A SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS OF LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION IN LOWER PRIMARY SCHOOL IN NYERI COUNTY, KENYA

By

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DECLARATION

This thesis is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other university.

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to all the individuals that value the place of mother tongue in early learning and its teaching in early childhood.
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Operational Definition of Terms

**Bilingual education:** - Education systems in which children are instructed in two languages simultaneously throughout their schooling.

**Children:** – These are children aged 6-8 years in the lower primary school.

**Dholuo:** - This is the language spoken by the (Ja)luo, a river-lake nilote community found in the Western part of Kenya. Some scholars use Luo (people) to refer to this language.

**Different language** – this is a situation where one individual talks in one language and the response is given in a language different from that of the speaker.

**First language:** -This is the language the child interacts with and which is the language of daily interaction and communication within his/her family and community.

**Gĩkamba:** - This the language of the Akamba social-cultural community found in the South-Eastern part of Kenya. It is a Bantu language similar to Gĩkũyũ and Kiswahili in diction and intonation. Some scholars use Akamba (people) or Kikamba (Kiswahili form) to refer to the language.

**Gĩkũyũ:** - This is the language of the Agĩkũyũ, one of the over 42 socio-cultural communities. The Agĩkũyũ are mainly found in central part of Kenya. Some scholars use the term Kikuyu in their contemporary writings to refer to both the people and the language. It is a Bantu language with a similar intonation to Kiswahili which is a national and official language in Kenya.

**Immersion language of instruction approach:** - A language policy in which a
child receives education in a foreign language throughout their school life.

**Language of the catchment area:** - This is the language of the majority of inhabitants in the study school’s catchment area or neighbourhood.

**Language Choice:** - this is selection of a given language among other languages for the purpose of using it for instruction in education. The term choice has therefore been used interchangeably with use.

**Language of instruction:** - This is the language the teacher uses when teaching. It is also referred to as the ‘medium of instruction’.

**Language environment:** - This is the locality within which a given language is actively used. In particular within the family and community set up.

**Language Exposure:** - This is where a child is in the presence of experienced language users such as parents, older siblings, relatives and neighbours. It also refers to being in an environment that is rich with language play-learning materials and language stimulating activities.

**Language policy in education:** - Also referred to as language in education policy is the stipulated language of instruction for pre-primary and lower primary school and also for child care programmes

**Language preference:** - it is the language favoured for instruction in education in early childhood.

**Language use:** - this is the observed situation as a result of language choice. This is the language that was observed to be employed during classroom instruction. The term use has been used interchangeably with choice.
**Lower primary school** – these are the standard one, two and three classes of the primary school which are part of the early childhood education programme.

**Maintenance language of instruction approach:** - Learning starts in first language and later when the second language is introduced as the medium of instruction the first language is maintained in the curriculum as a subject.

**Monitors:** - These are discs/tags given during the ‘English Medium Approach’ and the later years to help identify those who used mother tongue which was a prohibited language in schools. All those it had been passed on to from the first holder would get punished by either buying story books for English language, being caned or being subjected to manual work

**Mother tongue** – The language used by the mother with the child. It is therefore the first language a child acquires from the primary caregiver (mother). This is mostly the native language except in special circumstances. It is also referred to as vernacular. In Kenya there are over 42 vernacular languages.

**Mother tongue-based instruction:** - Learning programmes are delivered in the learner’s first language throughout schooling.

**Mother tongue-based bilingual education:** - An education policy that requires early childhood education to be conducted in the first language while the second language is introduced after three years of primary education to prepare learners for its use as a medium of instruction in secondary education and beyond.

**Multilingual education** – This means using more than two languages for simultaneously for instruction.
**Pre-primary**: - This term is used to refer to the two year formal schooling before joining standard one as stated in the ECDE National Policy Framework for Kenya.

**Pupils**: - Lower primary school children aged 6-8 years in reference to school and teachers. The term ‘learners’ is also used in this context.

**School language policy**: - This is the school statement providing guidelines on the language upheld by the school as the medium of communication and lesson instruction in the classroom. It is the school’s language of choice for instruction.

**Submersion language of instruction approach**: - This is where some children receive education in a language of the linguistic majority

**Teacher’s language preference** – The language the teacher’s preferred to use and which is dominant in his or her communication

**Transitional language of instruction approach** – This is the approach where learners are instructed in the first language in one part and the second language in the other part of primary education.
ABBREVIATIONS/ACRONYMS

CAQDAS - Computer Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis Software
DICECE - District Centre for Early Childhood Education
ECD - Early Childhood Development
ECDE - Early Childhood Development Education
ELL - English Language Learners
FGD - Focus Group Discussion
FPE - Free Primary Education
GoK - Government of Kenya
KCPE - Kenya Certificate of Primary Education
KICD - Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development
L1 - Language 1 or First language
L2 - Language 2 or Second language
MoE - Ministry of Education
NACECE - National Centre for Early Childhood Education
NESB - Non English Speaking Background
O.C. - Observers Comments
UNICEF - United Nations International Children’s Education Fund
ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to establish the language(s) used for instruction in lower primary school and also find out to what extent various factors related to school, teachers and parents influence the language choices for instruction in the respective classes and schools. This is because in spite of the language policy in Kenya stipulating that, learners in lower primary school be instructed in the language of the catchment area, studies in pre-primary school show that some schools ignore this rule. This comes at a time that issues have been raised concerning children being introduced to foreign languages too early before they have even mastered the first language. Likewise in the recent past a debate has been raging concerning instructing children in mother tongue at the pre-primary and lower primary schools. The available studies did not focus on language choices made at the lower primary level of education which is a crucial transition stage to formal learning. Most of these studies either addressed the status of the language policy in general or focused on other levels. They have also been exploratory in nature and dwelt on either perceptions, attitudes, values, multilingualism or other aspects of language. The study adopted the Choice theory and Transitional language model in the theoretical framework. The study design was qualitative and adopted a descriptive survey methodology which allowed for an in-depth examination of the situation. The independent variables were the factors said to influence the choice of the language of instruction while the dependent variable was the language of instruction used at lower primary school. This study was carried out within Nyeri County in which Kikuyu is the dominant language. This county has experienced an outcry in academic performance particularly in languages, mathematics and the sciences which has been attributed to the inability to express ideas. The target population of the study was children in lower primary school classes, their teachers and parents. A multistage sampling technique was adopted. Schools were randomly or purposefully selected at various stages; classes were selected through cluster sampling while teachers were randomly selected. Data was collected from private and public schools in rural and urban areas through lesson observations, interviewing teachers and focus group discussions with parents. A pilot study was conducted to pretest the instruments. Validity and reliability were established through triangulation. The qualitative data collected was analyzed using Kitwoods Qualitative Technique of Analysis to bring out the emerging patterns, themes and trends. Among other findings a variety of languages were being used in the classroom instruction with limited consideration to language policy in education. This was seen to be influenced by choices made by the teachers, parents and schools’ management and locality. The study recommends a cross monitoring of implementation of language of instruction policy, training of teachers and education officers, community awareness and resource mobilization so as to benefit children at lower primary school.
CHAPTER ONE  
INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

1.0 Introduction
This chapter is an introduction and background to the study. More specifically it addresses issues related to the topic to justify the study, the gap, purpose and objectives. In addition research questions, the significance of the study, scope, limitations and assumptions are presented. The chapter ends with a presentation of the theoretical and conceptual framework as well as the definition of terms.

1.1 Background to the Study
Language plays an important role in early childhood development and education. It is the medium of communication and instruction between and among learners and teachers in school and other out of school forums. Language also serves as a means of self-expression and socio-cultural identity (Cummins, 2000). Because of its centrality in the growth and development of children governments provide policy guidelines on language use in the learning processes in their education systems.

Language of instruction policies are designed to help maximize the benefits for learners during the instruction and learning process in school. Appropriate language of instruction policy in early childhood education potentially provides the children with a head-start and good foundation for social and educational progress. However, it has been observed that not all policies on
language of instruction are implemented as stipulated in the guidelines (Menken & Garcia, 2010) meaning that the language of instruction choices differ with policy.

A number of studies have pointed out discrepancies existing between language policies and instructional practice in learning institutions and even at the classroom level (Menken & Garcia, 2010; Murundu, 2010; Muthwii, 2002 & Tollefson & Tsui, 2004). The mismatch between policy and practice has been largely attributed to the multiplicity of players in the education process. Nonetheless, some studies have pointed out that teachers, in particular, play a crucial role in the ultimate choice of the language of instruction used (Chiori & Harris, 2001). In many cases the teacher’s language preferences in the learning process take precedence over the language policy. The teachers’ choices may be an outcome of an interplay of factors such as individual language preference and competence, attitude and values, learners’ social and cultural environments, parents and the larger community (Muthwii, 2002). The language choices made within a learning institution may be at variance with the recommended language policy in a given country.

The situation is more complicated in multi-linguistic states where other languages within the school and the neighbourhood compete for space too (Rubagumya, 1994). This is the case in some countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, where in spite of the language policies underscoring the significant role of indigenous language(s) in early childhood education, other languages are still
preferred (Ntsiki, 2009). For instance, Kenya’s language policy stipulates that the language of the catchment area or mother tongue be used for instruction in early childhood education (Republic of Kenya, 2012). The Kenyan language of instruction policy is anchored on the premise that the use of the language of the catchment area ensures that the child receives education in a familiar language (Gachathi Report, 1976 & Republic of Kenya, 2012). This notwithstanding, education field officers and researchers have shown that in the Kenyan case, children are more likely to be instructed in unfamiliar languages in total disregard of the language policy (Koech, 1999).

Studies have attributed the weak enforcement of the language of instruction policy in Kenya to lack of supportive child admission and teacher recruitment procedures (Ball, 2010; Mbaabu, 1996). In fact, knowledge of the relevant language recommended for instruction is not considered when recruiting teachers who are the key agents of the policy implementation process. Similarly, learners’ linguistic background is not considered during admission to school in early childhood education. It is therefore common to find teachers who are unfamiliar with the relevant language of instruction in the early childhood classrooms. Moreover, some of the recommended languages of instruction are not examinable in the training process or even in the education processes. This could necessitate the use of other languages for instruction at this level. The result of this is that children may end up being instructed in a language that they are not yet familiar with as was highlighted in the Koech Report (1999).
According to Webb (2004), children receiving instruction in an unfamiliar language in their learning process in school are likely to be negatively affected. This could lead to poor adjustment to school or even to a high rate of illiteracy as was experienced in India due to continued use of English (foreign language) in spite of an existing policy in favour of local languages (Annamalai, 2004). Webb (2004) has indicated that such children are likely to experience poor academic achievement and limited cognitive growth, emotional insecurity, low sense of self worth and an inability to participate effectively in the educational process.

The current study sought to find out the current language of instruction situation in early childhood education in Kenyan. An in-depth examination of the language of instruction choices in Kenyan classrooms could help inform the language policy implementation process in Kenya. This may help curb wastage in early childhood education and consequently in the entire education system. The study results may help in identifying policy gaps and provide information for the formulation of intervention measures for successful adoption of the language of instruction policy in early childhood education. It is expected that the study will shed light on language practices and malpractices and the factors associated with the choice of language of instruction in the classroom situation. Such empirical data is invaluable in the development of the necessary structures for formulation of responsive policy of language of instruction in early childhood education for better academic foundation for children.
1.2 **Statement of the Problem**

The language policy in schools in Kenya stipulates that instruction in early childhood education be conducted in the language of the catchment area. The language of the catchment area has been defined as the language of the majority of inhabitants in the school’s catchment area or neighbourhood. Consequently, the language of the catchment area is particularly important as the language of instruction in the early years of schooling since children’s transition from home to school is usually easier if the language used in school is similar to that at home. Moreover, this enables ease of conceptualization of new ideas. Competence in the first language serves as the foundation for learning additional languages. A significant number of children joining standard one in early childhood in Nyeri County, Kenya do not understand any other language other than their mother tongue. Such children should be taught in mother tongue if they are to benefit from the wide range of learning that goes on in early childhood education.

Studies on the language policy for education in Kenya suggest that only a small proportion of schools are using the recommended language of instruction (Munyeki, 1997; KIE, 2007; Muthwii, 2005 and Murundu, 2011). These studies also appear to suggest that due to a shift of emphasis on academics there has been increased pressure to use English rather than the language of the catchment area (mother tongue) to instruct learners in early childhood education. Most of the available studies have focused on perceptions, attitudes and values attached to various languages of instruction.
While some of the studies have mainly focused on upper primary school level (Muthwii, 2005). Those studies in early childhood education (Munyeki, 1997 & Murundu, 2010) did not focus on lower primary school classes although this is a crucial transition stage to formal learning. The studies in lower primary school have mainly focused on multilingual urban setting (Wangia, 1991 & Bunyi, 2005) and not on monolingual setting where mother tongue is the recommended language of instruction (UNESCO Report, 2014). Most of these studies are also exploratory in nature hence there was need for an in-depth situational analysis of language of instruction practices in monolingual settings.

What is happening in upper and pre-primary schools in terms of language of instruction was known but not at the lower primary school where mother tongue is supposed to be used in instruction. Issues have been raised that English is being introduced too early before children have gained competence in the first language (Koech, 1999). This implies that teachers of lower primary school might be using inappropriate languages in lesson delivery. Such a practice will impede children’s school progress and their future educational and social development. An in-depth examination of language choice at the classroom level with an aim of informing policy implementation process was necessary. Without information on the language(s) teachers are using for instruction in the early childhood education classes and the factors influencing this choice, it is not possible to enforce the use of the language of the catchment area for instruction at this level.
1.3 **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to establish the language(s) used for instruction in lower primary school. The study also, sought to find out how various factors related to school, teachers and parents influence the language chosen for instruction in the respective classes and schools.

1.4 **Justification of the Study**

A study on language choice at the lower primary school was found necessary due to the fact that this level is a crucial transitional stage from home to formal learning. This is also the level at which language implementation of language policy in education in Kenya can be easily assessed. It is also at this level that players in the education sector have been known to violate the language policy. Studies focusing on pre-primary school showed that only 5% of the schools (Murundu, 2010) were adhering to the stipulated language of instruction policy. Information on the languages used in the instruction of children during the foundation years is important for planning, programming and in the implementation of language in education policies.

1.5 **Research Objectives**

The study aimed to achieve the following objectives:

1. Find out the language(s) used for instruction in lower primary school.
2. Establish the extent of use of the language of the catchment area for instruction in lower primary school.
3. Determine the differences between public and private schools in the choice of language of instruction in lower primary school.

4. Explore whether teachers’ language preferences influence the choice of language of instruction in lower primary school.

5. Investigate how the parents’ language preferences influence the choice of language of instruction in lower primary school.

1.6 Research Questions

The study endeavored to answer the following questions:

1. What language(s) are used for instruction in lower primary school?

2. To what extent is the language of the catchment area used for instruction in lower primary school?

3. What differences exist between public and private schools in the language(s) chosen for instruction in lower primary school and what are the reasons for these differences

4. How do teachers’ language preferences influence their choice of language of instruction in classroom set ups for lower primary school?

5. How do parents’ language preferences influence the choice of language of instruction in lower primary school?

1.7 Significance of the Study

The significance of the study can be visualized in at least three ways. To begin with the findings may provide invaluable information that can aid in review and reformulation of the language policy by the government of Kenya in
consultation with other stakeholders in the education sub-sector. Moreover, policy dissemination and implementation is crucial and results of empirical studies provide information that can be applied in developing programmes on language in early childhood education and development. Understanding the factors associated with the choice of the language of instruction may enable the relevant government agencies and departments to put in place the appropriate support systems and structures for effective implementation of supportive policies. This may lead to improved practices on the implementation of the language policy in early childhood education and consequently help to improve the transition to lower primary school, educational outcomes and social development of children in the subsequent years.

In addition, the data collected for the study will add to the existing information on language policy and practice in early childhood development and education. This may be referred to by scholars and other researchers that have interest in studies on instruction in lower primary schools. An informed debate generated based on empirical data may lead to more research and development of better models and theories on the language of instruction in early childhood education.

It is also anticipated that the results of the study will help identify possible solutions to teacher instructional problems in the classroom environment. This will make the teachers work easy and help improve the teacher-pupil
interaction. This may help provide motivation to the teachers who handle children in lower primary.

Finally, the effective use of an appropriate language of instruction will help improve the educational outcomes of children. The result of the study may provide invaluable information that will improve access to basic education and reduce the level of wastage exhibited in the Kenyan education system. This therefore means the findings of this study are useful and geared towards improving the educational wellbeing of the target population who are learners in the lower primary school.

1.8 Delimitations and Limitations of the study

This study was confined to choice of language of instruction by teachers in lower primary school classes. In particular these classes were studied because this is the level that the issue of language of instruction in education in Kenya is most critical. The study also focused on factors associated with the choice of language of instruction in lower primary school in Nyeri County, Kenya. This means that application of the results in other areas may need to be done with care because the social, economic and cultural set up may be different. In addition, the language of the catchment of the county is Gĩkũyũ, hence some specifics of the linguistic environment may not be applicable to schools in a different linguistic environment. Hence the findings of this study may only be generalized to populations that use Gĩkũyũ as the language of the catchment area.
1.9 Assumptions of the Study

The study was guided by the following assumptions:

1. That the language of instruction is key in determining the child’s early school experiences. It is therefore critical for scholars in early childhood to understand the issues surrounding the choice of the language of instruction.

2. That the respondents would honestly provide the required information. And that during the observation sessions, the presence of the researcher will not influence or change the norm in the instruction process.

3. That the findings of this study will be useful in the language of instruction policy implementation and planning. Information on the language of instruction to use during this crucial stage where learners are transiting from home to formal schooling may be unavailable to individuals and institutions.

1.10 Theoretical Framework

This study employed the choice theory and the transitional language model of instruction in education.

1.10.1 Choice theory

This theory was advanced by William Glasser in 1998. He argues that in spite of giving human beings information, they choose how to behave. Behaviour, according to Glasser (1998), comprises acting, thinking, feeling and
physiology. He argues that human beings have the capacity to control their thinking and actions but not their feelings or physiology despite all the information at their disposal. Human beings choose to behave in ways that they think will improve their quality world (Glasser, 1998). To him a quality world is one that will bring out the best feelings and physiology. Human beings will, therefore, think and act in ways that they think will help them meet their psychological needs and satisfy the needs of the ones close to them.

This theory is applicable because the study is about the language of instruction choice made at lower primary school. This choice is made by the government, management of schools, teachers and parents with the express aim of helping learners reap maximum benefit from the teaching-learning process at this level. The choice made may be in conflict with the ensuing social-cultural situation or the policy guidelines by the Ministry of Education in Kenya. Likewise not every choice of the language of instruction will benefit the learners at the lower primary school.

According to scholars (Eshiwani, 1990; Eshiwani, 1993 & Sifuna, 1980), in Kenya it is known that there has been little involvement of the larger society in the choice made in formulating and implementing education policies. The government relays the information through the mass media with an assumption that the society will adopt the government guidelines without question. Even with this information a society’s thinking and action could be different and may therefore choose to act contrary to the laid down guidelines.
An important tenet of this theory was in finding out whether parents who represents the larger society influence the language choice made at school level. Likewise whether the Ministry of Education informs schools’ management and administration on language policy guidelines expecting that they will be implemented per se but school managers’ choice may be in contrast. Similarly it is assumed that teachers are informed and that they know and understand the language of instruction policy in education and will adhere to it in the lesson delivery. The teachers also give information to their learners on what language is to be used in the learning process expecting the learners to adhere to that. However, even with this information, studies at other levels of education other than lower primary school (Munyeki 1997, Murundu, 2010 & Muthwii, 2002) reveal that the language policy in education is not adhered to. It was therefore essential to analyse the situation in Nyeri County to establish the language of instruction status in order to provide essential information on language choice and in the factors which influence this choice at the lower primary school.

