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*FIMBO YA MBALI HAIUI NYOKA*: THE QUESTION OF LANGUAGE AND EDUCATION IN  
TANZANIA

BY

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THESIS

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## ABSTRACT

Despite gaining political independence five decades ago, for much of sub-Saharan Africa, it is not yet *uhuru* in terms of educational or economic independence. The objective of implementing adequate language policies for education and development unfortunately remains unfulfilled. This state of affairs persists in the face of decades of research on language of instruction that argues in the case of post-colonial societies, the use of colonial languages in education often leads to ineffective pedagogical practices. Furthermore, these studies attribute the low academic achievement of students (at all levels) and the underdevelopment of these societies to ineffective language policies.

The primary objective of this thesis is to study the relationship between language, education, and development. This study problematizes the language of instruction used for post-primary education in the East African nation of Tanzania, to gauge whether the language used for instruction aids or hinders the educational process i.e., the production and reproduction of knowledge, dialogue between the instructor and student, and critical thinking. Additionally, it examines the extent to which the language selected corresponds with the government's goal of developing a nation with a high quality of education at all levels; a nation, which produces the quantity and quality of educated people sufficiently equipped with the requisite knowledge to solve the society's problems.

This study used an interdisciplinary approach, and is supported theoretically by various aspects of sociology, education, and sociolinguistics. The critical assumption of this study is that education in any society should be instructed in a language that both the learner and teacher understand well. This is a minimum requirement for effective instruction and communication to take place in the classroom. Furthermore, the language of instruction should be a language,

which is accessible to the majority of the population. This facilitates educational democracy, the generation of knowledge and its dissemination to as many people as possible. This corresponds with the concept of mother tongue education, a concept that is widely accepted and viewed as a basic human and linguistic right.

Considering the evidence and literature, this study makes two conclusions. First, that Kiswahili rather than English is the most appropriate and logical choice vis-à-vis the language of instruction in Tanzania. Secondly, since both languages are critical to the prospects of the nation, English should be taught as a subject and not used as the language of instruction.

I dedicate this thesis to the people who have played a critical role in my personal and academic growth.

*Baba and Mama* for your love and guidance,

Mr. John Barry for believing in me when others doubted,

The students and staff of *Rafiki* Village for restoring my confidence and sense of purpose.

*Tanzania Tanzania, ninapokwenda safarini,*

*Kutazama maajabu, biashara nayo makazi,*

*Sitaweza kusahau mimi, mambo mema ya kwetu hakika*

*Tanzania Tanzania, nakupenda kwa moyo wote.*

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To all I say, *nashukuru sana, na Mungu awabariki*

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## CHAPTER 1:

### Introduction

Despite gaining political independence five decades ago, for much of sub-Saharan Africa, it is not yet *uhuru* in terms of educational independence.<sup>1</sup> The objective of implementing adequate language policies for education and development unfortunately remains unfulfilled. This state of affairs persists in the face of decades of research on the language of instruction (henceforth LOI) that argues that in the case of post-colonial societies, the use of colonial languages in education often leads to ineffective pedagogical practices. Furthermore, these studies attribute the low academic achievement of students (at all levels) and the underdevelopment of these societies to ineffective language policies (Roy-Campbell & Qorro, 1997; Brock-Utne, 2000; Prah, 2003; Alidou, 2004).

This study problematizes the LOI used for post-primary education in the East African nation of Tanzania, to gauge whether the language used for instruction aids or hinders the educational process i.e., the production and reproduction of knowledge, dialogue between the instructor and student, and critical thinking. Additionally, it examines the extent to which the language selected corresponds with the government's goal of developing a nation with a high quality of education at all levels; a nation, which produces the quantity and quality of educated people sufficiently equipped with the requisite knowledge to solve the society's problems.

### Introduction to the Problem

Tanzania is a multilingual society where over 120 indigenous languages are spoken (Rubagumya, 1990; Roy-Campbell & Qorro, 1997; Brock-Utne, 2000; Roy-Campbell, 2001; Qorro, 2013). Due to several historical and political factors (which I will summarize in chapter

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<sup>1</sup> Uhuru is Kiswahili word that means freedom.

2), one indigenous language, Kiswahili, has become synonymous with Tanzanian society, culture, and national unity (Rubagumya, 1990; Batibo, 1995). Kiswahili is today spoken by 99 % of the population (Brock-Utne, 2007).<sup>2</sup> Soon after Tanzania gained independence, Kiswahili, the national language was implemented as the LOI for public primary education, and English was maintained as the LOI for post-primary education. It is important to note here that Tanzania is one of the few African countries that has managed to implement an indigenous language as the LOI for its entire public primary education system (Rubagumya, 1986; Rubagumya, 1990; Roy-Cambell, 1992; Mazrui & Mazrui, 1995; Roy-Campbell & Qorro, 1997; Brock-Utne, 2000; Roy-Campbell, 2001; Qorro, 2013).

Since the implementation of Kiswahili as the LOI for primary education in 1967 under the policy of Education for Self-Reliance (ESR), the Tanzanian government has made several plans to replace English with Kiswahili as the LOI for post-primary education (Rubagumya, 1986; Rubagumya, 1990; Rajabu & Ngonyani, 1994; Roy-Campbell, 2001; Brock-Utne & Holmarsdottir, 2004). The reason the Tanzanian government intended to change the LOI from English to Kiswahili was due to the concern that the bifurcated educational system which uses Kiswahili, a language which is spoken by the majority of Tanzanian's for the lower level of education, and English a language that is spoken by a minority of Tanzanian's for post primary education would be a reversion to the marginalizing educational practices that were used during the colonial era (Rubagumya, 1990; Roy-Campbell & Qorro, 1997). Another concern was that the use of English as the LOI would not prepare Tanzanian students to contribute effectively, and be part of the socialist and egalitarian society the government wanted to create (Rubagumya, 1990; Roy-Campbell & Qorro, 1997).

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<sup>2</sup> The National Kiswahili Council of Tanzania (BAKITA) estimates that 99% of Tanzanians speak Kiswahili.

Despite these concerns 47 years after the implementation of Kiswahili as the LOI for primary education, English remains as the LOI for post-primary education. The decision by the Tanzanian government to maintain English as the LOI for post-primary education has led to widespread research and debate about which language best facilitates the educational process given the linguistic background of the majority of Tanzanian students, the educational objectives of the nation, acceptable education practices, and the nation's social, political, economic, and developmental goals (Rubagumya, 1990; Rajabu & Ngonyani, 1994; Roy-Campbell & Qorro, 1997; Brock-Utne, 2000, Roy-Campbell, 2001; Brock-Utne, 2012; Qorro, 2013). These studies indicate that the use of English as the LOI in Tanzania imposes a great burden on students. They argue further that proficiency in the LOI directly relates to educational outcomes.

### **Previous Studies**

In Tanzania Since the late 1970's several studies have discussed the problems associated with the government's decision to maintain English as the LOI for post-primary education. Mlama and Matteru (1977) carried out a study concerning educational practices and outcomes in schools vis-à-vis the LOI on behalf of the National Council on Kiswahili (BAKITA). They found that **“student's knowledge of English had deteriorated”** and there was **“a serious LOI problem in secondary schools”** (p. 70, emphasis mine). They found that neither the teachers nor the students were proficient in English, and consequently the teachers were teaching their students incorrectly (Mlama & Matteru, 1977). Mlama and Matteru recommended that the government change the LOI in secondary school from English to Kiswahili and improve the teaching of English as a subject.

Two years after the recommendations by Mlama and Matteru the government appointed its own commission, *Tume ya Rais* (the Presidential Commission) to study and make

recommendations on how the educational system could be improved. *Tume ya Rais* carried out widespread studies in both rural and urban regions throughout the country. In 1982, *Tume ya Rais* recommended that the LOI at the secondary level should be switched from English to Kiswahili by 1985. They also recommended that Kiswahili should be made the LOI for tertiary education no later than 1992 (Roy-Campbell, 2001).

In 1984, the Tanzanian government requested that the British government study and make recommendations regarding the LOI in secondary education. The study conducted by Criper and Dodd (1984) like the studies conducted by Mlama and Matteredu (1977) and *Tume ya Rais* (1982) found that English had ceased to be a viable medium of instruction for secondary education in Tanzania. They noted further,

**Were it not for the fact that much teaching is in practice carried out in Kiswahili . . . it is hard to see how any genuine education could take place.** The problem should be treated as an emergency and not allowing a long term solution. (p.72, emphasis mine)

Despite their findings, Criper and Dodd (1984) recommended that English should remain as the LOI for post-primary education. Brock-Utne (2001) finds the recommendations of Criper and Dodd (1984) “highly illogical” and questions their failure to build on the recommendations of the previous Tanzanian commissions she argues, “One would think that their conclusion would encompass an argument for a switch to a medium of instruction with which the students were familiar, namely Kiswahili” (p. 4). Criper and Dodd's recommendation that English should be made the language of instruction at all levels was a contradiction of their study's findings, which concluded that English had ceased to be a viable medium of education in Tanzania. On the other hand, Ngonyani (1997) was not surprised by the proposals set forth by Criper and Dodd. He argues that they were conducting research under the auspices of the British government to

enhance the position of their language in a former colony.

In 1997, a study conducted by Roy-Campbell and Qorro found that the decision to maintain English as the LOI has significantly affected the educational process in Tanzania. They note that the use of English has hindered teachers from imparting knowledge and students from acquiring knowledge. They posit:

The primary uses of English are in post-secondary school classrooms and among non-Kiswahili speaking foreigners. Kiswahili, or in some cases another mother tongue, is used in most aspects of life in Tanzania. Consequently, **secondary school students have very little opportunity to practice the English they learn as a subject in schools. It is no wonder, then, that when such students enter Form I, they are at a linguistic disadvantage. This follows them throughout their secondary school career**, with some students becoming marginally better with better exposure to English. (p. vi, emphasis mine).

In other words, neither the teacher nor student is able to participate effectively in the educational process not because they lack the intelligence to do so, but because they do not have an adequate comprehension of the LOI (Roy-Campbell and Qorro, 1997).

Malekela (2004) compared students' performances in Kiswahili and English in the national examination. He reports that although students perform poorly in both subjects, their performance in English is considerably worse. **He indicates that over 80% of students performed at level D or below.** The findings of Malekela substantiate the findings by Criper and Dodd (1984). Malekela observes that learning through English as LOI is detrimental to the performances for the majority of secondary school students. He argues that despite the "SPEAK ENGLISH ONLY RULE," students only have contact with English in the classroom and therefor

e it is illogical for a language that students do not comprehend to be used as the LOI.

