

**IMPACT OF LOCAL LANGUAGE ON LITERACY DEVELOPMENT AMONG  
LOWER PRIMARY IN GOVERNMENT AIDED SCHOOLS IN BUNGOKHO  
SOUTH SUB-COUNTY, MBALE DISTRICT**

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**UGANDA CHRISTIAN  
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## DECLARATION

I Wanasolo Richard, do declare that this research report titled "Impact of local language on literacy development among lower primary in government aided schools in Bungokho South Sub-County, Mbale District," is entirely my original work and I do acknowledge that it has never been presented to any institution of higher learning for any award.

Signed.....

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Date.....8<sup>th</sup> July 2024

**APPROVAL.**

This is to certify that this research report has been under my close supervision and is now ready for submission to the department of education of Uganda Christian University for the intended award.

Signed: MUSA.....

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Date: 8/07/2024.....

## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this piece of work to my beloved family members especially my parents; Mr. Nabulo Patrick and my mum Ms. Nabushuwu Lornah. To my dear wife Ms. Kimono Irene and the children; Wanasolo Joan, Wanasolo Jairus, Nabulo Eddie, Nabushuwu Patricia, Katisi Tracy and Nabushuwu Mildred and my siblings; Shimali Nicholas, Lule Benard, Washiraka Franco, Namakoye Janet, Khabuya Agatha and Nabifo Oliver for their financial, spiritual moral guidance and compassion they rendered to me during my stay at Uganda Christian University.

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## **LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS**

FL	:	First Language
MoES	:	Ministry of Education and Sports
NAEP	:	National Assessment of Educational Programme
NICHHD	:	National Institute of Child Health and Development
NPE	:	National Policy on Education
NELP	:	National Early Literacy Panel NELP
NRP	:	National Reading Panel
NYSED	:	The New York State Prekindergarten Foundation for the Common Core
UNICEF	:	United Nations International Children’s Emergency Fund
UNESCO	:	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.

## ABSTRACT

The study will examine the “Impact of local language on literacy development among lower primary in government aided schools in Bungokho South Sub-County, Mbale District.” The purpose of the study is to examine the impact of local language on literacy development among lower primary in government aided schools in Bungokho South Sub-County, Mbale District. The study was guided by the following objectives; to examine the status of children’s literacy development abilities among learners in lower primary in Bungokho South, Mbale District; to analyse the factors that affect literacy development among learners in lower primary in Bungokho South, Mbale District and to find out possible ways to improve literacy development skills among learners in lower primary in Bungokho South, Mbale District. Data was collected from 152 respondents using self-administered questionnaires and interview checklists. Objective one of the study found out a very high mean and small standard deviation of ( $\mu = 3.55$ ;  $SD = 0.48$ ) according to the scale used in the study. The high mean implies that respondents recognizes the fact that local language affects the status of reading abilities in the Sub-county and it hinders their academic progress on literacy development and the small standard deviation shows that most of the respondents agreed to the item questions in the questionnaire. Objective two of the study found out a very high mean and small standard deviation of ( $\mu = 3.56$ ;  $SD = 0.50$ ) according to the scale used in the study. The high mean implies that respondents stated that there are so many factors that affect literacy development which minimizes their ability to read and actively participation in the literacy activities and the small standard deviation shows that most of the respondents agreed to the item questions in the questionnaire. Objective three of the study showed a very high mean and small standard deviation of ( $\mu = 3.56$ ;  $SD = 0.50$ ) according to the scale used in the study. The high mean implies that respondents stated that there are so many factors that affect literacy development which minimizes their ability to read and actively participation in the literacy activities and the small standard deviation shows that most of the respondents agreed to the item questions in the questionnaire. The study concluded that status of reading abilities, phonemic awareness, alphabet and phonological awareness, oral language development and print awareness are serious factors that affect literacy development and have potential negative effects on learners’ literacy development. Coupled with the challenges that both teachers and learners go through, for instance, financial family background, low pay among others, local language could have a serious bearing on their literacy development in general.

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.0 Introduction**

This chapter focuses on the background of the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, objectives, research questions and scope of the study, significance, conceptual framework, operational definitions and limitations and delimitations of the study.

#### **1.1 Background to the Study**

The development and the growth of the society largely depend on the language which links the people together. In other words, people's culture cannot be fully appreciated without the use of language, which conveys such culture. Therefore, people that lose its language will be people without a culture and once people have no culture, they cannot be identified as people; it becomes people without a future and identity. Language education is the most important vehicle of people's culture, the most distinctive of all the traits which separates human being conceivable. In other words, it is that tool which differentiates the human from other animals; language forms the basis for translating taught, discoveries and an invention to reality from one generation to another. It is language that defined human's humanity.

The National Policy on Education (NPE, 2013), affirmed that Government recognizes the importance of language as means of promoting social interaction, national cohesion and preservation of our culture. The policy endorsed the need for every child to learn the language of the immediate environment, which is the first language (FL), home language, native language or vernacular used by every individual at home (Sumbalan, Caterial, Jimeno & Balane, 2017).

World Bank (2005) estimated that half of the out-of-school children globally do not have access to the language of school in their home lives, indicating the significance of language barriers in education. The use of indigenous language as a means of instruction in all subjects alongside with English Language at any level of education will not only overturn a long held dismissive attitude towards Nigerian Languages, but immensely strengthen the status of indigenous languages across in the by providing a positive result in the performance of every learner. It provides an opportunity for the children to exercise their right to learn in their first language (Sumbalan et al., 2017). It will enforce additive bilingualism, address the goal of

social equity as well as forge equal access to education and equal language rights for all citizens of the democratic country.

In a report commissioned by the U.S. Department of Education, August and Shanahan (2010) concluded that teaching students in their home language was beneficial to English-literacy learning and better than English immersion. With regard to mastery of the majority language, there is growing acceptance that home-language maintenance not only supports it (Makin, Campbell, & Jones Diaz, 1995), but also that children who are educated initially in their home language learn a second language, and hence the majority language, more proficiently and achieve more academic success than those who have not had such a solid foundation (Barac & Bialystok, 2011; Cummins, 1999; Cummins, 2000; Swain, Lapkin, Rowen, & Hart, 1990; Thomas & Collier, 1997).

