et al.* (2012: 529) point out, it has often been challenging to implement colonial language policies, given that most are still “partly formulated and inconsistently interpreted.”

2.2 Perspectives on National vis-à-vis Official Languages

On official and national languages, Rosendal (2010), as cited in Namyalo, Isingoma and Meierkord (2016), argues that, in the Ugandan contexts, an official language is often considered as synonymous to the national language (see e.g., Nakayiza, 2016, as cited in Isingoma, 2017). In this regard, Cluver (1993) states that a national language is an indigenous language that has been developed to symbolise a specific region or a nation in general. Besides, Lodhi (1993) is of the view that it is the national language that is used in primary schools, parliament, and in the mass media. Lodhi, however, argues that unlike official languages, national languages are not required to publish or pass laws of the country (cf. Webb, 2002). This is why national languages fulfil the functions and domains of use of the official language.

Cluver (1993) argues that while the selection of an official language is a challenging exercise in linguistically complex countries, such languages are derived from the nation’s language policy. To him, in most African contexts, languages that do not belong to any ethnic group have served as official languages in respective countries (cf. Lianza and Muaka, 2020). Relatedly, to Ruiz (1990: 18, as cited in Cluver, 1993: 54) some of the primary uses of official languages include being declared “...for public or official functions” and its use “for official purposes.” The main purpose of official languages is for use in specific domains such as international relations (Cluver, 1993). Similarly, Spolsky (2009) states that an official language is the one that is used for communication between a government and its people. It is expected to be the language of mass media and the medium of instruction in government-funded schools (cf. Wright, 2004). Nonetheless, if there is more than one official/state languages in a country, there should be rules postulating the functions of each language (Spolsky, 2009).

From the above definitions, this paper notes that while official language(s) are considered to be the developed national language(s), the former can as well develop in the absence of the latter as it is the case in Uganda where English serves

as an official language without necessarily the presence of a *de facto* developed nation language(s). The position of English in Uganda is mainly due to its status as an international language and is considered politically neutral. Briefly, the two language clusters (i.e. national and official languages) play complementary roles in a country such as being educational languages in different education phases and levels. However, for such roles to be defined, there is a need for them to be articulated in the language policy or the culture policy, something which is missing in the UNCP, that this paper intends to address and make its contribution.

Having attempted to define and clarify some of the ambiguously used terms in the field of language planning mainly in the Ugandan context, it is important to briefly explore the realisation of these concepts, as mainly used in the *Sera ya Utamaduni* and UNCP, respectively. However, before the exploration of the two policies (i.e. the *Sera ya Utamaduni* and UNCP) is done, it is equally important to summarise the teaching of Kiswahili in the Ugandan context.

3.0 A Summary of Kiswahili Pedagogies in Uganda

Literature (see Mukama, 2009; Jjingo and Asiimwe, 2019; Jjingo, Kakeeto and Asiimwe, 2019) notes that the teaching of Kiswahili in Uganda has been a contested concern since the language was formally introduced in the country's education systems in the 1920s. One of the key concerns has always been the fact that Kiswahili is a foreign language in Uganda (Mulumba and Masaazi, 2012). Oliver and Atmore (1999) state that Kiswahili was brought to Uganda by the Arab merchants from the East African coastal societies by the 1840s. Being a foreign language, advocates of the use of indigenous languages and English language in the education systems of Uganda have often interrupted the implementation of policies that require Kiswahili to serve as an educational language in the country. For example, according to Mbaabu (2007) through the influence of such advocates, in 1952, Kiswahili was rejected in the education systems of Uganda (cf. Adimola, 1963; Nyaigotti-Chacha, 1987).

Nevertheless, in the late 1980s, concerns about teaching Kiswahili in Uganda resurfaced. It should be noted the 1992 Government White Paper (GWP) on education recommended the teaching of Kiswahili as a compulsory subject in all primary and secondary schools in Uganda. However, Jjingo and Visser (2018) contend that while this recommendation has partially been implemented in post-primary learning institutions (see e.g., Republic of Uganda, 2008, 2014a, 2016, 2019), its implementation in primary schools is still challenging (see e.g., Republic

of Uganda, 2012, 2014b, 2015a; East African Community, 2019; Jjingo, Arinaitwe, Masereka, Asiimwe and Masengo, 2019).