1.10.2 The Transitional language of instruction in education model

There are eight approaches recommended in the choice and implementation of the language of instruction in education (Ball, 2010). These are: mother tongue based instruction, bilingual language of instruction education, mother tongue-based bilingual education, multilingual education, transitional bilingual, maintenance bilingual, immersion instruction and submersion education. These approaches are concerned with the degree to which the
child’s L1 should be used in the instruction of curriculum and how and when L2 should be introduced (Benson, 2009). It is also concerned with the stage at which second language should be used for academic instruction.

The transitional model of language of instruction in education was found necessary in focusing this study. This is because the language of instruction policy in Kenya, where this study was carried out, requires primary education to start in one language and switch to another at a given level. The transitional language of instruction model in education lays emphasis on ‘bridging’. This is where children start education in one language as the language of instruction with an aim of transiting into another language as a medium of instruction (Ball, 2010). This is the most common situation in most parts of Sub-Saharan Africa where multiethnic and multilingualism is highly evident (Canaragajah, 2005; Corson, 2001; Lin & Martin, 2005; Rubagumya, 1990 &1994 & UNESCO, 1976 & 1982).

In some African countries language policies state that a child starts education in the first language and after some time receives education in a second language (Mbaabu, 1996a & Rubagumya, 1990 &1994). This is normally up to standard three or four. However, it is not known why schools tend to introduce education in languages of their choice or to exit to other languages at their choice with total disregard of policy recommendations. There are two approaches to exits from Language one (L1) to Language two (L2) medium of instruction in this approach; early and late exit. Instruction in first language for
up to six or eight years is regarded as late exit while exit after only two or three years is regarded as a ‘short cut’ or early exit (Ball, 2010). Late exit is recommended to allow children to gain competence in the first language. Competence in the first language translates to competence in the second language and/or other learning that goes with that language.

This model is applicable to this study due to the transitional nature of Kenyan language(s) of instruction policy. It is within a similar concept that schools in Kenya are expected to start early childhood education in one language and exit to another language in upper primary classes. However, schools are likely to vary in the choice of language of instruction and level of exit from L1 to L2 with some exiting as early as in early childhood standard one class.

1.11 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework shows the variables at play in choosing the language of instruction. Language choice in education is largely as a result of the education policy in place, education management and socio-cultural factors and belief systems. Even with a policy in place for language of instruction in early childhood education, the choice of the language to adopt is likely to be influenced by multiple factors such as the school environment, teachers, teaching-learning resources, learners and parents. These factors combine to determine the type of language chosen for instruction in a given learning environment. The language used in instructing the child will in turn shape the child’s social-cultural identity and academic performance. In the
following page is a representation of variables at play in the choice of language of instruction at the lower primary school.
Figure 1.1 Correlates of Language of Instruction in Education

- **Education Policy**
- **Education Management**
- **Socio-Cultural Factors and belief systems**

**Type of school**

**Teachers’ language of instruction preference**

**Learners’ knowledge of language**

**Parents’ language preference**

**Language of instruction choices in a school**
- Mother tongue only
- English only
- Kiswahili only
- Mother tongue and English
- Mother tongue and Kiswahili
- Mother tongue and Kiswahili then English
- Code switching, code mixing or ‘Sheng’

**Home-School Transition**

**Cultural Identity**

**Education Performance**

**KEY**

- Study Variables
CHAPTER TWO
LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction
This chapter presents a review of related literature. These are the studies on language of instruction policy in education, language choices with states and institutions and the issues concerning the choices made and the language of instruction policy implementation process.

2.1 Approaches to Language of Instruction Choices
There are eight known approaches to choosing language of instruction (Ball, 2010). The approaches include mother tongue based instruction, bilingual language of instruction education, mother tongue-based bilingual education, multilingual education, transitional bilingual, maintenance bilingual, immersion instruction and submersion education.

2.1.1 Mother tongue-based instruction
Mother tongue based instruction is an approach in which the learning programme is delivered in the learner’s first language throughout schooling. This has been the norm in larger parts of China (Lao, 2004), Japan, United States, European Union (Corson 2001; Grimes, 1992; Menken & Garcia, 2010 & Tollefson, 2002). In Africa, mother tongue based instruction has been used in countries such as South Africa, Tanzania, Ethiopia and Nigeria (Menken & Garcia, 2010 & Mundia,
1982). The mother tongue based approach is possible in areas where it is also the official language and in countries with large homogenous populations. One or several indigenous languages are selected as official language to be used for instruction in education as well as other official transactions. One problem in multiethnic communities like the ones found in Africa is that minority language speakers may not get a chance to be instructed in their language as only the languages of large linguistic ethnics are considered. This is the case in Nigeria and South Africa (Rubagumya, 1994).

2.1.2 Bilingual language of instruction

The bilingual language of instruction model, also known as two-way bilingual education, is where children receive education in two languages simultaneously. The two languages can be that of a minority and a majority linguistic group or an indigenous language and a foreign language. A good case is Middle East in Iraq where both Arabic (majority) and Kurdish (minority) languages are used in bilingual education (Lin & Martin, 2005). Bilingual education simply means that two languages are recognized as official languages of instruction in education. This is normally common where the two languages play both a national and regional role in social-economic and political transactions. The official status of Kiswahili alongside English language may lead to a bilingual education approach in Kenya. With elevation of Kiswahili status it could be used as a language of instruction in schools.
The main driving force of language choice in the Middle East is the religious role of concerned languages such as Hebrew and Arabic in Israel. A study of the role of Arabic in education in early childhood education in schools with minority Arabic speakers’ pupils showed that both Arabic pupils and their parents preferred ‘own’ language in education (Lin & Martin, 2005). The study sampled 30% of pupils and parents in Ghaza region of Israel and used parental reports and structured interviews for pupils. Eighty nine point nine percent (89.8%) of the respondents preferred to be instructed in an Arabic language. The reason given was that Hebrew language undermined the language rights of the Arabs in the cosmopolitan region.

### 2.1.3 Mother tongue-based bilingual education

Another approach is the ‘mother tongue-based bilingual education’ also known as developmental bilingualism. This approach involves using the first language as the medium of instruction all through the primary school education. The second language is introduced as a subject at some point in primary school to prepare learners to use it for the study of various subjects or academic contents at secondary and post secondary institutions. In Wales for example, Welsh language is successfully used as the medium of instruction in primary school while English is taught as a subject during this period in readiness for later use at secondary and post secondary levels of education (Menken & Garcia, 2010). This approach
ensures that primary school education is given in a first language thus providing for intensive and extensive opportunity to learn the language.

2.1.4 Multilingual language of instruction

Multilingual language of instruction in education involves using more than two languages simultaneously as language of instruction. This is not a very common approach in education and exists only where regional governments feel sidelined by the national language policy. In China, Mandarin language is officially used alongside Chinese and English making Hong Kong education multilingual (Dutcher & Tucker, 1994 & Zhou & Sun, 2004).

2.1.5 Transitional approach

‘Transitional’ which is another form of language of instruction approach is also referred to as ‘bridging’. This approach involves children being instructed in first language in the first part of primary school education. Later the first language is replaced by a second language at some point within primary school education. Exit from first language to second language of instruction is either early or late. Early exit involves children being instructed in first language in the first two or three years of primary education while late exit is up to six years. Early exit is also referred to as a ‘short cut’. Late exit is recommended on the grounds that competence in first language translates to competence in second language and/or other learning that goes with that language. This form of approach is practiced in
some African countries as a language of instruction policy. For example in Kenya the language of instruction policy requires that pupils in lower primary be instructed in mother tongue or language of the catchment area and then exit to English in the fourth year (Gachathi Report, 1976).

This Short cut or early exit is also a common feature in Uganda and Zambia (Mbaabu, 1996 & Mundia, 1982). In both early and late exits children are taught the second language as a subject in the hope that it will be possible to use it as a language of instruction when pupils finally exit into it. However, in the case of early exit there is likelihood that if the first language is not actively used in social interactions some children may not gain the required competence to use it in later life. It is nonetheless important that children get competence in a language that will be used at national and international social and official interactions. In the case of Kenya English language is expected to play such a role.

2.1.6 Maintenance approach

Another approach to language of instruction policy is ‘maintenance approach’. This is also referred to as additive bilingual education because addition of a new language(s) (L2) as language of instruction does not replace the first language (L1). At the start L1 is the medium of instruction while L2 is studied as a subject. After children are fluent and can use L2 as a medium of instruction L1 becomes a
subject of study in the curriculum. The purpose of this approach is to make children academically proficient in both first languages and any other language.

However, in this approach some children study in a foreign language all through their education life. This is because the language of instruction regarded as first language could just be that of the catchment area but not necessarily the first language of every pupil in the class. This happens where children from minority language speakers go to school together with children of majority language speakers. Children who benefit most are those whose first language is used as the language of instruction. This is because they are likely to gain competence in use of first language in their ethnic society’s activities and second language for national and international transactions (Ball, 2010).

2.1.7 Immersion approach

‘Immersion’ is another approach in language of instruction. This approach involves a child receiving education instruction in a foreign language throughout his or her social life. This is the situation where a foreign language is used as the language of instruction. For example, in Kenya, the ‘English Medium Approach’ of 1969 required children to be taught in English right from standard one. Mother tongues were only allocated a single lesson per week for story telling as recommended in the Ominde (1964) report. Although English was a foreign language, majority embraced it as a language of instruction. This was possibly
because of the high value attached to English as a language of socio-economic and political mobility. However, subsequent policies on education did not find it a viable venture and have recommended that first language is important as the language of instruction in the first years of primary school education (Gachathi, 1976; Mbaabu, 1996 & Koech, 1999). Whether, this is working needed to be investigated.

2.1.8 Submersion language of instruction

The eighth and last approach choice of language of instruction is the ‘Submersion’. This is also referred to as ‘sink’ or ‘swim’ into language. This is mostly practiced where language choices are made from among local languages. Speakers of non-dominant languages have no choice but to receive education in the language of dominant speakers. In Kenya, there are societies that receive education in the early years in a language of the majority. For example the Embu people have been receiving education in Gĩkũyũ. This is also the case among Kalenjins, Abaluhyia, Miji Kenda and many others (Mbaabu, 1996). The main reason for this could be lack of resources in terms of materials, capital and personnel. It was important to find out whether a society with a language of majority was adhering to the recommended policy on language of instruction.
2.2 Language Policies across the World

After making national language policy decisions, a country must make a language policy in education. This is because education plays an important role in national policy implementation (Tollefson, 2002). Without comprehensive language policies in education and viable plans of implementation the national language policy is likely not to serve the purpose it was meant for. This has been experienced in countries that have politically designed language policies that are haphazardly planned and end up with serious repercussions including denying learners the rights to receive early education in their first language. The following section reviews policies in various parts of the world.

2.2.1 Language policy in Europe

Languages of instruction choices in English dominated countries have been influenced by the existing social circumstances. In United States for example the official language, English, can be attributed to vast English permanent settlement of immigrants which started with the Polish at the state of Virginia (Tollefson & Tsui, 2004). However, with time some states have established bilingual education. Bilingual education entails the use of English and some local languages as the medium of instruction. The first experience in bilingualism started when the Polish Franciscan missionaries taught Catholic catechism in indigenous languages such as Czechs, Dutch, French, German, Norwegian, Spanish and Swedish (Grimes, 1992; Heinz, 1998 & SIM, 1995). Ohio was the first to adopt bilingual
education in English and German (Heinz, 1998). Other states that have adopted bilingual education in English and the language of the majority of inhabitants are Louisiana with French and English, New Mexico with Spanish and English. However, the language policy in United States advocates for homogeneity where English language is the official language recognized by the government (Crawford, 2004; Heinz, 1998 & Tollefson & Tsui, 2004).

Governments of European Union states have made language policies in education at regional, international, national and country or local levels. While English is highly recognized as the main official language, it is not a first language (L1) in all states. In Wales for example, Welsh language is successfully used as the language of instruction right from the start of education and where English is the language of instruction Welsh is a compulsory subject. The language of instruction policy in education is guided by the language situation in Europe. The modern Europe can broadly be described as having three major languages (English, French and German) used by the majority of its inhabitants (Canagarajah, 2005).

There are eleven official languages in the European Union (EU): Danish, Dutch, English, Finnish, French, German, Greek, Italian, Portuguese, Spanish and Swedish (Corson, 2001; Grimes, 1992; Menken & Garcia, 2010 & Tollefson, 2002). Interestingly every European Union member state has its own multiple
languages. A good example is in United Kingdom (UK) where apart from English the other native languages are Welsh, Manx Gaelic, Cornish, Scottish Gaelic and Scots language. In the states that make UK such as Wales several indigenous languages are spoken. Unlike European Union, the language of instruction in education in United States has been changing gradually (Menken & Garcia, 2010).

2.2.2 Language policy in the USA
The current practice in United States of America (USA) is bilingualism in the language of instruction in education. This is governed by an Education Act with an express aim of giving immigrants access to education in their first language especially in early childhood. This has been realized through political pressure of language minorities and indigenous language revitalization movements. This bilingualism, therefore, focuses on English Language Learners (ELL) to ensure that non English-speaking children do not fall behind their peers in mathematics, science and social studies while they master English. The argument is that bilingual education programmes are better than English only programmes (Heinz, 1998 & Tollefson & Tsui, 2004). According to Crawford (2004) English is a major language of instruction with an emphasis on bilingualism influenced by research findings which have shown that proficiency in English alone did not translate to academic achievement. Therefore, learners are required to have learnt
a second language (L2) by the time they complete elementary school which is equivalent to primary school in many African countries.

2.2.3 Language policies in Canada and Far East

Educational policies in language of instruction in Canada, Spain, Japan, China, Hong Kong and Australian have shown that regional or local languages are vital even with the embracement of the so called global languages. In Australia for instance, the government has started a programme aimed at revitalization of the indigenous languages (Baldauf, 2005). This is seen as an effort aimed at providing effective education from pre-primary school through to senior secondary at all the community education centers. English is regarded as L2 and is supported by government funding. In China, Hong Kong and India bilingual education is practiced where Chinese, Cantonese (Hong Kong) and Hindi are official languages and also language of instruction in schools alongside English language (Zhou & Sun, 2004). English is regarded as official L2 that is learnt in all schools.

Where English language is used as the medium of instruction, the official national language is a mandatory subject. English is becoming more popular in India due to its educational role at the universities. Local languages have their role in elementary education and some local schools have chosen and made them mandatory subjects. An example is Mandarin Chinese in Hongkong (Dutcher & Tucker, 1994). This means that local languages can be used in education and
English still remain an important language of international and global interactions.

2.2.4 Language policy in Middle East

The Middle East is one region where cultural, religious or ethnic languages have played a big role in education. Hebrew in Israel and Arabic in Iraq are official languages as well as the languages of instruction in schools because of their strategic roles in religion and ethnicity positions (Collier, 1995; Dutcher & Tucker, 1994; Grimes, 1992 & Menken & Garcia, 2010). For example in Israel, the Jewish or Christian and Islamic dominated regions either use Hebrew or Arabic respectively as the languages of instruction in pre-schools and beyond. Where English is used as the medium of instruction the religious/ethnic language is a mandatory subject in the school curriculum right from early childhood. In Iraq, Kurdish is taught alongside Arabic. Former French colonies in North Africa such as Tunisia and Algeria that are predominantly Muslim and expected to use Arabic, chose and adopted the colonial language particularly - French as the national language as well as the language of instruction in schools (Lin & Martin, 2005).

2.2.5 Language policy in Africa

The African situation in language of instruction policy in education is normally one on one where official language is automatically the language of education.
However, some countries choose more than one language to be used for both official government functions and social activities like education. In other situations one or several of the many majority languages are given official status. This is the case with South Africa, Nigeria and Zambia (Mundia, 1982 & Rubagumya, 1990) where several indigenous languages are part of the school curriculum. South Africa in particular recognizes 11 languages as both official and languages of instruction in education. Nigeria is a giant multilingual and multiethnic country in Africa with over 800 recognized languages. Eight of these languages have been chosen as official languages alongside English and are part of curriculum in formal education. The eight languages are studied up to university level of education (Rubagumya, 1994).

The use of the mother-tongue-based language of instruction in education in Sub-Saharan Africa is only in a few countries (World Bank Report, 1995). Only in eight countries is mother-tongue-based language of instruction in formal education is being practiced. These countries include South Africa, Nigeria, Chad, Ethiopia, Sudan, Somalia, Tanzania and Zimbabwe. Some of these countries use African languages in educational instruction at senior primary and secondary level. Nonetheless, the use of mother-tongue-based language of instruction has been opposed by some scholars (Mazrui, 1995). They argue that in countries with the most complex language situation the use of the colonizer’s language (especially English) after independence provides a common basis.
Mazrui (1995) contends that the World Bank encouragement of the use of African mother tongues as languages of instruction in elementary education is a gimmick of under-developing the continent. This is a view which is highly disputed by Ngugi (1986) who prefers vernacular in literacy and then translation to reach the global readers. This shows that language policy for education in developing countries is still a difficult endeavor. However, the greatest concern is whether the mother tongue-based language of instruction policies are implemented as expected. This is the main concern in a country like Kenya.

### 2.2.6 Language policies in Kenya

Kenyan people are of diverse ethnic origin. There are over 42 vernacular languages including Kiswahili. English, though a foreign language has taken root as a day today language of communication among the modern elites. To cater for language diversity in education, the colonial government initially allowed the use of some mother tongues in early years of education in African schools (Guthrie, 1969; Barasa, 2005; Mbaabu, 1996 & Sifuna, 1980). How well these languages were utilized in education has remained a contested topic in studies of language policies implementation.

Soon after independence English was chosen and introduced as the language of instruction in schools. This was the ‘immersion’ language of instruction approach
in education. This was done through a Commission of Inquiry into Education (Ominde Commission, 1964). Consequently by 1966, Nyeri District had 319 Standard One classes that had adopted the New Primary Approach where English was the only language of instruction (Mbaabu, 1996). Since then, the use of English in education in Nyeri has been highly regarded by those of the old school and it is gaining popularity in the modern generation as well. This, however, if it is the practice in lower primary schools it would be against the current language of instruction policy in education.

In 1976, mother tongue was considered to be the most suitable choice of language instruction in the vast majority of lower primary classes following the recommendations by the Gachathi Commission (Republic of Kenya, 1976 – Gachathi commission). Through a circular released by the Ministry of Education a clear guideline was given that mother tongue be used as the language of instruction in lower primary school while English and Kiswahili were to be taught as subjects (Ministry of Education, Kenya 1976). English was to be adopted as the medium of instruction from standard four and beyond.

Kiswahili and English have been the national and official languages respectively since independence (Mbaabu, 1996). However, the current constitution has uplifted Kiswahili to an official language position together with English (Government of Kenya, 2010). The impact of the choice of Kiswahili as an
official language is yet to be seen. The Constitution has also recognized the
importance of local languages for their cultural role. Some of these languages
notably, Dholuo, Gĩkũyũ and Gĩkamba have a recognized vernacular grammar
and dictionary. Also in existence is written literature for about half of the
vernacular languages expected to be used in lower primary schools. According to
a UNESCO Report (Daily Nation, Friday 19th November, 2010) some native
languages in Kenya such as Suba, Burji, Boni, Bongom, Ongamo, Omotik and
Dahalo are on the verge of extinction. Others like Elmoro, Kore, Sogoo, Yaaku,
Lorkot and Kinare are already extinct. Such languages are ‘swallowed’ by the
languages which provide more chances of ‘civic participation and economic
advancement’ (UNESCO, 2014). The extinction of these languages could be due
to lack of being chosen as languages of instruction.

The trend in Kenya is that children born in upper and middle income families are
likely to acquire and/or learn English or Kiswahili or even German and French
before their mother tongue. The Ministry of Education is refocusing on the need
to implement the mother tongue policy in education (Republic of Kenya, 2012).
For children to participate in education and preserve cultural heritage in language
serious decisions on choice and implementation of mother tongue-based language
of instruction may need to be readdressed.
2.3 Language Policy Implementation

Implementation, monitoring and evaluation are major components of language policy planning and development (Tollefson, 2002). It has been argued that states have been quick in formulating policies including those of education but with no proper plans of implementation. An implementation plan entails making clear decisions on resources available in terms of personnel, capital and materials. This has been a major handicap in many developing countries (Rubagumya, 1990; 1994 & Eshiwani, 1990). This is because language policy planning approach has been a ‘top-bottom approach’. The society that is expected to adopt these policies is not normally consulted and governments expect that citizens will accept such policies unquestioningly.