The preparation and foundation for literacy success is formed before children enter school (National Literacy Panel, 2000). Preschool education plays a critical and significant role in promoting literacy, preventing literacy difficulties, and preparing young children for kindergarten. In an effort to provide a clear, comprehensive, and consolidated resource for early childhood professionals, the New York State Prekindergarten Learning Standards have been revised to fully encompass the New York State Common Core Learning Standards for English Language Arts and Literacy at the Prekindergarten level. The revision process has resulted in one document, the New York State Prekindergarten Foundation for the Common Core (NYSED, 2011). The New York State Prekindergarten Foundation for the Common Core is organized into five broad developmental and interrelated domains: Approaches to learning; physical development and health; social and emotional development; communication, language and literacy; and cognition and knowledge of the world. These domains of child development represent the overarching areas of early childhood education that are essential for school and long-term success. The five distinct, but highly interrelated domains provide the structure for the New York State Prekindergarten Foundation for the Common Core.

In Australia, NELP, (2008), the National Early Literacy Panel (NELP) conducted a synthesis of the scientific research on the development of early literacy skills in children ages zero to five. The panel's primary purpose was to synthesize research to contribute to decisions in educational policy and practice that affect early literacy development and to determine how teachers and families can support young children's language and literacy development. The

NELP report identified six key predictors for early literacy development and school success. These skills and abilities include alphabet knowledge, phonological awareness, rapid automatic naming of letters or numbers, rapid automatic naming of objects or colors, writing and phonological memory (NELP, 2008). Children who do not acquire mastery of these skills fall behind their classmates and generally are not literacy and comprehending at grade level. NELP also concluded that there are an additional five early literacy skills that are moderately predictive of later literacy achievement:

According to Elumelu, (2017), Nigeria should place emphasis on right policies that promotes not only access but inclusion and quality literacy development. Nolasco (2012) found that when pupils use and master their first language used in their immediate environment or the entire country, they are able to develop critical, reasoning and problem-solving skills that they can use for life-long learning. In Nigeria today, especially in the south western Nigeria, Yoruba language has attracted much research attention across the fields of linguistics, literature, culture as well as Yoruba language Education. Thus, Yoruba has features prominently in education from the primary to the tertiary levels and has been a compulsory subject as well as a medium of instruction in some schools and colleges.

In another study carried out in Kenya, Malone (2010), emphasizes that indigenous literacy development in the education program helps a child build a strong educational foundation, then bridge successfully into one or more school languages, and then use both or all their languages for life-long-learning. There are huge number of researches that cited that language proficiency affects learners' achievement for children. Hence, it is not surprising to find a vast volume of literature on the language learning relationship because language is believed to be the gateway for learning and the vehicle that facilitates acquisition of new knowledge through direct and indirect interaction with teachers and peers, as well as through the reflective processes of introspection (Francis & Rivera, 2007; Fernando, 2020). Researchers like Akinola (2009), Ojo (2009), Oladokun & Adekunle (2010), and Alimi (2012) acknowledge the use of mother tongue in teaching pupils in both pre-primary and primary schools. Also, Adeyinka (1998) states that 'if the Kenyan child is to develop curiosity, manipulative ability, spontaneity, flexibility, intuitive, manual dexterity should acquire these skills and attributes through the mother tongue as a medium of education or instruction which is the natural way of learning.

In Uganda, the MoES (2016), notes that language, literacy and literacy development in the prekindergarten years proceeds through several levels of foundational skills with skills and behaviors becoming more complex and more proficient as children get older. According to the NICHD (2000), foundation skills include three elements; Phonemic awareness, knowledge of high-frequency sight words and the ability to decode words for example, by using known sound-symbol correspondences to sound a word out and decipher it. Although picture literacy reflects a critical stage in literacy development, it is important for children to understand that print can be read and tells the story. In developing print awareness, a child begins to understand what print looks like, how it works, and the fact that print carries meaning (Strickland & Schickedanz, 2009). Concepts of print refer to the ability of a child to understand and recognize the ways in which print functions for the purposes of literacy, particularly with regard to books. Concepts about print include knowing where the front and the back of the book are located; knowing right side up from upside down; knowing that the print, not the picture, is what we read; knowing which direction we read in; and knowing the meaning of punctuation marks among others.

## **1.2 Statement of the problem**

Studies conducted around the world indicate that literacy problems are real and exist in many countries. Despite being English speaking, 20% of children in Europe and America at the age of 11 years are not confident readers (Davis and Brian, 2011). Despite recent improvements in access to schooling, literacy rate remains low in Sub-Saharan Africa and Uganda in particular, according to UNESCO (2013), 774 million adults (15 years and older) still cannot read and write. A report by the MoES, (2010), indicates that about 75% of children at Primary three and six have difficulties with basic literacy skills. In the Bungokho South, a report by the inspector of schools of 2019 shows that, much as Bungokho South is in city, about 50% of children at Primary three in government aided schools cannot read. Uwezo (2013), report on literacy provides clear evidence that the basic literacy skills of primary school children are deficient across East Africa region. While 100% of children in class Two and higher classes should be able to read Basic English, Uwezo (2013) reveals that very few are able to do so, with 3 out of 10 class 3 children are able to read a class 2 level text. In light of the above discussion, there was need therefore to ascertain the impact of mother tongue that might lead to low literacy development among lower primary pupils in Bungokho South, Mbale District.

### **1.3 Purpose of the Study:**

The study examined the impact of local language on literacy development among lower primary learners in Government Aided Schools in Bungokho South, Mbale District.

### **1.4 Specific Objectives**

The study was guided by the following specific objectives;

- i. To examine the status of children's literacy development abilities among learners in lower primary in Bungokho South, Mbale District.
- ii. To analyse the factors that affect literacy development among learners in lower primary in Bungokho South, Mbale District.
- iii. To find out possible ways to improve literacy development skills among learners in lower primary in Bungokho South, Mbale District.

### **1.5 Research Questions**

The study answered the following questions;

- i. What is the status of children's literacy development abilities among learners in lower primary in Bungokho South, Mbale District?
- ii. What are the factors that affect literacy development among learners in lower primary in Bungokho South, Mbale District?
- iii. Suggest possible ways to improve literacy development skills among learners in lower primary in Bungokho South, Mbale District?

### **1.6 Scope of the Study**

The scope of the study was limited in terms of content, time and geographical scope.

