Teachers' perspectives and related classroom practices in mother tongue literacy development in Uganda

Medadi E. Ssentanda iD

Department of African Languages, Makerere University, Uganda | Department of General Linguistics, Stellenbosch University, South Africa
E-mail: medadies@gmail.com

Allen Asiimwe iD

Department of African Languages, Makerere University, Uganda
E-mail: asiimwea94@gmail.com

Abstract

In this paper, we discuss teachers' views and related classroom practices of teaching the mother tongue, (MT) Luganda as a subject, as observed in rural classrooms in central Uganda. The challenges observed arise from the lack of and, in some cases, limited training of teachers in MT teaching. Also, there is a disjointed approach to the teaching of Luganda and English, languages to which learners are simultaneously introduced when they first learn to read. The disjointed approach to the teaching of Luganda and English brings about the problem of letter-naming when teaching the two languages. In addition, the overrepresentation of the Luganda orthography regarding the use of /r/ and /l/ as though they are phonemes affects the quick mastery of writing skills in Luganda. The paper demonstrates how teachers go about the teaching of the MT (Luganda) and how these difficulties affect language teaching in rural schools in two districts in Uganda. The paper ends with a discussion on what can be done to overcome these challenges with implications on teacher-education.

Keywords: mother tongue education; literacy development; teachers' perspectives; Luganda orthography; Uganda

1.   Introduction

This paper describes teachers' views on and practices in the teaching of MTs in Uganda's rural schools. The language policy in Uganda requires all rural schools to select a dominant language in the area to use as the language of learning and teaching (LoLT) from primary one (P1) to primary three (P3) and to teach it as a subject in these classes before shifting to English as LoLT in P4. Although MT is accorded varying meanings (see for example, Nyaga & Anthonissen 2012), the term is employed in the present study to refer to a language that the child knows best or the language(s) they speak at home (Kosonen & Young 2009). There are, however, teachers who have been reported to understand MT education as the teaching of a local language, e.g.

Luganda alongside English and other subjects (see for example, Ssentanda, Huddlestone & Southwood 2016). Ssentanda et al. (2016) also argue that the formulation of policies regarding MTs involve political play, which makes MT teaching difficult. In other multilingual contexts, research has revealed that although schools claim to practice MT education, learners' linguistic repertoires are not fully exploited (see for example, Nyaga & Anthonissen 2012). In other cases, schools and/or teachers assume that learners are monolingual, and yet children in most African communities are largely multilingual (Banda 2010; McKinney 2017). Arguably, the practice of MT education and MT teaching in Africa is largely construed towards monolingualism, a practice that undermines the plurilingual nature of African communities (Ssentanda & Norton, 2022), and, in turn, this makes MT teaching and MT education unattainable.

Despite the misapprehension surrounding MT in African communities, a rich body of research on MTs has undoubtedly proved that, when children first achieve proficiency in their MT, they can learn the second language easier and faster (UNESCO 1953; Cummins 2001; Romaine 2013). The teaching and learning of MTs in Africa at large has, however, been challenged by both material and human resource issues (Bamgbose 1991, 2004; Woldemariam 2007; Chimbutane 2011; Nyaga 2013). Research on the teaching of MTs in various African countries has demonstrated that pupils/learners are very lively and are participative when they are taught in their MTs as opposed to second language(s) (Chimbutane 2011; Ssentanda 2014c). In other research, focus is generally on language-in-education implementation, attitudes towards MTs and English, and the nature of teacher-learner interactions in classrooms (Tembe & Norton 2008; Nankindu 2015; Ssentanda 2016; Ssentanda, Huddlestone & Southwood 2016). Other scholars, such as Abiria, Early, and Kendrick (2013) as well as McKinney (2017), have demonstrated the creativity among teachers in accommodating plurilingualism among learners and teachers, and how this creativity enhances teaching and learning. Teacher training has also been reported to affect the quality of teaching of MTs (Fafunwa, Macauley & Sokoya 1989; Altinyelken 2010; Ouane & Glanz 2010). The lack of and/or limited training of teachers in MTs affects the quality of teaching of MTs.

The scope of research on MT education in Africa in general and Uganda in particular is growing. However, what is mostly lacking is ethnographic studies inquiring into the manner in which MTs are taught. Studies that inquire into classroom practices of MT teaching are few. Such studies are crucial as they contribute to the understanding of the needs of teacher training and strategies for modifying policy for localised situations. Ethnographic studies involving classroom observations, teachers' interviews, and daily interactions over an extended period help us to learn and understand the specific ways in which MTs are viewed and taught in schools. Ethnography also helps us to understand how teachers interpret the language policy as well as how their understanding of the policy influences their actions in classroom activities (Hornberger & Johnson 2011; Martin-Jones 2011).

Additionally, although studies report on the challenges of implementing the language-in-education policy and the attitudes of teachers and parents towards MTs and English, there is need to focus on the teachers' actual classroom practices, namely how teachers go about teaching the MTs, whether they exhibit knowledge of the MTs in terms of speaking, writing, reading, etc., and how learners participate in such classroom interactions. It is through these classroom interactions that we can understand whether teachers possess the language skills of the MTs they teach and whether learners can meaningfully pick up these skills in their MTs from their teachers, which they can later transfer to the learning of their L2 (e.g. English).

2.   The historical context of teaching mother tongues (MTs) in Uganda

Formal education in Uganda began as missionary efforts in 1877 (Protestants) and 1879 (Catholics) (Ssekamwa 2000). From the beginning, missionaries encouraged education in people's MTs and, as such, wrote orthographies and grammars for the languages they taught. Initially, MTs were taught for about the first six years, thereafter replaced by English (Bamgbose 2004). We must mention here that, although missionaries introduced literacy in MTs, they did not develop MT-literacy in an empowering manner. Later, when education reviews were carried out, policy modifications suggested that MTs should be taught in elementary classes, Kiswahili introduced and used as a lingua franca in the middle classes, and English in upper classes and further education (Furley & Watson 1978). The proposal of Kiswahili as a lingua franca was dropped because of the resistance put up by Sir Philip Mitchell, the then-ruling Governor, and the Buganda leadership (Ssekamwa 2000), arguing that Kiswahili would destabilise the language developments already invested in local languages in Uganda. In 1963, a commission popularly known as the Castle Commission (Uganda Government 1963) directed education in Uganda until 1987, when another commission, the Kajubi Commission (Kajubi 1989), made recommendations that were later reflected in the Government White Paper on Education (Government of Uganda 1992). These policies have since directed the running of education, including the management of language issues.

The 1992 Government White Paper requires that MTs be taught as subjects and used as LoLT from P1 to P3, while English is introduced as LoLT in P4. In addition, MTs should be taught as subjects after P4, with a recommendation for the examination of MTs at the end of primary schooling. Between 1992 and 2008, however, there are no traceable studies regarding how or whether MTs were taught in schools in Uganda. It appears that the teaching of MTs was left to the discretion of teachers with no penalty if the (1992) Government recommendations were not implemented. Moreover, Ugandan MTs are not yet examinable at the end of primary schooling.

Reports such as Read and Enyutu (2004) indicate that literacy levels dropped prior to 2004/2005. According to these authors, the poor literacy levels were attributed to the exclusive use of English as LoLT and to the nature of the curriculum in place at the time (Read & Enyutu 2004). Consequently, the Government of Uganda, under the Ministry of Education and Sports, appointed a committee to review the curriculum and language issues. Read and Enyutu (2004) recommended a review of the curriculum and the use of MTs as LoLT from P1 to P3, changing P4 to a transitional year equipping students to have English as the LoLT from P5 onwards. The hope was that the transition arrangement would help children to proceed well in education. Transitional models have, however, been criticised for abandoning the MT too quickly before children have achieved suitable levels of MT literacy (Dutcher 1997), which in the end undermines their language development, both in the MT and in the second language. In the end, transitional models encourage monolingualism rather than bilingualism (Stroud 2002).

