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## English language and Academic Performance among Learners in Inclusive Schools of Mabaale Sub County, Kagadi District.

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### ABSTRACT

The study focused on teaching language and performances among learners in rural schools in Mabaale Sub County, Kagadi district. The study was carried in four schools namely: Kamuyange, Kamurandu, Muntuguru and Nyakarongo primary schools. In the view of the study, it was revealed from the findings that the sampled schools experienced poor performances in English language. There are poor communication, school dropout, poor class attendance, family background, poor teaching methods, nick naming teachers, lack of scholastic materials, late coming, poor cooperation and collaboration among learners. The findings of the study showed that the effect of English language on academic performance in Mabaale Sub County include; failure to interpret questions, poor expression using the language, lack of confidence by learners, grammatical errors in answering questions and spelling problems by both the learners and teachers. In order to have improved performance in primary schools in English, the teachers should always make sure that the right instructional materials and methods of teaching should be used depending on the content/work to be covered, providing refresher courses for teachers targeted at methodology, the pupils should be provided with language hobbies and other leisure activities.

Keywords: English language. Academic Performance, Learners, Inclusive Schools, Mabaale. Sub County, Kagadi and District.

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### INTRODUCTION

The term English is often in its most sense referred to the language of England and of southern Scotland from a historical view point. It is commonly known that during the 5<sup>th</sup> century AD, the entomic tribes invaded Britain whose tribes comprised the Jutes, Anglos and the Saxons. Later, Anglo-saxon civilization came into existence from the word Anglos, two other words, English and English were derived. This English originally meant the language of the Anglos and their kindred tribe [1]. English language and academic performance in rural schools in Mabaale sub County Kagadi district. The important aspects that were considered are academic performance of learners and teaching English language. Aiken [2] observed that some people attribute their failures to bad luck, difficult task and other extenuating factors while others attribute their success to their own efforts, abilities and other dispositions. [3] says that, it is essential subjects that should be taught/learnt in practical sense by teaching real figures from

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such information and work of art as the Chinese saying goes; what I hear, I forget, what I see, I remember, what I do, I understand. [4] Contends that the equality and effectiveness of the teaching in schools depends on the availability of requirements and facilities. He noted that if instructional materials are available and properly used, teaching becomes easy and children learn faster. He concluded saying, that visual aids are key to good teaching they motivate creativity of learners. Academic performance: Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary 6<sup>th</sup> Edition defines academic as anything connected with education, specially studying in school and universities. Performance: This means how well or badly you do something. According to Roger Le Roy Millers book titled “Economics Today”, individuals who are classified as poor share some general characteristics. Studying is not reading. It requires a more intense and organised effort. To study effectively, you must have good planning, memory, reading, note taking and time management skills. To study effectively you must master certain skills: planning, memorising, time management, note taking, and sometimes managing stress. Everyone has a different “learning style”. Consequently, everyone has a different “studying style”. But the way that you are studying right now might not be the best for you. How would you know? Easy: If your grades aren’t what you’d like them to be, then you probably need to change how you study, [5].

In many researches on second language classroom, the role and influences of mother tongue or first language on second language learning has always been a hotly debated issue. There have always been contradicting views about whether or not to use first language of the students in the second language classroom. During the past 30 years, in the late seventies to early eighties, the idea of using mother tongue in language classroom was not a favored one. Majority of the language classroom used solely second language while the use of first language is avoided totally. In fact, many supported the use of second language only so as to provide full exposure to that language. The use of first language in the language classroom is deemed as depriving the learners input in second language, [5]. The poor level of achievement in many subject areas may be due to poor foundation in English language among secondary school students which invariably may be connected with the conflict between mother tongue and English. This is because children in this part of the world are first introduced to their mother tongue with which they comprehend ideas. But as they grow, they sooner or later realise that the language of instruction in schools is basically in English. For this reason, learners struggle in between two languages mentally, socially, economically and educationally. [6] said that although a reasonable degree of theoretical consistency can be discerned between teaching approaches and theoretical bases, there are also differences and inconsistencies, as would be expected between applied and theoretical sciences. As to the issue of the role of the mother tongue in second language teaching, the metaphor of a pendulum swinging will be adopted throughout to indicate the position each approach or method takes either for or against the deliberate use of the mother tongue in second language teaching. To be more specific, second language teaching will centre round three major approaches namely Traditional Approach, Behavioural Approach and Communicative competence. The main prerequisite for a successful learning of a second language is strong perception and comprehension capabilities in the mother tongue. Mother Tongue Influence is one of the biggest inhibiting factors in acquiring a second language especially English language which has been around us for more than three centuries. In order to rule the Indians the colonists imposed English through every sphere of common people. They imposed in every conceivable way viz., culturally, socially, educationally and judicially. Due the explosion of mass media, learning English has become both easy and hard- easy because sources of learning materials are available but it is hard because this is not our mother tongue but an alien tongue with an entirely different distinct grammatical features. Hence, mixing native language and English is common in India. A lot of people refer to mother tongue „influence“ on English, as mother tongue „influenza“ and have a good laugh at others“ expense. Of all the influences, the mother tongue influence is the most difficult to get rid of [7].