Galabawa and Lwaitama (2005) compared student performances when Kiswahili and English were as the LOI. The purpose of their study was to determine whether the use of Kiswahili as the LOI improved student performances. The experimental group was taught in Kiswahili one month and the control group was taught first in English for two weeks and then taught the same topics in Kiswahili for two weeks. At the end of the experiment the experimental group was tested in Kiswahili while the control group was first tested in English and then in Kiswahili after an additional two weeks.

The findings of the study show that students performed better on the tests when Kiswahili was used as the LOI. They note that when the same group was taught in Kiswahili they performed better than when they were instructed in English. The study also shows that both groups performed poorly in Biology and Geography when English was used as the LOI and that the groups, but performed better when Kiswahili was used as LOI. Galabawa and Lwaitama (2005) argue that the LOI should be changed from English to Kiswahili at secondary school level.

Brock-Utne (2007) observed Biology and Geography lessons taught by the same teacher in Kiswahili and in English. She notes that the students were not engaged in the lessons when they were taught in English. She says, “[Lessons] were characterized by students’ silence, passivity, chorus answers.” (p. 518). When the same lessons were conducted in Kiswahili the classroom became vibrant and both teachers and students engaged critically in the subject matter. She notes, “Lessons in Kiswahili were characterized by students’ active participation such as asking questions, volunteering to answer questions, relaxed atmosphere, and the teacher’s ability to complete the lesson as planned” (519).

Brock-Utne (2007) repeated her study with a different group of students, but maintained the same teachers. She notes that like in her first experiment when the class was taught in English there was no dialogue: the students were reluctant to ask or answer any questions. When the class was taught in Kiswahili the students were more engaged and more willing to participate in classroom discussion and even challenge their teachers.

These studies highlight the deteriorating state of education in Tanzania; furthermore, these studies show that many students are leaving school having acquired little to no education. This worrying trend is further reiterated by the results of the 2013 Form IV national examinations, in which **only six percent of the candidates received a passing grade** (Twaweza, 2013, emphasis mine). The unprecedented failure rates on last year's national examination suggests a deep seeded rot in Tanzania's educational system, that has been allowed to grow for several decades. The recommendations of Criper and Dodd are the basis of the current education policy in Tanzania, which designates English as the LOI for post-primary education. The Criper and Dodd report (1984) recommended that the Tanzanian government implement the English Language Teaching Support Project (ELTSP), a project that was geared towards improving the standards of English teaching in post-primary education throughout Tanzania. The project sought to improve the standards of English teaching through syllabus and curriculum development, teacher training, and the provision of textbooks (Roy-Campbell, 1992). According to Roy-Campbell (1992) the British Overseas Development Agency (BODA) stipulated that it would fund the project if Tanzania maintained English as the LOI for post-primary education. The Tanzanian government agreed to the conditions set forth by BODA. The government's decision to accept the recommendations of Criper and Dodd at the expense of the recommendations of Mlamba and Matheru and *Tume ya Rais*, speaks to the larger problems of



dependency and neocolonialism in Tanzanian society. This trend of neocolonialism and dependency unfortunately continues today. Several studies as highlighted above, have shown that the use of English as the LOI for post-primary education is an obstacle rather than a facilitator of education. Despite the existence of these studies, the nation's leadership continue to insist that English remains as the LOI for post-primary education. I argue that for Tanzania to achieve her educational and developmental goals Kiswahili rather than English is the most appropriate and logical choice vis-à-vis the LOI in Tanzania. *Fimbo ya mbali haiui nyoka.*<sup>3</sup>

### **Statement of the Problem**

The current situation in Tanzania whereby primary education is instructed in Kiswahili and post-primary education is instructed in English makes the educational process more difficult for both students and teachers. Despite the fact that the majority of Tanzanians are bilingual, the country has one lingua franca, Kiswahili, which is spoken by 99 percent of the population (Brock-Utne, 2007). It is important to note that in mainland Tanzania, Kiswahili is not regarded as a vernacular language because it is not technically attached to one ethnic group (the majority of Tanzanians of African descent are considered a “Mswahili” regardless of whether they speak English as their mother tongue) (Batibo, 1995). Kiswahili is the national and official language, and is the language that is most widely used in society for both official and unofficial business. Moreover, it is the language used for every day communication. In other words, it is the language used to address the bus conductor, speak to doctors at the hospital, to buy goods at the market, and to make a statement at the police station (Rugemalira *et al*, 1990).

Despite being the co-official language of Tanzania, according to Qorro (2013) English is

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<sup>3</sup> A Swahili proverb which when literally translated means that “a stick that is far away cannot kill a snake.” In other words, when one is confronted with a problem they must use the most appropriate means to solve that problem.

a foreign language which is not widely used in Tanzanian society. A visitor to Tanzania in 2014 will **see** English in some newspapers, hotels, shopping centers, and public offices. However, they would not **hear** it spoken between Tanzanian's unless they are talking to foreigners. According to Rubagumya (1990), only 5% of Tanzanian's speak English as a second language. Since English is the LOI for post-primary education, one would assume that more than 5% would be proficient in the language for education to be effective and beneficial to learners. Unfortunately, this is not the case.

Government statistics show that 99.1 percent of primary school students are enrolled in public schools which use Kiswahili as the LOI. While 0.9 percent of students are enrolled in private primary schools which use English as the LOI (URT, 2005). Given the linguistic situation in Tanzania, where the English language is not widely used by members of society, the seriousness of the LOI problem is further illuminated. Roy-Campbell and Qorro (1997) note that since English in Tanzania is primarily used for post-primary instruction and among non-Kiswahili speaking foreigners, students and teachers in Tanzania have limited opportunities to practice and improve their English competence.

The current education policy, which designates English as the LOI in post-primary education, not only disregards the widely researched and accepted notion in education that students learn best when instructed in their first or native language, it also ignores the linguistic and economic reality of the majority of Tanzanian students. Consequently, 99.1 percent of Tanzanian students, who are instructed in Kiswahili at the primary level are at a great disadvantage once they arrive in secondary school where English becomes the LOI. Education in a foreign language that is used by a small, privileged section of the population is counter to the nation's developmental and educational goals (Qorro, 2013).

In 2014, the Tanzanian government continues to be non-committal on its pronouncements to implement Kiswahili as the LOI for post-primary education. Consequently several developments have occurred. First, students who finish primary school with Kiswahili as the LOI can no longer cope with English as the LOI in secondary school. As a result, the standards of education and student performances at the post-primary level have been in a constant state of decline (Mlama and Matteredu 1978; Crippler and Dodd, 1984; Roy-Campbell, 1992; Roy-Campbell & Qorro, 1997, Brock-Utne, 2000; Vuzo, 2005; Qorro, 2013). **Second, Kiswahili has become the “de facto” LOI for secondary education. In other words, code switching and mixing have become accepted practice in Tanzanian secondary schools.**<sup>4</sup> Many teachers in secondary schools have resorted to using Kiswahili to elaborate the content of their lessons. This has resulted in rote education as students are forced to memorize written notes in English to prepare for their examinations (Brock-Utne & Holmarsdottir, 2004).

The premise of this thesis is that Kiswahili is the best choice for the post-primary LOI in Tanzania. Considering the educational and development goals of the nation no other language can effectively serve this purpose. This premise is based on four assumptions.

- 1) Mother tongue education is the most effective means of educating a child (Skutnabb-Kangas & Phillipson, 1994).**
- 2) Competence in the LOI is a significant variable in academic performance (Roy-Campbell & Qorro, 1997).**
- 3) Language and culture are inseparable; therefore, educating a child in a foreign language unavoidably separates them from their culture (wa Thiong’o, 1986).**

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<sup>4</sup> Code-switching is the switch in language that takes place between sentences; code mixing is the switch in language that takes place within the same sentence.

**4) Effective intellectual decolonization will only be attained through the re-centering of African languages in all institutions of knowledge and cultural production (Mazrui & Mazrui 1995).**

### **Purpose of Study**

The purpose of this study is to examine the Tanzanian educational system vis-à-vis the LOI used for post-primary education. The current educational policy in Tanzania designates English, a former colonial language, as the LOI for post-primary education (Roy-Campbell, 2001). A significant question this study will attempt to answer is whether the educational policy governing the LOI used for post-primary education, is logical and appropriate, given the country's linguistic environment, developmental goals, and past and current educational outcomes.

The current state of affairs in the Tanzanian educational system where by students are instructed in a language they do not understand and that is not widely used in society, does not allow students to articulate their thoughts, creatively express their ideas, or, achieve the greatest possible degree of academic achievement. The arguments in favor of English do not take into consideration the forty years of research by internal and external experts, which argue (with empirical evidence) that English has ceased to be a viable LOI in Tanzania. Thus discussing these arguments and the reasoning behind them is also a purpose of this thesis.

I argue that Tanzania's educational and developmental prospects would be best served in an educational system where Kiswahili is used as the LOI for post-primary education. In the age of globalization however, no country is an island. Therefore, for Tanzania to meet her development goals it is equally critical that her citizens are also competent in foreign languages such as English. These languages however should be taught effectively as subjects, not as the

LOI. Thus, it is of critical importance that the LOI is addressed so that students are provided with an education that will allow them to succeed educationally, and equip them to contribute to the nation's development. Brock-Utne (2001) asserts that "choosing as the language of instruction an indigenous language, a language people speak, are familiar with and which belongs to their cultural heritage would redistribute power and privilege from the few to the masses" (p. 118).

### **Research Questions**

To address the purpose of this study as highlighted in the preceding section, this study seeks to answer the following questions:

- a. Why has English remained the LOI for post-primary education in spite of government plans to implement Kiswahili as the LOI for the entire educational system and over forty years of research that shows that English has ceased to be a viable LOI in the Tanzanian context?
- b. What are the primary disadvantages of maintaining English as the LOI for post-primary education?
- c. What is the way forward?