#### **1.6.1 Geographical Scope**

Geographically, the study was carried out in Bungokho South, Mbale District. Mbale is in Eastern Uganda and is named after the largest district, Mbale which also serves as the main administrative and commercial center in the sub-region. Mbale District is the largest in the region and the location of the city headquarters is located approximately 245 kilometers (152 mi), by road, northeast of Kampala, the capital of Uganda, and the largest city in that

country. Generally, the study was conducted in Bungokho South Sub-county which is bordered by Butaleja District to the south, Wanale Sub-county to the North, Mutoto Sub-county to the west and Bukiende sub-county to the east.

### **1.6.2 Content Scope**

The study was limited to examining the impact of local language on literacy development among lower primary learners in government aided schools in Bungokho South, Mbale District.

### **1.6.3 Time Scope**

The study was conducted from 2021 to 2024. This is period was considered partly affected by the Covid 19 pandemic and were automatically promoted to next classes with low or no literacy skills.

## **1.7 Significance of the Study**

This study was developed to have relevance in the improvement of the education system of not only Bungokho South Sub-county but also Mbale District and other educational institutions in Uganda and Africa. The study will create awareness to educationists which will help them to understand that the role played as regards academic performance.

Successful completion of the study may serve as a baseline data in the achievement of the pupils in mother tongue-based instruction.

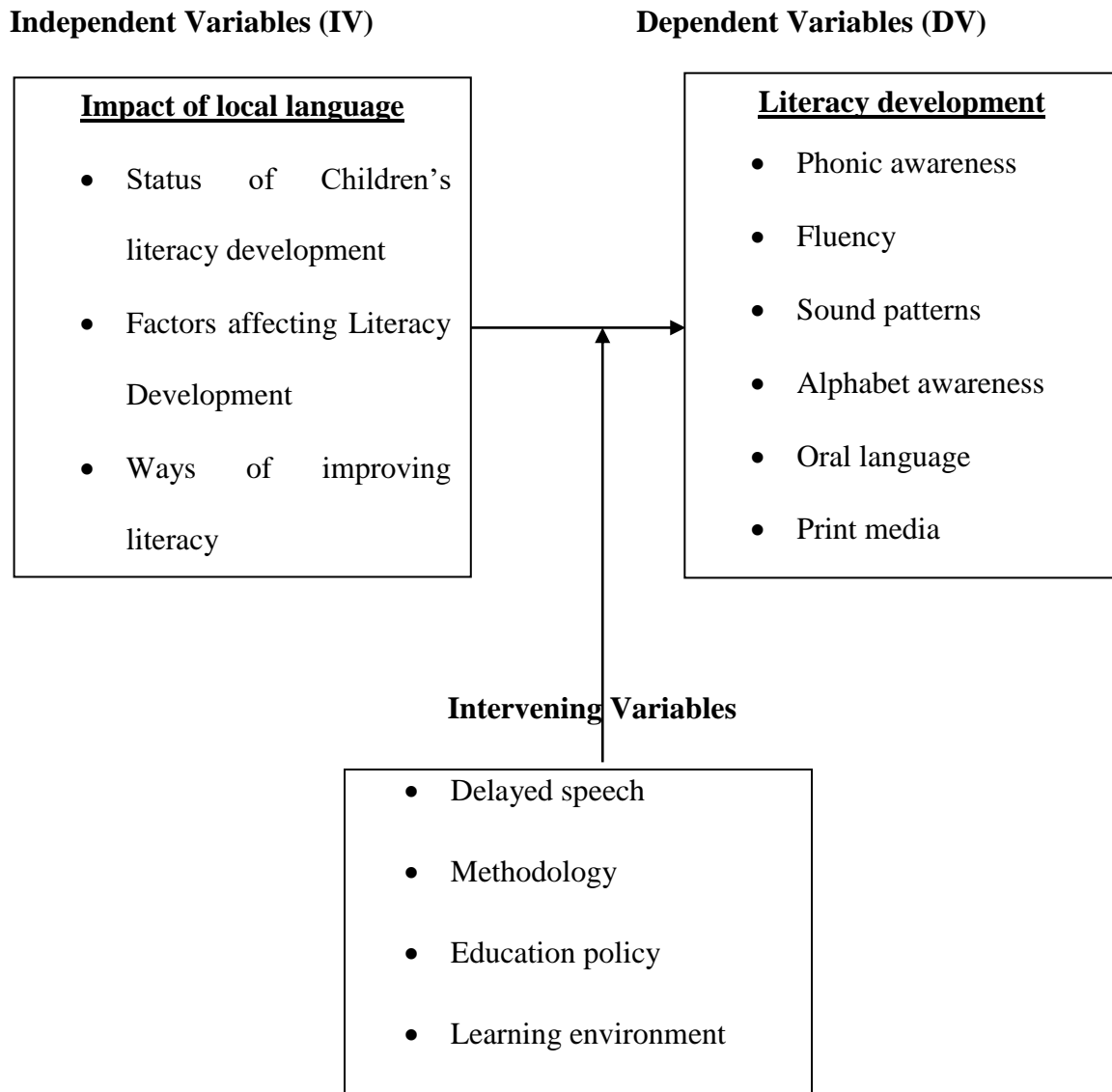
It would lead to the improvement in pupils' literacy development skills and create a positive attitude among the pupils.

The study might also help lower teachers with better methods that lead to the production of literate individuals who self-reliance.

Lastly, with the result of this study, curriculum makers and researchers would be given a feedback with regards to the implementation of mother tongue based-instruction as part of the primary school curriculum.

## 1.8 Conceptual Framework

**Figure 1.1:** Conceptual framework showing the relationship between the impact of local language and literacy development.



*Source: Primary Data (2024)*

Figure 1.1 above illustrates a conceptual framework that helped to model the relationship between the independent variable, “Impact of local language,” and the dependent variable, “literacy development.” It further shows an interception of the intervening variables with causal relationship by spurious associations which results from delayed speech, methodology, and education policy and learning environment although not part of the study variables.

## 1.9 Definition of Key Operational Terms

**Reading:** According to Sentuwa (2004), reading is a learning skill which aids all other learning activities. In the context of this study, reading is the interpreting of meaning from printed words. According to the World Book Encyclopedia (1994), reading is the act of getting meaning from printed or written words. Wawire, (2011), also refers to reading as life characterized by the habit of reading intensively and extensively.