Many countries have specific Ministries or departments responsible for education policies. Such institutions are expected not only to formulate policies but also come up with clear plans of implementation and follow up at school level. The ministries and institutions responsible must in particular address language of instruction in early childhood. This is one of the education policies that have had issues of implementation particularly in schools with multilingual communities (Menken & Garcia, 2010). This is especially a major concern in Africa, Middle East and Asia. Communities and individual schools are continually negotiating on choices of language of instruction on the basis of market demands –parents, learners, teachers among others (Menken & Garcia, 2010). Choices made for
lower primary instruction needed to be analyzed because they impact on children’s social and educational progress.

In US and UK language of instruction in education policies are well spelt out and departments responsible of education ensure implementation. However, issues have risen where indigenous languages have been ignored in education. For instance in US, in order to ensure that immigrants receive early childhood education in their first language political minorities and indigenous language revitalization movements have pushed for their consideration. This has so far been fruitful in some states.

A case at hand is in a study that was carried out in Arizona involving ten primary schools randomly selected to find out opinion of the indigenous people on the use of English as the official language of education. The survey showed that the schools did not only teach indigenous languages but endeavoured to use them as medium of instruction (McLine, 2001). The survey further showed that teachers, parents and learners of the Indians of the Navajo nation in Arizona had a higher preference of their indigenous language. Of the subjects studied 91% preferred to use indigenous language to English while 78% had a preference of bilingual education where English and indigenous languages ran simultaneously. Parents had a higher preference of indigenous languages than pupils and teachers. Pupils in elementary classes had a higher preference of indigenous languages than those
in secondary schools and colleges. This was a survey and more of a general opinion than an in-depth investigation of status of implementation. This survey was also carried out in a state that was resisting official language policy of education with a case challenging the same in court. It was therefore necessary to do an in-depth study to find out status of implementation of official language of instruction policy in Nyeri County in Kenya.

Another country that is interesting to consider in addressing implementation of language of instruction in education is Korea. A study was done by Jung and Norton (2002) to assess the status of implementation of ‘New Elementary English Approach’. The study aimed at investigating the relationship between the formulation of language policy by the government and the implementation of such a policy by the teachers and education administrators. Three schools were purposefully selected in Seoul region of Korea. Data collection was done through case study. Four policy makers were interviewed and questionnaires were administered to 17 sampled teachers and learners who were also observed during the teaching learning process. Official documents relating to language policy in education were analyzed. The findings showed that 90% of the teachers supported introduction of English as a subject while 60% opposed over emphasis of English against other foreign languages. It was noted that, although teachers were trained to teach English, majority were not proficient in English language and could not lead a class effectively in a foreign language. However, this study did not
compare English teaching with alternative local languages of Seoul. This study aimed at bridging the gap in information on implementation of language policy in schools where local languages are the alternatives to English language.

South Africa as a country has tried to adhere to the procedures in language policy planning and implementation (Mundia, 1982 & Rubagumya, 1990). The main aim is to retain the country’s cultural diversity and respect among linguistic groups. Over 80 indigenous languages and English are considered as local languages and used in education. The initial choice of 11 official languages was driven by political reasons at independence. However, a language plan task group was mandated to seek the opinion of the citizens and establish a plan of action towards implementation of a comprehensive language policy in education. This, according to the study has been fruitful in the sense that early grades education has adopted the policy where regional languages are used in education. Such are Afrikaans, Ndebele, Zulu, Xhosa and Tswana, Sotho, Venda, Tsongo alongside English. (Rubagumya, 1990 & 1994). The issue of choice of language of instruction in South Africa is still being pursued (Ntsiki, 2009).

A survey of Gauteng province of South Africa shows that African states seem to be adopting strategies meant to strengthen implementation process of language of instruction policy both at regional and national education level. The study was on effects of language shifts in education in the early grades in Gauteng province of
South Africa. The findings of this study show that countries easily adopt changes that are community driven (Ntsiki, 2009). This study targeted Matric level of education which is equivalent to primary school education in Kenya. A questionnaire was sent to ten percent of both public and private schools. Stratified sampling method was used to select schools with a representation of the public and private, rural and urban. The return rate was 80%. The results showed that policy implementers and other stakeholders had started adopting the government policy of educating children in their mother tongue up to Grade 6 rather than the previous grade three. The teacher training colleges had produced more teachers competent in mother tongues. Learners were being attended to at school in mother tongue linguistic groupings. As a result English was poorly taught and its performance seriously affected. However some parents were still pushing schools to use English as the language of instruction. Ntsiki’s study used a questionnaire. Interviews and observations could have produced more inner opinions especially on parents’ reasons for resistance to implementation of the policy despite having been involved in its development.

A study of the problem of teaching and learning mother tongue as a subject in primary schools of Zambia gives a situation of serious challenges (Mundia, 1982). The study aimed at investigating the capacity and attitude of teachers, supply and dissemination of teaching materials and a comparison of one local language (Silozi) with English language. It was noted that teachers were not adequately
trained to handle mother tongues, teaching materials were inadequate, and parents, teachers and learners did not see any educational value in it. However, this study did not focus on mother tongue policy implementation and factors influencing the same.

The place of English in implementation of language policy in education in countries with a local language as the official language has been characterized by dilemmas. In Ethiopia for example, language policy is a mixture of Amharic (indigenous language) in primary school education and a pragmatic unwritten policy in favour of English as a language of secondary school education and higher learning. In a study by McNab (1989) on implementation dilemmas of the language policy and language practice it was noted that there are weak points in implementation touching on teachers’ training, lack of in-service support and historical imbalances. This study focused more on language planning and national implementation activities in Ethiopia rather than the factors likely to impede on the same at school level.

A few studies in East Africa on language policy and practice show that parents, teachers and pupils have varied preferences on language of instruction choices. Muthwii (2002) conducted a study that involved parents, teachers and pupils in upper primary school (12-16 years in rural schools and 11-13 years in urban schools). This study explored the attitudes, views and perceptions of parents,
pupils and teachers on language use as a tool for enhancing pupils acquisition of an all round education in particular language skills among the major language groups in Kenya and Uganda. The study observed that although Kenya’s language policy is clear concerning the place of mother tongue in curriculum, the relationship between mother tongue and languages of wider communication has never been addressed publicly and systematically. It was noted that there is a serious problem in implementing of the mother tongue policy which was the concern of this study. Muthwii used self reports, focus group discussions and structured interviews. Self reports do not always accurately reflect actual language behavior (Milroy, 1987) while structured interviews narrows the responses. A study using actual language observation and unstructured interviews was found useful to investigate factors influencing language choices in lower primary schools.

The Koech (1999) report raised concern on the issue of introducing children to foreign languages in Kenya too early in their education life. This was despite the 1976 Ministry of Education circular on language policy. The report underscored risks of introducing children to education in a foreign language. Such include school dropout, repetition and wastage. It also pointed out that since the 1976 circular there has not been any serious follow up on language of instruction from the policy makers or curriculum developers. The result is a mixed adoption of the language of instruction especially in the formative years of education.
A study by Murundu (2010) in Emuhaya District in Kenya showed that only one fifth of the pre-primary education centers used the recommended mother tongue-based language of instruction in sampled pre-primary schools. This was attributed to limited follow up on implementation by the Ministry of Education. The study was not on language of instruction per se and focused on pre-primary classes where language of instruction was only implied. It was therefore necessary to carry out an in-depth situational analysis of the language of instruction choices in standard one to three where the language policy on instruction in education is clearly spelt out.

Another study in early childhood education by Munyeki (1997) showed that lack of mother tongue text books and teachers’ incompetency in mother tongue is considered as a hindrance to implementation of early childhood curriculum. Munyeki’s study surveyed perceptions and utilization of selected factors on mother tongue teaching in nursery schools in Githunguri District, Kiambu County, Kenya. This study too did not address standard one to three and was exploratory in nature rather than in-depth.

2.4 Factors Influencing Language of Instruction Policy Implementation

The preceding reviews of literature have pointed out some factors likely to influence language policy in early childhood education. These factors include policy and culture, perception of teachers, parents and pupils’ preferences, lack of
seriousness in curriculum implementation, lack of monitoring, inappropriate and inadequate teaching-learning materials, the value attached to various languages and external pressure (McNab, 1989; Mundia, 1982; Munyeki, 1997 & Muthwii, 2002). In this section a few factors that have been considered to have a strong influence on choices made in language of instruction in early childhood education are discussed.

2.4.1 Policy and culture

Ministry of Education makes policy guidelines on language of instruction. The current policy emanated from the Gachathi Report of 1976. However, the cultural values determine whether the language policy is adopted or not. According to Eshiwani (1990), language policy implementation process in Kenya is not clear and does not always bear the general aims of education in mind. It creates a ‘contradiction in the objectives’. For example, national early childhood development policy framework does not clearly state the language policy for pre-primary school education. However, the policy is clearly spelt out for standard one, two and three. Even with a clear policy guideline, cultural values and belief systems are likely to influence the choice of language of instruction in early childhood education. Nonetheless, education policies including that of language of instruction are likely to be influenced by politics and cultural values at play in the time of formulation.
2.4.2 School factors

All schools in Kenya are regulated by the Ministry of Education. They are, therefore, required to adhere to the education policy including the language policy. However, the location, type of school and management will influence the extent to which a given policy is adopted. Mundia (1982) and Muthwii (2002) studies show that rural and urban, private and public schools have made varied choices on language of instruction. The private school education providers appear not to be fully controlled by Ministry of Education regulations. The private and urban schools have created an impression that quality education is about using English language as the medium of instruction right from pre-primary school level. This is likely to influence the views of teachers and parents in public schools.

2.4.3 Teacher factors

Teachers have different perceptions of different languages. In a study carried out in some parts of Kenya and Uganda, teachers considered English language to be the most appropriate medium of instruction in both mono and multilingual settings (Muthwii, 2002). One of the reasons the teachers gave was that English is the language of instruction and examination. The other issue they raised was lack of accurate vocabulary for science and technology in vernaculars. Some teachers reported that that they had no adequate skills in their mother tongues. However, even with preference to introduce English and Kiswahili early, teachers
particularly in public schools reported that they had to translate into mother
tongue substantial content when teaching to ensure learning is effective.

The described scenario can be blamed on teacher training in language of
instruction. According to Mbaabu (1996) teacher training colleges do not give any
specific training on mother tongues yet the student teachers are expected to teach
in these languages during teaching practice or when they are finally employed.
The Teachers Service Commission, the body responsible for employment of the
teachers, does not consider proficiency in mother tongue or ethnic origin when
posting the teachers to schools. The current crop of teachers is also a product of a
training that has little emphasis on language of instruction. To make the teachers
effective in delivering curriculum in vernacular, in South Africa teachers are
given intense training in the use of their vernacular languages (Ntsiki, 2009). It
was therefore found necessary to find out whether teachers’ preference influenced
language practice in the teaching-learning process in Nyeri County, Kenya.

2.4.4 Parent factors

Parents may have an influence on the choice of language of instruction in schools.
Their influence may be through indirectly pressurizing the teachers or schools to
use a certain language. This could be because of ignorance. Some parents may not
be aware of the role of mother tongue or first language in education. Sometimes
they consider English to be superior as a language of social mobility and
education advancement (Mbaabu, 1996). Some parents indirectly demanded or put pressure on schools to use English. Parents may withdraw children from schools that use mother tongue in early childhood or simply enroll them in schools that use English language right from pre-primary school. In the study by Muthwii (2002), some parents felt that Mathematics and Science should be taught in a ‘child’s own language’. This, they said, would help their children understand well. The parents with children in rural settings preferred use of mother tongue as a language of instruction at least for the lower primary classes. Parents from semi urban areas preferred Kiswahili as the language of instruction in primary school education. Their argument was that most children joined school with no English language at all and that mother tongue would enable them to understand teachers’ explanations better.

Parents from the urban areas whose children go through nursery education in English preferred the same for them in the rest of schooling. Parents with an English-biased perception on language of instruction considered schools using English from primary 1 as being progressive. Like the teachers, they also argued that instruction materials are readily available in English and that mother tongue was limited in vocabulary. They also said that English competency would help young scholars to compete with Europeans and Americans in field of science and technology.
Some literate parents supported the need to mix mother tongue and English as language of instruction in lower primary classes. Most parents were in agreement that language of instruction in upper primary classes should be English. This was because most of the national examinations particularly at completion of primary school education are written in English. They also argued that, at upper primary school level children are assumed to be conversant in the use of English language. Since these were parents perceptions it is necessary to investigate whether they influence language of instruction choice in schools.

2.4.5 **Education officer factors**

The Ministry of Education has officers in charge at all ministerial levels to man policy implementation. At the district level there are education administrators, quality assurance and standard officers, teacher advisory tutors and pre-primary teacher trainers. These are expected to coordinate education in their area of jurisdiction and ensure that language policy is implemented in all the schools. However, just like the TSC, the Ministry does not consider ethnic origin or knowledge in the language of the catchment area when posting the education officers. These officers also seem to have varied preferences and perceptions to both mother tongue and English languages. A major problem worldwide in the field of language teaching is the popular belief that anyone who can speak a language can teach it (ESK, 1982). The fact, however is, that the language teaching requires a special combination of knowledge and specific skills that is
always hard to find, and finding teachers who have it should be the first concern of any good administration (Pennington, 1989). It is therefore not clear whether these officers make a serious follow up in implementation of language of instruction policy or to what extent they influence language of instruction choice in schools.

2.4.6 Learner factors

Pupils’ awareness of language policy in education is not a consideration in making choices of language of instruction, admission to lower primary or choosing the teachers to teach them (Eshiwani, 1990 & 1993, Mbaabu, 1996 & KIE, 2007). They therefore receive education in the language they find in a given school. However, the choice of language of instruction by individual teachers or schools is likely to be influenced by the pupils indirectly though their entry behaviour. For instance, majority of children in Kenya join pre-primary or standard one class with no knowledge of English language. Such pupils have limited competency in their mother tongue. This means that the teachers or school managers have to make a choice on language of instruction. In higher primary classes pupils can easily express their language preference.

In a study by Muthwii (2002) majority of Kenyan and Ugandan pupils in upper primary would prefer English as the language of education after standard four. However those from monolingual rural setting from the two countries preferred
mother tongue as language of instruction and examinations. This, they argued, is the language they understood at length because it is used both at home and school environment. In Kampala district, predominantly urban, mother tongue was preferred language of instruction. The majority in Kampala are particularly Baganda who are said to be proud of their Luganda language.

The children who were opposed to mother tongue as language of instruction said it would be difficult learning science and sitting examinations set in English. Other learners argued that they lacked fluency or ability to read the written mother tongue (Muthwii, 2002). They also said that English is an indicator of how educated one is.

In Kenya urban multilingual from under privileged schools preferred to be taught in Kiswahili in lower classes and English in upper classes. They said that English ‘helped them to pass examination well and have a bright future’ (Muthwii, 2002). Pupils from rural monolingual settings preferred teachers to clarify important concepts in mother tongue or Kiswahili. This showed that though English was preferred for purpose of examination children did not have a proper grasp of this language. Muthwii’s study showed that children seemed confused on the issue of language of instruction and that of examination. While they preferred English, they said they understood better in mother tongue or Kiswahili.
2.4.7  Literacy material factors

Teaching and learning materials in a language are said to contribute highly in the teaching and learning process. One of the major activities in language policy implementation is to ensure there are relevant instructional materials (Mbaabu, 1996 & Donahue, 2002). Available studies have raised issues concerning vernacular materials in learning institutions. For example in Zambia, Mundia (1982) noted that the mother tongue syllabus was not detailed and available books not graded. It would be necessary to investigate the availability of mother tongue materials used during lessons of language of catchment area in early childhood education classes.

2.5 Summary of Literature Review

From the preceding literature review it can be noted that:

Language of instruction dilemmas exist in many multilingual and multiethnic countries. Although these countries have made language policies in education the schools or regions have other local or regional languages competing for consideration. This is normally because of the functions of such languages in social interactions.

Existence of language of instruction policies does not translate to implementation. It has been observed that only a small percent of schools seem to use the recommended language of instruction. This means that schools make own choices
on which language is to be used at which level of education. It was therefore necessary to find out the factors likely to influence such choices.

Available studies have focused on language policy in general or other levels of education other lower primary school. Studies touching on language of instruction have been in pre-primary, upper primary or simply the language of a country. It was therefore necessary to carry out a study at lower primary school. This is the level at which formal education starts and lays foundation to progress in schooling and education advancement.

Studies on factors influencing language of instruction choices are limited. Available studies have focused on curriculum implementation, perceptions on language of instruction and role of mother tongue among others. It was necessary therefore to find out the extent to which various factors relating to school, teachers, parents and pupils influence language choices in schools.

The main method of data collection in the available studies on language of instruction policy is survey. A survey is an exploratory method of research and does not produce in-depth data. It was necessary to make an in-depth situational analysis through a descriptive study. This was hoped to produce details concerning language practices in lower primary school which is a crucial transitional stage of children from home to school life.
CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the research design, description of study location, variables, population, sample and sampling techniques, research instruments and pilot study. Methods of data collection and analysis, and ethical considerations in research are also addressed.

3.1 Research Design

This study adopted a descriptive survey research design. This design was appropriate in this qualitative study for ‘extensive and intensive’ collection and examination of in-depth data (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007) on the issue of the extent of use of language of catchment area in instruction in lower primary school classes as recommended in the education policy in Kenya. Application of the language policy or lack of it is a complex process involving interplay of a combination of factors that cannot be easily understood without using a design that provides room for situational analysis and investigation of various factors and the inter-relationship existing between them. The use of a descriptive survey research design enabled the researcher to establish and intensively examine how school, teacher and parent factors interact to influence the language of instruction in lower primary school.
3.2 Variables

There were two levels of variables in this study. Independent variables included factors related to school, teachers and parents. The dependent variables were the different languages, language combination or medium of instruction strategies in use for instruction in standard one to three in early childhood education. These variables are described here below.

3.2.1 Independent variables

There were four independent variables. These related to the factors that influence choices of language of instruction in lower primary school classes. They included:

a) Type of School. The type of school had to do with the school management in terms of whether it is public or private. Public schools were those owned by the community and directly supported by the government through personnel and funds. Private schools were all those that are owned by individuals, religious institutions and companies. Data on this variable were measured on a nominal scale.

b) Teachers’ Language Preference. In this variable consideration was on the language(s) the teachers prefer in formal lesson instruction and during non-formal communication with pupils. A frequency tally was made on the number of times a teacher delivers a message in one language or the other during classroom
instruction and during other activities in the school. The languages expected to be used were mother tongue, Kiswahili or English. This variable was measured on a four level scale of preference; ‘highly preferred’, ‘moderately preferred’, ‘lowly preferred’ or ‘not preferred’. Reasons for using a certain type of language were recorded. This variable therefore consisted of frequency data categorised into four levels.

c) **Parent’s Language Preference.** The consideration in this variable was made on the language parents frequently use. More specifically was the language the parents used at home with their children and the one they preferred when their children are being taught in school. The reasons given for the preference of a certain language were recorded. Expected languages are mother tongue, Kiswahili and English.

### 3.2.2 Dependent variables

The dependent variables were the observed language of instruction in a given school. The observed scenarios during lesson delivery took any of the following forms:

1) **Kikuyu language only** - the teacher and pupils communicated in Kikuyu language.

2) **English language only** – the teacher and pupils communicated in English language.
3) Kiswahili language only - the teacher and pupils communicated in Kiswahili.

4) English and Kiswahili languages – either the teacher or the pupil communicated in English or Kiswahili and the other responded in the alternative language.

5) English and Kikuyu languages – either the teacher or the pupil communicated in either English or Kikuyu and the other responded in the alternative language.

6) Kiswahili and Kikuyu languages – either the teacher or the pupil communicated in either English or Kiswahili and the other responded in the alternative language.