### **Significance of Study**

Teaching in the local language contributes to continuity in the learning process and reduces dropouts (Bamgbose, 2000). Therefore, the critical question is why the learners are not taught in the language they understand best from primary to post-primary education. By privileging those who speak and have, access to English and marginalizing those who do not, this system further enhances the socioeconomic cleavages that exist between Tanzania's minority upper class and the lower class. This system is also politically, developmentally, and economically calamitous (Senkoro, 2005). The education that the majority of Tanzanian students

receive however does not prepare them to contribute to their individual development, the development of their communities, nation, and global community. An education in a language that is only mainly understood by a small portion of the Tanzanian population goes against the educational and developmental needs and goals of the nation.

Education can only take place when the instructor and students both understand the language being used for instruction. Education here must be understood as a critical process through which knowledge and information are created, imparted, and debated. Therefore, it must be delivered in a language that both the students and instructors fully comprehend in order to facilitate a critical learning and teaching environment in which creativity, innovation, and intellectual curiosity are promoted. In other words, education is not a process in which students are solely reliant on their teachers for knowledge and information (Friere, 1970).

Considering the central role education plays in Tanzania's developmental goals, the decision to instruct students in a language they understand or do not understand is one of the most significant issues in education and thus development in Tanzania. The use, misuse, or even lack of use of a culture to which language belongs, can have a fundamental impact on the minds of those who would have otherwise excelled, had they been taught and required to articulate their thoughts in a language they understand (wa Thiong'o, 1986).

### **Organization of Thesis**

This thesis consists of five chapters. Chapter 1 is an introduction to the study. This chapter has presented an overview of the Tanzanian educational system. The introduction to the problem, the statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research questions, and the significance of the study have also been included in this chapter. Chapter 2 analyzes the rise of Kiswahili in Tanzania as a language of independence, government, and education. In this

chapter, I also discuss the current linguistic situation in Tanzania. Chapter 3 discusses the reasons English remains as the LOI for post-primary education in Tanzania. Chapter 4 makes a case Kiswahili as the LOI for post-primary education in Tanzania. In this chapter, I describe how student performances are hindered by the use of English as the LOI. Chapter 5 concludes the thesis by reiterating the main points made in the preceding chapters. I present the case that Tanzania is best served by an educational system that uses Kiswahili as the LOI and teaches English effectively as a subject. In this chapter, I present the options Tanzania has going forward.

## CHAPTER 2:

### The Growth and Spread of Kiswahili in Tanzania

#### Introduction

Since Tanzania gained independence in 1961, Kiswahili has expanded in its official and informal capacity. In Tanzania, Kiswahili has become a symbol of national unity and culture. In discussing languages and their role in education, it is imperative to discuss the historical context that precipitated the current discourse on language and education in Tanzania. In other words, it is impossible to understand the role of language plays in education within the African context without first discussing how the role of colonialism and the post-colonial reforms in dictating educational and language policies.

#### Pre-Colonial Language Setting

Batibo (1989) discusses the historical events that led to Kiswahili becoming a trans-ethnic medium of communication in eastern and central Africa by in detail.<sup>5</sup> Therefore, this study will not examine those factors in depth, but will only summarize the factors that led to Kiswahili becoming the lingua franca in Tanzania. These factors include:

1. Kiswahili having no tribal roots, made it acceptable to learners;
2. Since a majority of Tanzanians spoke Bantu languages, it was easy for them to learn Kiswahili because it shared the same structural roots;
3. It was used extensively for trade and other economic functions;
4. It was the lingua franca for urban communication;
5. Kiswahili was used extensively for religious activities, particularly in the spread

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<sup>5</sup> See Batibo (1989) The position of Kiswahili among the lingua francas of Africa. *Journal of Linguistics and Language in Education*. Department of foreign languages and Linguistics, UDSM. 4 1:27-41 for a detailed discussion on the rise and spread of Kiswahili in East and central Africa.



of Islam and later Christianity;

6. Its extensive use in civil society especially the military and police forces. (Batibo, 1989, p. 31)

Since the Arab presence 18<sup>th</sup> century, Kiswahili has been progressively and extensively developed to become an effective LOI for education. This period in East Africa coincided with the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> Century, was predominantly based on economic activities. When Arab rule was established in Zanzibar Kiswahili was used as the language of communication between the Arabs and the Africans. The use of Kiswahili facilitated the communication of new ideas and practices, especially Islam, Islamic teachings, and a new literary style (Mazrui & Zirimu, 1978). It was during this period that the first education books were written and published in Kiswahili (Batibo, 1995).

### **Kiswahili during Colonialism**

According to Polome (1980), Christian missionaries established the first western schools in Tanzania during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. As noted earlier, Kiswahili was the lingua franca in Tanzania due to its use in several domains. Since Kiswahili was widely spoken and by a large majority of the population, the Roman Catholic Church and other Christian denominations decided to adopt it as the LOI for education as well as a means for spreading the gospel (Polome, 1980).

When the Germans colonized Tanganyika (Tanganyika merged with Zanzibar in 1964 to form Tanzania) in 1885, the colonial regime decided to use Kiswahili as the LOI for primary education; while German would be used as the LOI for post-primary education (Brock-Utne, 2013b). The German colonial regime created three types of schools for Africans in Tanganyika. Sixty primary schools (Webeschulen) which used Kiswahili as the LOI for three years; nine high schools (Hauptschulen) which used Kiswahili as the LOI for two years, and one college

(Oberschule). The use of Kiswahili for educational instruction during the German colonial regime led to the linguistic development of Kiswahili as a language for education. By 1910, there were 11,000 academic and religious books published in Kiswahili. The significance of Kiswahili in Tanganyika was further emphasized in 1914, when the German colonial administration designated Kiswahili as the language for their official correspondence (Cameron & Dodd, 1970). The language policy during the German colonial period led to the spread and enhanced status of Kiswahili in Tanganyika.

When Tanganyika became a colony of the British Empire (1918-1961), English, the language of the colonial regime was introduced to the country. During the British colonial period, Kiswahili continued to be the LOI for the first years of primary education (Std.1-5) while English was used as the LOI in upper primary (Std. 6-7), secondary education (Form I-IV), and tertiary education (Roy-Campbell, 1992). During the British colonial period, many textbooks and other educational material had been written and published in Kiswahili. By the time the nation gained independence in 1961, all subjects at the primary school level could be instructed in Kiswahili (Batibo, 1995).

Despite the increase in educational material in Kiswahili during the British colonial regime, the education language policy placed an emphasis on acquiring the colonial language. In other words, those who could speak the colonial language were privileged educationally, professionally, and socially. On the other hand, those who could not speak the colonialists' language were marginalized in the same respects (Mulokozi, 1991). During the last years of British colonial rule, the independence movement needed language that could unite that could unite the 120 ethnic groups in the nation. Due to its widespread use, Kiswahili was the only language that could serve this purpose (Batibo, 1995).

## **Kiswahili after Independence**

Kiswahili had been the lingua franca of Tanzania (then Tanganyika) and East and Central Africa before the nation gained independence in 1961. When the Tanganyika African National Union (TANU, was the nation's first political party) was formed in 1954, the significance of Kiswahili increased as it became the language of political campaigns and more significantly it was the language of *uhuru*. Kiswahili became an indispensable tool for mobilizing and uniting people from all the ethnic groups in the country. Unlike many other African countries, in Tanganyika politicians did not need interpreters during campaigns because Kiswahili was understood all over the country (Rubaguyma, 1990). Furthermore, the spread of Kiswahili during the pre-independence movement led to the language becoming a symbol of patriotism and nationalism. According to Mazrui and Mazrui (1995), Tanzania's national identity came to be increasingly defined as Kiswahili in its cultural character. They note:

. . . The Tanzanian culture, therefore, is the sum total of all the good customs and traditions of the different language groups in Tanzania. All these regional cultures using local languages, or dialects, are now being transformed into a national culture using Kiswahili, which is increasingly commanding the loyalty, affection, and respect of Tanzanians. (p. 83)

Therefore, Once Tanzania gained independence; Kiswahili was designated as the co-official language with English. According to Whitely (1971, p. 155) "the choice of Kiswahili was a gesture of independence from colonialism and an affirmation of the role that the language played in Tanzania's achievement of independence." The first Tanzanian government used Kiswahili intentionally to unite the newly independent country. Before the Ujamaa period a "Mswahili" was a Muslim from the coast of Tanzania whose native tongue was Kiswahili. However, since

independence a “Mswahili” refers to all Tanzanians of African descent (Mazrui & Mazrui, 1995). The creation of “Kiswahili national identity” during this period is what has led to Kiswahili becoming the mother tongue of the majority of Tanzanians today. According to Batibo (1995) in the early 60’s only 10 percent of Tanzanians spoke Kiswahili as their mother tongue, due to the intentional spread of Kiswahili by the first Tanzanian government this number has risen to 99% in contemporary Tanzanian society (Brock-Utne, 2007). Rubagumya (1991) argues that it was through the promotion of Kiswahili that Tanzanians regained a sense of national identity and cultural pride. He posits:

In the late 60’s and early 70’s nationalistic sentiments were so high in Tanzania that people who spoke English in public were accused of having *kasumba ya kikoloni*, i.e. ‘colonial hangover.’... This was a period immediately after the 1967 Arusha Declaration... a document which spells out Tanzania’s commitment to socialist and self-reliant development strategy... this was a period where it was fashionable to express negative attitudes to[wards] English and when most practical steps towards promoting Kiswahili were taken (70).

The Prime Minister’s declaration that Kiswahili should be used in all social sectors further emphasized the significance of the language in the newly independent country. Perhaps the most significant illustration of the importance of Kiswahili in Tanzania was when the former president officially addressed the nation in Kiswahili (Rubagumya, 1990). It is clear from these examples, that since the nation gained independence, the government has held Kiswahili in high regard. From an analysis of the nation’s formative and current policies, it is clear that the use of English as the language for governmental and societal functions was intended to be temporary (Roy-Campbell, 2001). The government’s prioritization of Kiswahili suggests that it is the

language that is representative of the nation's culture, values, and traditions (Mazrui & Mazrui 1995).

### **Kiswahili and Education for Self-Reliance**

Kiswahili played a significant role in Tanzanian society before independence. In the period immediately after independence, and especially with the implementation of the Arusha Declaration, Kiswahili began to play a more significant role in terms of the post-colonial government's platform for their economic and social policy.<sup>6</sup> It is also important to note that during the immediate post-independence period there was subtle propaganda against English. This anti-English sentiment had an impact on the minds of many people; consequently, English was relegated to an inferior status (Ngonyani, 1997). In 1967, the Tanzanian government introduced a new educational policy, Education for Self Reliance (ESR). ESR proposed significant changes to the content and structure of the Tanzanian educational system. The policy sought to build an egalitarian society by making formal education accessible to all citizens regardless of their socioeconomic background.