**Literacy** refers to ability to read and write (Jönsson & Olsson, 2008).

**Oral society:** This refers to people who prefer narrating or listening to stories that are delivered by word of mouth through talking and accompanied by demonstrations (Loh, Ellis, Paculdar, & Wan, 2017).

**Pupil** in the study is a child of school going age attending primary one to primary seven (Sammons et al., 2005).

**Primary schools** in Uganda in the study are schools that follow the Uganda education curriculum. These schools teach pupils from Primary One to Primary Seven who are within the age bracket of 6 to 13 years old (N’Namdi, 2005).

## 1.10 Limitations of the Study

The researcher encountered the following challenges:

Some respondents were biased during the time of giving their responses on the research tools.

Weather changes in Mbale for example during rainy season limited accessibility to some respondents.

Limited time to collect data as the researcher was on course as well as executing daily school duties and family obligations delayed the process

Financial constraints also posed a threat especially during printing, collecting data from respondents and transport costs.

The study was also carried out during the Covid 19 pandemic which caused a problem in both transport and difficulty in accessing the respondents as they were told to observe social distance.

## **1.11 Delimitations**

The study was limited to Bugohko sub-county due to limited time and funds that couldn't allow the researcher explore the whole Mbale district.

The research tools which had difficult terms to respondents to interpret and make a response were simplified through a translation

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.0 Introduction**

This chapter focused on existing literature on impact of local language on literacy development. The researcher got the secondary data from books, internet, and journals. The purpose of reviewing the literature was to have an informed view about the topic, identify the gaps within the literature and close the gaps.

#### **2.1 Status of Children Literacy Development Abilities**

Literacy is one of the basic skills of English. Nunah (2004), states that literacy is a fluent process of reader combining information from a text and their own background knowledge to build meaning. Globally, about 20% of English speaking states, children at age of 11 years are unable to read confidently (NAEP, 2015). The report also indicated that some American children struggle to read. According to U.S Department of Education despite noteworthy progress in recent years, one student in early public school eighth graders lacks basic grade level literacy skills. 66% of US fourth graders scored below proficiency on literacy test, meaning they are not literacy at grade level (NAEP, 2013). Even more alarming is the fact that 80% of children from low economic background score below grade level in literacy. According to Coley (2002), about 60% of low income children to kindergarten and more than a third of middle income children are the same level. These research findings suggest significant gaps in literacy for American children. Focus of the education for all movement has slowly moved from access to quality to a focus on achievement of learning outcomes.

According to EFA (2011), there is an increase of illiterate adults despite recent improvement in access to basic education. Literacy remains low in Sub- Saharan Africa with many people not able to read or write. Nearly one billion people entered 21st Century unable to read a book or write their names (UNICEF, 1999). EFA (2011) also indicate that there is need to secure literacy ability in young children to enhance literacy in adulthood. This study aims at investigating the impact of local language on literacy development among lower learners in Bungokho South, Mbale District.

Across East Africa, more children are going to school and billions of shillings poured into education with increasing budget every year. Despite this huge allocation Uwezo (2011),

indicate that education in East African region seems to have deteriorated whereas on average, only a third of children in the region possess basic literacy. In Kenya, educational achievements lag behind, despite the significant progress which has been made in increasing children's access to schooling (Mugo et al, 2011; NASMLA, 2010; 16 Uwezo, 2011) The report further indicate that a significant number of children do not possess foundational grade two levels skills even as they approach the end of primary school education.

Uwezo report (2013), titled "Are our children learning?" revealed that nationality, seven out of ten children in grade two cannot read grade two text. The report also showed that 11 out of 100 children in standard eight cannot read a simple English or Kiswahili story. Many children in Kenya fail to read effectively in formative years of primary school – National survey in Kenya found that more than half of pupils in Grade Two are unable to infer meaning from short text passages. Karuoya (2015) investigated school factors influencing literacy achievement including teaching skills and school policies but did not investigate other school contextual factors including school literacy culture, pre- school experiences and availability of literacy materials that this study aims at investigating.

Class two learners with strong skills to read at an early age experience quite a lot of exposure to print media and eventual advancements in a variety of knowledge domains (Cutting & Scarborough, 2006). On the contrary, children who lag behind in their literacy skills receive less practice in literacy than other children do. They also miss opportunities to develop literacy comprehension strategies and often encounter literacy material that is too advanced and consequently, may acquire negative attitudes about literacy itself.

In Kenya, teaching literacy skills is done at primary school level as a basic skill, in addition to listening, speaking and writing (Dubeck, Jukes & Okello, 2012). After 8 years of age, which in Kenya places them in grade 4, the learners are expected to learn all the subjects in the school curriculum without any difficulties in literacy. Information about the stages of literacy development indicates that learners starting at this level should read to learn, where they use literacy as a functional tool for acquiring new knowledge (Mugo, Mwoma & Limboro, 2011). Evidence from the Uwezo assessment (2010 & 2011) estimates that only around 50% of children in grade 4 are able to read at grade 2 level, 19 identifying significant delays in acquisition of literacy competency among children in Kenyan primary schools. The National Literacy Panel Report (NRP, 2000) came up with a balanced literacy program using the five Literacy Elements which were assembled as a literacy map for teachers. Based on the

findings, the Five Literacy Elements are: (a) phonemic awareness (b) Phonics (c) Fluency, (d) Vocabulary, and (e) text comprehension. Each of the five Literacy Elements is needed to create the core foundation of student's success in literacy. Therefore, without proper knowledge and review of these Five Elements, teachers cannot properly implement a beneficial literacy block. Balanced literacy is widely viewed as an outgrowth of the National Literacy Panel Report of 2000, combining a literature-based focus on comprehension instruction with a strong explicit phonics component. The above elements are what strengthen and determine the literacy levels of learners.

Indeed, study has established that a significant number of learners complete the primary school cycle without having achieved the basic levels of literacy skills (Uwezo, 2011). However, Lerner (2006) noted that literacy difficulties among school-going children should be considered as a serious handicap in life in that children who do not learn to read may not succeed in life. It is therefore necessary for the class two teachers to use the right instructional strategies and resources to improve the literacy skills.