#### **Aim of the study**

The study was focused on teaching language and performance among learners in rural schools of Mabaale Sub County, Kagadi district.

#### **Objectives of the study**

- i. Examine how English language was manifested in pupils of Mabaale Sub County, Kagadi district.
- ii. To find out how English language affected academic performance in Mabaale Sub County, Kagadi district.
- iii. To ascertain how we overcome the problem of poor performance of English language in rural schools in Mabaale Sub County, Kagadi district.

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### Research questions

- i. How English language was manifested in pupils in Mabaale Sub county Kagadi district?
- ii. How does English language affects academic performance in MabaaleSub County, Mabaale district?
- iii. How can the problems of poor performance in rural schools be overcome in Mabaale Sub County Kagadi district?

### Scope of the study

The study was carried out in Kagadi district, on the challenges facing teaching English language in rural schools towards the performance in primary schools of Mabaale Sub County. The study was carried out in teaching language and performance among learners in rural schools in Mabaale Sub County, Kagadi district. Each of the above schools were visited independently so as to get firsthand information. Since it was impossible to encompass the entire population, the researcher got information by sampling specific individuals of different levels.

## METHODOLOGY

### Research design

The descriptive sample survey design enabled the researcher to use both qualitative and quantitative techniques in collecting and analyzing data.

### Population

The target population comprised of teachers, parents, pupils and head teachers.

### Sampling strategies

In this study, the researcher used probability sampling techniques because of its high general ability of results. Simple systematic and stratified sampling methods are three types that were used. In systematic sampling the fraction method employed in the study in addition to the stratified random sampling in which the population was divided into a number of strata.

### Sample size

**Table 1: The population sample was as follows:**

Respondents	Number	Percentage
District Inspector of schools	1	1.7
Parents	13	21.6
Teacher	12	20
Head teachers	4	6.7
Pupils	30	50
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100</b>

### Data collection methods

The researcher used questionnaire because it collected information from many respondents in a projected time span. The interview guided whereby conversations with the purpose of obtaining valid and valuable information during the course of conversation was also used. The observation technique was in addition used. The researcher observed the school environment, the teachers and pupils.

### Data analysis methods

The response from questionnaires, interviews, focused group discussion and observation will categorize in themes resulting into pie charts, percentages, and tables.

## DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Data was analyzed according to the research objectives that were formulated. The objectives of the study were; it presents findings and interpretations. It is presented in accordance of the three objectives and research questions that guided the study. The data collected was organized in response to questionnaire, focus group discussion, observation and interviews administered to teacher, parents, pupils and head teachers all selected from in Mabaale Sub County, Kagadi district. Data was generated, collected and analyzed in form of frequencies, percentages and tables basing on the responses got from the respondents.

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### Background characteristics of the respondents

The background characteristics of the respondents was studied and they include age and sex. This information was obtained from local leaders, teachers, students of institutions of high learning, civil servants and opinion leaders.

### Sex dimension of the respondents

Gender mainstreaming is an important aspect in the employment and development. It is better to understand the roles played by each sex when carrying out this study. Today development has integrated both male and female to achieve their objectives.