The post-colonial government desired to end the cycle of privilege, power, and access based on the knowledge of the colonial language in an environment that was linguistically dominated by Kiswahili (Nyerere, 1972). Under ESR the purpose of education was "To transmit from one generation to the next the accumulated wisdom and knowledge of society, and to prepare the young people for their future membership in society and their active participation in its maintenance or development" (Nyerere, 1967). In order for a socialist society to function,

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<sup>6</sup> The Arusha Declaration was Tanzania's model for development that formed the basis of African socialism. The key principle of the declaration Ujamaa comes from the Swahili word for extended family or familyhood and is distinguished by several key characteristics, namely that a person becomes a person through the people or community.

education had to be the primary means of socialization. One of the main goals of ESR policy to transition Tanzania from a “colony” to a free, independent state based on the principles of equality and self-reliance. ESR was conceived by Julius Kambarage Nyerere, Tanzania’s founding father, who gained his prominence, not through a struggle for independence, but through his emphasis on education for all Tanzanians. His uncompromising attitude towards education earned him the revered title of Mwalimu (teacher). Nyerere viewed education as the best means to reform and inspire a community to serve and play an active role in the self-reliant development of the nation. The philosophy of ESR was based on four factors.

- (a) To critique the inadequacies and inappropriateness of colonial education;
- (b) To outline the kind of society the United Republic of Tanzania is trying to build;
- (c) To examine some salient features of the education system that existed around 1967 in the light of the newly declared goals and strategy of socialist development; and
- (d) To propose changes designed to transform the education system in order to make it more relevant and appropriate in serving the needs and goals of a socialist society with a predominantly rural economy (Nyerere, 1968, pp. 50-53).

During this period, the time 98% of students could not go on to secondary education. Therefore ESR made primary education terminal for the majority of Tanzanian students. Since primary education under ESR was complete, students could use the practical skills they learned in school to become self-reliant citizens. The vast majority of students were expected to return to their villages, therefore Kiswahili was considered more relevant to primary school leavers than English (Samoff, 1990).

Only 5 percent of the population spoke English fluently many of whom were high-ranking government officials, lecturers, and tycoons (Rubaguyma, 1991). The Tanzanian

government recognized the relationship between language, education, access to knowledge, and privilege. The use of Kiswahili as the LOI would assist the transition to secondary education for those who completed the Adult Education and Universal Education programs. One of the stated objectives of ESR was to end elitism based on educational status. The use of Kiswahili as the LOI would also limit the privileging of individuals based on language. The Universal Primary Education and Adult Education programs were geared towards providing a basic education to the entire population. In order to facilitate these programs, Kiswahili was designated as the LOI for primary education, a move that further enhanced the status of the language. Undoubtedly, the switch was welcome and was well in line with the benefits of using the mother tongue as the LOI (Ngonyani, 1997).

The decision to use Kiswahili as the LOI for the Adult literacy programs and Universal Primary Education enabled the population, a majority of whom lived in villages, to read newspapers and understand radio programs, which exposed them to national issues and international events. In other words, people became more aware of events that occurred outside their communities. The use of Kiswahili as the LOI also facilitated the government's dissemination of its political ideology and thus cementing its psychological control of the public (Roy-Campbell, 2001). It is important here to note the inconsistent philosophy of ESR. If education was meant to end elitism, rather than to favor the few who spoke English, it would seem that Kiswahili should have also been made the LOI for post-primary education. ESR could not end elitism in society while the educational system used Kiswahili for the lower reaches of education and English for the higher levels of education. During this period, only two percent of the population would go on post-primary education, and therefore, the use English as the LOI for post-primary education would continue the educational elitism based on language (Samoff,

1990). However, 47 years after the implementation of ESR, English has remained the LOI for post-primary education.

**Conclusion**

The Tanzanian government from its inception declared that Kiswahili would replace English as the language for the country’s governmental and societal functions, that is, Parliament, in the various Ministries, in the lower judicial courts, in all of pre-primary and primary school. The use of English was restricted to the functions for which Kiswahili was temporarily unable to be used, that is, the high court, post-primary education (Brock-Utne, 2001). The transition from the use of English to Kiswahili for governmental and societal functions is outlined in table 1 below:

**Table 1. Language use in Tanzania today.**

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A.	English	
	<b>Administration</b>	Court of Appeal and High Court (with Kiswahili interpretation) Diplomacy and International contacts Foreign trade and Cultural Exchanges
	<b>Education</b>	Secondary Education University Education Diploma Teacher Training World Literature and Technical Information
B.	Kiswahili	
	<b>Administration</b>	Government Business* R.M. Court
	<b>Education</b>	Law Enforcement Primary Education (1-7) Kiswahili in subject Secondary Schools* Kiswahili Subject at University* Certificate Teacher Education

Key:

\*Functions formerly fully or partially under English

(Modified from Batibo, 1995, p. 65)



The sentiment was that once Kiswahili had been standardized and sufficient technical terminology for educational and professional purposes had been developed, it would be used as the language for all governmental and societal functions (Inniss, 1995).

The Tanzanian government has succeeded in replacing English with Kiswahili for several key governmental and societal functions as highlighted in table 2. Although Kiswahili has become the LOI for public primary education, with instructional material being published in the language, the Tanzanian government back tracked on its five year plan to make Kiswahili the LOI for the first two years of secondary education by 1973 and tertiary education in 1985 (Rubaguyma, 1986; Roy-Campbell, 2001). After more than 40 years of research by internal and external experts, the government continues to state that more studies are needed before Kiswahili can be implemented as the LOI for post-primary education (Malakela, 2004).

In hindsight, however, it seems that the Tanzanian government's use and support of Kiswahili was, and is, ideological (rhetorical) and not technical (practical) (Whitely, 1968). The Tanzanian government's historic and current inability to confront the language issue is further illustrated by the fact language is no longer mentioned in the nation's constitution (Brock Utne & Holmarsdottir, 2004). Therefore, although this thesis is being written in 2014, the implementation of one of the several policies that designate Kiswahili as the LOI for post-primary education has yet to come to fruition.

## **CHAPTER 3:**

### **Politics vs Pedagogy**

#### **Introduction**

Given the Tanzanian social linguistic context, studies that have shown that English is no longer a viable LOI for post-primary education, and the presence of policies that designate Kiswahili as the LOI, it is important to address why the Tanzanian government has not firmly addressed the LOI question. The factors that are considered in LOI policy formation are not solely concerned with pedagogy; rather they also focus on political and economic factors. Language policies like educational policies are not politically neutral and therefore they must be analyzed within the broader political and power struggles in a given society (Tollefson, 1992). There are obviously several factors, including financial restraints and lack of materials. However, the two major factors affecting the implementation of Kiswahili as the LOI are political and attitudinal.

#### **Political Factors**

Politics play a significant part in the formation of national policies. Since its inception as an independent state the Tanzanian government has declared that Kiswahili would be LOI for post-primary education in Tanzania (Rajabu & Ngonyani, 1994). Roy-Campbell and Qorro (1997) argue, however, that the political rhetoric in Tanzania in regards to the use of Kiswahili as the LOI for post-primary education in Tanzania has yet to yield any type policy implementation. According to Fishman (1972), language planning is an initiative that is concerned with resolving language related problems in a given nation. In other words, language planning deals with the choice of a national language, language revival, language standardization, language for education, language spread, and other societal activities linked to language.

Language planning is a technical process that determines the use of language in various social contexts. Bokamba (1995) notes that for language policies to be conducive to the educational and development goals of a society they need to go through a process of extensive language planning. He notes that in the case of many African countries, the language planning process is more concerned with “perceived” problems rather than incorporating research findings to formulate language policies that will address local needs (Bakomba, 1995). In addition to solving language problems, language planning also involves a process of evaluation. The evaluation of policies is designed to determine whether specific policies are solving the problems identified in the language planning process. Elaborating on Fishman’s definition, Rubin and Jernudd (1975) posit

Language planning is focused on problem-solving and is characterized by the formulation and evaluation of alternatives for solving language problems to find the best (or optimal, most efficient) decision. In all cases it is *future oriented*; that is, the outcomes of policies and strategies must be specified in advance of action taken. (xvi)

As I highlighted in chapter 2, the Tanzanian government has drafted several policies that designate Kiswahili as the LOI. However, as the current situation suggests there has been no evaluation or follow up to ensure that policies are implemented. Ineffective policy implementation is one the areas that the Tanzanian government has identified in the nation’s development plan vision 2025 as a hindrance to national development. They say:

Tanzanians have developed a propensity to prepare and pronounce plans and programs, and ambitions which are not accompanied by effective implementation, monitoring and evaluation mechanisms. As a result, implementation has been weak. This situation has given rise to the erosion of trust and confidence among the people on their leaders. It is

evident that the people are now less enthusiastic about participating in national endeavors. Apathy has set in (p. 10)

Despite the government's acknowledgement in 1995 that ineffective policy implementation is a hindrance to national development, the educational policies drafted in 1998 and 1999 that designate Kiswahili as the LOI are yet to come to fruition.

The lack of endeavor on the part of the Tanzanian government has resulted in the continued debate on LOI for post-primary education and the steady decline of student performances in Tanzania. Moreover, students are forced to continue to learn in a language which they do not understand (Roy-Campbell & Qorro; 1997; Qorro, 2004; Vuzo, 2005; Brock-Utne, 2007). Brock-Utne (2010) contends that the view of English as the language of globalization and science and technology, and the fear that Tanzanian society will be isolated technologically and economically, if they do not use English as the LOI in secondary education is another technical reason the Tanzanian government is reluctant to switch the LOI from English to Kiswahili. The situation whereby, the language policy address the "perceived" need of English for commerce and development does not incorporate over 40 years of research on the LOI that in Tanzania. Research that clearly indicates that the decision to use English as the LOI for post-primary education seriously affects student performances (Mlana and Matheru 1978; Cripser and Dodd, 1984; Roy-Campbell, 1992; Roy-Campbell & Qorro, 1997, Brock-Utne, 2000; Vuzo, 2005; Qorro, 2013).