### **Factors that affect literacy development among learners**

Reading requires the mastery, integration and application of numerous skills and knowledge. The National Reading Panel (NRP) of the National Institute of Child Health and Development (NICHD) issued a report that identified five areas that were critical for effective reading instruction: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension (NICHD, 2000). Reading or learning how to read is a combination of all these skills. They are interconnected and interdependent on one another, which makes it difficult to teach them in isolation. Learning to read is a developmental process. Most children follow a similar pattern and sequence of reading behaviors as they learn how to read: from appreciation for and awareness of print to phonological and phonemic awareness to phonics and word recognition. Foundation skills are reading skills that students typically develop in the primary grades. The skills and behaviors that develop early serve as the base for later competence and proficiency. They are the building blocks that children learn to utilize to develop subsequent, higher-level skills to become proficient readers.

Studies have shown that several key factors impede literacy comprehension among learners ranging from phonetics awareness to ability to process the individual sounding of letters which is needed for word recognition (National Literacy Panel, 2000; Torgeson, 2002).

During preliminary years in pre-schools, literacy instruction focuses on decoding and fluency, which requires both strong phonemic awareness and phonic skills.

Storch and Whitehurst (2002) outlined different components of emergent literacy skills and identified three factors that appear to be associated with class Two school learners' later word-decoding skills; oral language, phonological processing abilities, and print knowledge. In the earliest stages, literacy in an alphabetic system involves decoding letters into corresponding sounds and linking those sounds to single words (Dalton & Grisham, 2011).

Reading is a complex and multifaceted process that involves learning a complicated and often confusing code of letters and sounds known as the alphabetic principle. Research has shown that some children struggle with this element of reading development because they have difficulty with phonemic awareness (NICHD, 2000; NELP, 2008; Shanahan & Lonigan, 2013). Phonemic awareness is a subset of phonological awareness. Phonemic awareness refers to the ability to recognize, identify and manipulate phonemes in spoken words. Research has found that this element of reading is the single strongest indicator for a child's success at learning to read (NICHD, 2000). Phonemic awareness is grounded in oral language and serves as the foundation for reading development. Children who cannot hear and work with the phonemes of spoken words will have a difficult time learning how to relate these phonemes to graphemes (a letter or a number of letters that represent a phoneme in a word) when they see them in written words. This pre-phonics problem interferes with the learning of letter and sound connections.

According to Shanahan & Lonigan, (2013), knowledge of the alphabet and phonological awareness are both strong predictors of later decoding and comprehension and teaching these in combination has a consistently positive impact on improving students' literacy and comprehension abilities. Phonological awareness provides the foundation for phonics. Phonics, the understanding that sounds and print letters are connected, is the first step towards conventional reading. In a study conducted in Tanzania to determine the effects of phonological sensitivity on language development, Johnston, Anderson and Holligan (2006) asserted that phonological sensitivity refers to skills to manipulate the sound structure of oral language. The study has converged on the finding that phonological sensitivity plays a critical role in the normal acquisition of literacy skills.

Children who are better at detecting and manipulating syllables, rhymes, or phonemes are quicker to learn to read. Whereas the connection between oral language and literacy is clear for literacy comprehension, some studies indicate that vocabulary skills also have a significant impact on decoding skills very early in the process of learning to read (Wagner, Torgesen, Rashotte, Hecht & Barker, 2003). Studies have demonstrated significant concurrent and longitudinal correlations between children's vocabulary skills and their phonological sensitivity. Moreover, studies of children with special needs and poor readers indicate that there is a core phonological deficit in nearly all poor readers regardless of whether their literacy abilities are consistent or inconsistent with their general cognitive abilities (Phillips & Torgesen, 2006). Acquisition of skills to read and understand vocabulary is another component of literacy skills which enhances transition of children from class one to class two.

In order to read words, it is imperative that the learners know their meanings. According to Johnston (2006), as learners develop and become more advanced readers, they not only learn to connect their oral vocabularies to their literacy prowess, but also strengthen each of these areas by adding new words to their repertoires. Similar arguments were posed by Landi (2010) in a study conducted in Malawi amongst 123 respondents to establish the significance of understanding meanings of words in language learning in which they indicated that literacy is considered to be a key element of vocabulary development in school-age children.

When a child begins to learn to read, their print vocabulary and oral vocabulary tend to be the same, as children use their vocabulary knowledge to match verbal forms of words with written forms. These two forms of vocabulary are usually equal up until grade 3 (Landi, 2010). Because written language is much more diverse than spoken language, print vocabulary begins to expand beyond oral vocabulary. The study further indicated that, by age 10, children's vocabulary development through literacy moves away from learning concrete words to learning abstract words which are necessary for transition into class one.

Oral language development provides students with the foundation for comprehending text and communicating effectively. Fluency is inextricably tied to decoding and reading comprehension (Pikulski & Chard, 2005). It serves as the bridge between literacy development and comprehension. . Oral language provides a foundation where children learn about the alphabetic principle and subsequently learn about the structure of spoken English words. NICHD, (2000), say that oral language development is a term used to describe the development of knowledge and skills that allow children to understand, speak, and use words

to communicate and read. During the preschool years, children become fluent in the language spoken at home. With appropriate guidance and support, children's oral language will develop as they begin to use more complex grammar and vocabulary which normally affects the literacy development skills. Children's oral language skills serve as the foundation for both aspects of reading ability: Word reading and language comprehension (Shanahan & Lonigan, 2013).

Print awareness is also an important part of developing literacy. For pre and emergent readers, the picture in books is an important element for developing oral language and vocabulary during storybook reading and independent play. Although picture reading reflects a critical stage in literacy development, it is important for children to understand that print can be read and tells the story. In developing print awareness, a child begins to understand what print looks like, how it works, and the fact that print carries meaning (Strickland & Schickedanz, 2009). Concepts of print refer to the ability of a child to understand and recognize the ways in which print functions for the purposes of reading, particularly with regard to books. In a study conducted in New York about literacy development, Strickland & Schickedanz, (2009), opine that concepts about print include knowing where the front and the back of the book are located; knowing right side up from upside down; knowing that the print, not the picture, is what we read; knowing which direction we read in; and knowing the meaning of punctuation marks, and is boosted by first language. As children are learning about print concepts, they are building the foundation for early literacy development.

Cain & Oakhill, (2007), assert that knowledge of these concepts is essential to conventional reading and writing in English. Children with print awareness will begin to understand how written language is connected to oral language. Oral language skills are linked to the code-related skills that help word reading to develop and they also provide the foundation for the development of the more-advanced language skills needed for comprehension. Print awareness also supports children's ability to recognize words as components of both oral and written communication. The concepts of word are predictive of how well children will be able to read in the early grades.