In addition, recommendations were made to bolster the implementation of the MT policy, e.g. through dedicated teacher training, though these have yet to be implemented. The MT teaching policy has, therefore, remained a challenge owing to one major issue, namely inadequate teacher training (Altinyelken 2010; Ssentanda 2013; Ssentanda et al. 2016). Currently, there are ten local Ugandan languages (Uganda National Examinations Board 2019) taught in secondary schools (Senior I to Senior IV), but these are optional to students. These include Leb Acoli, Leb Lango, LugbaraTi, Luganda, Runyankore-Rukiga, Lusoga, Ateso, Dhopadhola, Runyoro-

Rutooro, and Lumasaaba. The candidates who join Teacher Training Colleges would have completed Senior IV, but these may not necessarily have studied one of the local MTs at Secondary School level, since they are optional. At the primary school level, however, there are more than 36 languages that have been approved by the National Curriculum Development Centre (NCDC) as LoLT. In addition, the teaching of MTs, their curriculum and the associated pedagogy at Teacher Training Colleges are largely unconsidered. Teachers who go out to teach in primary schools, therefore, have had no training in MT education. Moreover, some of them, as mentioned earlier, have themselves had no exposure to how their MT is written, for example, at the secondary school level.

Previous studies in Uganda have provided evidence to show that there are difficulties that originate from the uneven implementation of the national language-in-education policy and the curriculum (see, for example, Ssentanda 2014a). Ssentanda et al. (2016), for example, find that, whilst the language-in-education policy and curriculum guidelines stipulate that all children should be taught to read in their MTs, in practice, there is great variation across schools. The study reports differences between rural and urban schools run by the government, with the former using a regional language (e.g. Luganda) as LoLT and the latter often using English due to the multilingual nature of the school intake, while offering the MTs as subjects in the curriculum. Here, private schools were shown to offer pre-school provision where English is used as the LoLT given that there is no policy requirement regarding the choice of LoLT at the pre-school level (Ssentanda 2014a). It is, therefore, prudent to study how teachers handle the teaching of MTs as a subject with no and/or limited training and experience of learning their or in their languages.

3.   Methods and study context

The data on which this study is based were collected from two districts, namely Kayunga and Rakai[1] Districts, at two different periods. Kayunga is a rural district in central Uganda where the population largely comprises L1 speakers of Luganda and Lusoga. Rakai is a rural district in south-central Uganda, and comparatively further from the capital (Kampala), bordering Tanzania, where the population comprises largely L1-speakes of Luganda (Uganda Bureau of Statistics 2014).

---

[1] At the time of collecting data in 2012, the study area fell under Rakai District, but as of 2018, the area was divided into two, Rakai and Kyotera. This study area now falls under Kyotera District.
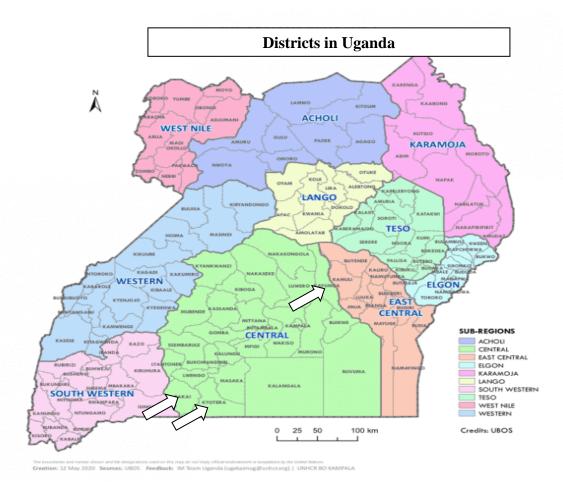
Figure 1. Map Uganda showing Rakai/Kyotera and Kayunga Districts (Source: Ethnologue 2016)

Data in Kayunga were collected between October and November of 2018, while that of Rakai was collected between October and November of 2012. In 2012, when the Rakai data were collected, MT education under the thematic curriculum had been running for five years. The 2018 data, therefore, is more like a follow up on the issues observed in 2012 after another six years, which accounts for eleven years of MT education programme in the country. We employed questionnaires and interviews to collect both data sets regarding teachers' views towards the teaching of MTs and carried out classroom observations to study the way teachers conduct MT lessons. In addition, we conducted a review of the teachers' resource book (NCDC 2006) to identify issues related to the Luganda orthography.

Seven government schools (three in Kayunga and two in Rakai) and two private schools were selected for the study. The schools were purposively selected due to easy accessibility. In total, 24 teachers participated in the study, all teaching P1 to P3. In the Rakai District, each class was run by one teacher while in Kayunga, teachers employed team-teaching whereby two teachers facilitated one class at a time, especially in classes that had large numbers. The NCDC guidelines stipulate that classes (P1-P3) should be run by one teacher who handles all thematic areas. The challenge accompanying this guideline is that there is no specialisation, which means that teachers who have weaknesses in one learning area may not deliver all content as desired. It is commendable that the Kayunga District schools (at least those in the current study) improvise to overcome the challenge of one teacher handling a class by harnessing the

advantages of team-teaching. We note that team-teaching affords teachers the opportunity to rest after giving a lesson and having time off to prepare for the next. Still, with typical large classes of over 70 learners (see Altinyelken 2010; Ssentanda 2013), a second teacher in class would help to maintain discipline and the attentiveness of learners while the other is teaching. Moreover, an earlier study in Rakai District demonstrated that teachers felt overburdened with running a class singly – with large learner numbers, and giving more than ten lessons a day, they often skipped MT teaching, as it was considered irrelevant to what learners would be examined on at the end of primary school (Ssentanda 2013).

Regarding teacher qualifications, all the teachers in government schools included in the study had received pre-service teacher training, even if not prepared for the MT education. In Uganda, government schools do not employ untrained teachers. The private schools had both fully qualified and untrained teachers (cf. Ssentanda 2013). The teachers in government schools had qualifications ranging from Grade III to Grade V certificates, while those in private schools ranged from Senior VI to Grade III certificates. Teachers who had Senior VI as a qualification, would themselves have had seven years of primary schooling, and six years of secondary education without formal training at college. As rural private schools offer their teachers lower remuneration, they attract fewer trained teachers compared to government schools where the teachers' salaries are higher (also see Ssentanda 2013). The teachers who participated in the study had taught for a period of between 5 and 12 years.

We obtained ethical clearance for the study for Kayunga from the Makerere University institutional review board, namely the Makerere School of Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee, and from the head teachers at the selected schools. For the 2012 study, ethical clearance was obtained from the Stellenbosch Human Research (Humanities) and Ethics Committee, Stellenbosch University, and the Uganda National Council of Science and Technology.

The study was guided by the following research questions:
1. What are the teachers' views towards MT education in Uganda? And
2. What are the teachers' classroom practices used to teach MT and how do such practices promote MT education?

Data related to the first research question were collected through the questionnaire and interviews with teachers. The questionnaire and interviews elicited teachers' descriptor data, language diversity of learners and teachers, language policy and practice in the school, linguistic practices in the classroom, and teachers' suggestions on how to improve the implementation of the MT policy. The classroom observations focused broadly on understanding how teachers handle the teaching of the MT, which content they select, what methodologies they choose, what materials they use, how they prompt learners' participation, how they teach Luganda language, and whether teachers follow the Luganda spelling rules on the chalkboard and on the wall charts in class. In addition, instances of translanguaging as a scaffold in developing MT skills and L2 (Jegede 2011) were also considered.