Furthermore, the current policy does not address the nation's goals to build a highly educated society. If the government was serious about creating a well education society, students would be instructed in a language that they understand best, a language that gives them the best opportunity to succeed academically. As I will discuss later, instruction in a foreign language not

only limits a student's chances for academic success, but hinders a society from attaining its educational objectives (Trappes-Lomaxx, 1990).

According to Mulokozi (1991) and Roy-Campbell (1992), three obstacles have prevented Kiswahili from being implemented as the LOI for post-primary education. The first obstacle is related to language planning as it involves the creation of new vocabulary, changing the script, and making spelling changes, as deemed necessary. This argument focuses on the capacity of Kiswahili to serve as a LOI at the post-primary level. The major arguments identified here focus on whether there are enough teaching materials (textbooks), teachers, and vocabulary available to use Kiswahili at the post-primary level.

The second obstacle involves language competence. In other words, would Tanzanians be adequately equipped to use English particularly when they go abroad to study or when they are representing the country at international conferences? Teacher competence is also included in this category as students' ability to acquire knowledge in schools is directly related to the teachers' competence of the LOI.

The third obstacle deals with the political repercussions Tanzania may face if English was no longer the LOI for post-primary education. The government was concerned that the loss of English would result in isolation from the international community. Abandoning English would also negatively affect diplomatic relationships with other countries but would also potentially affect the amount of foreign aid the country receives.

Despite the availability of books and technical vocabulary, no steps have been taken to implement Kiswahili as the LOI for post-primary education. It is important to note here that besides Kiswahili, the only other subject that has been taught in Kiswahili at the post-primary level is *Siasa* (Politics). *Siasa* was a course that was geared toward teaching TANU's socialist

ideology and citizenship. Specifically this course was designed to indoctrinate the students with the government's political philosophy. TANU's ideology was perceived by the government to be of such critical importance to the nation's future prospects that the government ensured that this course was taught in a language that students would understand (Brock-Utne, 2012).

### **Attitudinal factors**

According to Schmied (1985), English enjoys both "absolute" and "relative" privilege in Tanzania. He argues that though English exists in an environment dominated by Kiswahili, it is still privileged in many social and economic settings. Schmied refers to this as "absolute" privilege. He argues further that, when country specific language related problems such as the inability of students to communicate with their teachers become clear, the privilege of English is reduced and becomes "relative." Rubaguyma (1989) and Qorro (2005) argue that Schmied's discussion of absolute and relative privilege can be applied to the LOI debate. They argue that parents prefer that their children learn in English, and that students prefer to learn in English. They argue further that in Tanzania, students and parents view English as a symbol of intelligence, and therefore desire to be identified as being able to speak English. This is absolute privilege. He argues that the privileged status of English in Tanzanian society is another reason Kiswahili is not the LOI in Secondary schools. The problem [of the implementation of Kiswahili as the LOI in secondary education] is more complex than just money. In Tanzania as in many other developing countries, knowledge of a European language is associated with being educated and consequently moving up the socioeconomic ladder. (p. 284)

Gardner (1985) argues that there are several factors that influence whether an individual will be able to successfully acquire a second language, such as the teacher's capability, and the learning environment. He also maintains that attitude significantly influences the success with

which second languages are learned. He says, “In the language learning situation, if the students' attitudes are favorable, it is reasonable to predict . . . that the experience with the language will be pleasant, and the students will be encouraged to continue” (p. 8). Baker (1988) argues that language attitudes are not instinctive; rather they are formed by socialization. He argues further that in societies where languages are in conflict, people tend to have positive attitudes towards the language that is perceived as superior. Brock-Utne and Holmarsdottir (2004) reiterate Baker's argument vis-à-vis the role of colonial languages in Africa,

It is an indisputable fact that in the post-colonial situation, the linguistic hierarchy built into the colonial system led to knowledge of the conquerors' language becoming a vital component of the ‘cultural capital’ of the neo-colonial elite. It was, and remains their knowledge of English and/or French [for example] that sets them apart from the vast majority of their African compatriots and which keeps them and their offspring in the privileged middle and upper classes. (p. 6)

Malakela (2004) argues that the linguistic attitude in Tanzania is not very different from that described in the quotation above. He says,

We have today a rule in a number of secondary schools, which requires students to speak English in the school compound. Whether the rule is enforceable or not is another question. But the mere fact that such a rule exists indicates a definite and positive attitude to English. (p. 111)

Qorro (2005) argues further that the attitude of parents towards the LOI also plays a significant role in determining what language their children will be instructed in. she notes that during the colonial period parents saw the teaching of Kiswahili in schools as a deliberate step taken by the colonial government to give African children an inferior education. She adds that the reality

today is that an individual who speaks English has some advantage over someone who does not, hence the desire of parents for their children to be instructed in English.

According to Brock-Utne and Holmarsdottir (2004), parents play a significant role in the LOI debate in Tanzania. They argue that the positive attitudes of parents towards English as the LOI is a reason the Ministry of education is reluctant to implement one of their many policies that designate Kiswahili as the LOI for secondary and tertiary education. When they asked the Minister of education why English is still the LOI for secondary and tertiary education, he responded,

I hear there is some pressure to change [the LOI from English to Kiswahili]. It mostly comes from professors. My own opinion is that I have to take into account what the community wants. Is it the community that has asked for this change? I get a large number of applications from groups that want a license to start English medium primary schools. I have not had a single application from anyone who wants to start a Kiswahili medium secondary school. The Tanzanian community is not thinking about this language issue. I hear it from professors. I don't hear it from the community. The day I hear it from the community I shall start thinking about it. (p. 70)

Brock-Utne and Holmarsdottir (2004) argue that many parents in Tanzania want their children to learn English because of the opportunities the language opens for their children. They note that parents perceive English as the language of globalization, a language necessary for their children to learn if they go abroad or have a chance of a higher position in business, government or academia.

According to Rubagumya (1989), the positive attitudes of the students in his study can be used as a representation of the national attitude towards English. He argues that the problems of



English in Tanzania cannot be attributed to negative attitudes towards the language. He further argues that the national attitude towards English has always been generally positive. He adds that attitudes concerning English have improved since the country gained independence in 1960.

Rubaguyima notes that positive attitudes towards English cannot be used as a gauge for successful language learning, as a majority of the students interviewed were performing poorly in their studies.

Rubaguyima (1989) claims that the positive attitudes towards English in Tanzania can be attributed to the absolute and relative privilege English enjoys over Kiswahili. He notes that due to the status of English in Tanzania, students are under immense pressure to learn the language. He argues that even though children are exposed to English, the exposure will not necessarily guarantee them success after school. He argues further that parents are faced with a dilemma, whether to accept the majority practice, or to resist it and do what they think is in the best interest of their children, a decision that their children themselves may not accept.

The arguments presented above concerning the debilitating effects of foreign language raises many debates on the question of the use of Kiswahili as the LOI for post-primary education in Tanzania. Prah (2004) argues:

Turkish students study to the university level in Turkish. Greeks, Albanian, French, Spanish, Portuguese, Polish, Danish, Norwegian, Korean, Germans, Chinese, Indonesians/Malaysians, Japanese, Arabs, and others all manage their education from the beginning to the end in their own languages. **Somewhat, when it comes to Africa the logic breaks down and all sorts of reasons are found why in the case of Africa this should be different** (p. 23, emphasis mine).

I will now discuss the principle reasons given that African languages cannot serve as the LOI as

presented by Chumbow, (2005).

### **African Languages will Impede National Unity**

The main concern is that there are too many languages in these countries to select one as the language of education. It is said that selection of one over others would create tensions and ethnic strife (Roy-Campbell, 2001). The former colonial language is thus seen as a neutral language, since it is not associated with any one ethnic group. However, as wa Thiong'o Bamgbose, Qorro, Roy-Campbell, and Brock-Utne argue the continent has paid a significant price for selecting "neutral" languages to facilitate education. In the case of Tanzania however, the use of Kiswahili as discussed in chapter two shows that in the Tanzanian context the use of Kiswahili facilitated rather than impeded national unity. In the Tanzanian context, the continued use of English as the LOI has the potential to impede national unity. The current educational system as I have argued earlier further exacerbates the social cleavages in society based on linguistic ability. Therefore, in the case of Tanzania, the use of English is more likely to impede national unity.

### **The Inadequacy of Scientific and Technical Vocabulary**

According to Brock Utne (2013), The National Council on Kiswahili (BAKITA) was formed in 1967. The purpose of BAKITA was to assist in the standardization of Kiswahili and to develop technical terminology for educational and professional purposes. Since its inception, BAKITA has developed a plethora of technical terminology for various educational and professional disciplines (Brock-Utne, 2013). Furthermore, according to Bamgbose (2000) languages can only develop in their capacity for education through use. The more Kiswahili is used for science and technology, the more it will develop a greater vocabulary to facilitate the learning and discussion of those subjects (Mazrui & Mazrui, 1995).

It is important to note here that societies that have successfully implemented indigenous languages as the LOI for education are those that have substantially progressed and developed not only educationally but socially and economically as well (Prah, 2004). The results of the use of indigenous languages as the LOI in Sri Lanka clearly indicate that English is not a prerequisite to scientific learning and advancement. Furthermore, the Sri Lankan experience indicates that indigenous languages disrupt the social marginalizing effects of English instruction. Brock-Utne (2000) notes the positive effects of the change of LOI from English to vernacular languages for teaching science and technology:

The transition from English to the national languages as the medium of instruction in science helped to destroy the great barrier that existed between the privileged English educated classes; between the science educated elite and non-science educated masses; between science itself and the people. It gave confidence to the common man that science within his reach and to the teachers and pupils that knowledge of English need not necessarily be a prerequisite for learning science (Ranweera as Cited in Brock-Utne, 2000, p. 153).

These results further support the use of indigenous languages for science and technology.

Tanzania should be encouraged by the Sri Lankan experience.

### **Shortage of Adequately Trained Teachers to Teach in African Languages**

The lack of adequately prepared teachers to teach Kiswahili in post-primary education is a serious concern. In the Tanzanian context, however many teachers are not adequately prepared to teach in English. Rubaguyma (1994) notes,

Teachers in Tanzania are under pressure from different groups whose interests do not necessarily coincide. Officials in the Ministry of Education want to see the policy of

English medium implemented and they want educational standards in the schools improved. The belief in official circles is that these two objectives are inseparable. Parents want the best education for their children and it would seem that they too are convinced this will be achieved by exposing pupils to more English, not less. (p. 52)

Rubaguyma notes that teachers are also a product of an unsound educational system and therefore, they should not be expected to improve student performances without an environment and policy that is committed to sound educational practices. He argues that until the ministry of education and other stakeholders critically address the language issue, teachers and students will remain helpless. Since the majority of teachers in Tanzania are more competent in Kiswahili surely it would cost less to train them to teach in Kiswahili.