Jjingo and Visser (2017) argue that the establishment of the GWP provided a framework from which, constitutional provisions, policies, and other key documents were subsequently developed to facilitate the teaching of Kiswahili in Uganda (see Republic of Uganda, 2005, 2008, 2014a, 2018). For instance, having recognized the possible advantages associated with Kiswahili language at the national, regional as well as international contexts (see Harries, 1976; Ojwang, 2008; Mwaniki, 2010; East African Community, 2017), the 1995 Ugandan Constitution was amended in 2005 to this effect to read as follows: “Swahili shall be the second official language in Uganda to be used in such circumstances as Parliament may by law prescribe” (Republic of Uganda, 2005: n.p). While this constitutional postulation on the official status of Kiswahili is largely unclear (Mukama, 2009), this paper argues that it provided a basis upon which the official recognition of Kiswahili was established in the UNCP.

While the existing Kiswahili frameworks are somewhat interrupted, presently, the teaching of Kiswahili in Uganda is increasingly being experienced. Nonetheless, it is argued that there is still a need to teach Kiswahili in all education systems of Uganda so that it can gradually be acquired and used as the second official language in the country. One way of doing this is by including such instructional provisions, for example, in the UNCP which are presently absent yet those for indigenous languages are present, as summarised here that “...local languages shall be promoted...taught and spoken in the educational and other institutions in all levels...” (Republic of Uganda, 2006: 20-21). It is in this respect that the next section will discuss language-related provisions, as outlined in the *Sera ya Utamaduni* for Ugandan language planners to draw on.

4.0 Culture and Language Policy in Tanzania

Msanjila (2009) states that the language policy of Tanzania is enshrined within the country’s cultural policy. Subsequently, the next subsection provides an overview of Tanzania’s culture policy for subsequent comparison with the UNCP.

4.1 Tanzania’s *Sera ya Utamaduni*: A Synopsis

Sera ya Utamaduni is Tanzania’s main policy document on cultural issues (Wizara ya Elimu na Utamaduni, 1997). It discusses the roles and the aims of culture in transforming Tanzania. In particular, the policy states different components of culture as articulated in each chapter. These include art and craft, protection and development of cultural heritage, entertainment, and language(s). The journey

towards the policy's establishment is envisioned to have its roots in the pre-independent Tanzania (see e.g., Massamba, 1989; Blommaert, 1994; Ngonyani, 2001; Topan, 2008; Mulokozi, 2009; Hans, 2019). This paper focuses on the third chapter of *Sera ya Utamaduni* that specifically deals with language.

Sera ya Utamaduni resulted from demands from language stakeholders requesting the Tanzanian government to prepare a feasible policy on languages (Msanjila, 2009). *Sera ya Utamaduni* enshrines multilingualism in the Tanzanian context. It recognizes that Tanzania has more than 100 languages (cf. Tibategeza and Plessis, 2012). Relatedly, it categorises languages that exist in Tanzania, as follows: (i) indigenous languages; (ii) national language (Kiswahili) and (iii) foreign languages (e.g. English and French). It further states that because of the long historical contacts among the above language categories, mainly Tanzania's indigenous and Kiswahili, as a national language, have borrowed from foreign languages (cf. Swilla, 1992).

Chapter three of *Sera ya Utamaduni* provides somewhat detailed views on how the three language categories in Tanzania, as mentioned above, are supposed to be realised in Tanzania's educational institutions. For example, section 3.1 deals with Kiswahili as a national language. It emphasises the view that Kiswahili has been a *lingua franca* in Tanzania even before the arrival of colonialists in the region.