Furthermore, Gately, (2004) states that literacy development is greatly influenced by local language as learners may fail to match words of L1 with those in L2. The concept of a word refers to the ability of a reader to match spoken words to written words while reading. While developing print awareness, young children will began to understand that each word is

separate, and that words are separated by a space within each sentence. Using strategies to build concept of word will also support children's developing awareness of the individual sounds within words which triggers literacy. Developing concept of word precedes and may facilitate the development of phonological and phonemic awareness.

### **How to improve upon learners' literacy Development**

Currently, several efforts are being made in Europe and across the globe to tackle the challenge of literacy, perhaps the most comprehensive one is the work of the ELINET network, the antecedents of which project are presented in one of the chapters. Firstly, Schleppegrell (2004) has elaborated that language resources improve on a functional linguistic perspective which includes context. Learners must master for successful literacy development in schools through context. She shows that the context influences the use of language resources, and simultaneously that the selected language resources constitute the context. However, the Dutch academic world has only limited experience in this approach. They have read and discussed texts by Acevedo (2002), Derewianka (1990), Coffin (2006), Gibbons (2006), Love (2009), Schleppegrell (2006, 2007), Schleppegrell & Achugar (2003), and Rose (2006, 2008), among others. The main question they asked during this stage was to what extent the presented – mostly Australian – insights and examples are applicable to the Dutch education context.

Van der Leeuw & Meestringa, (2014), indicate that practice in the analysis of specific subjects improves literacy development. In the analyses, it was concluded that analysing the subject-specific texts not only offered insight into the specifics of the professional languages that are taught at school but also gave useful ideas for the training of learners to develop better literacy skills.

According to Jonsson & Olsson, (2008), in order to improve learners' literacy, teachers should try to be patient, especially with slow learners. To them, children need to be praised and encouraged. For instance, poor readers should never be rebuked as this frustrates them and destroys their efforts to master reading Ibid. Their findings do not deviate from the current reading practices in schools of Bungokho South where teachers have been encouraged to be more patient when guiding slow learners, encouraging formation of reading clubs and conducting several debates for pupils to widen their understanding in different perspectives. Elley, (2001), is in agreement when she reveals in so many studies that teachers

rewarded pupils who had performed even moderately well in reading with small tokens like sweets or biscuits. Some of the ways in which teachers rewarded their pupils were through showing off the pupils' books to their fellow pupils, asking pupils to read in front of the class and putting stars in the pupils' exercise books. Such rewards encouraged pupils to indulge more in reading since they anticipated being rewarded. Teachers in return were rewarded by their head teachers, depending on the pupils' performance in class.

Literacy is a learning skill which aids all other learning activities. The more one reads the better one learns (Martins & Marques, 2010). Therefore, for any individual to develop a literacy skill, they need to practice reading. Furthermore, he pointed out that children must read at different paces. Indeed, Cox and Guthrie (2001) agreed that the amount of reading that children do for enjoyment and for school was found to be a major contributor to their literacy achievement. For a reading culture to be possible reading must be part of all aspects of life and not only certain parts such as school or work (Magara and Batambuze, 2005). Similar findings were also made by the Reading for Change study (2002), which showed that reading enjoyment is more important for children's educational success than their family's socio-economic status.

According to Dike (1995), stories, lullabies, proverbs, tongue twisters, riddles, legends, fables, myths and songs are all part of the children's everyday life that boost their literacy skills, so they should be acknowledged as something that can lay the foundation for reading practices among children. She further noted that it is mostly at home that this form of literacy is practised. Dike also stated that in almost all the homes, of the children in the Nigerian study, someone told stories to 99 per cent of the children. According to the study, when the teachers told stories, something that was occasional, it was frequently as time filler after examinations had ended rather than as part of the curriculum. Storytelling took place in informal settings such as the home and the playground. Further still the way literacy was manifested was different at home and in school. Dike argued that literacy mediation, through oral tradition and other cultural expressions, was required to promote a reading culture in Africa.

The development of good reading habits largely depended on the way children were introduced to reading. Usually teachers taught pupils to identify the different letters of the alphabet before introducing them to the reading of syllables and simple sentences. For instance, Bakunda et al. (2003) asserts that in order to improve literacy development,

practice with the objective of developing learners' reading skills, the Enhancement of Universal Primary Education in Kampala (EUPEK) project decided to use a phonic approach to teach reading. A method known as 'jolly phonics' was considered a better alternative because it is a multi-sensory approach which involved the use of letters, sounds, actions and storylines. It made reading alive, enjoyable and comprehensible. The jolly phonics method helped learners to be able to decode words by understanding the sounds that letters represent. Hence the pupils were taught the 42 sounds of the English language, not just the alphabet names. With this knowledge pupils were taken through stages of blending sounds and forming words and then reading. At the same time they were taught to write by identifying sounds in words relating the letters to those sounds and forming the letters correctly. This approach to teaching reading gave the learner a sound foundation for reading and writing.

Furthermore, Magara and Batambuze (2005) stated that training of teachers to teach literacy lessons would be the best method as a means of promoting literacy among the learners. Teachers needed to be trained to teach pupils how to read. It has also been argued that traditional methods of teaching, which are based on a single textbook, were much less effective than a book-based approach. This meant that, instead of the traditional method of reading, the pupils should come in contact with many different kinds of books that are relevant to them (Elley, 2001). These teaching methods could be seen as one way of changing the pupils' perception of reading as schoolwork. This aspect was important since it is believed that a literacy development could not flourish if reading was seen as something that pupils were obliged to do but do not enjoy doing.

Magara, (2005), opined that availing relevant literature to the learners helps them to develop good literacy skills. The relevance of the material depends on the context and the children. The best judges of what material is stimulating and relevant for children, were the children themselves

When children got the opportunity to select their own books based on their own needs, it could make them become more interested and engaged in reading. This was important since the children's own interest and engagement were vital components of a good learning environment and the ability to promote literacy skills. Although it is stated that the best way to promote reading as an enjoyable activity is to let the children choose the books they wanted to read by themselves, this is not always possible Ibid. according to Magara, in most cases, when children got to choose books they still had to pick from a limited selection.