### **Costs and Resources**

One of the most significant obstacles to implementing Kiswahili is the anticipated cost of creating educational materials and training teachers. According to Brock-Utne (2013), a project based at the Institute for Kiswahili Research (TUKI) has developed textbooks for the whole of the secondary school system. The textbooks are available in Kiswahili for all subjects they just need to be published and distributed to secondary schools. Any decision to change the current education and language policy is going to be an expensive undertaking. The Tanzanian Government needs to be fully cognizant that they can no longer vacillate on which language should be the LOI for post-primary education. If the government is indeed genuine in its desire to create a highly educated society that offers a high quality of education they have must make a commitment to a language policy that is in line with research findings, universally accepted educational practices, and the needs of the Tanzanian state.

## Conclusion

Implementing a policy that changes the LOI for post-primary education from English Kiswahili will undoubtedly be an expensive undertaking. Furthermore implementing a policy that also implements modern EFL (teaching English as a foreign language) methodology that strengthens and improves the teaching of English as a subject at all levels as I propose will undoubtedly add to the cost of implementing such a policy. The switch of LOI will cost a lot of money and the Tanzanian government either does not have the resources or has been unwilling to invest in such a policy. There are two important questions that need to be asked here: First, what is cost of having 99.1 (the number of students who attend public primary schools that use Kiswahili as the LOI) of primary school students inadequately prepared to enter secondary schools? Second, what is the cost of having 94% of Form IV students failing the national examination?<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> In secondary school Tanzanian students take two national examinations at the “Ordinary” level. One exam is administered in Form II, this exam determines whether students will advance to Form III-IV. The examination is taken in Form IV, this exam determines whether students will be able to advance to the “Advanced” level Form V-VI.

## CHAPTER 4:

### Arguments in Support of Kiswahili

#### Introduction

For **over 40 years** there has been a language and educational policy in place that if implemented would replace English with Kiswahili as the LOI for Tanzania's entire educational system. The government has reiterated this position in several policies and educational plans in 1969, 1970, 1974, 1979, 1982, 1995, 1997, and 1999 (Brock-Utne, 2013). The findings of Criper and Dodd (1984) best articulate why plans have been made to change the LOI from English to Kiswahili.

Tanzania finds itself in a vicious circle: poor standards of English in primary schools lead to poor standards of English, hence education generally, in secondary schools . . . , which in turn lead to a weakening of teacher education . . . , which in turn reinforce the weaknesses in primary and secondary schools. Were it not for the fact that much teaching is in practice carried out in Kiswahili . . . it is hard to see how any genuine education could take place. The problem should be treated as an emergency and not allowing a long term solution. (p.72)

Unfortunately, the aforementioned situation in Tanzanian schools is worse now than it was in 1969, in view of declining student performances on the Form IV national examinations. More than four decades later however, none of the policies intended to replace English with Kiswahili have been implemented. In fact, in recent years, the government has declared that English would continue to be the LOI in Post-primary Education (Qorro, 2013).

It is important to note here that the main reason for the preserving of English as the LOI is that Tanzania would isolate itself from the world educationally and economically if Kiswahili

was implemented as the LOI for post-primary education (Brock-Utne, 2004; Malekela, 2004; and Qorro, 2005). Since English is the language of globalization, science, and technology it is argued, that it must be used as the LOI for post-primary education in order to enable Tanzanian students to compete and prosper globally. The former Minister of Education and Vocational Training (MOEVT) stated, “We must learn from foreign nations in order to do so we must use English to promote understanding [of the subject] matter in schools” (Rajabu and Ngonyani, 1994, p.11). The underlying assumption here is that in order for Tanzanian’s to be able to communicate internationally, English must be used as the LOI. Therefore, the rationale behind the argument to maintain English as the LOI is that it will increase English competence. However, studies by (Rubaguyima, 1986; Roy-Campbell and Qorro, 1997; Brock-Utne, 2004 and 2005) argue that given the social linguistic environment, it is unlikely that the use of English as the LOI for post-primary education will increase proficiency. Furthermore, recent studies have argued that English is unlikely for facilitate learning (Qorro, 2012; Brock, Utne, 2013). Considering the research findings, the decision to maintain English as the LOI for post-primary education is not based on research or pedagogical arguments.

Philipson (1992) highlights four fallacies surrounding the use of English for instruction former British colonies: The monolingual fallacy, the early start fallacy, the maximum exposure fallacy, and the subtractive fallacy. The first fallacy, the monolingual fallacy, is the belief that English is best taught exclusively. This fallacy argues that teaching another language at the same time will hinder the student’s ability to become competent in English. The early start fallacy, argues that the earlier a child learns English the more competent they will become in the language. The maximum exposure fallacy argues that the more a child is exposed to the English the better they will become. The last fallacy, the subtractive fallacy, argues that if other languages

are used or taught, the student's competence in English will suffer.

Phillipson argues that these fallacies that are used to advocate for the use of English as the LOI in post-colonial societies do not take into consideration research on cognitive development and language acquisition. He argues that cognitive development in a student's first language is necessary for a student's ability to learn a second language. He notes further that, "Failure to provide educational conditions for the development of cognitive-academic proficiency in L1 (first language) as well as initial literacy the L1 may invalidate efforts to build up such skills in L2 (second language)" (p. 191). Studies by (Malma and Matteru, 1977; Criper and Dodd, 1984; Roy-Campbell, 1992; Phillipson, 1992; Bamgbose, 2000; Brock-Utne, 2000; Prah, 2004; and Qorro, 2004, 2013) clearly indicate that the research highlighting the significance of instructing a child in an indigenous language or mother-tongue education has been ignored by African policy makers.

### **Mother Tongue Education**

According to Skutnabb-Kangas and Phillipson (1996) an individual's mother tongue is determined by four categories. The first is *origin*, which refers to the language an individual learns. The second category is *identification*, which is conceptualized at two stages. *Internal identification* refers to the language one identifies with, and *external identification* is the language which other people identify as the individuals mother tongue. *Competence* is the third criterion, which simply refers to the language which the individual most competent in. *Function* is the fourth category and relates to the languages that one uses the most. Therefore, Kiswahili can be identified as the mother tongue for the majority of Tanzanians as it the language they speak best and use the most frequently (Rubagumya, 1990; Roy-Campbell & Qorro, 1997; Mkwizu, 2003).



Several studies on effective educational practices support the concept that instruction, **where possible**, should be offered in a student's first language. The use of the mother tongue for educational instruction increases the learner's educational performance and enables them to develop critical thinking skills. Furthermore, these studies argue that for the cultural and cognitive development of a child, an education provided in student's mother tongue is preferable to an education offered in foreign language (UNESCO, 1958; Skutnabb-Kangas & Phillipson, 1996). Rugemalira *et al* (1990) posit:

It is beyond dispute that the educational process in any society ought to be conducted through a language that both the learner and teacher command well. This is a minimum requirement for any communication to take place in the teaching and learning situation. In addition, at a more general level, the language of education should be that which is accessible to the majority of the population. This facilitates the generation of knowledge and its dissemination to as wide an audience as possible within a given society. When it comes to the choice of medium of education these are the two basic considerations. (p. 28)

Societies that have implemented the mother tongue as their national languages of instruction, have managed to develop in all sectors of social life (Mazrui, 1996). Having a well-educated population is crucial to the development of any society. Mazrui's argument supports the notion that there is a correlation between language, education, and human development. Unfortunately, this relationship is often ignored in education and development strategies implemented in the developing world (Brock-Utne, 2000; 2012). Why is this the case? Bull (1964) cited in Desai (2004) argues; "What is best for the child psychologically and (educationally) may not be what is best for the adult socially, economically, or politically and,

what is even more significant, what is best for the child and the adult may not be best or even possible for society” (p. 47). Bull’s argument does not dispute that a child learns best when instructed in their mother tongue, rather he further highlights that education and language policies are not politically neutral, and there are several factors that come into play when LOI policies are formulated.

As highlighted in the preceding chapter, this is true especially in countries that do not have one unifying indigenous lingua franca (Bamgbose, 2000). For these countries it may not be economically viable to provide students with an education in their mother tongues. Another possible consequence of selecting one indigenous language as the LOI in a multilingual context is the possibility of ethnic violence. As mentioned earlier, language cannot be separated from issues of power and marginalization. Therefore, the decision to use one language over others will undoubtedly lead to serious social conflict (Roy-Campbell, 2001).

In the case of Tanzania however, the concerns mentioned above do not come in to play as Kiswahili is the mother-tongue for 99 percent of Tanzanians (Brock-Utne, 2007). Due to the linguistic environment and the advanced standardization of Kiswahili, it is the most appropriate choice for LOI in Tanzania.

The discussion by Rugemalira *et al* above is critical to educational discourse in Tanzania and Africa in general. They raise several important points concerning the benefits of mother tongue education: First, the use of the mother tongue in education allows teachers to teach and students to learn without having to worry about learning the LOI at the same time. This facilitates class room discussion and debate as opposed to rote instruction when a foreign language is used for instruction. Second, the use of the mother tongue for education opens the doors of education to more citizens. Rather than a select few elite who have access to the

dominant language used for instruction. The use of an indigenous language will allow more citizens to access education and be evaluated on their knowledge of the content and not their linguistic aptitude. There have been a few African countries (Nigeria, Cameroon, Namibia, Guinea) that have tested various programs that use the mother tongue as the primary language of instruction at the primary level (Bamgbose, 1991; Alidou 2004). These programs have largely been successful and support the arguments in favor of mother tongue education. In the following section I will discuss the Six Year Primary Project that was implemented and in Nigeria.