4.   Previous Approaches/Studies

Before proceeding to the findings in this study, it is necessary to give a background of previous studies on teachers' views and classroom interactions. Regarding teachers' perspectives on

teaching MT in P1 to P3, previous studies in Uganda have indicated that teachers regard the MT as important but could not teach it as per policy and curriculum guidelines (Ssentanda 2014b). According to Altinyelken (2010) and Ssentanda (2014b), for example, teachers gave two reasons for their views, namely that MT was not an examined subject at the end of primary school, and that they are a thin-stretched staff and therefore cannot handle all the curriculum areas. Altinyelken (2010) and Ssentanda (2014b) also report that teachers acknowledge that the use of MTs in P1 to P3 facilitates the acquisition of reading and writing skills. Moreover, many employed MTs in their classroom interactions for various reasons, for example, to give instruction, to clarify a point, to call for attention, for disdain, to compensate for lack of English proficiency, or to encourage learner participation (cf. Ssentanda 2014b).

With this background, it is clear that the nature of teaching and use of MTs in schools cannot facilitate their development in the educational system. Accordingly, the development of literacy in the MTs is negatively affected in the early years given that the MTs are not regularly taught, and teachers are not adequately trained and prepared to teach them. Additionally, the curriculum materials with which to teach the MTs are written in English, and teachers have to translate them in order to teach in their MTs – a task they are unprepared to take on (Ssentanda et al. 2016). Similar findings are reported in a study on teachers' skills and attitudes in early grade multilingual classrooms in Kenya (cf. Nyaga 2015; Nyaga & Anthonissen 2012).

As the following sections will show, the MT classroom interactions show that teachers cannot handle MT teaching sufficiently, partly because their training and the curriculum do not guide them well. Consequently, some of the content they give to P1 to P3 learners is too advanced, a practice that distorts the appropriate and progressive development of MT literacy in the initial three years of school. Studies have demonstrated that after year three, the opportunities for developing advanced skills and knowledge in the MT are minimal, do not exist, or are minimally given to those who elect their MT as specialist subject (e.g. Wren 2000). Such experiences undermine the development of literacy skills in the MT. Here, Wren (2000:7) emphasises that "if children are still struggling with reading skills in the third grade, odds are, they will be struggling the rest of their lives." Ssentanda (2014c) presents classroom vignettes which demonstrate that rural government school learners are particularly facing this challenge as they have limited opportunities to attend pre-primary and, therefore, have a two-year gap of developing their literacy skills in their MTs.

5.   Findings

Having looked at these contextual issues, we now turn to some of the insights gleaned from the ethnographic study carried out in selected rural schools in Kayunga and Rakai Districts. In the following sections, we draw on some of the teachers' views and classroom practices to demonstrate the perspectives held by teachers and the related classroom practices in MT literacy development in Uganda.

5.1   Teachers views towards the teaching and use of MT as LoLT

Regarding the first research question, teachers expressed their views on MT education in both the questionnaire and through follow-up interviews. From the teachers' opinions expressed on the questionnaire, the majority of the teachers (62.5%, 15/24) viewed the MT as getting in the way of learning English, while others (37.5%, 9/24) viewed it as a facilitating tool to the

acquisition of English. In one of the questions, we asked teachers whether they have anything to mention regarding the teaching of the MT at their schools. In response to this question, some respondents gave what we view as their opinions towards MT education (attitude) while others made suggestions of what they think can improve the teaching of MT at their schools.

1.   (a) Respondent 1:   "It confuses a child if he/she reaches primary four."

        (b) Respondent 2:   "Problem of English speaking and writing when they reach transitional class (P.4) as well as other classes like P5 - P.7."

        (c) Respondent 3:   "MT education is good, but it interferes with the learning of English."

Respondents 1, 2 and 3 view the MT as interfering[2] with the learning of English (learners' L2). Note that respondents 1 and 2 particularly mention that, when learners get to the transitional class, P4, they get confused. Although we did not interrogate the teachers as to what they meant by "confusion", their narratives suggest that they want learners to learn one language at a time, they believe that when they teach English, the MT (pupils' L1) should not be taught, for they believe it is the source of confusion or interference (cf. Ssentanda & Wenske 2021). Here, it should be remembered that from P1 through P3, children are learning the MT as a subject and use it as a LoLT as well. The views expressed by these respondents are similar to the beliefs reported in previous studies (Dutcher 1997; Benson 2008). Teachers believe that for children to learn English, or any other L2 for that matter, no other language should be taught because other languages get into the way of learning English, a language of prestige and status in Uganda.

Other teachers had positive views regarding the teaching of the MT, that is, they viewed the MT as a facilitating tool for the acquisition of English.

2.   (a) Respondent 4:   "MT can help learners to get well-spoken in acquiring the second language that is English."

Other respondents suggested ways to strengthen the teaching of the MT at their school. For example, respondent 5 in (3a) had this to say:

3.   (a) Respondent 5:   "School administration should employ teachers for MT."

Respondent 5's suggestion indicates that schools are facing a challenge of the lack of qualified teachers to teach the MT. This issue was touched on in Section 1 (see also Ssentanda 2013 regarding teacher training issues in Kyotera District). It is, therefore, possible that the views and practices reported and analysed in this study point to a lack of relevant training in MT teaching and how this scaffold the acquisition of L2.

As can be seen from teachers' views above, there are two conflicting views regarding the use of MT as LoLT. Some teachers support it while others think that it negatively affects the acquisition of English as an L2. Regarding the use of the MT as LoLT, the government schools

---

[2] In this study we did not pursue how the MT interferes with learning English.

complied with the policy, while private schools did not, arguing that the linguistic repertoires of their learners cannot enable them to choose a MT common to all learners. This belief and practice of teachers regarding learners' bilingualism/multilingualism/plurilingualism as a deficit rather than as an empowering resource has been studied extensively elsewhere in schools (e.g. see Banda 2010 Nkadimeng & Makalela 2015; Makalela 2016; for the case of South Africa). Further interactions with teachers in our study revealed that teachers in private schools were under pressure from parents to have pupils learn to speak English as early as possible (cf. Tembe & Norton 2008), as proficiency in English brings with it increased opportunities and status. Moreover, teachers were under the impression that using English as LoLT would accelerate pupils' development of English proficiency (cf. Dutcher 1997). Previous studies in Uganda (see Tembe & Norton 2008) provide evidence that parents/guardians prefer English to their children's MTs in schools. These views are telling of a language ideology which underpins the attitude of parents towards English versus the MTs. Although the present investigation never pressed this issue, the question to ask here would nevertheless be how we can change these perceptions of parents and teachers who believe English affords more "cultural capital" than a multilingual repertoire.

Furthermore, classroom observations revealed that whenever teachers allowed the use of the MT, including in private schools, pupil participation in class was exuberant; they quickly, freely and correctly gave answers unlike in cases where teachers forced them to use English. This experience of use of MTs as LoLT has been reported on elsewhere (see for example Chick 1996; Chimbutane 2011). Such classroom vignettes demonstrate that, if pupils are to have meaningful learning experiences in classrooms, the use of languages familiar to them prior to school entry should be encouraged. In addition, pupils should be allowed to develop their familiar languages.

5.2   Teachers' classroom practices in the teaching of the MT as a subject

The purpose of the second research question was to determine the teachers' classroom practices in the teaching of the MT and how such practices promote MT education. Classroom observations revealed that teachers have various challenges in the teaching of the MT as a subject. The challenges emanate from the lack of training in the teaching of the MT. We will discuss the challenges of teaching MTs observed in the classroom vignettes in two forms. First, we will show the mistakes that teachers make while writing words in the MTs, then show the nature of classroom interactions and the kind of content that teachers expose learners to in the teaching of the MTs.