7) English, Kiswahili and Kikuyu languages – the three languages were used alternatively by either the teacher or the pupil in communication.

8) Code-switching and code mixing medium of instruction strategies – code switching is where either the teacher or the pupil uses two or more languages alternatively in communication, while code mixing is using two or more languages in delivering the same message. This was likely to take the following forms:

   (i) Kikuyu-English. Switching or mixing Kikuyu and English by either or both the teacher and the pupil.

   (ii) Kikuyu-Kiswahili. Switching or mixing Kikuyu and Kiswahili by either or both the teacher and the pupil.
(iii) English-Kiswahili. Switching or mixing English and Kiswahili by either or both the teacher and the pupil.

(iv) Kikuyu-English-Kiswahili. Switching or mixing Kikuyu, English and Kiswahili by either or both the teacher and the pupil.

9) ‘Sheng’ – this is a corrupted form of communication or self-invented ‘language’ or slang among the young generation especially in the urban centers. It can be a mixture of several known languages or a common communication with words that cannot be easily placed in a known language. It was likely to take the following forms:

(i) Predominantly English – English language words were more evident.

(ii) Predominantly Kiswahili – Kiswahili language words were more evident

(iii) Predominantly ‘sheng’ – ‘strange’ slang more evident

3.3 Location of the Study

The study was carried out in Nyeri County. The region was selected because in an earlier study on vocabulary spurt occurrence in the Kikuyu language (Githinji, 2007), it was noted that majority of the children had undergone a vocabulary spurt within the expected age of 18 to 24 months. This implied normal development. However, it was not known whether the normal language development was sustained when children went to school. Its sustenance is dependent on choice of
language of instruction. In addition, this district is located at the headquarters of Nyeri County which had previously served as the provincial headquarters of the Central province of Kenya (now commonly referred to as the central region). This means that most of the communities are represented in both formal and non-formal employment. Their children attend the local schools. Some schools are located in the town centre, slum areas, within coffee plantations and extreme rural set ups. This means that choices of language of instruction in some of the schools were likely to be in conflict with the laid down policy. It was therefore necessary to find out what languages were chosen for instruction and whether locality, management, parents or teachers influenced the choices made. Nyeri County was also an area where the implementation status of the language of instruction policy in early childhood education had not been documented. Lastly, performance in national examinations at primary school level in this area has been deteriorating in the recent past (Ministry of Education, 2014). The most poorly performed subjects were the languages, mathematics and science. As noted earlier teaching in an unfamiliar language negatively affects language learning and is likely to affect other subjects that require the same in transmission of knowledge and concepts.

### 3.4 Target Population

The target population for this study was the lower primary school, teachers and parents. The choice of lower primary was influenced by the fact that it is at this
level that a child’s foundation for future education and social success is laid. In addition previous studies appear to suggest that this transition stage to formal learning is most hit by an inappropriate choice of the language of instruction. According to the language policy, at the lower primary school, children are supposed to be instructed in the language of the catchment area. In the case of Nyeri County the predominant language is Gĩkũyũ which is the language of the catchment area hence should be used as the medium of instruction. However, the situation was likely to be different due to various reasons. Some children may be from ethnic backgrounds different from Agĩkũyũ. Some Agĩkũyũ children may not have been exposed to the Gĩkũyũ language for various reasons. In addition the mastery of the Gĩkũyũ language is likely to vary among pupils.

The teachers were also likely to vary in their understanding and preference of various languages. Some teachers may not understand the Gĩkũyũ language because the Teachers Service Commission, the teacher employment body, does not consider linguistic background when posting teachers. Others may have been from the Agĩkũyũ ethnic community but may not have been exposed to Gĩkũyũ as the first language or they could have been in schools that did not use the language. Also as noted by Mbaabu (1996) the teachers are not given specialized training on use of vernacular during teacher training. Parents were also likely to vary in the value they attach to various languages. Some parents may have been from other linguistic backgrounds other than Gĩkũyũ. There could be parents who do not
understand the importance of the first language in early childhood development. Some may have a preference for foreign languages over vernacular while others are likely to have a preference for mother tongue.

3.5 Sampling Techniques and Sample Size

A multistage sampling technique was used. This technique entailed proportionate sampling in two or more stages from groups within the target population. Nyeri County was purposefully selected to meet the characteristics of the target population that is - a Gikũyũ language dominated setting with influx of communities from other language groups. This was more likely than other counties due to the previous socio-political role of Nyeri town as the administrative headquarters of central region. Schools were put on strata based on rural and urban, public and private. Three schools that discriminated children joining standard one through an interview based on competence in answering questions in the English language or in English were avoided. Random sampling was employed to select four schools with equal representation - two private and two public with one urban and one rural school in each category. From each of the schools selected, the researcher picked three classes, a class at each of standard one, two and three for purpose of lesson observation. In schools with more than a stream per level random sampling was used to select one class per level.
The teachers to be interviewed automatically were the class teachers of the classes selected. This is because teachers at lower primary teach all nine subjects in the class assigned. This includes the languages offered in the school. It is therefore at the teacher’s disposal to choose the language of instruction irrespective of the national language policy or the school policy. Consequently, 12 teachers were observed while teaching and later each was interviewed separately.

Parents were purposefully selected to participate in the interview. The class teachers helped to identify three parents from each of the class levels in each type of school who encouraged the use of Kikuyu, English, Kiswahili or a combination of the possible language choices at early childhood level of education. This helped focus only on the parents that have an inclination to a certain language(s). Purposeful selection allowed for intensive examination of the phenomenon of language choice and the prevailing reasons for the choice made.

3.6 Research Instruments

The data was gathered using observation, interview and focus group discussion schedules. These instruments were considered most appropriate in situational analysis and in the collection of in-depth and extensive data in this qualitative research. The instruments used are described in detail below:
3.6.1 Lesson observation schedule

A note book, an observation schedule and voice recorder were used to record observation data during the lessons in lower primary school classes. Observations were written down in detail in the note book. This entailed detailed description of language practices by the teacher and pupils and prevailing circumstances. Direct utterances were also noted down.

The observation schedule helped gather information on the language used during lesson delivery. This was on the language used for instruction in each subject, on whether the teacher used more than one language in the same lesson and whether teacher-child or child-teacher communication was carried out in the same or varied language(s). The lesson observation schedule helped to identify language practices in the lessons’ introduction, teacher’s explanations, teacher’s questions, pupil’s responses, pupil’s questions, lesson conclusion and non-formal communication between the teacher and the pupil(s), among pupils and among teachers. A tally was made whenever a certain language practice was noted. Language practice was assessed on a statement that delivered a complete instructional message. The frequency tally showed the extent of use of a given language. See section A of Appendix I.

Although the participants were informed of the use of a voice recorder, it was discreetly used to avoid creating anxiety among the teachers and pupils during
their communication. The recorded information was later transcribed to allow for direct quotations and it also served as a back up to the other observation instruments.

3.6.2 Interview schedule for teachers

An interview schedule was used to interview the teachers. This schedule consisted of semi-structured questions. The interview schedule was more of a guide and questions were not asked directly as they appear on the schedule. This allowed for in-depth probing of matters to do with the choice made and the reasons given for the choice of language of instruction in the lower primary school classes.

The teachers’ interview schedule focused on the choice of language of the instruction in lower primary school classes. It helped seek information on which language(s) teachers preferred to use at this level. The choice focused on the various levels in lower primary school and the choice made for each subject and/or activity area. This schedule helped probe the teachers on the reasons for the choice made and the difficulties encountered in the use of mother tongue and/or other languages at this level. See Appendix II.

During the interview with the teachers, the researcher recorded responses in three ways; one method was by way of taking notes in a note book where detailed descriptions of the responses were noted down. The second one was the use of a
voice recorder. The voice recorder served as a backup for the information written
down during the interview. It was referred to when organising the data for
analysis. The third method was by way of ticking in the appropriate box and/or
writing down the responses in short form in the spaces available in the interview
schedule.

3.6.3 Focus group discussion schedule for parents

A focus group discussion schedule was used by the researcher to guide the parents
and focus them in discussing issues relating to language practice in lower primary
school. This schedule consisted of semi-structured questions. The focus group
discussion schedule was only a guide and questions were not asked directly as
they appeared on the schedule. This allowed for in-depth probing of matters to do
with the choice made and the reasons given for the choice on language of
instruction at lower primary school classes.

The parents’ focus group discussion schedule focused on their preference of the
language of instruction. It sought information on whether parents encouraged
teachers to use a certain language when teaching their children and reasons given
for that. In addition it sought information on the language(s) used between the
child and the parent and whether the language of instruction was discussed among
the parents in school forums. It further helped to find out the value the parents
attached to the language(s) they preferred for their children. See Appendix III.
During the group discussion with the parents, the researcher recorded responses in three ways; one method was by way of taking notes in a note book where detailed description of responses were noted down. The second one was by use of a voice recorder which they had been informed about. However, this was done discreetly to avoid distracting their attention in the focus group discussion. The voice recorder served as a backup for the information written down during the interview. It was referred to when organising the data for analysis. The third method was by way of ticking in the appropriate box and/or writing down the responses in short form in the spaces available in the focus group interview schedule.

3.7 Pilot Study

The instruments were pre-tested to allow for necessary adjustments and corrections on the selected items. One public and one private school from the study location were used in the pilot study. The researcher used the instruments by conducting the study at lower primary school classes by interviewing three teachers and holding a focus group discussion with three parents from each of the two schools. The pilot study schools were excluded from the main study. After the piloting, new items common to the population under study that had not been captured in the instrument were added. Such included:

- Effect of mother tongue on the language of instruction
- Availability of mother tongue materials
- Type of Sheng used at school/home
- **Role of the community in language of instruction**

Likewise items that were in the instruments that were not relevant for the study were eliminated. Such included:

- *Language(s) parents use when communicating with their children*
- *Whether Sheng is spoken at home*
- *Whether lower primary school pupils are punished for using a language different from the school’s rule.*

Any items that appeared to be ambiguous were adjusted accordingly. The purpose of this pilot study was to establish validity and reliability of research instruments.

### 3.7.1 Validity

Content validity was established through administration of the instruments to the pilot study sample to enable the researcher to identify items that needed to be included and those that needed to be adjusted or replaced in order to provide accurate and adequate information relating the variables under study. In addition, with the assistance of professionals who are specialists in this field, the researcher did an item analysis of the variables relating to those factors that influence choice of language of instruction. The item analysis was meant to ensure that the items accurately represented the independent and dependent variables under this study.

Cross-validation was also used. This is a popular validation strategy in qualitative research. It is also referred to as triangulation in that it allows for validating of the methods, sources and results of the study. It also ensures that descriptions are factual, interpretations are logically understandable and explanations are
theoretically based. According to Shank (2006) cross validation helps make a powerful contribution to support existing research and research hypotheses or questions through analysis of methods, sources and presenting interpretations from multiple perspectives. In this validation the following approaches were taken:

1. Cross-validation of the methods by cross-examining the data-collection methods that ensured that legal and ethical procedures were followed all through the data collection process. Specialists in the field of research were asked to conduct this validation.

2. Cross-validating the data sources by examining them at different points in the process of data-collection. At each point the researcher compared the differing viewpoints of people interviewed and the differences emerging from class observations. This ensured that the research data was taken from research-relevant individuals and places. Multiple data sources were analyzed to form a final understanding and interpretation of the study’s results. Feedback from the participants was requested. This was done by contacting subjects for clarification of recorded data. The researcher sought the feedback from participants by sharing the results with them. By agreeing with results, the research was considered to be valid.

3. Cross-validating analysis. The researcher requested other researchers (peer-review) to analyse or to review the findings. The aim was not to have all the analyses being in agreement, but rather to develop multiple
ways of looking at the data. However, where majority shared the views of the researcher the research was considered valid. Similarities and differences in the findings were considered in the report writing.

4. Developing a final theoretical understanding of the research. This was based on the aforementioned validation strategies. The multiple perspectives informed stronger data sets because when taken together versus individually results become stronger.

3.7.2 Reliability

Reliability was established through a variety of activities to ensure that the observation schedules, interviews and focus group discussions produced the same results. First and foremost it was the test-retest during the pilot study. The pilot study was repeated severally at the schools from the study area selected for this purpose. The instruments were administered severally over a period of four weeks to check whether they would produce the same results. The data collected and the methods of data collection were compared and contrasted. Modifications were made on instruments, ways of observing, methods interviewing and moderation of group discussion. The review of instruments and methods strengthened their reliability.

Another approach in ensuring reliability was by involving specialists in the research field, as well as peer reviews and supervisors’ comments. Two
specialists were engaged to observe the researcher as he administered the instruments during piloting. They were told to be as objective and critical as possible. The specialists gave very valuable feedback that helped the researcher to improve on both the approaches and instrument administration. Likewise two peers were requested to review the instruments against the data collected. Their feed was incorporated in adjusting the instruments and modifying the methods of data collection and analysis. The supervisors were given a mini report of the pilot study and their comments were very valuable in establishing reliability. This regular debriefing with supervisors was useful even in the actual study to ensure reliability.

Feedback from the participants was also useful in establishing reliability. The participants were given a summary of the transcripts and asked to criticize it. This included even the negative comments uttered by both teachers and parents about each other or about the children. This was important to gauge out their opinion and find out whether the transcription retained their message. They were able to confirm what they had said, refute some of the data and they clarified what was ambiguous in their natural communication. This helped the researcher to focus the instruments and methods.

In addition, reliability was also established by establishing the validity. This is because in qualitative studies the two are closely related (Golafshani, 2003).
Triangulation of which included cross-examining the methods of data collection, cross-examining the instruments and cross-examining analysis methods used in validation were also used in establishing reliability. This ensured that only well established instruments and methods were employed in this study.

Another method found useful in establishing reliability was through sampling. The variety of sampling methods ensured that the instruments were focused and methods of data collection and analysis were appropriate. In particular the random sampling technique ensured biasness was avoided.

Lastly reliability was also established during the pre-visit to the study site. This helped to develop trustworthiness which is a prerequisite in ensuring the study was credible. This helped developed early familiarity with the study site and participants. Various tactics were used to ensure honesty. The researcher ensured that he was on time for every activity and participated in it to the end, ensured that observations were focused to the schedule, asking the right questions to the concerned people, following the right procedures of transcription, analysis and reporting. Finally compiling a detailed report every day soon after observations to ensure that data did not pile unattended. Similarly, analysis was an ongoing activity comprising the researcher’s reflective commentary noted down as observer’s comments.
3.8 Data Collection

This was done in two stages:

3.8.1 Pre-visits to study schools

The researcher pre-visited every school and took time to be there to ensure that all the participants were familiar with him. The purpose was to remove any anxiety and develop trustworthiness. The researcher was able to meet the teachers, pupils and most of the parents that were to take part in the study. The parents were met during the school visits, meetings and/or clinics held in the course of the school term preceding the school term for this study. During the familiarization visits the researcher carried out activities similar to those that were to be carried out during the actual study. Activities with the parents included being in the parents meetings and discussing the matters concerning their welfare, asking questions on their behalf or asking them questions during the deliberations and finally chatting with them as they waited to be served or for the meeting to start. This helped them feel free with the researcher during the actual study. Activities with teachers included being at the school assembly, participating in indoor and outdoor activities such as playing with the children during physical education, taking part in their snacks, tea, lunch and pass time chats. The researcher was also open to them when they asked even general questions on the early childhood career, the controversy that was prevailing concerning the employment of ECD teachers and issues related to family life. Sitting in class and taking notes as the lesson was going on as was to
be done during actual study was an important activity used to enhance familiarization. This helped to create a rapport with all the participants.

3.8.2 Actual data collection procedures

At every visit, the researcher went through the head teacher/principal’s office to report his presence in the school and ask for permission to make observations in the selected classrooms and to interview selected teachers and parents. At this point the researcher signed the visitors’ book.

In the class, the researcher requested the teacher concerned to allow him into her class and explained the purpose of the study and the procedure to be used in the same. While in the class, the researcher greeted the learners who were now familiar with him. Likewise at the start of every focus group discussion the researcher informed the parents about the study, the activities and sought informed consent from them. All the participants were always reminded of their freedom to participate or not to or to withdraw at whatever point. None of them opted out may be because they were already familiar with the researcher.

During the actual data collection the researcher started with observations, followed by teachers’ interviews and then parents’ focus group discussions. This helped removed possible biases that could arise from pre-empting the purpose of the study. If interviews and group discussions were carried out first the
participants would get to know what the researcher was looking for. This would make them come up with acting strategies to avoid imagined mistakes and act accordingly.

The lesson observations were conducted in the morning in the selected classes. In the morning session the teachers and pupils are fresh and likely to participate actively in the lesson. A total of 12 teachers were observed conducting lesson in the nine subjects offered in the lower primary school. This is because a teacher may use different languages in different subjects. The school time table allowed for five lessons each morning. A period of one month and half was spent in lesson observations. The researcher noted down in detail all the observations made during lessons. Notes were written in a notebook and voices were recorded using a voice recorder.

The observations were followed by an interview of the selected teachers. The teachers were interviewed face to face at their convenience but within the school. The interviews were normally carried out early in the morning before classes started, after lunch during quiet/rest/nap time for learners or after releasing the children to go home. The face to face interactions gave room to the teachers to discuss, explain and raise issues concerning the language of instruction policy. The researcher was also able to probe the teachers at each point of the interview.
Each teacher’s interview lasted a minimum of one hour with some taking a longer time. All the responses were recorded by writing them down as reported.

The teachers’ interview was followed by the focus group discussions involving the parents who had been identified in the process of pre-visits with the help of the lower primary school class teachers. The school administration had been requested to invite the concerned parents to school. After being introduced to the parents, the researcher explained the purpose of the interview, the procedure and then sought their consent. They were reminded that they were free to participate or not to. All those present participated freely. As in the case with the teachers’ interviews, the focus group discussions involving parents were also face to face to engage them in a discussion on the language of instruction preferences. The parents’ discussions lasted two hours in each school. All the interviewees were interviewed in the language they were most comfortable with either Gĩkũyũ, Kiswahili or English. This was enabled by the that the researcher has good working knowledge of the three languages.

The interview time as well as the focus group discussion was not restricted since the purpose was to collect detailed information concerning the language of instruction choice and the factors influencing the choices made. A lot of probing was done to ensure that every detail was captured. The entire data collection
process lasted for a period of about three months which translates into one school term in Kenya.

3.8.3 Ethical and Logistical Considerations

Permission to carry out this study was sought from the Graduate School, Kenyatta University. Having been granted permission by the graduate school (see Appendix V) the researcher sought a research permit from the Ministry of Education through the National Council for Science and Technology (see Appendix VI). The permit was presented to the County Director who gave the researcher a letter of permission and introduction to school heads through the District Education Officer (see Appendix VII). The researcher wrote to the head teachers of selected schools through the district education officer informing them of the intended visit and requesting them to make the necessary arrangements concerning the subjects of study (see Appendix VIII).

At the school the researcher explained to the head teacher the procedure of the study which was lesson observations, interviewing of teachers and focus group discussions with the selected parents. In addition the head teachers were requested to invite to school the selected parent(s) on specified dates. The teachers and parents were informed of the purpose of the study and requested to give informed consent (see Appendix IX & X). On the parents’ consent form there was a section requiring the parent to consent to their children being studied. The head-teachers
had been requested by the researcher to inform the parents during parents’ meetings about the purpose of the researcher’s presence at their schools and the head-teachers had confirmed to have done that. The researcher ensured anonymity and confidentiality of the respondents and of the information provided. Codes were used for the names of the schools, teachers, parents and learners. All the information gathered was used for the purpose of this study.

In addition, the researcher ensured minimal interference with the school-programme during the study. Lessons were observed as timetabled. The interviews were conducted at the convenient time for the teacher either early in the morning, after lunch during rest/quiet activities for learners or after the lessons. The focus group discussions for parents were also conducted at their convenient time as agreed among them, the head teacher and the researcher. The interviews and focus group discussions were conducted in the given school during working hours.