Thus, it was interesting to see on what grounds these books were selected. In most of the literature that we came across, it was stressed that books should be selected with the specific context in mind. For instance, it was acknowledged that developing countries required books printed in local languages which reflected local knowledge, traditions and culture (Greaney, 1996). Books that dealt with subjects that were relevant for the children's daily lives and reflected their world both inside and outside school were also believed to promote engaged readers (Verhoeven and Snow, 2001).

Furthermore, it was stressed that to be able to produce culturally suitable books, local publishers should be involved in the production of books for children in developing countries. The importance of local publishers was not only related to the production of culturally suitable books for children, it could also be seen as a way of preventing cultural imperialism (Elley, 2001).

Apart from books that deal with the everyday experience of children in Africa and Uganda, it is also important to consider the African heritage when writing and selecting books that are relevant for children. According to Nhlengetfwa (2005), to use the term 'African heritage' is, however, problematic since it was after all an entire continent we were talking about. Nevertheless, as we had seen, the aforementioned authors considered it important to consider similarities between different countries on the African continent, historically and culturally. So then was it also relevant to talk of a 'Ugandan heritage', which could affect the content of the literature that the children in Uganda encounter.

## **Literature Gap**

From the reviewed literature, it has been indicated that mother tongue has an influence on literacy development; Uwezo (2013), report on literacy provides clear evidence that the basic literacy skills of primary school children are deficient across East Africa region. While 100% of children in class Two and higher classes should be able to read Basic English, Uwezo (2013) reveals that very few are able to do so, with 3 out of 10 class 3 children are able to read a class 2 level text. According to EFA (2011), there is an increase of illiterate adults despite recent improvement in access to basic education. Literacy remains low in Sub-Saharan Africa with many people not able to read or write. Nearly one billion people entered 21st Century unable to read a book or write their names (UNICEF, 1999). EFA (2011) also indicate that there is need to secure literacy ability in young children to enhance literacy in

adulthood. Furthermore, according to EFA (2011), there is an increase of illiterate adults despite recent improvement in access to basic education. Literacy remains low in Sub-Saharan Africa with many people not able to read or write. Nearly one billion people entered 21st Century unable to read a book or write their names (UNICEF, 1999). EFA (2011) also indicate that there is need to secure literacy ability in young children to enhance literacy in adulthood. While this is true, in Bungokho South, children also show low literacy development skills; there are also no studies yet on how local language impacts on literacy development. It is against this backdrop that the study sought to examine the impact of local language on literacy development among lower learners in Bungokho South, Mbale District.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.0 Introduction**

This chapter presents the procedures and techniques used to collect data. It covered the research design, area of study, sample size, sampling technique, data collection methods, data processing and analysis and ethical considerations.

#### **3.1 Research Design**

The study adopted a descriptive research design with both qualitative and quantitative approaches. Aaker et al (2002) defines a research design as the detailed blue print used to guide a research study towards its objectives. The study was descriptive in that it described the impact of local language on literacy development among lower primary learners in Government Aided Schools in Bungokho South, Mbale District. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), a descriptive design entails systematic and empirical inquiry in which the researcher does not have a direct control of independent variables as their manifestation has already occurred. The main rationale for using this design is that it allows in-depth study of the subject matter. Secondly, the design was suitable for describing the attitudes, opinions and behavior patterns of people. A descriptive design allowed a researcher to study how the independent variables affected the dependent variable. Qualitative research method was used to describe life experiences and give meaning to them, while quantitative approach involved conversion of data into numeric forms for analysis and interpretation.

#### **3.2 Area of Study**

Geographically, the study was conducted in Bungokho South Sub-county which is bordered by Butaleja District to the south, Wanale Sub-county to the North, Mutoto Sub-county to the west and Bukiende sub-county to the east. The following school was included in the study; Namatsale primary school, Lwamboko primary school, Bumageni Army primary school, Mukhuwa primary school and Bukasakya primary school.

#### **3.3 Population of the Study**

Population is the total aggregate or group of individuals or objects to which a researcher is intended in generalizing the conclusions of a research (Best and Karn, 1996). The study

consisted of 260 respondents which included 160 learners, 20 health workers, 50 lower teachers and 30 parents. Teachers were involved in the study because they were involve in monitoring students' school attendance, assessment and evaluation of students, and they also know students very well in terms of their weaknesses, strength and general behavior. Students were involved in the study because they were the ones that were directly affected by the speech development difficulties thus they were rich in formats. Parents also participated in the study because they were the main subject of concern whose association and upbringing directly impacts learner's literacy development study while health workers were included in the study given the role they play in trying to help unveil speech disorders among the children.

### 3.4 Sample Size

According to Mugenda (2010) and Peter (2012), sampling is the process of choosing the research units of the target population, which are to be included in the study. The sample size of study was drawn from 152 respondents who comprised 113 learners, 044 lower teachers, 028 parents, and 019 health workers. The sample size was determined using Morgan and Krejcie (1970), table as given by Amin, (2005) (Appendix IV).

**Table 1: Sample size and distribution**

<b>Respondent category</b>	<b>Target population</b>	<b>Sample size</b>
Pupils	160	113
Lower teachers	50	044
Parents	30	028
Healthy workers	020	019
<b>Total</b>	<b>260</b>	<b>152</b>

### 3.5 Sampling Procedures

Sampling technique is defined as the process of selecting samples to represent the population (Kothari (2009). In this study, a researcher used simple random sampling and systematic techniques as described below.

### **3.5.1 Simple Random Sampling**

According to Cohen, et al (2000), simple random sampling appears when each unit of the sample has been selected entirely by chance where each subject or unit in the population has an equal chance of being selected. This technique was used to select the students, parents and lower teachers from the selected public primary schools from Bungokho South sub-county, Mbale District. After the pieces of papers had been mixed up in a basket, researcher asked parents, learners and lower teachers to randomly pick up coupons one at a time until a sample of five schools were obtained. Simple random sampling procedure is preferred because of its power to minimize biasness and maximize sample representativeness.

### **Systematic Sampling**

Systematic sampling is a probability sampling method where the researcher chooses elements from a target population by selecting a random starting point and selecting sample members after a fixed 'sampling interval, (Kothari (2009). The researcher used systematic sampling to select healthy worker. Systematic random sampling was used because it was extremely simple and convenient for the researcher to create, conduct, and analyzes samples as there was no need to number each member of a sample and good for representing a population in a faster and simpler manner.