5.2.1   The mistakes in writing Luganda

Regarding teachers' competence in teaching and writing Luganda, teachers indicated in the interviews that the orthography of the MTs is difficult and challenging for them. For instance, the examples written on the chalkboard consisted of many mistakes, which learners dutifully copied in their exercise books. In addition, even some of the wall charts written in Luganda had errors. The most common examples of such mistakes and misspellings committed by teachers were related to the use of letters 'r' and 'l'; the use of and/or non-use of double consonants or vowels; the use of apostrophe for joined-up words; and the combining of words that should be separated or separating words that should be combined (see Nsimbi & Chesswas 1958; Walusimbi 1999 for Luganda orthography rules). During classroom observations in Rakai

District, several misspelt words were observed on both the chalkboard and on wall charts (see Table 1 below).

Table 1. Some of the misspelt words observed on both the chalkboard and wall charts

Misspelt word	Correct spelling
ensweera	*enswera* 'fly'
okusoma no'kuwandiika	*okusoma n'okuwandiika* 'reading and writing'
essomelo	*essomero* 'school'
Mukibiina	*mu kibiina* 'in class'
satu	*ssatu* 'three'
ssoma	*soma* 'read'
ebintu ebikozesebwa ne gyebiva	*ebintu ebikozesebwa ne gye biva* 'things used and where they come from'
...ez'okutesaako	*...ez'okuteesaako* 'matters to be discussed'

Similarly, teachers in Kayunga District committed several mistakes both on the chalkboard and on wall hangings/charts in class. We use the example of charts in classroom to illustrate these orthographical mistakes.
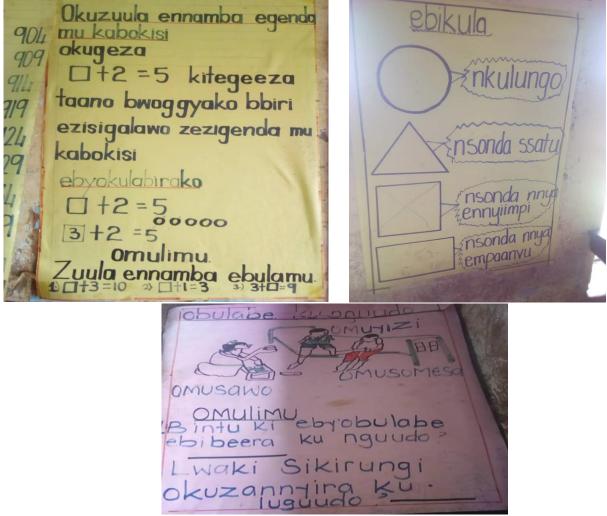

Figure 2. Wall charts showing orthographic mistakes made by teachers

The following mistakes in Table 2 feature on the charts above.

Table 2. Errors in orthography observed in schools in Kayunga District

Teachers' spelling	Correct form
bwoggyako	*bw'oggyako*
kabokisi	*kabookisi*
nsonda ssatu	*nsondassatu*
ndonda nnya enyiimpi	*nsondannya ennyimpi*
lwaki sikirungi…	*lwaki si kirungi…*
nsonda nnya empaanvu	*nsondannya empanvu*
zezigenda	*ze zigenda*
ebuddu	*e Buddu*
nekazilya	*ne kazirya*

The spelling mistakes were observed in all classes (P1 to P3). This could be due to lack of background exposure in their MT (Luganda) or a complete lack of pre-service training, as explained earlier. Moreover, teachers also reported that the books available to them were inadequate and, as such, they could not depend on them for guidance on Luganda orthography rules. For example, a closer look at the *Teacher's Resource Book (Luganda)* (NCDC 2006) shows that this book was either prepared by unqualified persons in the language or was not edited to desirable standards. The mistakes that teachers make may in part be attributed to the use of this resource book as part of the problem. The shortcomings of this book cannot be attributed to the lack of qualified persons in the Luganda language, as there is no lack in this regard. The mistakes that teachers make on the chalkboard and on wall hangings or charts, as shown above, are copied by the learners and understood to be correct. This affects the development of the orthography skill that is being developed in young children.

Furthermore, our review of the teachers' resource book revealed various kinds of misleading information regarding the Luganda orthography. For instance, on page 21 (NCDC 2006) only, there are many misspelt words as given in (4) below:

4.   (a) *ebinyonyi* ("bird") misspelt as *ebinnyonnyi*
        (b) *weetegereze* ("take note") misspelt as *wetegereze*.
        (c) *walifu* ("alphabet") spelt in two different ways, namely, *walifu* and *waliifu*.

Also, on the same page, there are two orthographic rules which are grossly misleading (NCDC 2006:21).

5.   (a) *Ennukuta z'oba wetegereza* (sic.) *'B' ennukuta eyo bw'eba etandika ekigambo eba eggumidde.*
        Oba tolina [ku]gigatta [ku] ginnayo (sic) *singa eddoboozi liba liggumira e.g.,   B oba (") so si Bbosa (x). bale (") so si Bbaale (x).*

        **Our translation*:*
        The letters that you should pay attention to, 'B' when this letter appears word initially, it is written as a double letter. You are not supposed to write it as double if the syllable has emphasis in it e.g. B or (") but not Bbosa (x), bale (") but not Bbaale (x).

6.   *Singa ennukuta eno eba wakati wennukuta* (sic.) *empeerezi ebbiri awo osobola okuwandiika ebbiri okulaga 'b' bweba* (sic.) *ng'eri mu kigambo ekitaliimu kuggumira kwayo tuwandiika emu e.g., abaana oba bala.*

    Our translation:
    If the consonant is between two vowels, you may spell it with a double consonant, 'b' but with a single consonant in other cases, e.g. abaana or bala.

These two rules are not only misleading but are not acknowledged in the Luganda orthography (e.g. see Nsimbi & Chesswas 1958; Walusimbi 1999). Given the background of teacher training regarding the teaching of Luganda, teachers are likely to teach these rules as stated in the resource book. They will, therefore, end up transferring incorrect spellings to their learners. This is misleading and creates confusion among teachers and learners. Moreover, such rules are more advanced and are better introduced at a later stage in learners' literacy development. Given that MT teaching stops in P3, then later introduction of such advanced rules is wishful thinking (Ssentanda 2013).

In an interview, a P2 teacher at school B (Rakai), who doubled up as a deputy head teacher, she mentioned that teachers at her school are very proficient in spoken Luganda (primary language production skill) but less so in the written form (secondary language production skill). As such, they end up teaching incorrect writing rules to their learners. Similarly, a P1 teacher at the same school pointed out that the greatest challenge she had with teaching Luganda was in writing the language. Other teachers in Rakai District called upon the government to provide them with Luganda dictionaries in the hope that they could help in resolving their Luganda writing challenges.

Luganda has many minimal pairs, meaning that the language has nearly identical words in which the only difference between two items in a pair is one sound, for example, that one should be written with a double vowel (or consonant), while the other should be written with a single vowel (or consonant). Each of the two forms represents a different word with a different meaning; a distinction that is signalled in the doubling (or not) of the vowel or consonant.

7.   **For example,**
    a) *okusiika* 'fry' or 'roast' and *okusika* 'pull';
    b) *okusennya* 'fetch fireword' and *okusenya* 'brush teach';
    c) *okuzika* 'grow bushy' and *okuziika* 'bury';
    d) *omuka* 'concentrated' and *omukka* 'smoke', etc**.**

These examples suggest that recognizing minimal pairs in learners' MT is a crucial part of early language development. Firstly, children learn that similar sounds can have different meanings – a fact they acquire long before they learn to write. Secondly, when they learn to write, they have to realize different meanings are marked by giving them different spelling forms, and thus the spelling needs to be systematic. Although these issues are abstract to learners at the beginning and in the classrooms, it is crucial for teachers to know the orthography and illustrate the differences. Teachers also need to be systematic and consistent in presenting such rules to the learners so that they can internalise them well. Accordingly, teacher training and good teaching manuals to support the curriculum are invaluable in MT literacy development.