**Table 2: Sex distribution of the respondents**

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	34	57
Female	26	43
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: primary data

Out of 60 respondents, majority was found to be males (57%) and the males were 43% as shown on the table above. The reason for this was that most of the male respondents were willing in giving information about the topic of study.

**Table 3: Respondents' age differences in years**

Age range	Frequency	Percentage
17 – 22	10	17
23 – 28	14	23
29 – 34	16	27
35- and above	20	33
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Primary data

With regard to age, 33% of the respondents were between the age of 35 and above, 27% were between the ages of (29-34), 23% were between the age differences of (23-28), while 17% belonged to the age difference of (17-22). The old people were seen as experienced age group which can help to examine how English language is manifested in pupils, to find out how English language affects academic performance and to ascertain how the problem of poor performance in rural schools can be overcome in Mabaale Sub County Kagadi district than the youth who had less or no experience. The old people were always identified as the group that could listen to the radio news, read the newspapers and even watch the television. The study involved at least all the age groups. This means that the entire population was fully represented.

### Presentation of findings

#### How English language is manifested in pupils in Mabaale Sub County, Kagadi district

**Table 4: Parents responses on whether they thought English Language is very important in our community**

Responses	Frequencies	Percentage
Strongly agree	11	73.4
Agree	4	26.6
Disagree	0	0
Strongly disagree	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: primary data

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From the table above, parents responses on whether they thought English Language is very important in our community showed that 73.4% strongly agreed while 26.6% agreed.

**Table 5: Head teachers' responses on whether they thought English by virtue of the political power of its native speakers has become the world's international language for excellence**

Responses	Frequencies	Percentage
Strongly agree		
Agree	4	100
Disagree	0	0
Strongly disagree	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source:** Primary data

According to the table above, head teachers' responses on whether they thought English by virtue of the political power of its native speakers has become the world's international language for excellence showed that all (100%) agreed.

**Table 6: The manifestation of English language in Mabaale Sub County as given by all the respondents**

Aspect	Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Manifestation of teaching English language	Poor communication	05	12.8
	Drop out	06	15.4
	Poor class attendance	04	10.5
	Poor cooperation and Collaboration among learners	03	7.6
	Nick naming teachers	05	12.8
	Lack of scholastic materials	05	12.8
	Late coming	04	10.5
	Family background	03	7.6
	Poor teaching methods	04	10.5
<b>Total</b>		<b>39</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source:** Primary data

The findings in table 6 are of interest and show various the manifestation of English language in Mabaale Sub County as given by all the respondents. 12.8% gave poor communication, 15.4% gave drop out, 10.5% poor class attendance, 7.6% family background, 10.5% gave poor teaching methods, 12.8% gave nick naming teachers, 12.8% gave lack of scholastic materials, 10.5% late coming, 7.6% gave poor cooperation and collaboration among learners.

### How English language affects academic performance in Mabaale Sub County, Kagadi district

**Table 7: Parents responses on whether the English language was the child's environment and was the natural basis on which verbal skills can be built**

Responses	Frequencies	Percentage
True	13	
False	-	
<b>Total</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source:** Primary data

The table above showed that all parents' responses on whether the English language was the child's environment and was the natural basis on which verbal skills showed that all (100%) believed that it is true.

**Table 8: The effect of English language on academic performance in Mabaale Sub County as given by teachers**

Aspect	Responses	Frequency	Percentage
The effect of teaching English language on academic performance	Failure to interpret question	4	11.1
	Poor expression using the language	5	13.9
	Lack of confidence by learners	6	16.7
	Grammatical errors in answering questions	2	5.6
	Spelling problems by both the learners and teachers	5	13.9
	Learners' bias on the language	4	11.1
	Undermining learners' workers	2	5.6
	Lack of enough vocabulary in the language	5	13.9
	Not used to the language even though it should be a medium of instruction	3	8.3
<b>Total</b>		<b>36</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source:** Primary data

The findings in table 8 the effect of English language on academic performance in Mabaale Sub County as given by teachers they include; failure to interpret question given by 11.1%, poor expression using the language given by 13.9%, lack of confidence by learners given by 16.7%, grammatical errors in answering questions given by 5.6%, spelling problems by both the learners and teachers given by 13.9%, learners' bias on the language given by 11.1%, undermining learners' workers given by 5.6%, lack of enough vocabulary in the language given by 13.9% and not used to the language even though it should be a medium of instruction given by 8.3%.