3.9 Procedure of data analysis

The analysis was guided by the objectives of the study. These were: to find out the language(s) used for instruction; establish the extent of use of the language of the catchment area for instruction and to determine the difference between public and private schools in the choice of the language of instruction. Finally it was to explore whether teachers’ and parents’ language preferences influenced the
choice of language of instruction in lower primary school in Nyeri County, Kenya.

The data was qualitatively analyzed with some aspects of the data being analyzed quantitatively. A computer software package for analyzing qualitative data was employed. This is popularly referred to as CAQDAS - Computer Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis Software. The CAQDAS programme allowed for categorization of the findings into common themes, trends and patterns that are the bases of the discussion of the findings. Quantitative analysis entailed frequencies and percentages. However, most of the data was qualitatively analysed.

The researcher also analyzed data in the process of its collection. This entailed making judgments or interpreting certain observations, utterances as well as reports of the respondents. This information was immediately noted down as Observer’s Comments (O.C). The observer’s comments were useful in the interpretation of the data collected during the lesson observations, teachers’ interviews for teachers and the focus group discussions involving parents.

The analysis also relied on the extensive and intensive details that were recorded in the field note books. Back up to the notes was a voice recorder that was discreetly employed though the participants had been informed about it. The
researcher transcribed the recorded data and heavily relied on these transcriptions (See Appendix IV) during the analysis process.

Data collected through each of the three methods used was analyzed separately and then cross-checked. This helped to develop clear and thoughtful understanding of each set of data gathered bringing out the factors at play in the choice of language of instruction at lower primary school. Common themes and trends in line with the study objectives were categorized together. This allowed for further in-depth analysis through comparison of themes and trends. The results are presented using tabulation of the frequency observations, verbatim quotations and detailed descriptions.

An adapted Kitwood’s Qualitative Technique for Data Analysis was also utilized. This technique is useful in the analysis of qualitative data. It has been adapted and used in other studies (Koech, 2005 & Wambiri, 2007). It entails analyzing the data through various methods. However, in this study the researcher adopted only the following methods:

3.9.1 Method 1: Total pattern of choice

This method helped reveal the least and most popular items. The independent variables varied in frequency of occurrence from the least to the most popular.
This was established by categorizing items by the degree of popularity among the subjects/respondents.

3.9.2 Method 2: Similarities and differences
Using the same technique as in method 1, similarities and differences were investigated within the total sample of accounts according to certain characteristics of the participants. Considered were the characteristics such as parents’ and teachers’ preference of a certain language, location and type of school and the pupil’s knowledge of the language used by teachers.

3.9.3 Method 3: Grouping items together
Categories that covered similar subject matter were fused together. This was based on, for instance, reasons given by the respondents relating to a common theme.

3.9.4 Method 4: Tracing a theme
This method of analysis transcended the rather artificial boundaries, which the items themselves implied. The relevant data to a particular topic was collected regardless of where it occurred in the interview material, focus group discussions and lesson observations. The researcher went through the data collected severally cross-checking it to identify the recurring themes and trends.
3.9.5 Method 5: Study omissions

The researcher had predicted issues likely to emanate from the interviews. The absence of an anticipated occurrence was explored to discover the underlying reasons for its omission.
CHAPTER FOUR
FINDINGS, INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION

4.0 Introduction

This chapter has the following sections: presentation of the results, interpretation and a discussion of the findings in reference to the stated problem and reviewed literature.

4.1 Findings and discussions

The following is a discussion of the study findings according to the objectives. The findings are supported by tabulated illustrations of lesson observations and verbatim quotations from the teachers’ interviews and focus group discussion with parents. Quantitative aspects of the data are presented in form of frequencies and percentages. The quantitative results in the tabulations, frequencies and percentages are only those aspects of qualitative data that could be quantified because of the numerical aspect of the data. Such included the tallies that had been made in the data collection schedules, the number of utterances in one language or the other, among others. A complete utterance that was countable was one which distinctly carried a message in either of the languages under examination or a combination of either or all the languages. This was derived from the handwritten notes, schedules as well as from discourse analysis of the recorded voice.
From a glance the results may look quantitative; nevertheless, most of the findings are qualitatively presented through descriptions. Details are in form of statements, narratives as well as verbatim quotations. The information in quantitative reports does not carry as much as that in the qualitative report.

### 4.1.1 Language(s) used for instruction across classes

The first objective of this study was to find out the language(s) used for instruction in lower primary school in public and private, rural and urban schools of Nyeri County, Kenya. Table 4.1 presents the results obtained through the observations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Language/medium of instruction</th>
<th>Public (A)</th>
<th>Private (B)</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Grand Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rural (%)</td>
<td>Urban (%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gĩkũyũ</td>
<td>181 (14%)</td>
<td>224 (8%)</td>
<td>405 (16%)</td>
<td>258 (5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kiswahili</td>
<td>211 (17%)</td>
<td>309 (22%)</td>
<td>520 (20%)</td>
<td>1065 (20%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>193 (15%)</td>
<td>256 (19%)</td>
<td>449 (17%)</td>
<td>1594 (30%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Code-switching</td>
<td>411 (32%)</td>
<td>415 (30%)</td>
<td>826 (31%)</td>
<td>1316 (24%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Code mixing</td>
<td>282 (22%)</td>
<td>339 (25%)</td>
<td>621 (23%)</td>
<td>1060 (20%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sheng'</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>20 (1%)</td>
<td>20 (1%)</td>
<td>56 (1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1278 (100%)</td>
<td>1382 (100%)</td>
<td>2660 (100%)</td>
<td>5349 (100%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results indicate that overall, schools in the sampled area demonstrated higher use of English (30%) followed by code-switching (24%), code-mixing (20%), Kiswahili (20%), Kikuyu (5%) and sheng (1%). English was more popular than the other languages. Kikuyu and Kiswahili were the least popular. The results thus
show that there is an outright deviation from the ministry of education’s policy guidelines that recommend the use of the language of catchment area for instruction in standards one to three.

Code switching and Code mixing entailed interchanging and a mixture of all the languages - English, Kiswahili, Kikuyu and *sheng’* at varying degrees. When the teachers were interviewed they could not tell which language they were using;

“...I mix one or two languages to help them understand...” (Teachers Interview, School D).

The occurrence of code-switching and code-mixing was spontaneous and not a predetermined deliberate language choice. Nevertheless, it served as a strategy in the choice of language of instruction at the lower primary school.

The popularity of use of English can be explained by the fact that for a long period of time it has been the only recognized official language and the education process is viewed as a training ground for preparation for formal employment. The teachers likewise reported that it was easier to conduct lessons in English than Kiswahili. The mixing of languages during the lesson did not support their claim. It can be noted that it is only recently that the Kenyan Constitution (Republic of Kenya, 2010) recognized Kiswahili as an official language but it is yet to be operationalized as communication in official circles is still conducted in English. Nonetheless, the fact that it only took thirty percent of the total
observations means that it may be popular but insufficient as a language of instruction in early childhood.

The combined likelihood of code-switching, code-mixing, and Kiswahili portrays teachers’ inadequacy in using the English language for classroom instruction. Moreover, observation of the teacher-pupil interaction in informal setups outside the classroom demonstrated less use of English and more use of Kiswahili and Gĩkũyũ. Interestingly, the general trend was that, when teachers addressed groups of pupils out of classroom set ups Gĩkũyũ was most preferred while when addressing individual pupils Kiswahili was more predominant. Consequently, English was only popular as a language of academic instruction in classroom set ups. This can be explained by the fact that even the learning materials are all written in English save for a few books for conducting mother-tongue lessons. The scarcity of the translated learning materials may be one of the factors explaining the predominance of English as a medium of instruction in standard one to three.

**Language used for instruction by type of school management**

The study sought to establish the role played by the school management in the choice of the language for instruction. The results are presented in Table 4.2
Table 4.2: Frequencies and percentages of language of instruction used in lower primary by school management

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language of instruction</th>
<th>Public</th>
<th>Private</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gĩkũyũ</td>
<td>224</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kiswahili</td>
<td>520</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>545</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>449</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>1145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Code-switching</td>
<td>826</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>490</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Code mixing</td>
<td>621</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>439</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sheng’</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>2660</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
<td><strong>2689</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results in the Table indicate that private schools preferred to use English followed by Kiswahili, code switching, code mixing, and the least use of Gĩkũyũ and *sheng’. In public schools the most frequently used medium was code-switching, code-mixing, Kiswahili, English, Gĩkũyũ and *sheng’. It is evident that the struggle to find a language for instruction is more prevalent in the public schools than in the private schools. In private schools the clear use of a single language (English, Kiswahili and Gĩkũyũ) accounted for 65% as compared to 45% in the public schools. The usage of Gĩkũyũ was more in the public schools than in the private schools. The use of Kiswahili was marginally different between the private and public schools while the use of code-mixing and code-switching was significantly more in public schools than in private schools. These results, therefore, indicate that language choice in private and public schools presented contrasting patterns. Nonetheless, in both cases the disregard for the policy guideline on language of instruction in early childhood was exhibited.
The observed differences between public and private schools could be attributed to the differences in language policies in the two types of categories of school management. Most private schools tend to ignore the language policy in education and adopt the international language, in this case English. This is in line with a study by Gacheche (2010) who reported that although schools in Nairobi were using English in instruction, 85% of standard two pupils could not read a passage in English. Pupils in standard two, as it is internationally recognized, should be able to demonstrate sufficient reading and comprehension in the language of education after two years of schooling (Gacheche, 2010 & Uwezo Report, 2013). This, therefore, raises an issue on why even with this revelation such schools ignore the policy on use of the language of catchment area. This ought to be Kiswahili in Nairobi and other cosmopolitan areas.

**Language used for instruction by locality of the schools**

Geographical location provides the socio-cultural set ups for language acquisition and learning. The study compared how the choice of language of instruction varied between rural and urban based schools. Table 4.3 presents the results.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language of instruction</th>
<th>Rural Public</th>
<th>Rural Private</th>
<th>Total Rural</th>
<th>Urban Public</th>
<th>Urban Private</th>
<th>Total Urban</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gĩkũyũ</td>
<td>181</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>204</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kiswahili</td>
<td>211</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>334</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>545</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>193</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>298</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>491</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Code-switching</td>
<td>411</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>375</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>786</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Code mixing</td>
<td>282</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>373</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>655</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sheng’</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1278</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>1420</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>2698</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The results showed that rural and urban schools exhibited different patterns in the choice of language of instruction in standard one to three. The results showed that the language of choice in instruction for urban schools was English (42%) followed by Kiswahili (20%) and code-switching (20%), code-mixing (15%), Gĩkũyũ (2%), and sheng’ (1%) in that order. Rural schools preferred to use code-switching (29%) followed by code-mixing (24%), Kiswahili (20%), Gĩkũyũ (8%) and sheng’ (1%).

Rural schools therefore used more of code-switching, code-mixing and Gĩkũyũ more than the urban schools. Comparatively, urban schools only used English more than their rural counterparts. Kiswahili and English were used in almost equal proportions. This therefore means that rural schools appeared to embrace a bi-lingual approach more than the urban schools despite the fact that urban schools had more pupils with diverse background than their rural counterparts. This may also mean that the extent of deviation from the recommended language policy was more rooted in urban schools than in rural schools. It is evident that many of the urban schools are inclined towards the use of English (a second language) as the medium of instruction in early childhood. The rural schools have not found their bearing hence the tendency of code-switching and code-mixing. This shows that inadequacy of the use of English for instruction has given room for code-switching, code-mixing and Kiswahili even in private schools.
A closer examination of table 4.3 reveals that private and public rural schools presented a similar pattern in the choice of the language of instruction. However, urban schools presented a mixed pattern. Interestingly, public urban schools presented a pattern similar to that of rural schools. Observations revealed that in private urban schools there is wide (84%) use of English and Kiswahili. This means that the private urban schools are nearly achieving the exclusive use of Kiswahili and English. As reported elsewhere in this report, the quest to use English is largely attributed to pressure from parents who would wish to see their children have a good command of English. Similar pressure may be what is driving the decreasing use of the language of the catchment area (Gĩkũyũ) as a medium of instruction.

**Different language responses by subjects (teachers and pupils)**

During lesson instructions and out of class interactions teachers and pupils spontaneously communicated in the languages at their disposal. Both teachers and pupils regularly responded to each other in a language different from that of the speaker. These responses were regarded as *different language interactions*.

**Different language responses by teachers**

Table 4.4 presents teachers responses to pupils.
Table 4.4  
Frequencies and percentages of responses in different language by teachers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pupil speaks</th>
<th>Teacher responds</th>
<th>Public rural</th>
<th>Public urban</th>
<th>Private rural</th>
<th>Private urban</th>
<th>Grand total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>Kiswahili</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>Gĩkũyũ</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kiswahili</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kiswahili</td>
<td>Gĩkũyũ</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gĩkũyũ</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gĩkũyũ</td>
<td>Kiswahili</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>224</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
<td><strong>262</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
<td><strong>201</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These results show that teachers were more likely to respond in Gĩkũyũ in public schools than they did in private schools. Responses in Kiswahili were highest in urban public schools and least in private urban schools. A scrutiny of combined responses by teachers reveals that responses in English were more common (46%), followed by Kiswahili (33%) and least common were responses in Gĩkũyũ at 21%. This can be attributed to the teachers’ endeavour to enforce the language rule used in school – that of using English and Kiswahili. The two languages - English and Kiswahili - are also languages of authority (Rubagumya, 1994) thus teachers as symbols of authority were likely to be more inclined to respond in English when pupils spoke to them in a different language. The two languages are also the official languages recognized by the Kenyan Constitution (Republic of Kenya, 2010). In addition, it was noted that in public rural schools, teachers talking to pupils outside the classroom and out of school used Gĩkũyũ - hence Gĩkũyũ is the most popular language out of class. Most teachers were from the Gĩkũyũ linguistic background and this was the language of the catchment area. The teachers also lived in close proximity to their learners. The head teacher
used English at assembly and Kiswahili while addressing individual pupils. This could be because the pupils may not understand English. In public urban schools, Kiswahili was used by both teachers and the head teacher and even visitors like the nun and imam during assembly.

The teachers in private schools tended to insist on using English when communicating with children at school. According to Annamalai (2004) learners that are taught through the second language were likely to show slow social and academic progress. This practice could potentially negatively impact on children’s social and academic development. Some teachers persisted in the use of English and/or Kiswahili even when the dialogue was largely monologue, with pupils’ responses limited to just ‘yes’ or ‘no’. This was different from rural public schools where three to five-word sentences by children were observed when mother tongue was the language of communication. As noted earlier for children to cognitively benefit from the instruction in a second language he/she must have competently learnt the first language and consequently the second language (Cummins, 1976 & Stuknabb-Kangas & Toukomaa, 1976). The mix of languages that teachers exposed children to does not qualify to be labeled as English only, Kiswahili only or mother tongue. This means that it may be difficult for children to master any one of the languages being used.
The child taught predominantly in Gĩkũyũ mixed with other languages can be regarded as deeply steeped in the mother tongue. The skills this learner develops will naturally be inclined towards the language of maximum exposure and motivation (Ando-Kumi, 1999). This correlation prevailed in all the other sets of learners – such that there was a clear connection between the language spoken at home and that advocated for by parents for use in the school. According to Cummins (1976) and Stuknabb-Kangas and Toukomaa (1976) such a child must undergo the first threshold of sustained exposure in the first language to successfully use and be able to learn a second language. Failure to cross the first threshold will mean that the child will not cross to the second threshold which ought to intellectually benefit him or her. This may in turn negatively impede the child’s learning.

**Different language responses by pupils**

The frequency and percentage of pupils’ responses to their teachers in different language is presented in Table 4.5.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher speaks</th>
<th>Pupil responds</th>
<th>Public rural</th>
<th>Public urban</th>
<th>Private rural</th>
<th>Private urban</th>
<th>Grand Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>Kiswahili</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>Gĩkũyũ</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kiswahili</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kiswahili</td>
<td>Kikuyu</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gĩkũyũ</td>
<td>Kiswahili</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gĩkũyũ</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>176</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>181</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>168</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>F</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>671</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>146</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
The responses in a different language were either in English, Kiswahili or Gĩkũyũ. Results show variation by schools’ locality and management. The Table shows that pupils from rural public primary schools had a higher tendency to respond in Gĩkũyũ when spoken to in Kiswahili (27%) than pupils from urban public schools (9%). A similar tendency was noted with pupils from rural private (15%) compared to those from urban private (11%). Responses in English to Kiswahili in private schools combined were higher (60%) than public schools combined (16%). Responses in Kiswahili when spoken to in English were more popular among pupils from public schools at 66% compared to private at 38%. This trend is an implication of the impact of the various medium of communication rules set by schools. Private schools emphasized on the use of English while public schools emphasized on Kiswahili. Teachers from public schools reported to have agreed to be lenient to lower primary school pupils who may use mother tongue

“...we allow the young children to speak Kikuyu if they can’t express themselves in English or Kiswahili” (Teachers’ Interview School, A).

Even with that kind of lenience reported the expected language of communication, which is mother tongue, had a limited place in pupil-teacher communication. This is likely to hinder self expression and all learning that comes with a child’s first language (Webb, 2004).

While talking to their fellow pupils, school prefects used Kiswahili. This, as noted earlier seems to be the language of authority. However, it could easily be noted
that the pupils’ Kiswahili dialogues did not have the eloquence exhibited by a regular speaker of a language. This betrayed their use of Kiswahili as a forced rule in school. However, in the context of language of formal communication among pupils Kiswahili can be regarded as the most popular and Gĩkũyũ the least popular.

It was noted that responses by learners in Gĩkũyũ when spoken to in Kiswahili were more common in public schools than in private schools. When asked questions in English, the learners attempted to respond in Kiswahili or English but could not communicate hence the teacher prompted them to respond in Gĩkũyũ. However, the number of learners attempting to respond in English when spoken to in Gĩkũyũ was higher in urban public schools than rural public schools.

Most responses by pupils across all the schools were one word or short phrase sentences of not more than ten words. The single-word utterances could be a sign of incompetence in the second language. Marland (1977) argues that ‘unless a pupil can read, write and talk competently he cannot benefit from the range of learning which the school provides (15.31). In New Zealand, it was found that students who had not developed competence in their first language did not grasp learned languages as easily as those who had a good foundation (NESB; Non-English Speaking Background, 2005). Similarly, lower primary school pupils are not competent in their mother tongue leave alone the second languages –
Kiswahili and English. Using the same in the learning process would pose a challenge to them.

4.1.2 Use of language of the catchment area in lower primary school

The second objective was to find out the extent of use of the language of the catchment area. The predominant language of catchment area in Nyeri County is Gĩkũyũ. The use of the Gĩkũyũ language was assessed for every subject, class, type of school management and school locality. Gĩkũyũ statements that were uttered within the contexts of code switching, code mixing and sheng’ were identified and separated as use of Gĩkũyũ language in instruction.

Use of the Language of the Catchment Area by Subjects

The language policy recommends the use of the language of catchment area for instruction in all the taught subjects. In this case it is the Gĩkũyũ language. The study, therefore, explored the use of the Gĩkũyũ language, which was dominant language of the catchment area, during the lessons for all the taught subjects. Table 4.6 shows the percentage of the extent of use of the Gĩkũyũ language by subjects taught in lower primary school.

The results show that there were marginal differences in the use of Gĩkũyũ across all the subjects. The results showed that the use of the Gĩkũyũ language was highest in social studies (12%) followed by physical education (11%), religious
education (11%), music, life skills, art, science, mother tongue, mathematics, Kiswahili and English, in that order.