The challenge of orthography in African languages has been reported on by Banda (2009) and Babane and Chauke (2015), who observe that African language orthographies were designed by Europeans. As Europeans were not familiar with the phonology of African languages, they misrepresented some of the sounds in writing. For example, Luganda has a challenge of 'r' and 'l' in its orthography. The 'r' is supposed to be written after every /i, e/ and 'l' after every /a, o, u/. The Luganda sound system, however, does not have /r/ as a phoneme. It therefore confuses people in writing because it does not come to them naturally, making this rule arbitrary. Many Luganda writers get this wrong, as do the teachers in the present study (see (11) Extract 4).

There was an attempt by the Centre for Advanced Studies of African Society (CASAS) to harmonise orthographies of some Bantu languages in Uganda. For example, Namyalo, Walusimbi, Bukenya, Masakala, Nabirye and Kiingi (2008) is an attempt to unify the writing of the Eastern interlacustrine Bantu languages including Luganda, Lumasaaba, Lusaamya, Lusoga, Lulamogi, Lunyole, Lugwere, and Lukenyi, although this has largely not been used. An attempt to follow the orthography proposed by Namyalo et al. (2008) was made by Kiingi (2009) in his revision of the first monolingual Luganda dictionary, first published in 2007, though some users rejected this dictionary, arguing that it was not written in the "official Luganda orthography". The Luganda orthography currently used is one that was championed by A.N. Tucker in 1947 (see Nsimbi & Chesswas 1958; Walusimbi 1999). The European/missionary orthography is so entrenched in popular use that later proposals, e.g. that of Namyalo et al. (2008) and Kiingi (2009) to revise the orthography and drop the 'r' for 'l', have not been welcomed. An instructive example in this regard is that of Kiingi (2009) *Enkuluze ya Oluganda eya e Makerere*, (the first Luganda monolingual dictionary), in which the 'r' was dropped and apostrophe not used to join words, which was received with some resistance. In fact, plans are currently under way to revise this dictionary back to the 1947 version with the hope that the revised edition will attract a wider market.

In the literature, scholars have observed that teachers are often required to take on tasks for which they either have not been trained or have been limitedly trained (Kaplan & Baldauf 2003). For example, the teachers interviewed for the present study reported that they had challenges in understanding Luganda orthography and grammar and that they had never studied Luganda in their school life. Since teachers have limited opportunities to receive training in writing Luganda or understanding its grammar, it is difficult for them to teach the language skills effectively and later on learners cannot progressively pick up the desired skills which they can transfer to the learning of English.

In sum, the errors and/or mistakes identified on the chalkboard and classroom wall charts point to a problem that is not of the teachers' own making, rather they emanate from their background – the language policy, language curricula and language teacher training. Previous studies (e.g. Cohen & Ball 1990; Alexander 1999) have indicated that teachers are expected to meet (and teach) standards that they themselves have not been introduced to, and this poses challenges in practice, and ultimately, in classroom interactions.

5.2.2   Teachers' challenges in the teaching of the MTs

Classroom observations revealed that learners in both government and private schools actively participated in the MT lessons. Whenever a teacher asked a question (a widely used form of pedagogy), almost a whole class of learners raised their hands and shouted out "me teacher, me

teacher". In general, MT lessons and classes in which the MT is the LoLT were very warm and lively. Even so, teachers had challenges in delivering the content. For example, some teachers shared content which appeared too advanced for the learners' level. Such a case was observed at a private school. The teacher being observed was a Senior Four leaver (equivalent to Grade X), i.e. a teacher whose highest qualification did not include any teacher training. The teacher taught a P3 class. Extract 1 (Ssentanda 2014b) demonstrates this challenge. The data in Ssentanda (2014b) are part of the 2012 study referred to earlier in Section 3. In the extracts, "T" refers to teacher turns while "L" represents learner turns.

8.   **Extract 1: Teachers' challenge in the teaching of Luganda**

₁T: *Ennyingo ez'ennyukuta ennya. Ennyingo ey'ennyukuta ennya tugambye tuzifuna nga tugasse ensirifu bbiri oba eza nnabansasaana, eeh? N'ogattako nnamapawengwa oba 'y' oba 'w' n'ossaako empeerezi. Ŋŋambye ennyingo ey'ennukuta ennya, luli twalaba ennyingo ey'ennyukuta ennya nga kuliko akatwe kano bwe kati, n'ozzaako 'a' oba 'u'. Naye kati tulaba ennyingo ez'ennyukuta ennya nga tugasse ensirifu bbiri. Ensirifu, ensirifu bbiri. Twaziraba ennyukuta eziggumira. Luli twalaba ennyukuta eziggumira, eziggumira mu walifu, z'osobola okuwandiika nga ziri bbiri. Tuwandiika ensirifu bbiri, ne tugattako nnampawengwa, nnampawengwa tusooka na ki, tusooka na 'y'. 'm' nnyukuta ki eyo? Eeh? 'M' egwa ewa? Wanika mukono, saagala kuvuuvuumira eyo mu kaama? Ani amanyi m w'egwa?*

Syllables with four letters. We get four-letter syllables after combining two consonants. Yes? Then you add a semivowel 'y' or 'w' plus a vowel. I have said, a syllable with four letters, the other day we saw a four-letter syllable with this sign here followed by 'a' or 'u'. But now we are looking at four-letter syllables with two consonants. Two consonants. We looked at the long sounds. The other day we looked at long sounds in the Luganda alphabet, those which you can write double. We write two syllables plus semivowels beginning with 'y'. 'M' which letter is that? Yes? Where does 'm' fall? Rise up your hand. I do not want you to keep murmuring. Who knows the category it falls under?

₂L1:   *Nsirifu.*
Consonant.

₃T: *'M' nsirifu. Esobola okuba nga nsirifu naye eyina ekiti ekirala ky'egwamu kye nakubuulira.*
Yes it can be a consonant but it has another category it falls under which I already told you about.

₄L2:   *Nnakinnyindwa.*
Nasal.

₅T: *Yes, 'm' nnakinnyindwa. 'm' nakugamba nnakinnyindwa, ate endala?*
Yes I told you that 'm' is a nasal. Which are the others?

₆L3:   *'n'*

₇T: *Ate endala? Ne 'ŋ' nayo nnakinnyindwa. Nga kuliko akatwe kano, kano bwe kati kano. Kaba sikalina mpeerezi yaakwo. Okategedde?*
Which are the others? Even 'ŋ' is a nasal. This has to have a curve here, a curve of this nature. It does not have a vowel. Is it clear to you?

      ₈Ls: *Yee*
                    Yes.

In the same lesson, the teacher told learners that they had a problem of easily getting confused: *Some of you are easily confused. We have talked of a nasal, at the same time we are talking about a consonant; being a nasal does not stop it from being a consonant.* The concepts, such as 'nasal', 'semi-vowel', to which this teacher was referring are too advanced for the learners' levels. These concepts are usually taught in Luganda grammar at high school, a level that this teacher had only just left. So, the teacher was teaching this class after only 11 years of schooling and had no form of teacher-education training. It is clear from Excerpt 1 that the teacher had a very limited conceptualization of how MT learning (as all other kinds of learning) needs to be "scaffolded", and an inaccurate assessment of what is suitable for P3 learners. Teachers with no pre-service training are hired by private schools, usually teaching the subjects that they took in High School. For instance, since the teacher in the example in (7) above had Luganda as one of his subjects at Senior Four, private school proprietors assume that they can teach that subject to primary school pupils. Moreover, even when they had no training in Luganda upon school exit, they still qualify to teach the Luganda (or any other applicable MT). Although such teachers have limited or no training in the MTs, their spoken proficiency is advanced.