Being a *lingua franca*, certainly, Kiswahili has been the *de facto* national language of Tanzania, as section 3.1.1, of the *Sera ya Utamaduni*, suggests that the Constitution of Tanzania is set to postulate the official use of Kiswahili as a national language. At the time of writing this paper, the Constitution of Tanzania (see United Republic of Tanzania, 2000) is largely silent on this matter. Nevertheless, to provide further for the development of national language (i.e. Kiswahili), section 3.1.2 affirms that incentives will be provided to individuals and various publishing companies to spread the Kiswahili scripts in the country. Section 3.1.3 further states that the National Kiswahili Council of Tanzania (BAKITA) will be responsible for researching and streamlining the continuous use of Kiswahili in the country. Furthermore, section 3.1.4 states that in conjunction with the National Kiswahili Council of Tanzania, other language development institutions in the country will be strengthened and provided with resources to fully implement their responsibilities and duties. To conclude its postulations on the issue of the national language, section 3.1.5 provides that indigenous languages shall continue to mutually support the general development of Kiswahili in the country (cf. Mazrui and Mazrui, 1992; Swilla, 1992).

Regarding the indigenous languages, section 3.2.2 reveals that different stakeholders in publishing houses will be motivated to write, collect research data, protect and translate Tanzania's indigenous languages into other languages. Besides, section 3.2.3 contends that the publication of dictionaries and grammar books for teaching indigenous languages shall be strengthened. Furthermore, section 3.2.4 asserts that individuals and various publishing companies will be encouraged to publish and spread the scripts of indigenous languages of Tanzania. Similarly, the same section further states that when Kiswahili becomes the language of instruction, the teaching of foreign languages in schools will be strengthened further. In this regard, *Sera ya Utamaduni* emphasises the view that English shall be a compulsory subject from primary to secondary schools. Besides, it affirms that the teaching of English in higher institutions of learning shall be strengthened and modernised.

Accordingly, chapter three summarises the issues of the language of instruction. Kiswahili is projected to be used as the language of instruction in early years of schooling, primary schools, teacher training institutions for certificates, and in the adult education. Section 3.4.1 proposes that a special program will be launched to facilitate the use of Kiswahili as a language of instruction in the entire Tanzanian education system. Section 3.4.2 projects that in the future, Kiswahili shall be a compulsory teaching subject from early years of schooling to secondary schools. Lastly, it calls for the modernisation and improvement of the teaching of Kiswahili in higher learning institutions.

However, Tanzania's *Sera ya Utamaduni* is 'not the best' in the world as has been illustrated by Msanjila (2009). In its current form, as a language-related document, *Sera ya Utamaduni* has contributed towards the development of languages (mainly English and Kiswahili) in different education phases and levels in Tanzania. While the educational statuses and functions of the indigenous languages in the Tanzania contexts are still confined in their traditional geographical boundaries, scholars state that the possible justification for this situation is because promoting indigenous could lead to the development of elements of tribalism in the country where national unity has by far been achieved in Tanzania (see Mkude, 2001, as cited in Msanjila, 2011).

For the development of national and official languages, the *Sera ya Utamaduni* has provided the basis for their teaching and learning in schools. Presently, there is the latest language-related policy, titled as *Sera ya Elimu na Mafunzo* (Education and Training Policy) of Tanzania.

4.2 Sera ya Elimu na Mafunzo (Education and Training Policy)

Sera ya Elimu na Mafunzo was published in 2014 (Jamuhuri ya Muungano wa Tanzania, 2014). This policy reveals that the Tanzanian government will provide for the use of braille and sign language at all levels and phases of education and training in the country. Additionally, on the question of medium of instruction and learning (MoIL), the policy states that the national language, Kiswahili, will be used as MoIL in all levels and phases of education and training in Tanzania. Relatedly, the government will strengthen the continuous use of English as the MoIL in the Tanzanian education systems. While these postulations concerning Kiswahili and English being MoIL are somehow contradictory, they imply the establishment of the dual-mode of instruction in Tanzania's educational systems (see e.g., Gómez, Freeman and Freeman, 2005; de Jong, Yilmaz and Marichal, 2019; Ngala, 2020). Furthermore, the Tanzanian government will broaden its financial contributions towards its education and training sector. This will enable learners to eloquently master these languages (specifically, English and Kiswahili), given their national, regional and international recognition.