Table 4.6: Frequencies and percentages of use of language of catchment area by subject, class, locality and type of school management

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Eng</th>
<th>Kisw</th>
<th>M.T</th>
<th>Mat</th>
<th>P.E</th>
<th>S.S</th>
<th>Scie</th>
<th>Mus</th>
<th>Art</th>
<th>R.E</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>69</td>
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<td>96</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>71</td>
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<td>%</td>
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<td>7</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>11</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

However, it is clear that the use of Gĩkũyũ varied across the classes but with a similar pattern for all the subjects. There was a comparatively higher usage of the language in class one than in class two and three. Notably, there was hardly any use of Gĩkũyũ in classes three and two for all the subjects in urban based schools both private and public. The use of the Gĩkũyũ language in the rural schools was higher in public schools than private ones. The use of the Gĩkũyũ language in the rural based private schools was only observed in social studies, music, religious
education and life skills. In the public rural schools the use of Gĩkũyũ as a language of instruction was spread more evenly across all the subjects with the exception of English and Kiswahili for classes two and three. Additionally, the use of Gĩkũyũ in classes one and two in rural public schools did not present major differences.

The results show a general progression into use of the second language for instruction in nearly all schools with a generally slower progression in rural public schools and sharp declines in urban based schools. This is contrary to the provisions of the lower primary school’s language of instruction policy that sets the language of the catchment area as the exclusive mode. This supports the findings of Munyeki (1997), Kenya Institute of Education (2007) and Muthwii (2002) which claimed that only a small portion of schools in Kenya were using the recommended language of instruction.

Use of the language of catchment area across lower primary school classes

The study also endeavored to assess the use of the Gĩkũyũ language across the classes. Table 4.7 shows the results.

Table 4.7: Frequencies and percentages of use of language of catchment area by class

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>442</td>
<td>53.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>235</td>
<td>29.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>16.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>806</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
It can be observed that 54 percent of the use of Gĩkũyũ in standard one, two and three is in class one, followed by 29 percent in class two and 16 percent in class three. Thus a general decline in the use of the language was observed as the subjects progressed through the lower primary level. If this were to be used as criteria for evaluating mother tongue-based language policy in education it can be concluded that schools in the study location are generally practicing the policy which advocates for the use of the language of the catchment area. However, when evaluated on the basis of the use of the mother-tongue for the purpose of content delivery during instruction this conclusion may not hold. This is because much of the Gĩkũyũ language which was used during instruction was mixed with other languages. Likewise the lessons meant for the Gĩkũyũ language were not fully utilized to teach the same.

**Use of the language of catchment area by type of school management across the classes**

The use of the language of catchment which in this case is Gĩkũyũ in both private and public schools were compared and the results are presented in Table 4.8

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Management</th>
<th>Standard One</th>
<th>Standard Two</th>
<th>Standard Three</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Frequency %</td>
<td>Frequency %</td>
<td>Frequency %</td>
<td>Frequency %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public</td>
<td>323 73</td>
<td>220 94</td>
<td>120 93</td>
<td>663 82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private</td>
<td>119 27</td>
<td>15 6</td>
<td>9 7</td>
<td>143 18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>442 100</td>
<td>235 100</td>
<td>129 100</td>
<td>806 100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The results in the Table indicate that public schools were five times more likely to use the Gĩkũyũ language in instruction than their counterparts in private schools. Compared across the classes, the public schools were found to be three times more likely to use Gĩkũyũ language in standard one. In standard two and three the public schools were 13 times more likely to use Gĩkũyũ as a language of instruction than their private school counterparts. Thus there is comparatively less usage of the Gĩkũyũ language for instruction in standard one, two and three in private schools than in public schools. This difference can be attributed to the schools’ language policies or rules. While all the schools seemed to endeavour to use English, the ‘English only’ language rule in private schools was stricter compared to public schools. Similarly, Bunyi (2005) in her ethnographic study of Kenyan lessons had noted that classroom interactions in a second language (L2) are dominated by safe talk. In such a situation teachers make little demand on learners, encourage chorus answers, repetition of phrases and copying of notes.

**Use of the language of catchment area by school locality across the lower primary school classes**

The location of school, whether rural or urban, may have significant influence on the use of the language of catchment area for instruction. The results of the use of language of the catchment area by locality are presented in Table 4.9.
Table 4.9: Frequencies and percentages of use of the language of catchment area by school locality and class

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Locality</th>
<th>Class one Frequency</th>
<th>Class One %</th>
<th>Class Two Frequency</th>
<th>Class Two %</th>
<th>Class Three Frequency</th>
<th>Class Three %</th>
<th>Total Frequency</th>
<th>Total %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>308</td>
<td>70</td>
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<td>100</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>672</td>
<td>83</td>
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<tr>
<td>Urban</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>442</td>
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<td>235</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>806</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results indicate that rural schools were five times more likely to use Gĩkũyũ than urban schools. The Table also shows that rural schools were twice more likely to use the Gĩkũyũ language for instruction than their urban counterparts in standard one. Notably, rural schools were the sole users of Gĩkũyũ language for instructions in classes two and three. Thus school location was a major determinant in the use of the language of the catchment area for instruction. These findings are different from those of the study by Muthwii (2002) where Kiswahili and English were more dominant. Although both Muthwii’s study and the current one focus on rural and urban set ups the class level could have brought out the divergence. This is because the current study focused on the lower primary school while the former one was on the upper primary school and language policies vary between the grades.

Teachers from the urban public schools reported that it would be difficult to teach mother tongue due to lack of resource materials;

“...syllabus is clear on what is to be taught but there are no resource materials and examinations set in and for the Kikuyu language” (Teacher interview, school B).
This contradicted the fact of the matter since Gĩkũyũ mother tongue books are available. Some teachers from rural public schools also reported to have taught the subject and pointed out specific mother tongue books that they used. The real issue could have been availability of these resources in specific schools.

In the urban locality, the alternative to mother tongue ought to have been Kiswahili, especially by virtue of the fact that Kiswahili has been recognized as an official as well as a national language in the country (Republic of Kenya, 2010). However, even the schools where teachers claimed that Kiswahili was the language of the catchment in their locality, they ended up using a lot of mother tongue in code mixing and code switching in the case of urban public schools “...head teacher kwa Kiswahili ni nani” in an English language lesson or too much English in the case of urban private schools “...do not throw rubbish kwa mto” in a Kiswahili lesson. It was observed that even the schools in the rural areas did not implement the mother tongue policy. This was in line with observations made earlier by Munyeki (1997) Kenya Institute of Education (2007) and Murundu (2010) which showed that only a small portion of schools were using the recommended language of instruction. In fact, all the schools studied here had not implemented the policy.

The rural schools are in a monolingual setting thus the Gĩkũyũ language was expected to be dominant. On the other hand urban schools, by virtue of their
locality, have Kiswahili as the alternative language of the catchment area. That fact apart, the Gĩkũyũ ethnic community and thus the Gĩkũyũ language is predominant in both localities hence it remains the language of the catchment area of this study.

The language policy in education states that the language of the catchment area is to be used in instruction in the lower primary school (Gachathi, 1976). However, teachers based their interpretation of this policy on the physical locality of the school rather than the school’s catchment area. Teachers from the urban localities therefore argued that urban schools were to use Kiswahili and/or English while rural schools argued for Kiswahili by virtue of the fact that their schools were within the municipality Sub County. These teachers further admitted that they could not read and write in Gĩkũyũ. This means it would be difficult to implement a language they have no literacy competency in. It is on this basis that the researcher grouped reasons given for not implementing the language policy. This is in line with the findings of Menken and Garcia (2010) that not all policies on language of instruction are implemented as stipulated. The schools studied seemed to have failed in equal measure. None of the schools had upheld the stipulated policy.

It is important to note that mother tongue was being used in schools though not purely as stipulated in the policy of language in education (Gachathi, 1976 &
Republic of Kenya, 2012). All schools used mother tongue at one point or the other. For instance, rural public schools were rich in spoken kikuyu, poor in the other language skills pertaining to Gĩkũyũ that is reading, writing and grammar, and badly off in all the other languages. In these schools, Gĩkũyũ is the language of communication between learners outside the classroom, teachers talking to each other and to the learners outside the classroom used the same language.

4.1.3 Comparison of public and private schools in choice of language of instruction

The third objective of this study was to explore how public and private schools compare or contrasts in the choice of language of instruction. Difference emerged between public and private schools in the choice of language of instruction in lower primary schools.

The main areas of divergence in these schools entailed language rules, use of mother tongue, Kiswahili and English, deliberations on languages, and teachers’ and parents’ language preferences. Private and public schools were assumed to be diverse thus the focus of this objective was on pointing out the divergence. Table 4.10 is a summary of the differences between private and public schools.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspect</th>
<th>Type of School</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Internal school language policy</td>
<td>Public: Proposes Kiswahili as the language of instruction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mother-tongue lessons</strong></td>
<td>- Have mother tongue lessons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teachers deliberations on language</strong></td>
<td>- Teachers agreed to be lenient on mother tongue speaking by lower primary school pupils</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mother tongue use</strong></td>
<td>- Predominant used in translations, code switching and code mixing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Important in social life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Code switching and Code mixing</strong></td>
<td>- Predominantly Gĩkũyũ and Kiswahili combinations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>English language</strong></td>
<td>- Rarely used in instruction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Parents’ language preferences</strong></td>
<td>- Preferred Gĩkũyũ and Kiswahili languages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Not keen on language used at school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Responses in opposite language by listener</strong></td>
<td>- Pupils responded mostly in Gĩkũyũ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Teachers responded mostly in Kiswahili</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teacher-pupil dialogues</strong></td>
<td>- Pupils participated better when mixed languages were used</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Lessons were more participatory when mother tongue was used</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teachers’ language preferences</strong></td>
<td>- Preferred Gĩkũyũ and Kiswahili</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sheng’</strong></td>
<td>- Not used in public schools in rural areas</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Differences between public and private schools were also noted across schools from the same type or locality. The teachers as well as parents contributed to the divergence and/or convergence of the attributes of schools. It can be observed that public and private schools, teachers and parents have a common preference of Kiswahili. However, respondents from public schools are categorical in the need for mother tongue;

“rūthiomi rwitũ nũruo rwega harĩ mwana” (our language is appropriate for the child – learning) Parents FGD, School A.

These sentiments were echoed by parents of rural private schools for fear of disappearance of the mother tongue;

“...mwana atoi gĩkũyũ gũkũ toakihitũkwo nimaũndũ maingi mũno ma itũra (that the child will miss a lot that goes on in the neighbourhood if he/she does not understand Gĩkũyũ) (Parents FGD, School C).

The concern therefore is the ultimate goal of enabling the child to progress in social and academic life. The value of the use of mother tongue and Kiswahili in public schools as compared to English in private schools can be judged based on learners’ limited participation in the latter. Private schools use English because;

“...the school prohibits the use of any other language...” (Teachers Interview, School D).

The knowledge and implementation of the language policy in education is one of the aspects of variations observed between public and private schools. While ignorance of the policy cuts across all the schools, a point of divergence was noted at the level of school language policy based on class room decisions by teachers, teachers’ opinions and parents’ expectations
“...would be happy if my child would speak English like (president) Obama” (Parents FGD, school C).

However, a trend was noted of public to private, rural to urban or vice versa on a continuum of Gĩkũyũ-Kiswahili-English an argument supported by earlier findings by Mundia (1982) and Muthwii (2002). Private schools had a strict school language policy where the English language was the only medium of communication and instruction. The situation of English language only in private schools was likely to have a negative effect on children’s schooling (Webb, 2004). These schools failed to realize that children needed a transition stage (Ball, 2010) and would learn better if they found the home language being used in the school environment (Stuknabb-Kangas & Toukomaa, 1976 & Lin & Martin, 2005). They fail in the mandate of providing children with an environment where they can use language as a means of self-expression and cultural identity (Cummins, 2000). The school language policy implementation though stricter in private schools was a common theme in all schools studied.

A comparison of the languages used in schools showed that teachers’ opinions differed with some saying mother tongue plays an important social role in the family unit and in the society as a whole, while others prefer Kiswahili because it is multiethnic and multilingual. Some teachers prefer English and Kiswahili because they are the official language.
The teachers’ views of the parents’ language of instruction opinions was another difference. Teachers, particularly from public schools, argued that parents are not usually bothered by the choice of the language of instruction in school. This was contrary to the opinion of those from private schools who said that parents are keen on children’s knowledge of English and would be happy on seeing their children speak fluent English. Parents in an earlier study (Muthwii, 2002) attached a similar value to the English language. This is a colonial mentality where speaking of English is adored (Ngugi, 1986; Rubagumya, 1994 & Mundia, 1982). Parents associate social mobility with speaking in English.

Unlike the private schools, the public school teachers had deliberated on the language of instruction and settled on the use of Kiswahili in lower primary school. However, they had agreed to be lenient on the children if they used any other language. In the rural public school the parents objected to punishing their children for speaking *sheng*’ arguing that it was just a stage in life. Those who spoke mother tongue were to be punished although no child was reported to have been punished by the time of this study. Still, other teachers went further to encourage parents to speak to their children in the language recommended by the school. This shows the important role that schools and teachers play in influencing the choice of the language of instruction (Grimes, 1992; Zhou & Sun, 2004; Menken & Garcia, 2010). Some teachers from private schools encouraged
the use of English in order to enforce the *school language policy* arguing that the use of all other languages was prohibited.

Another theme that emerged in the comparison of private and public schools was multilingual and multi-ethnic situation within the catchment area. Teachers in private urban schools reported not using Gĩkũyũ because of the school’s multiethnic nature. They preferred Kiswahili as the language of instruction because it overcomes ethnic and linguistic differences in communication. The argument was that Kiswahili unlike mother tongue would enhance national unity. This is a colonial mentality particularly in the British colonies, where indigenous people were encouraged to use English after independence as a scheme to entrench neo-colonialism in the African communities (Rubagumya, 1994; Mbaabu, 1996; Lin & Martin, 2005). This in itself spells doom for these important cultural languages and can be attributed to the fact that languages are rapidly becoming obsolete (UNESCO Report, 2010 & Nyakwara, 2013). It is important to note that negative ethnicity is not a result of language diversity or use of such languages. Children can be taught in their languages to appreciate social-cultural diversity thus leading to national unity.

While both public and private schools had notable use of translation, code switching and *sheng’* in the process of instruction, the extent to which this was the case varied between private and public schools. Private schools used *sheng’* at a
higher rate than public schools while code switching and code mixing were more common features in public schools. The mix of languages in public schools was more of translation between English and/or Kiswahili while in private schools it was more of translations from English to Kiswahili. The teachers displayed an unawareness of the disadvantages paused by the use of translation in the learning of a second language (Benson, 2009). The translations and the mixing of languages were done so spontaneously and unsystematically. The teachers did not seem to be aware that they were doing this since it had already become part of their communication. This is indeed worrying when teaching languages particularly English and Kiswahili which are the official languages in Kenya. Functional illiteracy observed in the majority of school leavers can be attributed to this approach (Annamalai, 2004). These individuals cannot fluently express themselves purely in one of the official languages.

Another worrying trend observed particularly in private and urban schools is the use of *sheng*. This is neither a cultural language nor a national language. Worse still, it is not standardized and varies according to generations, regions, occupations and daily occurrences. Both teachers and parents admitted that *sheng* corrupts the standard languages. *Sheng* also keeps changing with socio-economic and political changes hence every generation have their own slang.
Lesson delivery in both public and private schools did not display evidence of the official policy guideline in determining the language of instruction in the schools (Muthwii, 2002; Eshiwani, 1990). Although the sampled schools reported having their own policy guidelines, individual teachers resorted to what was most convenient and practical in their choice of language at the spur of the moment. This is evident in urban private schools where a strict ‘English only’ rule was being practiced. While the standard two and three teachers endeavoured to use ‘English only’, the standard one teacher had no choice but to use mother tongue and do a lot of code switching and code mixing. This scenario is an example of the frustrations that teachers go through when they are forced to teach in a language unfamiliar to learners (Murundu, 2010) pupils’ single word responses was a sign of limited learning (Marland, 1977 & Koech, 1999). If the trend of forced immersion of learners into unfamiliar language continues, most learners will get confused and not benefit from the learning that goes on in the early childhood classes.

A point of convergence between the two types of schools is the negligence of mother tongue as a subject. Except one teacher who happened to be a Meru, all the teachers interviewed were of Gĩkũyũ linguistic background. Notably, Meru is linguistically very close to Kikuyu, in fact the Meru initially received instruction in Kikuyu (Mbaabu, 1996). Except for this case, all the teachers were conversant with spoken Gĩkũyũ. A large percent (83%) can read and write in Gĩkũyũ. This
serves to highlight the irony of lack of conformity to the national language policy since they are adequately suited for handling the language of the catchment area. May be in mitigation of the above observation it emerges that none of the teachers including those who have taken the popular early childhood development (ECD) course has any training in the teaching of mother tongue. The ECD trained teacher claimed to have been trained to teach languages but not specifically mother tongue. This raises concern whether all languages share the same principles in the teaching-learning process. The teachers have all had ample training in the teaching of Kiswahili and English. These two findings raise the following questions:

a) Could this be the reason why in spite of the time table sparing 5 lessons particularly in public schools for the teaching of mother tongue there is no actual teaching of mother tongue and instead other subjects especially Kiswahili and English are taught including subjects unrelated to any language like mathematics?

b) What leads to the proliferation of translation, code switching, code mixing and ‘sheng’? Yet teachers are expected to be well guided in their training that each language should be taught and used independently in education.

Another variation was the nature of teachers’ responses in different language(s) if the learners approached the teacher in one of the ‘outlawed’ languages. This made the learners struggle to use the ‘lawful’ languages which are Kiswahili in public
schools and English in private schools. Teachers in rural public schools reported that pupils are handicapped in use of school imposed languages and in that case allow them to use mother tongue. This is just one of the cases of constrained self expression, a fundamental role of first language. Similar scenarios were noted during sessions of storytelling in all the three language lessons namely mother tongue, Kiswahili and English in both rural and urban public schools. Likewise during the two official languages in private schools with more difficulties being observed in rural private school compared to the urban private school. The learning of a second or third language goes contrary to features of mother tongue acquisition which is informal learning (Cummins 1976 & Stuknab-Kangas & Toukomaa, 1976). Learners need to be exposed, almost immersed separately in each of the three languages namely mother tongue, Kiswahili and English in order to learn the languages and benefit in social and academic achievement.

Differences emerged among parents within the same school or across the sampled schools. It is important to note that 10 different ethnic groups were represented in the focus group discussions with a higher multi-ethnic situation being witnessed in urban schools. Rural schools had only one exception from Gĩkũyū linguistic group. Out of the 36 parents who participated in the focus group discussion, 23 were Gĩkũyũ. One would have therefore expected a strong case for Gĩkũyũ language being the language of the catchment area. Notably, the argument for and against the use of Gĩkũyũ went beyond the language background with even the
non- Gĩkũyũ arguing an equally strong case for mother tongue. Only that they meant one’s mother tongue and not necessarily Gĩkũyũ.

The rural public school had the highest preference for mother tongue in all the classes while urban public preferred Kiswahili. In private schools English preference was stronger in standard two and three. This trend was common in all the schools meaning that parents were aware of the place of English in higher classes but ignorant of the transition stage (Benson, 2004; Cummins 1976 & Stuknabb-Kangas & Toukomaa, 1976). The parents seem to be advocating for ‘early’ exit against the ‘late’ exit from first language to second language. This is something practiced in Uganda and Zambia (Mundia, 1982; Mbaabu, 1996). Late exit of 6 to 7 years of schooling in first language is advocated in either a transitional bilingual/multilingual education or mother tongue-based bilingual education model (Ball, 2010; Menken & Garcia, 2010). This will allow children to become proficient in the first and second language to an extent that children can participate in ethnic societies’ activities and international transactions (Ball 2010) which is a goal in Kenyan education.

4.1.4 Influence of teachers’ language preference on language of instruction choice

The fourth objective of this study was to find out whether teachers’ language preferences influenced the choice of language of instruction in standard one, two
and three classes in Nyeri County. It can be noted that similarities and differences emerged across public and private and urban and rural schools. The results of the similarities are presented first followed by the differences.