Learning Luganda might be difficult for learners as a result of the improper approaches to teaching, such as exposing learners prematurely to advanced language content. Such classes lacked lively participation compared to those in which the content was appropriate to learners' ages. Learners who go through such experiences may develop resentment for the subject at higher levels of their education. If not checked, it might affect the teaching and learner interest in the subject and/or language in the long run. Moreover, learners may not gradually develop the language skills that they would later transfer to the learning of English as they transition or continue in their academic journey.

In another case observed in a P2 class at a government school in Kayunga District, the teacher engaged learners in learning Luganda. Learners appeared enthusiastic and expressed their readiness to give answers. However, three potentially problematic teaching practices were observed in one of the lessons, the first of which being that learners engaged in choral answering. This is problematic because the teacher did not check whether in fact all learners answered or whether they were sure of what they chorused. Secondly, the teacher did not have kind words when acknowledging learners' right or wrong responses/answers. Thirdly, there was a challenge of letter naming (a curriculum issue). We will discuss each of these issues in turn in the sections that follow.

9.   **Extract 2:** Question-choral interaction between teacher and learners
      ₁T: *Njagala abantu abasirise. Simanyi lwaki mwogera. Musirike mwogera. Nalukenge… okay, jjo twasomye ennyingo ez'ennyukuta emmeka?*
                 I want a quiet class. I don't know why you're talking. Keep quiet. Nalukenge…, okay, which syllables did we look at yesterday?
      ₂Ls: *Essatu.* [Others *'ebbiri'*]
                 Three [Others 'two']
      ₃T: *Ennyingo zaabadde za nnyukuta mmeka?*
                 How many letters were in the syllables?
      ₄Ls: *Ssatu.* [Others *'nnya'*]

		Three [Others 'four']
5T:	*Eeh?*	
		Yes?
6Ls:	*Ssatu.*	
		Three
7T:	*Twasomye nnyingo ani eyo?*	
		Which syllable did we learn about?
8Ls:	*Cwa*	
9T:	*Eeh?*	
		Yes?
10Ls:	*Cwa.*	
11T:	*Cwa. Ne tusoma endala?*	
		Cwa. And which other one?
12Ls:	*Cwe.*	
13T:	*Ne tusomayo n'eno?*	
		And this?
14Ls:	*Cwi.*	
15T:	*Ne tusomayo n'eno.*	
		And we learnt this?
16Ls:	*Cwo.*	
17T:	*Cwa?*	
18Ls:	[Some] *'Cwo'*; [Others] *'Cwo'.*	
19T:	*Eeh?*	
		Yes?
20Ls:	*Cwo.*	
21T:	*Ne tusomayo n'eno.*	
		And this?
22Ls:	*Nywa.*	
23T:	*Ne tusomayo n'eno…*	
		And this?
24Ls:	*Ba.*	
25T:	*Ne tusomayo n'eno.*	
		And this?
26Ls:	*Lwe.*	
27T:	*Musome eno.*	
		Read this.
28Ls:	*Lwo*	
29T:	*Eeh?*	
		Yes?
30Ls:	*Lwo*	
31T:	*Ne tusoma n'eno?*	
		And this?
32Ls:	*Mwe.*	
33T:	*Ani omulala agamba…?*	
		Who is saying…?
34Ls:	*Lwe.* [Other learners say *'Mwe'*]	
35T:	*Ani alinayo endala gy'ajjukira?*	
		Who remembers any other?

In turns 1 to 34 of Extract 2 in (9), the teacher and learners engage in a question and choral-answer interaction. Much as the answers given by learners in this interaction are correct, the teacher cannot easily know which learners know the answer and which ones do not. Compare the teacher-pupil interactions reported in Ssentanda (2014c), Hornberger and Chick (2001) and Chick (1996) where choral answering, similar to that reported in Extract 2, is considered a problem.

36Ls: *Me teacher, me teacher, me teacher.* [Those who know the answer raise their hands as they say, "me teacher", asking the teacher to choose them]

37T: *Yes* [Choosing a learner to give an answer]

38L: *Ta*

39T: *Eeh?*
         Yes?

40L: *Ta*

41T: *Ta twagisomye eggulo?*
         Did we see 'ta' yesterday?

42Ls: *No.*

43T: *Ani omulala?*
         Who else?

44L: *Gwe*

45T: *Gwe? Ggwe w'eri.*
         Gwe? 'gwe' is here already.

46L: *Me teacher, me teacher.*

47T: *Ani omulala?*
         Who else?

48Ls: *Me teacher, me teacher.*

49T: *Namugerwa.*

50L   *Namugerwa: Twi*

51T: *Tuwandiika 't', 'w' ne…*
         We write 't', 'w' and…

52Ls: *Me teacher, me teacher.*

53T: *Ahaa…*

54L: *Wo.*

55T: *Wo twagisomye? Wo yiino w'eri. Ahaa?*
         Did we see 'wo'? 'wo' is here. Yes?

56Ls: *Me teacher, me teacher.*

57T: *Eeh.*

58L: *Tu*

59T: *Tu twagisomye? Ahaa, Kisaakye.*
         Did we see 'tu'? No, Kisaakye.

60Kisaakye: *Two.*

61T: *Two. N'endala zonna ze twasomye eggulo. Ndowooza buli omu akyazijjukira.*
         'two'. And others that we looked at. I hope each one of you remembers.

62Ls: *Yes.*

The second issue we observed can be demonstrated in turns 35 through to 60. Although the teacher in this part of the interaction tries to pick up individual pupils to give answers in class,

he has no praise or words of affirmation for them. The teacher either keeps quiet and moves on to the next issue, or, if a learner gives a wrong response (turns 40, 44, 46, 54, 58…), the teacher calls on other learners to give the correct answer. In this classroom interaction, many learners' answers go unnoticed or unrewarded. The teachers should have, for example, said *good try, well done, thank you, try again, etc.,* to the learners who gave correct answers. However, even in this classroom interaction, the learners are very lively and eager to contribute (e.g. turns 35 and 55 in (9) Extract 2, as well as (10) Extract 3), despite not receiving recognition for the right answers given.

10.   **Extract 3:** Learners receiving no recognition for their answers
   ₁Ls: *Alya.*
   ₂T: *Alya. Tuwandiike ekigambo 'alya'. Ahaa.*
               'Alya'. Let's write the word 'alya' [S/he is eating]. Yes?
   ₃Ls: *Ya*
   ₄T: *Ekyo tekiriiyo mu Luganda. Wamma Nambi.*
               We don't have such a word in Luganda. My friend Nambi.
   ₅L: *Nambi: Ebiryo.*
   ₆T: *Ebiryo. Ebiki?*
               'Ebiryo'. What?

The third issue observed in MT lessons was the challenge of letter-naming, where learners confuse letter names as pronounced in Luganda and in English, reported by Ssentanda (2014b) and confirmed by the present study, as can be seen in Extract 4 in (10).

11.   **Extract 4:** The problem of letter-naming
   ₁Ls: *R*
   ₂T: *Eryato tebaliwandiika mbu 'elyato', nabagamba eno tuteekako 'r'. Tuteekako ki?*
               We don't write 'eryato' as 'elyato'. I told you that here we write 'r'. What do we do?
   ₃Ls: *'R'* [Some learners *'r'* – pronounce the sound as [aar] as the case is in English]
   ₄T: *Ani agamba 'r'?* [as pronounced in English]. *Tuteekako ani?*
               Who is saying [aar]? [as pronounced in English]. Which letter do we write here?
   ₅Ls: *'R'* [Some learners *'r'* – pronounce the sound as the case is in English].
   ₆T: *Tuteekako ani?*
               Which letter do we write here?
   ₇Ls: *'R'* [Some learners *'r'* – pronounce the sound as the case is in English].
   ₈T: *Tuteekako ani?*
               Which letter do we write here?
   ₉Ls: *'R'* [Some learners *'r'* – pronounce the sound as the case is in English].
   ₁₀T: *Tugenda kukola ki?*
               What are we going to do?
   ₁₁Ls: *Kuwandiika.*
               [We are going] to write.