### How the problem of poor performance in rural schools can be overcome in Mabaale Sub County Kagadi district.

**Table 9: The pupils' responses on whether they thought it's the role of the government to in improve on academic performance of pupils in primary schools of Mabaale Sub County.**

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	10	100
Agree	0	0
Disagree	0	0
Strongly disagree	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source:** Primary data

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It indicated that it's the role of the government to improve on academic performance of pupils in primary schools of Mabaale Sub County as shown by all (100%) pupils asked.

**Table 10: Respondents response on whether they thought that to improve the performance in primary schools school, the administration and teachers should be committed to their work**

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	60	100
Agree	0	0
Disagree	0	0
Strongly disagree	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Primary data

The table above indicates that to improve the performance in primary schools school, the administration and teachers should be committed to their work as given by all the respondents that all the 60 respondents (100%).

**Table 11: The measures to improve the academic performance of pupils in primary schools of Mabaale Sub County as given by all the respondents.**

Aspect	Responses	Frequency	Percentage
The measures to improve the academic performance	The use of better teaching methods	25	14.2
	The administration and teachers should be committed to their work	11	6.2
	The government should put in more efforts	30	17
	Parents should be sensitized	15	8.5
	Provision of guidance and counseling to children	15	8.5
	Preventing the absenteeism of both the teachers and children	18	10.2
	The teachers should always use the learning aids	21	11.9
	The use of better teaching methods	19	10.7
	The administration and teachers should be committed to their work	22	12.5
<b>Total</b>		<b>176</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Primary data

According to the table above, the measures to improve the academic performance of pupils in primary schools of Mabaale Sub County as given by all the respondents include; the government should put in more efforts (17%),

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parents should be sensitized (8.5%), the administration and teachers should be committed to their work (12.5%), the use of better teaching methods (14.2%), the teachers should always use the learning aids (11.9%), preventing the absenteeism of both the teachers (10.2%) and children and provision of guidance and counseling to children (8.5%). One of the head teachers interviewed showed that “governments must make firm political commitments and allocate sufficient resources to all components of basic education” and that “no countries seriously committed to Education For All will be thwarted in their achievement of this goal by lack of resources. Funding agencies should coordinate their effort to provide flexible development assistance...” He went ahead to say that there is a need to improve access and equity to basic education; enhancing quality through training teachers and strengthening capacity for education training and management. It should be noted that basing on the finding from the field, the academic performance of the children in largely affected by the family income since in most cases those families fail to provide to their children enough scholastic materials. The children are always sent home to collect the school fees while others are in class studying. This one hinders their academic performance in class.

#### Discussion of findings

##### How English language is manifested in pupils in Mabaale Sub County Kagadi district

The findings of the study were of interest and showed various manifestation of English language in Mabaale Sub County as given by all the respondents. 12.8% gave poor communication, 15.4% gave drop out, 10.5% poor class attendance, 7.6% family background, 10.5% gave poor teaching methods, 12.8% gave nick naming teachers, 12.8% gave lack of scholastic materials, 10.5% late coming, 7.6% gave poor cooperation and collaboration among learners. According to Miller, principals who work in schools with more low-income and minority students will tell you that teacher absenteeism is a problem. In a study by [8], he found that teachers with lower job performance ratings as measured by principal ratings had higher absenteeism rates. Also agreement with the above, According to [9] many things can cause poor communication in the workplace. From personal conflict to low morale to lack of motivation, poor communication will often ensue. Furthermore, [10] agreed that peer effects in schools have figured importantly in recent research on school production and in educational policy debates. The existence and structure of peer effects may have important implications for policies regarding ability tracking, classroom organization, and school choice, to name just a few. Empirical studies of peer effects in the school context face the same three challenges as in all other peer effects analysis: proper definition of a peer group, omitted variable bias due to self-selection into a group and common teacher effects that affect all members of a group (correlated effects), and the reflection problem.