5.0 Culture and Language Policy in Uganda

As earlier mentioned regarding Uganda, three documents provide for the language-related issue. One of them is the 1992 GWP, which is briefly be discussed in the subsequent subsection; the other is the 1995 constitution, as amended in 2005 (as noted in section 3.0 of this paper). The third document is the UNCP, which is this paper's focus and will be discussed in the last subsection of this section.

5.1 The 1992 Government White Paper (GWP) on Education

The 1992 GWP on education (Republic of Uganda, 1992) was the result of the recommendations of the Senteza Kajubi (1987) commission's report to the Government of Uganda. The commission was established to review the education systems of Uganda and their related structures (Evans and Kajubi, 1994; Jjingo and Visser, 2017).

Regarding language policy, the GWP confirms the view on government's awareness of its disadvantaged position due to "lack of clear and coherent language policy in education and national life generally" (Republic of Uganda, 1992: 16). Subsequently, while contemplating further on the issues of national/official language(s) as well as educational languages, generally, the GWP refers to two foreign languages (i.e. Kiswahili and English) and only five indigenous languages, which also serve as languages of wide communication (i.e. Akarimajong/Ateso,

Luganda, Lugbara, Low and Runyakitara), as educational languages in Uganda. However, the GWP hardly attempts to explicitly state or officialise a particular language as a national or official language.

Briefly, the references on languages in the ‘language policy’ as provided for in the GWP can be considered as what Ssentanda, Huddleston and Southwood (2016: 46) refer to as “escape clauses.” Like the UNCP (as it will be revealed in the next subsection), the GWP largely demonstrates that the ‘language policy’ is selective, incomplete and an indefinite one, which also calls for its evaluation/ review for ultimate upgrading.

5.2 An Overview of the Uganda National Culture Policy

The UNCP was published in 2006 and comprises ten sections. It is considered as the first “well-documented policy” in guiding and coordinating informal and formal cultural systems in Uganda’s history (Republic of Uganda, 2006: 8). The UNCP was designed to strengthen and promote national goals and interests. Specifically, the UNCP is set to ensure that culture provides a framework for harmonising the co-existence of both inter and intracultural exchange. It is the mission of the UNCP to endeavour ensuring that social cohesion, collaboration as well as the participation of all people in the cultural life, is enhanced in Uganda.

On social cohesion, UNCP states that Uganda is a multilingual country due to its several indigenous languages (see also Republic of Uganda, 2015b; Uganda Bureau of Statistics, 2016). The UNCP concurs that over time, the development of these indigenous languages has been uneven. Some languages have been assigned ‘special’ social statuses and functions while others have been denied such opportunities (Nsibambi, 1971; Kwesiga, 1994). It is partly in this line of deliberations that in section 2.2.1, the UNCP (Republic of Uganda, 2006: 9) declares “English as the official language of Uganda and Kiswahili as the second official language”.¹

¹ English and Kiswahili are foreign languages in Uganda. English has been the language of instruction from upper primary classes to the institutions of higher learning and for official government business. Kiswahili is increasingly gaining prominence (mainly in post primary schools) and usage as a teaching subject (Jjingo and Visser, 2017). While other foreign languages such as Arabic, French and German (presently, Chinese is being proposed as a teaching subject [e.g. see Bwambale, 2017; Kwesiga, 2018]) are taught in few learning institutions, according to Eberhard, Simons and Fennig (2020), out of forty-one indigenous languages that exist in Uganda, there are only five that serve as educational languages in the country.

To strengthen further the cultural aspects of Uganda, the UNCP identifies ten priority areas to focus on. It is a credit to the UNCP that its section 7.2 considers the promotion of language, as its second priority:

Language and literary arts serve as media for the protection and promotion of culture. Consequently, interventions to address the promotion of linguistic arts as a means of developing the local languages shall be promoted. This shall contribute to the expressive, socialisation and educational needs of Uganda (Republic of Uganda, 2006: 21).