As shown in Extract 4 in (11), the matter of naming letters also raises the question of writing rules. In Luganda, /r/ is not a phoneme but is used in orthography with /l/, which makes letter naming difficult. In turns 2 to 8 of Extract 4, we see that this is a source of confusion in this class, requiring specially targeted teaching.

Furthermore, in this same classroom vignette, a problem of letter-naming arose. As already discussed above, P1-P3 pupils are exposed to learning English and Luganda as independent subjects. In most cases, the two subjects are handled by one teacher; in the English language class, the teacher would refer to /r/ as [aar] and in the Luganda language class, they call it [la]. As children in government schools (generally) get introduced to reading in both English and Luganda (Ssentanda 2014c), and since English and Luganda sounds are named differently, learners are required to remember the different names of each sound whenever they switch to each of these languages (turns 3-11 of Extract 4). In many cases, children mostly remember the "English letter name", i.e. [aar] and use this name in the Luganda lessons as well. The teacher would then each time have to remind learners that they are in a Luganda lesson and that they have to use the "Luganda letter name" not the English one.

The challenge of letter-naming needs to be considered with urgency in order to facilitate the teaching and learning of reading in Luganda and English. This issue needs to be addressed at college during teacher training and in the curriculum. In addition, there is a structural discrepancy in some orthography rules that make teachers and learners look as if they have a wrong understanding of how to write the language. In essence, orthographic principles need to change.

6.   Conclusion

This classroom-based study alerted us to various kinds of difficulties which learners and teachers experience in the early years of developing literacy in the MTs in selected Ugandan rural schools. Issues in MT education in the first three years interfere with the acquisition of strong L1 literacy skills, the development of English as L2, and learning in general (i.e. all subject areas). Secondly, the teachers appointed to develop MT literacy in the first three years of schooling are either under-prepared or have no training at all in their own L1. Moreover, even those educators with teacher training certification are insufficiently prepared for the task.

Furthermore, the study has demonstrated the difficulties within the Luganda orthography which pose problems in writing. Particularly, the study has illustrated the difficulty of using 'r' and 'l' as though both were phonemes in Luganda. Although there are efforts to overcome the problem, past initiatives have not been successful. The study attributes this challenge to the colonial entrenchment of educational structures in the school system from which the 1947 Luganda orthography hails. Here, an interrogation of issues around Luganda orthography problems and revisions is required.

Still, the study has informed us of how chorus answering in classroom interactions might affect the learning process, especially that teachers are not able to check on learners' grasp of content. This challenge is exacerbated by the fact that teachers do not affirm and/or reward learners who participate in class. Moreover, the teachers' views discussed in this study indicate that much as teachers are somewhat aware of the values of MT education, they are not in support of teaching the MT as they think that it gets in the way of learning English.

We cannot over-emphasize the advantages which learners enjoy when they are taught their MT well in terms of writing, reading and comprehension, before a transition to another language is made. Ssentanda (2014b) points out the need to coordinate the implementation of the language-in-education policy in order to give exposure to all children in Uganda to learn to read first in their MTs. A key factor in reaching this goal is the re-aligning of the language-in-education policy with the pre-service and in-service teacher training and curriculum demands. This would, in turn, enable simultaneous teaching of MTs and English in a manner that does not compromise letter-naming and/or writing the two languages. Moreover, this re-alignment will enable children to function bilingually. In addition, though MT education is regarded as the best way of introducing literacy, the popular view among teachers favours English as the primary language of education. There is, therefore, the need for more classroom-based (ethnographic) research in Uganda to reveal the realities of linguistic repertoires of learners. This would, in turn, help to align the teaching of MTs and English in an additive manner rather than an either/or option. Parents and teachers who believe that English affords more "cultural capital" than a multilingual repertoire must be educated regarding the benefits of MT education. In short, while there is hope in MT literacy development, there is also a great deal of work to be done.

Acknowledgements

References

Abiria, D.M., M. Early & M. Kendrick. 2013. Plurilingual pedagogical practices in a policy-constrained context: A Northern Ugandan case study. *TESOL Quarterly*, 47(3): 567–590. https://doi.org/10.1002/tesq.119

Alexander, N. 1999. *English Unassailable but Unattainable: The Dilemma of Language Policy in South African Education*. Paper presented at the Biennial Conference of the International Federation for the Teaching of English (University of Warwick, England, UK, July 7-10, 1999).

Altinyelken, H.K. 2010. Curriculum change in Uganda: Teacher perspectives on the new thematic curriculum. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 30(2): 151–161. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijedudev.2009.03.004

Babane, M.T. & Chauke, M.T. 2015. Cross-border Language Harmonization: A Case of Xitsonga (South Africa) and Shangani (Zimbabwe). *Journal of Sociology and Social Anthropology*, 6(3): 435–440. https://doi.org/10.1080/09766634.2015.11885685

Bamgbose, A. 1991. *Language and the Nation: The language question in Sub-Saharan Africa*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press. https://doi.org/10.2307/1160851

Bamgbose, A. 2004. Language of instruction policy and practice in Africa. Office for Education in Africa, UNESCO.

Banda, F. 2010. Defying monolingual education: alternative bilingual discourse practices in selected coloured schools in Cape Town. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, 31(3): 221–235. https://doi.org/10.1080/01434631003658073

Banda, F. 2009. Critical perspectives on language planning and policy in Africa: Accounting for the notion of multilingualism. *Stellenbosch Papers in Linguistics PLUS*, 38: 1–11. https://doi.org/10.5842/38-0-50

Benson, C. 2008. Common themes and areas for further work: Questions, answers and remaining issues. In C. Haddad (ed.), *Improving the Quality of mother tongue-based literacy and learning: Case Studies from Asia, Africa and South America*. Bangkok: Unesco Asia and Pacific Regional Bureau for Education. pp. 182–183.

Chick, J.K. 1996. Safe-talk: Collusion in apartheid education. In H. Coleman (ed.), *Society and the Classroom*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. pp. 21–39.

Chimbutane, F. 2011. *Rethinking bilingual education in postcolonial contexts*. Bristol, Bufallo, Toronto: Multilingual Matters. https://doi.org/10.1186/2191-5059-3-2

Cohen, D.K. & D.L. Ball. 1990. Policy and practice: An overview. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 12(3): 233–239. https://doi.org/10.3102/01623737012003233

Cummins, J. 2001. Bilingual children's mother tongue: Why is it important for education? *Sprogforum*, 19: 15–20.

Dutcher, N. 1997. *The use of the first and second languages in education: A review of international experience*. Pacific Islands Discussion paper series, No 1. East Asia and Pacific region.

Fafunwa, A.B., J.L. Macauley & J.A.F. Sokoya. 1989. *Education in mother tongue: The Ife primary education research project (1970-1978)*. Ibadan: University Press Limited, Ibadan.

Furley, O.W. & T. Wastson. 1978. *A history of education in East Africa*. New York: NOK Publishers.

Government of Uganda. 1992. *Government white paper on the implementation of the recommendation of the report of Education Review Commission*. Kampala: Uganda Government.

Hornberger, N.H. & J.K. Chick. 2001. Co-constructing school safetime: Safetalk practices in Peruvian and South African classrooms. In M. Heller & M. Martin-Jones (eds.), *Voices of Authority: Education and Linguistic Difference*. Stanford: Ablex. pp. 33-55.

Hornberger, N.H. & D.C. Johnson. 2011. The ethnography of language policy. In T. L. McCarty (ed.), *Ethnography and Language policy*. New York and London: Routledge. pp. 274-289. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10993-012-9237-8

Jegede, O. 2011. Code switching and its implications for teaching Mathematics in primary schools in Ile-Ife, Nigeria. *Journal of Education and Practice*, 2(10): 41–54.