### **Six Year Primary Project**

The Six year primary project was a study that aimed to test the benefits of using the mother tongue as the LOI throughout the primary level. According to Bamgbose (2000) the purpose of the six year primary project was to determine the best means of instructing a child and the best method of teaching a foreign language as a subject to ensure students gained sufficient competency in the language in order to use it as the LOI at higher levels. The lead researcher on the project Fafunwa (1975) was keen proponent of mother tongue education. He argued, “If a Nigerian child is to be encouraged from the start to develop curiosity, manipulative ability, spontaneous flexibility, initiative, industry, manual dexterity, mechanical comprehension and the co-ordination of hand and eye, he should acquire those skills and attitudes through the mother tongue as the medium of education, which after all is the most natural way of learning (p. 216)

Bamgbose (1991) notes further at the time the six year primary project was implemented, there was a 40% dropout in Nigerian primary schools. Furthermore, the majority of Nigerian students were leaving school having acquired little to no competence in English or an indigenous language. Therefore the six year primary project aimed to ensure that students acquired “some

knowledge, at least in one language. . . [and] that to improve English teaching, serious attention should also be paid as well to the teaching of Yoruba” (p.85). According to Fafunwa (1975) the following were the objectives of the project:

1. Develop a primary school curriculum that is relevant and useful both to the child whose formal education terminates in primary six and the child whose education continues thereafter;
2. Design materials with appropriate methodology for teaching the proposed curriculum effectively;
3. Employ Yoruba language as the medium of instruction on the assumption that the child will benefit cognitively, socially, culturally and linguistically through the use of his mother tongue as the language of instruction throughout the primary school and thus bridge the gap between home and school;
4. Teach English language effectively as a foreign language through specially trained teachers throughout the six years, and
5. Evaluate the project continually with a view to determining the presence or absence of certain significant differences between the project children and those of primary schools not connected (p.217).

The six year primary project was extremely successful, and the results were in line with the benefits of using the mother tongue as the LOI. The use of Yoruba and teachers adequately trained to teach English as a subject significantly increased student performances and competency in the language. Additionally, this project led to an increase of materials and technical vocabulary in Yoruba. Despite the success of the six year primary project, the LOI for primary education in Nigeria is still English. Given the success of the six year primary plan, one

would assume that students would be better served by an educational system that used Yoruba as the LOI for primary and post primary education and taught English as a subject.

There are three conclusions that can be drawn from the six year primary project: first, the mother tongue/indigenous language is the most effective means of educating a child. Secondly, the best way to teach a foreign language in this case English is not to use it as the LOI, but rather to teach it effectively as a subject. Third, when analyzing the Tanzanian situation, the use of Kiswahili in primary schools is not one of the factors to blame for the current educational problems plaguing Tanzania. Rather, poor performance in English can be attributed to the quality of English instruction provided in primary schools (Qorro, 2005). The educational policy, which designates English as the LOI for post-primary education, assumes that students are learning English in primary schools. Several studies however, show that this assumption is incorrect. According to Senkoro (2005), the majority of English teachers at the primary and secondary level are not adequately trained to teach English. Consequently, they teach English incorrectly, and this ultimately leads to widespread error reinforcement. The poor instruction of English undoubtedly contributes to the high failure rates on the secondary school entrance exam, which is in English. It may also be one of the causes of poor student performances in secondary schools. Perhaps if primary school teachers were adequately trained to teach English, students advancing to secondary schools would be better equipped to deal with the switch in LOI.

### **Problems Associated with LOI Bifurcation**

According to the Ministry of Education and Culture (MoEC) (1995), one of the central purposes of primary education is to prepare a student for secondary school education. In other words, what a child learns in primary school should enable them to cope with more advanced concepts in secondary school. One would assume that if a child were to succeed in such a system

there would need to be consistency from primary school to secondary school (Qorro, 2005). When a child is instructed in their mother tongue at one level and then is instructed in a foreign language at a higher level, this complicates the educational process. Paradoxically, in the current Tanzanian educational system, as the subject matter becomes more complex students have to learn it in a language they have little or no comprehension in (Brock-Utne, 2000). If the LOI were constant from primary to higher education, the student and society would benefit immensely. Freire argues that without dialogue between the learner and instructor, effective education cannot take place. Effective education according to Freire requires students and teachers to be able to dialogue. Dialogue in education allows teachers and students to discuss, debate, ask and answer questions, ask for clarification and therefore construct and generate knowledge. These activities are the prerequisite to learning (Qorro, 2004). Effective education is impossible to attain where the teacher and student do not understand the LOI. He posits:

To acquire literacy is more than to psychologically and mechanically [obtain] reading and writing techniques. It is to dominate these techniques in terms of consciousness; to understand what one reads and to write what one understands; it is to *communicate* graphically. Acquiring literacy does not involve memorizing sentences, word or syllables- lifeless objects unconnected to an existential universe- but rather an attitude of creation and re-creation, a self- transformation producing a stance of intervention in one's context. (p. 48)

The Tanzanian Government (1995) in its development plan Vision 2025 notes:

Education should be treated as a strategic agent for mindset transformation and for the creation of a well-educated nation, sufficiently equipped with the knowledge needed to competently and competitively solve the development challenges, which face the nation.

In this light, the education system should be restructured and transformed qualitatively with a focus on promoting creativity and problem solving. (p. 3)

An education in a foreign language as the LOI cannot promote “creativity and problem solving” as students and teachers cannot dialogue critically in a language they do not understand.

Effective education, which fosters creativity and problem, can only take place when both the teacher and student understand the LOI. Students need an education that prepares them to be critical citizens. For education to be effective, it must be instructed in a language that encourages dialogue between teachers and students.

Trappes-Lomax (1990) argues that, for an individual to learn a foreign language, she or he must have the convenience of being able to practice the language. He notes that if an individual does not have the opportunity to practice the language, he or she will not be able to learn the language. He argues further a learner cannot acquire a language in a setting where the language is not commonly used in broader society. Therefore, it is very difficult for them to acquire competence in the foreign language. There are several consequences for the child and society if they are required to learn in a foreign language. Referring to the consequences of using a foreign language as the LOI, Trappes-Lomax (1990) posits:

a. For the individual learner:

- **[Her]His relations with teachers and fellow learners, in so far as these require to be mediated by the foreign language medium, will be impoverished;**
- **[s/]he will have no adequate linguistic means of educated self-expression;**
- **[s/]he will be handicapped in thinking and in learning to think;**
- **[s/]he will be able neither to receive nor impart educative information.**

**b. For society:**

- **The objectives of education will not be achieved;**
- **The cost of failure will be felt in every domain, economic, social, and political, as well as in the waste of time and money. (p. 97, emphasis mine)**

Despite these implications, Tanzanian students are required to learn in a foreign language that is in most cases nonexistent in their social context. In spite of poor academic performances and empirical studies within the African context that have shown that students learn best when instructed in indigenous languages policy makers continue to insist that foreign languages remain as the LOI.

### **Code Switching and National Exams**

Research on the LOI reveals that many teachers use Kiswahili to instruct their students. Furthermore, these studies reveal that in many Tanzanian schools Kiswahili has become the default LOI for secondary school (Criper & Dodd; Rubagumya, 1986; Roy-Campbell & Qorro, 1997; Brock-Utne & Holmarsdottir, 2004; Qorro, 2013). Teachers use Kiswahili to enhance classroom discussions and to explain concepts that students are unable to understand in English (Brock-Utne & Holmarsdottir, 2004) However, due to the current LOI policy that designates English as the LOI for post primary education, national examinations and regular exams are written in English.

Since a significant amount of instruction and classroom discussion is carried out in Kiswahili, students are not developing their linguistic and cognitive skills in English, and are therefore not in a position to successfully take exams in English. In Tanzania, national examinations determine whether a student will be able to advance to the next stage of their educational career. Therefore, a student's performance on the national examination has



significant ramifications for their future prospects. As I mentioned in chapter 1, in 2013, 94% of students failed their Form IV national examination. Such mass failure rates do not bode well for Tanzanian society. A question that must be posed is whether students are failing their examinations due to lack of preparation or lack of competence in the LOI?

Farr and Trumbull (1997) argue that there is an urgent need to reform traditional forms of assessment and to design measures that are more valid and viable for ethnically, racially, socially and linguistically diverse students. Halliday (1973) argues that educational failure is often and in a very general and rather deep sense language failure. The child who does not succeed in the school system may be one who is not using language in the ways required by schools. If the teacher's image of language is less rich than that which is already present in the minds of those he is teaching, it will be irrelevant to him as a teacher. A minimum requirement for an educationally relevant approach to language is that it takes account of the child's own linguistic experience, defining this experience in terms of its richest potential and nothing where there may be differences of orientation which would cause certain children difficulties in school. Since much of the teaching and classroom discussion occurs in Kiswahili it would be logical for students to also be examined in that language. Teaching in one language and examining in another can only lead to mass failure rates such as the ones that were witnessed in 2013.

## **Conclusion**

Bamgbose (2000) argues that languages can only develop through their use for different activities and in different sectors. The use of indigenous languages as the LOI has far-reaching implications for the ability of a language to develop as a medium for educational, cultural, scientific, and technological advancement. Furthermore, the use of the mother tongue as the LOI facilitates the economic and social development of societies (Qorro, 2004). Consequently, the

denial of education in one's mother tongue not only marginalizes the culture of the people whose mother-tongue use is denied, it also hinders the development process (Prah, 2004).

In developed societies, education is instructed the language(s) that the population understands, the language(s), which allow the population to think and express themselves in creative and innovative ways. In Africa however, the majority of countries continue to rely on former colonial languages for education. Mazrui (1996) asks,

Can any country approximate first rank economic development if it relies overwhelmingly on foreign languages for its discourse on development and transformation? Will Africa ever effectively take off when it is so tightly held hostage to other languages of the former imperial masters? (p. 3)

As the Six year primary plan in Nigeria Cleary illustrates, children learn best when instructed in their mother tongue, furthermore this facilitates the learning of other languages. Despite the success of the program there was no policy to implement a mother tongue education program in Nigeria. Bamgbose (2005) argues:

Outside Africa, no one questions why the languages of countries with smaller populations in Europe should be used as medium, even up to and including the university level. What seems to be lacking in many African countries is the political will to break away from the colonial policy and practice of limiting mother-tongue education to lower primary classes. Where such a will exists, much can be done in a short period of time. (p. 255)

Effective education and development in Africa cannot occur where the LOI is not an indigenous language. The use of foreign languages hinders the majority of people from being able to access knowledge and skills therefore limiting their possibilities for economic and social advancement. For African countries to develop educationally African languages need to be re-

centered in all institutions of knowledge and cultural production (Mazrui & Mazrui 1995).