The following is a list of similarities between private and public schools on the influence of teachers, on choice of language:

- Teachers reported that they struggled with vocabulary, pronunciation, and terminologies during class sessions when instructing pupils.
- Teachers preferred pupils learning Kiswahili because they considered it a national language.
- Some teachers discouraged pupils from using sheng.
- Teachers value for local languages is to preserve it but not for teaching.
- Used code switching and code mixing ‘to make pupils understand’.
- Majority of teachers did not use sheng’ in lesson delivery.
- Aspired to eliminate use of mother tongue in school to avoid its negative influence on official languages.
- Parents had raised issues with teachers on learning and use of various languages
- Timetabled mother tongue lessons were used to teach other subjects.

From the above summary it is clear that more value is attached to English and Kiswahili than mother tongue. This could be due to their role in national examinations. This is in line with the findings of Muthwii (2002) who found out that the two languages were highly placed as a medium of communication. While ‘sheng’ may be widely used in urban set ups in Kenya, its use in school was limited to casual talk rather than formal classroom instruction. Even in instances where teachers used one or two words when teaching one could tell it was not intentional. The rampant use of code-switching and code-mixing across the
schools shows inadequacy of any single language – English, Kiswahili or Gĩkũyũ to effectively deliver the content. Code-switching and code-mixing served as a strategy to handle this deficit.

Table 4.11 is a summary of the differences of the influence of teachers’ language preference in the choice of language.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Type of School</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Public</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perception of mother tongue</td>
<td>Teachers reported that without mother tongue pupils’ learning at lower primary school would be limited</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perception of English</td>
<td>Perceived English speaking as a preserve of the pupils in private schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perception of Kiswahili</td>
<td>Teachers recommended that Kiswahili be used as medium of communication in lower primary school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enforcing language rules</td>
<td>Had agreed to be lenient on lower primary school pupils if they spoke in mother tongue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role of parents in language rules</td>
<td>Teachers saw parents as a hindrance in English language learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purpose for English</td>
<td>To help children pass national examinations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role of education officers</td>
<td>- Were keen on the timetabling of mother tongue – language of catchment area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom participation by pupils</td>
<td>- Lively participation noted when mother tongue is used in instruction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium of communication among teachers</td>
<td>- Mostly used mother tongue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium of communication among pupils</td>
<td>- Mostly used mother tongue and occasionally Kiswahili</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parental concern on English language</td>
<td>- Had little concern</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deliberations on medium of communication and language of instruction</td>
<td>- Teachers involved in making school language rules</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Except in a few cases, teachers reported having difficulties in communicating with learners in the recommended language. One teacher reported she lacked words to use during English lessons;

“...I mix the languages because of lack of simple vocabulary” (Teachers Interview, School D).

In some schools, teachers reported feeling inadequate while instructing in the schools preferred language. They reported struggling with vocabulary, pronunciation, and terminology during class sessions. Some in public schools
were reported to perceive English and Kiswahili speaking as a preserve of the pupils in private schools.

Kiswahili was the middle point of teachers’ language preference in private and public schools. Those from private schools preferred Kiswahili and English while those from public schools preferred Kiswahili and mother tongue. Teachers from urban public schools faced the challenge of being compared with private schools using English within this study locality. One teacher saw the Kiswahili they recommended as making them a laughing stock for using a non-formal language hence the phrase by one of the teachers as “...lugha ya mtaani” (Teachers Interview, School B) meaning language of informal settlement.

Except for one teacher all the others though trained showed ignorance to the language policy in education. This ought to be an integral part of any teacher training syllabus where policies in education are core. This is also part of the examinations undertaken at all levels of teacher training courses leading to the inference that this claim is only meant to absolve the teachers from what must be termed as a sin of omission in availing to their learners the necessary content. Mbaabu, (1996) had noted that Teacher Training Colleges share the blame for not preparing primary school teachers to teach mother tongue, yet it is a mandatory subject in the lower primary. Likewise, the Teachers Service Commission does not ensure that teachers posted in primary schools can teach the language of the
catchment area. Similarly, the officers posted by the Ministry of Education to supervise curriculum implementation may not necessarily understand the language of the catchment area and thus, may not be in a position to enforce the policy. This, as noted by Ngugi (1986) may be a gimmick by some foreign masters through the Ministry of Education officials to advance the plight of English language as a way of destroying the African cultural languages (mother tongues).

Language preference by teachers is a theme that runs across teachers. Every language was preferred for different circumstances. For instance during lesson delivery it was observed that the frequency of code switching in all the schools except urban private was higher than all the other languages used. In the urban private schools’ lesson delivery, English was the preferred language followed by Kiswahili. Interestingly during the lesson observations the above was contradicted in that the language preference was different except for the urban public school.

It was observed that teachers made decisions of which language to use to deliver which lesson or its content. This can be referred to as ‘teacher’s language preference’. Teachers’ language preference was seen to influence the language used in the lesson, the school language as well as the parents thinking. They used the language they were most comfortable in or the one they thought they were “…I use whatever language comes to mind” (Teachers Interview, School C).
The teachers in rural public schools reported language preference to be Kiswahili though Gĩkũyũ dialogue had a higher rating compared to Kiswahili. This means that although other studies (Muthwii, 2002) had shown that teachers preferred English and Kiswahili as the language of instruction. The practice/situation on the ground could be different. This could be due to the varied levels that the two studies were taken with Muthwii focusing on upper primary school while this study focused on lower primary school.

While teachers did not report that, code switching and code mixing was noted as a preferred aspect of language choice by all teachers. The teachers argued that they mixed English with mother tongue or Kiswahili to make children benefit from the teaching – learning process;

“...I use other languages to make children understand” Teachers’ Interview, School D).

Webb (2004) notes that children taught in an unfamiliar language will not be able to participate in the educational process; will experience poor academic achievement and limited cognitive growth, emotional insecurity and low self esteem. The support for the first language by majority of teachers focuses on helping children have a head start in learning and so overcome these challenges.
Asked to give reasons for recommending a certain language, the teachers argued that mother tongue or the language of the catchment area was the most appropriate for introducing children to learning. Reason being that these children may not understand English or Kiswahili since it is the second language to most of them. However, the same teachers with this clear understanding went ahead to implement the teacher’s language preference as well as the school’s language policy. This raises the question on the keenness of the government and particularly the Ministry of Education in enforcing the language policy in education (Eshiwani, 1990). The government can take this knowledge of teachers as a basis to push for the case of mother tongue in schools.

As noted in other studies (Tollefson, 2004) social circumstances were at play in the language of instruction choices. This is evidenced by the teachers report that their pupils preferred using sheng’ to communicate due to the influence they got from their older siblings at home and peers in the community whom they look upon as their role models. This means that schools and teachers as well as homes and parents have failed in their language modeling role. Although, teachers reported discouraging pupils from using sheng they used it amongst themselves and with pupils hence defeating their efforts of discouraging its use.

Although the impact of Kiswahili as an official language is yet to be felt, its earlier role as a national language (Mbaabu, 1996) influenced teachers in their
language preference. Some teachers preferred their pupils learning Kiswahili because they considered it a national language. Unfortunately the teachers could not teach the same language they preferred without the reported code-switching and code-mixing. Even the recommendation alone displays the ignorance of the language of catchment area since it ought to have been Gĩkũyũ which is the more predominant.

The teachers from one urban public school reported that the language mostly used in school was Kiswahili since the school is set up in a locality of a slum dwelling with the multiethnic and multilingual population. They argued that children are from varied language backgrounds and have the habit of speaking Kiswahili. It would have been difficult, therefore, to use mother tongue in this school due to the diverse linguistic backgrounds of the children. Kiswahili is a language associated with informal settlements (Mbaabu, 1996), popularly referred to as ‘majengo’ in Kenya where the school area of catchment falls. These teachers reported that Kiswahili language speaking was out of habit as it was the language used even in the neighbourhood.

The findings of this study echo the findings of an earlier study (Muthwii, 2002) that teachers in Kenya from both rural and urban private schools had a higher preference of English language. However this preference was only evidenced in the urban private school. Teachers across all schools recommended Kiswahili as
one of the languages understood by majority of the children due to their diverse linguistic nature. This again was not the situation on the ground during the lesson observations especially at the rural public school where more Kikuyu than Kiswahili language was the norm.

One main omission observed in this study is the ‘discs’ or the punishments given during colonial time and at post independence to monitor those who had spoken in vernacular (Mbaabu, 1996). In the schools studied, violation of the school rule not to use mother tongue within the school compound was not punished. In urban private school where the rule to enforce the use of English language in communication was stricter, the teachers just reminded the pupils or ignored their non-English utterances. Asked whether there were set punishments for breaking the rule the teachers reported that if children spoke in Gĩkũyũ it is blamed on the teachers’ failure to implement the rule. Use of English in the private schools is a directive of the management which is in itself a violation of language policy in education. In public schools the teachers agreed to be more lenient to pupils in standard one to three if they used Gĩkũyũ or Kiswahili. Asked the reason why they chose to be lenient to lower primary children, the teachers argued that majority of the children could not competently talk in English or Kiswahili. Incidentally, there was no punishment in upper classes as well.
In summary therefore, teachers’ language preference was driven by three reasons; mother tongue for social role, Kiswahili for communication across diverse ethnic groups and English and Kiswahili for their roles as official languages of education and examination.

4.1.5 Influence of parents’ language preference on language of instruction choice

The last objective of this study was to find out whether parents’ language preference influenced the choice of language of instruction in standard one, two and three. The study endeavored to assess the variations in parental language preferences by school management, school locality, and across the classes. The results are discussed as follows.

**Parental language preferences by school management**

Parents from both private and public schools were engaged in a focus group discussion to establish their preferences in the language of instructions in lower primary school. Table 4.12 presents the results.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Public Frequency</th>
<th>Public %</th>
<th>Private Frequency</th>
<th>Private %</th>
<th>Total Frequency</th>
<th>Total %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kiswahili</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother Tongue</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English/Kiswahili/Gĩkũyũ</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English/Kiswahili</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kiswahili/Gĩkũyũ</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The results show that parents in public schools preferred the use of mother tongue (42%) as the language of instructions followed by Kiswahili (30%) and combination of language that would allow for code-switching and code-mixing (17%) and English (11%) in that order. In contrast, parents in private schools had a higher preference for use of English (39%) followed by Kiswahili (24%), a combination of languages that allow for code-mixing and code-switching (19%) and mother tongue (18%).

The results indicate that the parents’ preferences were at variance with the actual choices of language of instruction in schools. Whereas parents in public schools indicated a strong support for the exclusive use of mother tongue, the actual choice in schools embraced more of code-switching and code-mixing (54%) as discussed earlier. Similarly, parents in private schools highly preferred the exclusive use of either English or Kiswahili, whereas in actual sense, the respective schools demonstrated a level of code-switching and code-mixing, far much higher than the parental influence. It was observed that there was a comparatively lower use of English (21%) and Kiswahili (21%) parents’ preference notwithstanding. Notably, the use of mother tongue as a mode of instruction was far below the parental preferences in both public (parents, 42%; actual, 8%) and private schools (parents, 18; actual, 1%).
The general belief that schools conform to the parental preferences is therefore not true. In fact as one of the parents commented during the FGDs

“...the teacher was angry and told me that if I wanted my child to speak English, I should take my child to the academy” (FGD, Parents School B).

The differences in parental and actual language choice can be explained by the fact that not all the schools involved parents in deliberations on language of instruction. The private schools made their rules and passed them on to parents. Ntisiki (2009) notes that where parents are involved in deliberations the language of catchment area is easily accepted as the language of instruction in schools.

As a whole, there seems to be a multiplicity of preferences and all these are at variance with the laid down policy of language of instruction in lower primary school. Parents who took children to private school did so in the hope that their children would be taught in English language and excel in the national examination. This is in line with Muthwii’s (2002) study that shows that parents perceive English as the language of examination and academic progress.

The parents who supported English saw it as a sign of being educated;

“When a woman comes for a meeting she is seen as amazing when speaking in English and people regard her as learned” (FGD school C).

There is also a probability that the support of English and Kiswahili was based on the ignorance of the language policy;
“...if English and Kiswahili are the official languages in the country, then both should be used in teaching at all levels...” (FGD, Parent School A).

Majority of parents were largely unaware of any language policy in education. Ironically parents from private schools agreed to the use of English and Kiswahili in their school but doubt the effectiveness of the two languages in teaching lower primary school pupils. The school language policy here overrides the parenting role. The few who had a clue disagreed with the usage of mother tongue showing their non conformity to the language policy in education. This shows how policies with a top-down approach are likely to be rejected by the society (Eshiwani, 1990). In the South African study (Ntsiki, 2009), it was noted that implementation of language policy in education can only be realized if the stakeholders and the society at large are well sensitized.

A parent from a private school with English as the medium of instruction had raised the concern during a school parents meeting that children tend to speak English at home.

“I told them (fellow parents) that I was concerned that when our children come to this school they insist on speaking in English. I asked them whether they tell them that mother tongue is bad. They (parents) booed me” (FGD, School D).

The reaction of the other parents is a clear indication of their determination to push the school to use English for that is the one main reason for taking their children to private school. The prestige attached to English language was evidenced. They displayed awe of the English language commonly seen in people
outside mainstream scholarship, possibly a carryover from colonial brain washing (Rubagumya, 1994; Mbaabu, 1996; Muthwii, 2002). Even teachers from private rural school had indicated that parents appreciate English as the language of instruction. They further reported that parents are happy when they hear their children reading English words/names including road signs.

_Parents Language preferences by school locality_

School locality plays a key role in language selection especially in Africa where ethnicity takes a geographical location (Mundia, 1982 & Muthwii, 2002). The results are presented in Table 4.13 in the next page.

**Table 4.13: Frequencies and percentages of parents’ language preferences by locality**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Rural</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Urban</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>25</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kiswahili</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>26</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother Tongue</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>31</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English/Kiswahili/Gĩkũyũ</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English/Kiswahili</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kiswahili/Gĩkũyũ</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>54</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
<td><strong>54</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
<td><strong>108</strong></td>
<td><strong>101</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results show that parents from rural schools had a higher preference of mother tongue (48%) than those from urban schools (13%). On the other hand parents from urban schools had a higher preference of English and Kiswahili (at 39% and 35%) than those from rural schools (at 15%) for both languages.
Preference for a mixture of languages did not have a major variation. In overall mother tongue was more preferred in both rural and urban schools (at 31%) compared to Kiswahili (at 26%) and English (at 25%) respectively.

The high preference of mother tongue in rural schools could be due to influence of the language spoken at home and within the community. Parents from rural schools also expressed concern that children could not write their family names in mother tongue yet they spoke mother tongue at home and school;

“...kai magiragio nginya kumenya kwandika maritwa ma Gikuyu? (...are they prohibited from learning to write Kikuyu names?) (Parents FGD, School A).

This concern combined with the fear of the disappearance of the mother tongue explains their support of the language. Ironically the same parents had consented to Kiswahili as the language of instruction in lower primary school.

Parents who were opposed to mother tongue argued that by virtue of the fact that they were living in towns their mother tongues were not useful. This is supported by a Giriama parent who says that they no longer need their mother tongue;

“...sisi hatuhitaji hiyo lugha hapa Nyeri, tutaongea na nani, si mtoto atakua ake mjini” (...we don’t need that language here in Nyeri town. Whom will we talk with? Will the child not grow up and live in town?) (FGD, Parents School C).

Parents from urban schools who wished their children to be taught in English had even raised concern to the use of mother tongue in their school. They had enquired why teachers explain certain concepts in Gĩkũyũ to which the teachers
responded that they do so, when children come to school for the first time. Some parents had also complained about their children’s lack of interest in English and Kiswahili yet they were in urban set up. They blamed it on the predominance of the local language speakers. There was a greater concern that mother tongue was negatively affecting English and Kiswahili. This is in line with Muthwii’s (2002) study where similar concerns were raised.

Parents’ views on mother tongue and particularly Gĩkũyũ range from embracing the language by those from rural Gĩkũyũ background to a resigned acceptance by some speakers from different languages. Such parents had no issue with mother tongue being used for instruction. They argued that their children had acquired more Gĩkũyũ from the neighbourhood and school than the English and Kiswahili being taught in school. This is as reported by a parent of Cushite linguistic background

“...hata sasa mwite usikie, Kikuyu tupu” (…call him and see he speaks only Gĩkũyũ) (FGD, School B).

This means that parents in multilingual settings did not deter their children from learning whatever language enabled them to interact with their peers at school and within the children’s locality.

Some parents from urban schools had equated the learning of mother tongue to backwardness. According to Ngugi (1986) this is an attitude that had been
entrenched in the African society through neocolonialism in an aim to destroy the traditional culture.

The diverse backgrounds in the urban centers mean that most mother tongues or all of them may never be used in school unless a ‘multilingual’ model of language of instruction is adopted (Zhou & Sun, 2004; Dutcher & Tucker, 1994). Even then no system of education can afford to use tens of languages in a single education center. This calls for an alternative approach which is the language of the majority speakers. In this case Kiswahili is the lingua franca (Mbaabu, 1996) and as stipulated in sessional paper 14 of 2012 it could be the most appropriate language in the urban multilingual set up. However, one challenge would be to those children who come from home without the knowledge of Kiswahili. Incidentally these are the majority in Kenya.

It will be wrong to assume that mother tongue was irrelevant to majority of parents. As much as was for English, equal concerns for the language had been raised though not for academic reasons. The parents wondered why children from urban schools insisted on speaking in English even when at home. Parents across the schools seemed opposed to the sidelining of the mother tongue as was the case after independence when the ‘English medium’ was introduced (Ominde, 1964). Specifically they are concerned that their children in some lower primary classes were not being taught their mother tongue, and go on to point out the crucial role
of the language in the learner’s life especially religion and social interactions (Grimes, 1992; Dutcher & Tucker, 1994; Collier, 1995; Menken & Garcia, 2010). As observed, some parents feared for the disappearance of Gĩkũyũ literacy.

**Parents’ language preference across the classes**

Table 4.14 presents parents language preference across standard one, two and three.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Class One</th>
<th>Class Two</th>
<th>Class Three</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kiswahili</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother tongue</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English/ Kiswahili/ Kikuyu</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English/ Kiswahili</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kiswahili/ Kikuyu</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>36</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
<td><strong>36</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results show that majority of parents preferred the use of mother tongue across the classes (at 31%), Kiswahili (26%) and English (25%). At each class level, majority of parents preferred mother tongue for use in standard one (38%) followed by (33%) for standard two and (20%) for standard three. English language was more preferred for use in standard three class (35%) followed by standard two (25%) and standard one (17%). Use of Kiswahili was more preferred in standard three with (33%) followed by 25% in standard one and 22% in
It is notable that mother tongue preference is higher in standard one and goes diminishing towards standard three. The trend for English and Kiswahili is low in standard one and rises in standard three. Preference for mixed languages did not have much variation across the classes.

High preference of mother tongue in standard one is an indication that majority of the parents preferred the use of a language the learner is conversant with in lower primary school. Likewise the rising preference of English and Kiswahili towards standard three is a manifestation of the parents’ perception of the place of English in education progress. This is in line with Muthwii’s (2002) study that found out that majority of parents with children in upper primary preferred English and Kiswahili as the language of instruction.

Conversely, the short change from mother tongue preference to English and Kiswahili within only three years raises the issue of a ‘transitional approach’ to the language of instruction. It is clear that parents are not aware at what level language one (L1) may be dropped and language two (L2) taken up for instruction. As Mundia (1982) noted in Zambia, such early transition led to school dropout, high rate of repetition and poor academic progress.
The short continuum of parents’ preferences on language of instruction choices between standard one to three reveals that the language of instruction still remains a challenge in schools. This could be explained by the reason that both parents and pupils are from varied linguistic backgrounds (Rubagumya, 1994). There is also a strong indication that mother tongue would serve the rural area while mother tongue-based bilingual approach would be appropriate in urban settings of the study area given that majority of the speakers are from one language.

4.2 Conclusion

The study findings relating to the use of language in private and public, rural and urban lower primary schools have been discussed. Also discussed are the results relating to the utilization of mother tongue lessons and the use of mother tongue in lower primary schools. Findings on teachers and parents languages preferences have also been discussed. The next chapter presents a summary of the findings, the conclusion and recommendations of the study.
CHAPTER FIVE
SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND
RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction
This chapter presents the summary of the study findings, conclusions and recommendations. Care has been taken to ensure only highlights rather than details are presented in this chapter. These items are all based on the objectives of the study.