Kajubi, W.S. 1989. *Education for national integration and development: Report of the Education Policy Review Commission*. Kampala, Uganda: Ministry of Education.

Kaplan, R.B. & R.B. Baldauf. 2003. *Language and Language-in-Education planning in the Pacific Basin*. Dordrecht/Boston/London: Kluwer Academic Publishers.

Kiingi, K.B. 2009. *Enkuluze ya Oluganda eya e Makerere* (2nd edition). Kampala: Fountain Publishers Ltd.

Kosonen, K. & C. Young. 2009. Introduction. In K. Kosonen & C. Young (eds.), *Mother tongue as a bridge language of Instruction: Policies and experiences in Southeast Asia.* Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Orgranisation (SEAMEO). pp. 8–18.

Makalela, L. 2016. Ubuntu translanguaging: An alternative framework for complex multilingual encounters. *Southern African Linguistics and Applied Language Studies*, 34(3): 187–196. https://doi.org/10.2989/16073614.2016.1250350

Martin-Jones, M. 2011. Languages, texts, and literacy practices: An ethnographic lens on bilingual vocational education in Wales. In T. L. MacCarty (ed.), *Ethnography and Language policy*. New York & London: Routledge. pp. 232–253. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203836064-19

McKinney, C. 2017. *Language and Power in Post-Colonial Schooling*. New York: Routledge.

Namyalo, S., L. Walusimbi, G. Bukenya, M.W. Masakala, M. Nabirye & F. Kiingi. 2008. *Unified standard orthography of Eastern interlacustrine Bantu languages*. Cape Town: The Centre for Advanced Studies of African Society.

Nankindu, P. 2015. Contesting language choices in Uganda: English as a high value language. In M. Michieka & Y. Elhindi (eds.), *The changing roles of English in Eastern Africa*. Illinois, USA: Common Ground Publishing. pp. 58–77. https://doi.org/10.18848/978-1-61229-643-2/cgp

NCDC. 2006. *Teachers' Resource Book (Luganda)*. Kampala: National Curriculum Development Centre.

Nkadimeng, S. & L. Makalela. 2015. Identity negotiation in a super-diverse community: The fuzzy languaging logic of high school students in Soweto. *International Journal of the Sociology of Language*, 2015(234): 7–26. https://doi.org/10.1515/ijsl-2015-0002

Nsimbi, M.B. & J.D. Chesswas. 1958. *Ebinnyonnyola Empandiika y'Oluganda Entongole. An explanation of the standard orthography of Luganda. Eng. and Luganda*. Kampala: Engle Press. https://doi.org/10.2307/1157530

Nyaga, S.K. 2015. "They do not know much, but then, you have to cover the syllabus": The quality imperative – a dilemma for teachers in early grade multilingual classrooms in Kenyan primary schools. *Stellenbosch Papers in Linguistics*, Vol. 44: 175-187. https://doi.org/10.5774/44-0-172

Nyaga, S.K. 2013. *Managing linguistic diversity in Literacy and language development: an analysis of teachers' attitudes, skills and strategies in multilingual classrooms in Kenyana primary schools*. Stellenbosch University. Retrieved from http://scholar.sun.ac.za/handle/10019.1/79899

Nyaga, S. & C. Anthonissen. 2012. Teaching in linguistically diverse classrooms: difficulties in the implementation of the language-in-education policy in multilingual Kenyan primary school classrooms. *Compare: A Journal of Comparative and International Education*, 42(6): 863–879. https://doi.org/10.1080/03057925.2012.707457

Ouane, A. & C. Glanz. 2010. *Why and how Africa should invest in African languages and multilingual education: An evidence- and practice-based policy advocacy brief*. Hamburg: UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning.

Read, T. & S. Enyutu. 2004. *The Uganda primary curriculum review road map: For the implementation of the curriculum reforms recommended by the primary curriculum review report and approved by the Ministry of of Education and Sports*.

Romaine, S. 2013. Keeping the promise of the Millennium Development Goals: Why language matters. *Applied Linguistics Review*, 4(1): 1–21. https://doi.org/10.1515/applirev-2013-0001

Ssekamwa, J.C. 2000. *History and development of education in Uganda* (2nd edition). Kampala, Uganda: Fountain Publishers Ltd.

Ssentanda, M.E. 2013. Exploring connections: Reflections on mother-tongue education in postcolonial Uganda. *Stellenbosch Papers in Linguistics Plus*, 42: 281–296. https://doi.org/10.5842/42-0-163

Ssentanda, M.E. 2014a. "Have policy makers erred?" Implications of mother tongue motther tongue for pre-primary schooling in Uganda. *Per Linguam: A Journal of Language Learning*, 30(33): 53–68. https://doi.org/http://dx.doi.org/10.5785/30-3-547

Ssentanda, M.E. 2014b. *Mother tongue education and transition to English medium education in Uganda: Teachers' perspectives and practices versus language policy and curriculum*. Stellenbosch University. Retrieved from http://scholar.sun.ac.za

Ssentanda, M.E. 2014c. The Challenges of Teaching Reading in Uganda: Curriculum guidelines and language policy viewed from the classroom. *Apples – Journal of Applied Language Studies*, 8(2): 1– 22. Retrieved from http://apples.jyu.fi/

Ssentanda, M.E. 2016. Tensions between English medium and mother gontue education in rural Ugandan primary schools: An ethnographic investigation. In C. Meierkor, B. Isingoma & S. Namyalo (eds.), *Ugandan English: Its sociolinguistcs, structue and uses in a globalising post-protectorate*.   Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John   Benjamins.   pp.   95–117. https://doi.org/10.1075/veaw.g59.05sse

Ssentanda, M.E., K. Huddlestone & F. Southwood. 2016. The politics of mother tongue education: the case of Uganda. *Per Linguam: A Journal of Language Learning*, 32(3): 60–78. https://doi.org/10.5785/32-3-689

Ssentanda, M.E. & R. Wenske. 2021. Either/Or Literacies: Teachers' views on the implementation of the Thematic Curriculum in Uganda. *Compare: A Journal of Comparative and International   Education*, 1–20. https://doi.org/10.1080/03057925.2021.1995700

Ssentanda, M.E. & B. Norton. 2022. Plurilingualism in Southern Africa. In E. Piccardo, A. Germain-Rutherford & G. Lawrence (eds.), *The Routledge Handbook of Plurilingual Language Education*. New York: Routledge. pp. 394–399.

Stroud, C. 2002. *Towards a policy for bilingual education in developing countries*. Stockholm: Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency.

Tembe, J. & B. Norton. 2008. Promoting local languages in Ugandan primary schools: The community as stakeholder. *The Canadian Modern Language Review*, 65(1): 33–60. https://doi.org/10.31838/cmlr.65.1.33

Uganda Government. 1963. *Education in Uganda: The Report of the Uganda Education Commission*. Kampala: Uganda Government. https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004252448.cua-2_015_007

Uganda National Examinations Board. 2019. Uganda National Examinations Board Examination Timetable for U.C.E. Kampala: Uganda National Examinations Board.

UNESCO. 1953. *The use of vernacular languages in education*. Paris: UNESCO.

Walusimbi, L. 1999. *Empandiika y'Oluganda Entongole*. Kampala: Jilak Prints.

Woldemariam, H. 2007. The challenges of mother-tongue education in Ethiopia: The case of North   Omo   area.   *Language   Matters*,   38(2):   210–235. https://doi.org/10.1080/10228190701794608

Wren, S. 2000. *The Cognitive Foundations of Learning to Read*. Retrieved on October 10, 2013 from http://www.sedl.org/reading/framework/framework.pdf