## **CHAPTER 5:**

### **Conclusion**

#### **Introduction**

The premise of this study is that the education in any society should be instructed in a language that both the learner and teacher understand well. This is a minimum requirement for effective instruction and communication to take place in the classroom. Furthermore, the LOI should be a language, which is accessible to the majority of the population. This facilitates educational democracy, the generation of knowledge, and its dissemination to as many people as possible. This corresponds with the concept of mother tongue education, a concept that is widely accepted and viewed as a basic human right.

As I have argued in the preceding chapters, the problems plaguing the Tanzanian educational sector are complicated and multifaceted. Moreover, the policies that inform educational practices, as I have discussed in this study, are determined more by political and economic reasons more so than pedagogical considerations. The present situation in Tanzania, where public primary education is instructed in the national language, Kiswahili, while the majority of post-primary education is instructed in a foreign language, English, contradicts research findings and has far-reaching implications, which are detrimental to the future of the nation. The problem presented in this study is however not just an educational issue. When education is not effective and when access to effective education is dependent on socio-economic standing and wealth rather than intellectual ability, the entire nation suffers. Bull (1964) asserts, “While getting an education is a personal matter, in contrast, providing education is a social enterprise” (Cited in Trappes-Lomax, 1990, p.92). The Tanzanian government must recognize their responsibility to ensure that effective education is accessible to all citizens. Tanzanian

children regardless of social class must have equal access to an effective education at all levels so that they will be able to contribute fully to the development of the nation. The development and future success of Tanzania requires an educated population. The LOI should not hinder students from being able to access and optimize educational opportunities.

### **Future Prospects**

Bokamba (1995) argues that, “language policy must be for the benefit of the African people in the country concerned and must be articulated to achieve specific development goals which are an integral part of a coordinated plan of action” (p. 22). In other words, the decision on which language should be used as the LOI must involve two concerns: First, the policy must be in the interest of the citizens and secondly, the policy must be in line with the nation’s development goals and needs. I will use these two concerns posed by Bokamba to suggest the most appropriate way the Tanzanian government should approach the LOI question.

The Tanzanian government in the national development plan (Vision, 2025) has identified creating a “well educated and learning society” key to Tanzania’s current and future development. According to the Tanzanian government:

Tanzania envisages to be a nation whose people are ingrained with a developmental mindset and competitive spirit. These attributes are driven by education and knowledge and are critical in enabling the nation to effectively utilize knowledge in mobilizing domestic resources for assuring the provision of people's basic needs and for attaining competitiveness in the regional and global economy. **Tanzania would [should] brace itself to attain creativity, innovativeness and a high level of quality education in order to respond to development challenges and effectively compete regionally and internationally, cognizant of the reality that competitive leadership in the 21st**

**century will hinge on the level and quality of education and knowledge.** To this effect, Tanzania should:

- Attain self-reliance driven by the psychological liberation of the mindset and the people's sense of confidence in order to enable the effective determination and ownership of the development agenda with the primary objective of satisfying the basic needs of all the people - men, women and children.
- Be a nation whose people have a positive mindset and a culture which cherishes human development through hard work, professionalism, entrepreneurship, creativity, innovativeness and ingenuity and who have confidence in and high respect for all people irrespective of gender. The people must cultivate a community spirit; one which, however, is appropriately balanced with respect for individual initiative
- **Be a nation with high quality of education at all levels; a nation which produces the quantity and quality of educated people sufficiently equipped with the requisite knowledge to solve the society's problems, meet the challenges of development and attain competitiveness at regional and global levels** (pp. 6-7, emphasis mine)

It is clear from Vision 2025 that Tanzania aims to be a society that can provide high quality education at all levels and produce high quality students who are innovative and critical thinkers to help Tanzania develop and compete internationally by the year 2025. Given the goals of the Tanzanian government, the current global situation, and the linguistic context in Tanzania, Kiswahili is the best option vis-à-vis LOI policy that will help Tanzania achieve her development goals.

From an educational, developmental and cultural point of view the implementation of Kiswahili as the LOI would be beneficial for the Tanzanian state. The use of Kiswahili as the LOI for post-primary education would makes post-primary education more accessible to the majority of students. The learning environment would be enhanced as teachers as teachers and students would find it easier to communicate. Qorro (2004) notes that only when teachers and students understand the LOI are they able to discuss, debate, ask and answer questions, ask for clarification and therefore construct and generate knowledge. These activities are the prerequisite to learning. Conversely, when teachers and students do not understand the LOI learning cannot take place. In addition, if Kiswahili was implemented as the LOI for post-primary education it would further enhance the growth and spread of Kiswahili into various academic disciplines.

### **Can Kiswahili Be the LOI for Post-Primary Education in Tanzania?**

Many Tanzanian's including parents, students, scholars, and policy makers are cynical towards the prospect of Kiswahili serving as a viable LOI for post-primary education in Tanzania. As I have attempted to show in this thesis, the reason Kiswahili has not been implemented as the LOI for post-primary education is not pedagogical, rather it is economic and political. The efforts to implement Kiswahili as the LOI for post-primary education have only been supported by the Tanzanian government rhetorically, however they have been hesitant to implement any policy to make Kiswahili the LOI for post primary education. Bamgbose (2000) argues that this is a trend throughout the continent. He says,

Results from experiments and projects tending to support alternatives to current practices are often not given the necessary backing and follow-up, and proposals to the same effect are often ignored. The major reason for this is that it is extremely difficult to break away from existing practices in which imported official languages are the dominant media of

instruction. Even when there is an overwhelming case for changing to an African

language, such is the force of dominance that there is a great resistance to change. (p. 3)

The lack of initiative and the lack of financial support by the Tanzanian government in regards to the use of Kiswahili as the LOI for post-primary education has limited the ability of researchers to influence policy that could help Tanzania achieve its educational and developmental goals.

The debate over which language Kiswahili or English should serve as the LOI has been ongoing for four decades. During this time Tanzania should have come up with a viable educational policy that allows students excel. Tanzania cannot “be a nation with high quality of education at all levels; a nation which produces the quantity and quality of educated people sufficiently equipped with the requisite knowledge to solve the society's problems, meet the challenges of development and attain competitiveness at regional and global levels” (Vision 2025, p. 6) With the current language policy that evaluates students on their knowledge of a foreign language rather than their academic aptitude. For education to be effective and accessible to society, it must correspond with indigenous culture(s) and language(s). Similarly, for development to be sustainable, it must be in line with the local context. Where education does not reflect or promote local language(s) and culture(s), there is the possibility that the majority of the people will be marginalized (wa Thiong’o, 1986).

## **Conclusion**

In order for Tanzania, to improve educationally there needs to be a review of the educational policy in line with where the country needs to be in the next 5 to 10 years in terms of its ability to compete effectively in a globalized market for knowledge and innovation. Tanzania is still entirely dependent on external technical expertise in managing and exploiting its considerable mineral and natural resource wealth. The Tanzanian government must address the



current educational and developmental problems posed by the continued use of English as the LOI. If the Tanzanian government continues to vacillate between which language(s) should be used for instruction, education and development in the country will continue to deteriorate, since as this thesis has argued, Tanzanian students are not equipped to use English as the LOI for post-primary education. Therefore if Tanzania desires to be a nation with a high quality of education at all levels; a nation which produces the quantity and quality of educated people, Kiswahili must be implemented as the LOI for the entire educational system and English should be taught effectively as a subject. For Tanzania to develop and prosper in the 21<sup>st</sup> century both languages (and even more) are necessary, however English should be taught as a subject and not used as the LOI. If English is taught effectively as a subject from the primary school level it would enable university students to read, understand, and debate scholars such as Marx, Fanon, Friere, Bourdieu, and others whose works are not yet available in Kiswahili.

The current bifurcated system of education cannot be allowed to continue if the country wants to grow and prosper. Mwalimu Julius Nyerere argued that education should be in line with the nation's ethos and development goals. He said:

The education provided by Tanzania for the students of Tanzania must serve the purposes of Tanzania...It **must encourage the development of a proud, independent and free citizenry which relies upon itself for its own development, and which knows the advantages and the problems of co-operation.** It must ensure that the educated know themselves to be an integral part of the nation and recognize the responsibility to give greater service the greater the opportunities they have had. This is not only a matter of school organization and curriculum. Social values are formed by family, school, and society—by the total environment in which a child develops. But it is no use our

educational system stressing values and knowledge appropriate to the past or to the citizens in other countries; **it is wrong if it even contributes to the continuation of those inequalities and privileges which still exist in our society because of our inheritance. Let our students be educated to be members and servants of the kind of just and egalitarian future to which this country aspires** (Nyerere, 1967 pp emphasis mine).

Unfortunately, the educational system today has diverged from the educational foundations set by Mwalimu Nyerere. The focus is not so much to prepare the Tanzanian to be a loyal servant to the Tanzanian people and the Tanzanian nation. The deep sense of patriotism that accompanied learning is less emphasized. There is more pressure to perform rather than understand and allow the education to transform the whole person to become a treasured, responsible citizen. The rapid and disorganized expansion of Tanzania's educational system means there are fewer resources in terms of instructors, libraries, classrooms, capacity to supervise and instill quality education.

Education in Tanzania has fallen on hard times in every area. Government investment in education is low; the education policy is without a clear direction or focus and is too politicized. Educational institutions are poorly funded and poorly managed. Teachers and professors are inadequately paid, and facilities in schools and training institutions, have not been upgraded or expanded to cope with growing enrollment numbers and new advances in technology and knowledge.

For Tanzania to meet her development goals and improve educationally a new education policy with the necessary investments in **all** sectors of the education system that aligns with national aspirations for wealth creation and uplifting the status of the majority poor must be implemented. This will facilitate the creation of a modern state that upholds democracy, human

dignity, and prosperity for all. The implementation of Kiswahili as the LOI will be one of the many steps Tanzania will need to take in order to reform its educational sector. The implementation of Kiswahili as the LOI will enhance educational equity by making educational opportunities more accessible to the population. The use of Kiswahili will also foster national unity and discourage the social disparities that exist due to class and linguistic ability. Finally, Kiswahili as the LOI for post-primary education is one way of ending culture of dependency that is rampant in Tanzanian society. Interrupting dominant and elitist tendencies in education will foster intellectual and cultural decolonization. *Fimbo ya mbali haiui nyoka!*

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