##### How English language affects academic performance in Mabaale Sub County, Kagadi district

The findings from the study showed that the effect of English language on academic performance in Mabaale Sub County as given by teachers they include; failure to interpret question given by 11.1%, poor expression using the language given by 13.9%, lack of confidence by learners given by 16.7%, grammatical errors in answering questions given by 5.6%, spelling problems by both the learners and teachers given by 13.9%, learners' bias on the language given by 11.1%, undermining learners' workers given by 5.6%, lack of enough vocabulary in the language given by 13.9% and not used to the language even though it should be a medium of instruction given by 8.3%. From the reviewed literature in chapter two, the importance of English language is most noticeable in the field of education where any person seeking admission into any post-secondary institution must at least have a pass in the subject before he or she can be given admission into any Nigeria University, polytechnic or college of education [11] stated on the importance of English, that six grade of credit pass, is acceptable for admission into any University in Nigeria and a requirement for employment as well. By implication, this means that a candidate must have at least a credit pass in English language before he or she can be given admission.

##### How the problem of poor performance in rural schools can be overcome in Mabaale Sub County, Kagadi district.

The measures to improve the academic performance of pupils in primary schools of Mabaale Sub County as given by all the respondents include; According to the table above, the measures to improve the academic performance of pupils in primary schools of Mabaale Sub County as given by all the respondents include; the government should put in more efforts (17%), parents should be sensitized (8.5%), the administration and teachers should be committed to their work (12.5%), the use of better teaching methods (14.2%), the teachers should always use the learning aids (11.9%), preventing the absenteeism of both the teachers (10.2%) and children and provision of guidance and counseling to children (8.5%). To support the above, [12] talked about the qualification of a teacher. The success or failure of a course rests mainly with the teacher. He may be provided with all possible facilities, given the ideal syllabus and sufficient time for teaching science but unless she/he is enthusiastic about his work, knows the subject and really knows how to teach, is not likely to achieve success. On the other hand, keen and well informed teacher

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who loves his subject and believes in its value will succeed in spite of difficulties and hand caps. A good teacher is expected to possess certain academic qualification as also certain professional qualifications.

### CONCLUSION

In the view of the study, it was revealed from the findings that the sampled schools experienced poor performance in English language. There are various the manifestation of English language in Mabaale Sub County including; poor communication, school dropout, poor class attendance, family background, poor teaching methods, nick naming teachers, lack of scholastic materials, late coming, poor cooperation and collaboration among learners. The findings of the study showed the effect of English language on academic performance in Mabaale Sub County they include; failure to interpret question, poor expression using the language, lack of confidence by learners, grammatical errors in answering questions, spelling problems by both the learners and teachers, learners' bias on the language, undermining learners' workers, lack of enough vocabulary in the language and not used to the language even though it should be a medium of instruction. Though English language had a positive impact, much impact of the negative ended up lowering pupil's academic performance. There would be proper supervision and solving problems and making follow up to pupils.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

In order to have improved performance in primary schools in English the following should be put in place; Continuous positive reinforcement between management and employees is essential and could be an instant remedy of the poor communication problem. Provide refresher courses for teachers targeted at methodology, to prepare and use correct displays in class and guide pupils in independent writing. The pupils should be provided with language hobbies and other leisure time activities. By providing such activities our aim is to articulate, among pupils, a living and a sustaining interest in environment in which he/she lives. There should be the development of proper scientific attitude as one of the major objectives of teaching English. The development of scientific attitudes makes learners open minded, helps him/her make critical observations, develops in him intellectual honesty, curiously, unbiased and impartial thinking. It further be emphasized that all primary schools it is a must to use real objects and other relevant instructional materials, provide a proper and congenial place for performing demonstrations and is helpful in developing a sense of co-operation among the pupils; instructional materials are helpful in creating and promoting positive attitudes in the learners. The aim is to articulate, among learners, a living and a sustaining interest in environment in which he/she lives. There should be the development of proper attitude to make learners open minded as one of the major objectives of English learning. The development of positive attitudes makes learners open minded, helps him/her make critical observations, develops in him intellectual honesty, curiously, unbiased and impartial thinking.

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