5.1 Summary of study findings
The language used for instruction varied with school management, locality and across classes. It was observed that none of the schools studied adhered to the national language policy in education. Instead a mixture of Gĩkũyũ, Kiswahili and English was the main strategy used for instruction in lower primary school. This was with an exception of one of the high cost private schools where there was a heavy slant towards the use of English language.

The language of the catchment area, Gĩkũyũ, was rarely used as a medium of instruction without mixing it with Kiswahili and English. However, the English and Kiswahili communication had a heavy slant towards the Gĩkũyũ language. With all the teachers except one from Meru and the majority of children being
from a Gĩkũyũ linguistic background, Gĩkũyũ ought to have been the medium of instruction. Further, three quarters of the parents involved in focus group discussions were from Gĩkũyũ linguistic background with those from other linguistic backgrounds reporting that their children were speaking Gĩkũyũ. This therefore meant that these children would not have a problem if instructed in Gĩkũyũ.

Public and private schools varied in language choice in lower primary school. Public schools had adopted Kiswahili for lower primary school but agreed to be lenient incase pupils use mother tongue. Private schools had adopted a strictly ‘English medium’ only. Children from private schools were to be introduced to English as the language of instruction and communication from their first day in school.

The language teachers used in the introduction of a lesson indicated the language the teacher preferred for instruction. When pupils could not understand or respond in the language of lesson introduction the teacher switched or mixed with a language s/he assumed to be more favourable to the pupils. The pupils took the cue and responded in the new language. In public schools the teachers agreed which language was to be used in classroom instruction as well as the medium of instruction in school. Some teachers had a tendency of using Kiswahili in class for non-Kiswahili subjects. The pupils in turn used the language the teacher was
communicating in. This means that the teachers’ influence was observed in the pupils’ language and in the school language.

Majority of parents expected their children to be taught in a given language at a given class. Parents had been reported to have withdrawn children from public schools and taken them to private schools so that the child could learn in English. Some parents were equally concerned about the schools’ failure to teach mother tongue. They feared that children would lose a lot of learning that goes on in the community if they do not understand mother tongue. Kiswahili was also embraced by parents as a national language and the language of communication across diverse ethnic groups.

5.2 Conclusions
This study has established that the policy on language of instruction in education in Kenya has not been fully implemented in the early primary school years. Although some rural public primary schools appear to be following the policy, there is complete overlooking of the same in urban schools both public and private. The mixing of languages witnessed during lesson delivery and the conflicting views on language of instruction among teachers and parents shows lack of direction in language of instruction choice. This raises concern on the quality of learning by pupils in standards one, two and three and whether they are benefiting in their language and the learning that ought to come with it.
The decisions on language of instruction in education and the process of implementing the same have been left on the hands of individual parents, teachers and schools. Some of these stakeholders are not well informed on the benefits of using local languages and the teaching of the same in early childhood. If the situation persists children may lack the crucial benefits of learning in a familiar language and knowing how to read and write in the language. This may negatively impact on their education and social life. The negative effects may spill over to generations and become a spiral social problem unless appropriate interventions are put in place. The Ministry of Education should come in speedily and take up its key function of enforcing the language policy in education to steer this country in achieving quality Education for All and prepare children linguistically for optimum participation in social life.

5.3 **Recommendations**

The following are the recommendations of the study:

5.3.1 **Recommendations for quality control**

It was observed that the Ministry of Education officials had directed schools to have mother tongue timetabled. However, they had neither enforced the use of mother nor its teaching at the classroom level. There is need, therefore, for the Ministry of Education to monitor whether recommended language(s) are used for instruction in lower primary school classes.
Private and public schools had different rules on school language with private schools management directive overlooking the Ministry of Education directives. Ministry of Education officers should ensure that both public and private schools follow the recommended policies.

Most parents and teachers were not aware of the language policy in education. It is therefore important that the Ministry of Education educate the community about the policies in place and their importance in line with the social aims and goals of education. Teachers should be involved in policy formulation so as to justify the expectation that they implement them. This will help ensure personal preferences do not unduly influence the choice of language of instruction in lower primary school classes.

The Ministry of Education should set resources aside to train individuals who can set examination at this level in the language of the catchment area. This is because, first, mother tongue lessons were normally sidelined because of their being non-examinable. Second, except for Kiswahili all the examinations in lower primary school are set in English.

5.3.2 Recommendations for curriculum implementers

Among the officers deployed to implement the policies in education, there should be some who understand the language of the catchment area. This is because it
would be difficult to enforce and monitor language policy implementation if one does not understand the language of the catchment area. Such individual(s) must be experts in that language.

Teachers expressed the likely challenge of teaching in and teaching mother tongue due to lack of training. The Ministry of Education ought to organize in-service training for all teachers required to teach lower primary school. Such a course should focus on reasons for failure to use mother tongue, available mother tongue resources and the way forward in use of mother tongue.

**5.3.3 Recommendations for curriculum developers**

Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD) is mandated by the Ministry of Education to produce resource materials that are not popular with publishers. The institute should therefore ensure that there are enough teachers’ guide books, course books, class readers as well as charts and posters among other materials. The KICD should translate the mother tongue syllabus into all the languages that ought to be taught and used in the instruction in lower primary school classes.

**5.3.4 Recommendations for further research**

It emerged from this study that different children, though from the same geographical area may not necessarily be using the same language at home. There
is need to study the linguistic environments at home. This is because such languages are likely to influence classroom language.

Parents and teachers are part of the school management committee. However, the findings of this study show that majority of the parents as well as teachers do not know the language policy in education yet they are expected to assist the Ministry of Education in implementing it. It would be important to study the Parents Teachers Association (PTA) knowledge of education policies and curriculum in general and language policy in particular.

Teachers sampled for this study were all from the same linguistic background – Gĩkũyũ with an exception of one who was from the Meru a closely related linguistic community. Some of the teachers reported that they were not able to read Gĩkũyũ (mother tongue) literature. It would therefore be important to find out whether the teachers of specific language group expected to teach in mother tongue and mother tongue were literate in the particular language.

Gĩkũyũ is one of the major languages in Kenya; a study could be carried out in a minor language to see if the same findings apply. This is because the findings of this study may not be generalized in other localities unless such a locality has the same attributes like the location of this study.
The officers from the Ministry of Education working countrywide in various offices are expected to enforce and monitor the implementation of education policies including that of language. It is important to find out whether they carry out their mandate of ensuring that all schools adhered to the stipulated language in education policy.

It would be important to carry out research on the academic performance of learners from homes in which the parents used English and Kiswahili. This would help find out whether there is a difference in their children’s academic performance compared with children who come from homes where mother tongue is the medium of communication.
REFERENCES


Otieno J. (Nov. 19, 2010), Why People Stop Speaking in their Mother Tongue. *Daily Nation Newspaper, Nation Media Group*

Otieno J. (Nov. 19, 2010). Languages Becoming Extinct Together with Tradition and Culture. *Daily Nation Newspaper, Nation Media Group*


**APENDIX I**

**LESSON OBSERVATION SCHEDULE**

**Section A; General Information**

(i) Type of school

- Public
- Private

(ii) Class

- STD1
- STD2
- STD3

(iii) Dominant language in the school’s neighbourhood

- Kikuyu
- Kiswahili
- English

**Section B; Specific Observation on Language used at School**

(a) Medium of instruction during the following activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACTIVITY</th>
<th>TALLY</th>
<th>TOTAL FREQ</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mother-tongue</td>
<td>Kiswahili</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Instruction</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Assembly</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication with non-teaching staff</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Play</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication with outsiders</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(b) Language used for class instruction during various lessons

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lessons</th>
<th>Tally</th>
<th>Total Freq</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>Kiswahili</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Language</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kiswahili Language</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother tongue Language</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Mathematics</td>
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<tr>
<td>Physical Education</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Music &amp; Movt.</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Religious</td>
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<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

(c) Teacher-Pupil Initiated Communication

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHILD-INITIATED</th>
<th>TALLY</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## COMMUNICATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pupil Kikuyu – Teacher Kikuyu</th>
<th>FREQ.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pupil Kikuyu – Teacher Kiswahili</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pupil Kikuyu – Teacher English</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pupil Kiswahili – Teacher Kiswahili</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pupil Kiswahili – Teacher English</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pupil Kiswahili – Teacher Kikuyu</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pupil English – Teacher English</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pupil English – Teacher Kiswahili</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pupil English – Teacher Kikuyu</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
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<th>TEACHER-INITIATED COMMUNICATION</th>
<th>TALLY</th>
<th>TOTAL FREQ.</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Kikuyu - Pupil Kikuyu</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>Teacher Kikuyu – Pupil Kiswahili</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Teacher Kikuyu – Pupil English</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Teacher Kiswahili – Pupil English</td>
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<td>Teacher Kiswahili – Pupil Kikuyu</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teacher English – Pupil English</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher English – Pupil Kiswahili</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teacher English – Pupil Kikuyu</td>
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</table>

**Section C; Conclusion**

Make other general observations

________________________________________________________________________
APPENDIX II
INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR TEACHERS

PART ONE; GUIDING QUESTIONS
Section A: Background Information

Teachers name____________________ Teachers Code _________________________
The class(es) one teaches: ___________________________________________
Duration teaching lower primary class____________________________________
Linguistic background__________________________________________________

Section B: Interview session topics

1. Language Policy
   (a) Are you aware of the language policy in education?
   (b) If Yes, which language does it recommend for use in lower primary?
   (c) What language(s) does your school encourage teachers to use when teaching in each
       of the following classes?
       Standard One
       Standard Two
       Standard Three

2. Staff meeting deliberations
   (a) Do you talk about language of instruction during staff meetings?
   (b) Which language do teachers recommend to be used in teaching in each of the
       following classes?
       (i) Standard One
       (ii) Standard Two
       (iii) Standard Three
   (c) Which language would you recommend to be used in the following classes?
       (i) Standard One
       (ii) Standard Two
       (iii) Standard Three

3. Mother tongue lessons
   (a) Are there Kikuyu language lessons on the time table?
   (b) How are they spent?
   (c) What difficulties do you face when teaching Kikuyu language lessons?

4. Comparison of languages used in school
   (a) Which language would you prefer to be used in teaching children in lower primary?
   (b) What reasons would you give for supporting the language you prefer?
   (c) What do the rest of the teachers in school prefer and what reasons do they give?

5. Parents influence in teacher’s language
   (a) Do parents encourage teachers to use a certain language when teaching children in:
      (i) Standard One?
      (ii) Standard Two?
      (iii) Standard Three?
(b) Why do most of the parents encourage the use of the preferred language in teaching children in:
   (i) Standard One?
   (ii) Standard Two?
   (iii) Standard Three?

6. **Teaching in English language**
   (a) Are there subjects, other than English language, that you teach in English?
   (b) What difficulties do you experience teaching children in English language?
   (c) How do you handle these difficulties?

7. **Teaching in Kiswahili language**
   (a) Are there subjects, other than Kiswahili language, that you teach in Kiswahili?
   (b) What are the difficulties that you experience in teaching children in Kiswahili language?
   (c) How do you handle these difficulties?

**PART TWO; FIELD NOTES**
Make detailed notes in a note book.
APPENDIX III
FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION SCHEDULE FOR PARENTS

PART ONE: GUIDING QUESTIONS

SECTION A: BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1. Linguistic Background
   a) What is your mother tongue?
   b) How often do you use mother tongue with your child?
   c) Do you use Kiswahili, English, code switch, code mix or sheng with your child?
   d) In which instances do you use the above languages with your child?
   e) Is your child conversant in the first language you introduced to him/her?

2. Parents influence on teacher’s choice of language of instruction
   a) Are there instances when the language of instruction is discussed during parent meetings in school?
   b) With reasons, which languages do parents prefer to be used in teaching your children in:
      (i) Standard one?
      (ii) Standard two?
      (iii) Standard three?
   c) What do parents say about the use of English, Kiswahili or Kikuyu languages in:
      (i) Standard one?
      (ii) Standard two?
      (iii) Standard three?
d) With reasons, which language would you prefer to be used in teaching children in:

(i) Standard one?

(ii) Standard Two?

(iii) Standard Three?

e) Do parents ask teachers to teach their children in a certain language?

f) If yes, when do they ask and how do they do so?

3. Importance of various languages used in schools?

a) Which languages do you think your child learns in school?

b) How do the languages your child learns at school useful to him/her?

c) (i) Which language do you think is most useful to your child?

(ii) Why do you consider it least useful?

d) (i) Which language do you think it is the most useful to your child?

(ii) why do you consider it useful?

4. Language Policy

a) Are you aware of the language policy in education in Kenya?

b) If yes,

(i) Which language does it say should be used in instructing children in the lower primary?

(ii) Do you think is applicable?

(iii) Why do you think it is applicable or not applicable?

PART B: NOTE BOOK
Make detailed notes in a note book.
APPENDIX IV – SAMPLE TRANSCRIPTION

INTRODUCTION
Teachers were interviewed separately. The teachers’ interview came after lesson observations. The transcriptions here below are as per school A, B, C and D. Key points by individual or a couple or the three teachers were picked and recorded. For details on type of schools see the lesson observation transcripts.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.N.</th>
<th>TOPICS</th>
<th>SCHOOL A</th>
<th>SCHOOL B</th>
<th>SCHOOL C</th>
<th>SCHOOL D</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td><strong>Linguistic Background</strong></td>
<td>• All 3 trs Kikuyu all conversant in Kik</td>
<td>• 2 Trs Kikuyu; 1 Tr Meru; Std 1 Kik-Spoken; Std 2 Kimeru – spoken</td>
<td>• All 3 trs Kikuyu; All conversant in spoken and written Kik; Std 1 &amp; 2 trs trained to teach lgs in ECD cert &amp; dip courses</td>
<td>• 3 Kikuyu; Std 1 tr learnt and taught Kik; All conversant with Kik, Kisw &amp; Eng</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Not taught to teach MT</td>
<td>• Std 3 Kik origin but not conversant</td>
<td>• All not trained to teach MT; Trained to teach Swa &amp; Eng</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Trained to teach Eng &amp; Kisw</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td><strong>Language Policy</strong></td>
<td>• Varied in opinion; Std 1 – could not remember; Std 2 – Need to use MT</td>
<td>• All did not know language policy; All though Kisw &amp; Eng; All recommended Kisw – multilingual set up – Swahili, Turkana, Meru, Luhya, Luo, Somali; Slum st-up; Many Muslims</td>
<td>• All did not know language policy; Had a English as school’ policy; Std 1 pupils have no klge of Eng; some und Kisw; Speak to them in Kisw &amp; Kik</td>
<td>• All did not know language policy; All thought it was English; School policy – English; All know Eng &amp; Kisw official lgs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Whatever possible to comm.</td>
<td>• Argued that with books in recommended language can teach; Kisw was the school’s lg policy in L.P.</td>
<td>• Std 2 pupils fairly good in understanding Eng; Parents guide h/work in Kik</td>
<td>• Std 1 Tr Thought Kisw lg of catchment; Std 2 Tr Eng coz it is a high cost Kindergarten</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• All recommended Kiswahili since it is within ‘Municipality division’</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Std 3 pupils Good in understanding Eng except sentence construction</td>
<td>• Make Kisw mandatory in L.P.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Kiswahili was the school lg policy in L.P.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
KENYATTA UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE SCHOOL

E-mail: dean-graduate@ku.ac.ke
Website: www.ku.ac.ke

Our Ref: E83/10347/08

The Permanent Secretary,
Ministry of Higher Education, Science & Technology,
P.O. Box 30040,
NAIROBI

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION GITHINJI PETER Wanjohi – REG. NO. E83/10347/08

I write to introduce Mr. Githinji Peter Wanjohi who is a Postgraduate Student of this University. He is registered for Ph.d degree programme in the Department of Early Childhood Studies.

Mr. Githinji intends to conduct research for a proposal entitled, “A Situational Analysis of Schools, Teachers and Parents’ Influences on Language of Instruction in Standards one, Two and Three Classes in Nyeri County, Kenya”.

Any assistance given will be highly appreciated.

Yours faithfully,

MRS. LUCY N.MBAABU
FOR: DEAN, GRADUATE SCHOOL

P.O. Box 43844, 00100
NAIROBI, KENYA
Tel. 8710901 Ext. 57530

DATE: 1st February, 2013

KENYATTA UNIVERSITY
OFFICE OF DEAN
GRADUATE SCHOOL
P.O. Box 43844-00100, NAIROBI

-1 FEB 2013
NCST/RCD/14/013/165

Peter Wanjoji Githinji
Kenyatta University
P.O.Box 43844-00100
Nairobi.

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION

Following your application dated 14th February, 2013 for authority to carry out research on "A situational analysis of schools, teachers and parents' influence on language of instruction in standard one, two and three classes in Nyeri County, Kenya," I am pleased to inform you that you have been authorized to undertake research in Nyeri County for a period ending 31st July, 2013.

You are advised to report to the District Commissioners and the District Education Officers, Nyeri County before embarking on the research project.

On completion of the research, you are expected to submit two hard copies and one soft copy in pdf of the research report/thesis to our office.

DR M.K. RUGUTT, PhD, HSc.
DEPUTY COUNCIL SECRETARY

Copy to:

The District Commissioners
The District Education Officers
Nyeri County.

"The National Council for Science and Technology is Committed to the Promotion of Science and Technology for National Development"
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

Ref: GEN/RES/42VOL.II/133

District Education Office
Nyeri Central
P O Box 208
NYERI

Date: 20th March, 2012

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION
WANJOHI GITHINJI

The above named has been authorized to carry out research in our schools. He will be in the selected schools for at least one week participating in lower primary class activities.

Any assistance accorded to him will be highly appreciated.

W. M. GAICU
DISTRICT EDUCATION OFFICER
NYERI CENTRAL
APPENDIX VIII: RESEARCHER’S LETTER TO SCHOOLS

Wanjohi Githinji
Department of Early Childhood Studies,
Kenyatta University,
P.O. Box 43844 – 00100,
Nairobi.

To:
The Head teacher,
______________ Primary School,
Nyeri County.

Thru’
District Education Officer,
Nyeri Central District

RE: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CARRY OUT RESEARCH IN YOUR SCHOOL

This is to kindly request you to allow me to carry research in your school. The County Director of Education as well as the District Education Officer in this area have both granted me permission to visit the selected schools. Your school is one the few that I wish to study. The purpose of the study is academic for a degree from Kenyatta University. The research will entail observing all lessons taught in your lower primary section, interviewing the teachers handling classes at that level and focus group discussion with selected parents of children in lower primary school. I will be coming over to discuss the logistics of this study as well as to brief the teachers and parents.

I look forward to your consideration of request and to your favourable response.

Thank you in advance,

Wanjohi Githinji
APPENDIX IX - TEACHERS CONSENT FORM

This is to certify that I ________________________________ a teacher in

Standard _______ of ___________________________ primary school, have been informed of
the purpose of this research activity which is academic and voluntarily accept to participate both
in classroom activities and interviews. I have been assured of confidentiality and anonymity and
in turn I promise to be honest and genuine in the whole undertaking. I am aware that I free to
withdraw from the activity during or even before it commences.

Signed:

1. ______________________ Teacher __________________________ Date __________

2. ______________________ Researcher________________________ Date __________

3. ______________________ Witness __________________________ Date __________
APPENDIX X: PARENTS’ CONSENT FORM

This is to certify that I ________________________________ a parent of Standard _______ child of ______________________ primary school, have been informed of the purpose of this research activity which is academic and voluntarily give consent for my child to be observed and likewise voluntarily accept to participate in both in focus group discussions to be held at the school on a date to be informed. I have been assured of confidentiality and anonymity and in turn I promise to be honest and genuine in the whole undertaking. I am aware I am free to withdraw from the activity during or before it commences.

Signed:
1. ____________________ Parent ___________________ Date ____________
2. ____________________ Researcher__________________ Date ____________
3. ____________________ Witness ____________________ Date ____________