In light of the above, section 7.2.1 outlines key interventions to promote languages, as has been stated in section 7.2 of the UNCP. In this respect, the interventions include; ensuring (i) that all languages have developed orthographies; (ii) that languages are taught and spoken in educational and other institutions at all levels; (iii) the preservation and development of orature and literature at all levels; (iv) the development of dictionaries in local languages; and (v) the promotion in the learning and use of local languages (Republic of Uganda, 2006: 21).

Unlike Tanzania's *Sera ya Utamaduni* which postulates the teaching of foreign languages, the UNCP, particularly, section 7.2 is largely silent on the interventions of promoting foreign languages, such as Kiswahili in the Ugandan multilingual context. Whereas Kiswahili is foreign to Uganda (see Crabtree, 1914; Pawliková-Vilhanová, 2004), the UNCP has accorded it an official status. This means the current form of UNCP can be considered as largely incomplete and needs to be reviewed.

6.0 Way forward

To address the above-discussed concerns, this paper agrees with previous studies (e.g. Msanjila, 2009; Kanana, 2013) that call for the review of specific culture policies, a requirement which is also established in section 9.0 of the UNCP (Republic of Uganda, 2006). Therefore, for a coherent and systematic evaluation and reviewing of the UNCP, this paper considers the following possible measures (drawn from Mekacha's (2000) book, as cited in Msanjila, 2009), as pertinent for reviewers of the UNCP to take into consideration. To bring forth such measures, this paper lists them (measures) in the form of questions. The questions are purposely unanswered to allow possible instigations to the government and language planners in Uganda to contemplate on.

The questions include; (i) Why is there a need to develop a sufficient language policy? (ii) Does the policy to be developed sufficiently consider the

social, economic, and political dynamics of the country? (iii) How can policy planners determine the domain(s) of use of an official or another language(s)? (iv) Will policy planners accept views from citizens regarding perspectives for language distributions, as mentioned in (iii), above? (v) Which instruments are in place to address possible policy changes that might arise during the implementation period of the policy? (vi) How will policy planners determine different functions of language institutions, agencies and individuals in charge of the changes, as mentioned in (v), above? (vii) In how many phases will the policy be implemented? (viii) How will the policy be evaluated to analyse its strength and challenges? (ix) What mechanisms are in place to explicitly identify and address possible challenges that might affect the implementation processes before the policy is put into use? (x) How will policy planners measure the effects of the policy after it has been put in use? Lastly, (xi) how do policy planners plan to sustain, amend, and change the policy to address social issues that affect the country?

In summary, while the above questions were intended to address issues related to the revision of *Sera ya Utamaduni*, Msanjila (2009) confirms that the same questions should be considered by all policy planners for the realisation of sufficient language policy. Thus, to advance further Msanjila's (2009) views, Ugandan policy planners ought to borrow from these questions as benchmarks in the review processes of the UNCP or lead to the development of a comprehensive and a visible language policy that deals with languages and their related-support systems. This is envisioned to realise an efficient policy with possible mechanisms to address the issue of teaching of not only Kiswahili as an official language in multilingual Uganda, but also the use, spread and the maintenance of other languages that exist (cf. Strydom and Pretorius, 2000) mainly in the education system of Uganda.

7.0 Conclusion

The need to contribute to the review processes of the Uganda National Culture Policy, this paper has reviewed and compared the language postulations and references, as established in the cultural policies of Uganda and Tanzania, respectively. Specifically, it drew attention to the references regarding the teaching of languages, as established in Tanzania's culture policy that can be reflected in Uganda's cultural policy purposely to enhance the teaching of Kiswahili, a foreign language and as a second official language in Uganda. To reflect such references in the UNCP or the language policy, in general, the paper has offered series of measures in form of questions to provide a benchmark for the language planners in Uganda to reflect on during this period of the review processes of the Uganda

National Culture Policy or to alternatively provide a basis for the establishment of a comprehensive language policy that can take into consideration the teaching and learning of languages (Kiswahili in particular) that do exist in the multilingual Ugandan classrooms.

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