## **3.6 Data Collection Instruments**

Research instrument is a survey, questionnaire, test, scale, rating, or tool designed to measure the variable(s), characteristic(s), or information of interest, often a behavioral or psychological characteristic. In this research, questionnaire, and Interview checklist were used.

### **3. 6. 1 Methods of Data Collection**

A questionnaire is defined as a list of questions which are designed to solicit specific responses that are required, Sarantakos, (2005) which used in this study. This method was used to aid in the collection of data from learners, teachers and parents. According to Amin, (2005), a questionnaire is a self-report instrument used for gathering information about variables of interest in an investigation. Closed ended likert scale questionnaire was designed and used in accordance with the objectives one and two and the key variables of the study. A

questionnaire is preferred because there is less chance of any bias with a standard set of questions to be used for your target audience. According to Mugenda & Mugenda, (1999), a questionnaire is appropriate for large samples and respondents can fill them at their own convenience as recommended. The questionnaire was designed as follows; section A had demographic data, Section B had questions on the study variable with closed ended questions and section and C had open ended questions. This instrument was used to collect data from the learners, lower teachers and parents. The researchers develop a questionnaire based on a four point Likert scale as follows: Strongly Agree 4, Agree 3, Disagree 2 and Strongly Disagree 1.

### **3.6.2 Interview**

According to Gubrium, (2012), an interview is essentially a structured conversation where one participant asks questions, and the other provides answers. Commonly, the word "interview" refers to a one-on-one conversation between an interviewer and an interviewee. Interviews are discussions, usually one-on-one, between an interviewer and an individual meant to gather information on a specific set of topics (Gubrium, 2012). The researcher used semi-structured interviews, which are essentially and verbally administered questionnaires in which a list of predetermined questions asked to the healthy workers with no variation but with some scope for follow-up questions to responses that warranted further elaboration. Interviews gave the researcher an opportunity to revisit some of the issues that had been overlooked in other methods and yet they were deemed vital for the study.

### **3.7 Data Quality Control**

In an attempt to achieve quality data, the researcher made an analysis with respect to instrument validity and reliability.

#### **3.7.1 Validity of the Instruments**

Validity refers to quality of data gathering instrument or procedures that enables it to measure what it sought to measure (Best and Kahn, 2004). To determine the validity of instruments, the researcher conducted a preliminary survey at Nauyo Primary School located in Mbale District since this had the same characteristics with the schools under study. The questionnaires and interviews were piloted to 8 teachers and 5 students before the larger actual survey was conducted in Bungokho South sub-county. This was done to discover the

ambiguities and some grammatical errors in the question items before they were corrected. This helped to cross check the validity of the instruments. The researcher had an opportunity to discuss with the respondents especially on difficult vocabularies or grammatical errors or rather with ambiguity statements in order to rephrase or delete them. In addition, the researcher sought for expertise advice from his supervisor who helped to improve on the clarity on the items from the questionnaires and interviews. The Content Validity Index (CVI) of the instrument was calculated using the formula below. The instrument was considered valid if the value of 0.6 and above is achieved.

$$\text{CVI} = \frac{\text{total number of relevant items}}{\text{Total number of items}}$$

### 3.7.2 Reliability of the Instrument

Reliability means the degree of consistency and precision in which the measuring instruments demonstrates. Reliability of the instrument is the measure of consistence over time and over similar sample (Cohen et al, 2007). The Statistical Packages of Social Scientists (SPSS) was used to ascertain it. Cronbach's Alpha of a minimum reliability analysis of 0.70 and above was taken as a reasonable measure of internal reliability. Since the score obtained was 0.818 and above 0.7; the instrument was adopted as being reliable. The points was achieved when the valid items were divided by the total number of items times one hundred;

$$17/21 \times 100 = 80.95.$$

**Table 3.2: Reliability statistics**

Cronbach's Alpha	No of Items
0.818	21

*Source: Primary Data, (2024)*

### 3.8 Data Collection Procedure

The researcher went to the field after getting an authorization letter from the Head of Department Uganda Christian University, Mbale University College, which introduced him as a student of the University from the Department of Education. The head teachers of the selected schools of Bungokho South sub-county helped the researcher to collect data by giving him a go ahead. The researcher then collected the data in the Sub-County.

### **3.9 Data Processing and Analysis**

Data analysis is a systematic process involving working with organizing data and breaking them into manageable unity (Bagdon & Biklen, 1992). It is also concerned with systematizing data searching for patterns, discovering what is important, what is to be learnt and deciding what to tell others (Cohen et al, 2007). All information that is collected from interviews and questionnaires were subjected to content analysis which involved identifying coherent and important examples, themes and patterns in data collected from the field work. Qualitative approaches therefore, were analyzed through thematic analysis where data is categorized according to their relevant themes and patterns developed accordingly. Quantitative data from the questionnaires were analyzed through simple descriptive statistics after tabulation and conversion into frequencies and percentages for descriptive purposes. In the first place data was cleaned from errors and then coded. After coding, data was analyzed through content analysis to examine its influence on learners' literacy development.

### **3.10 Ethical Considerations**

Research ethics refers to moral principles guiding research (Horman, 1991). It means conducting research in a way that goes beyond merely adopting the most appropriate research methodology, but conducting research in a responsible and morally defensible way.

To ensure these ethical considerations are taken into account, the consent of the respondents and confidentiality was sought and they were assured that the data they provided was strictly for purposes of the study.

In addition, to enhance the participant's privacy, the respondents' names were not be used thus; Confidentiality was practiced by avoiding the use of names but rather initials or codes.

The researcher respected the rights of the respondents in the process of getting the information; sought for permission from the local leadership before carrying out the study.

Coercive approach was as much as possible be avoided in trying to access information from the respondents but rather observed professional ethics in conducting the study. It can be emphasized that this study is original work, and that no known study regarding the impact of local language on literacy development among lower learners has been done in Bungokho South Sub-county, Mbale District had been done.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS

#### 4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents and discusses the findings on the impact of local language on literacy development among lower learners has been done in Bungokho South sub-county, Mbale District. The study was guided the following objectives; to examine the status of children's literacy development abilities among learners in lower primary in Bungokho South sub-county, Mbale District; to analyse the factors that affect literacy development among learners in lower primary in Bungokho South sub-county, Mbale District; to find out possible ways to improve literacy development skills among learners in lower primary in Bungokho South sub-county, Mbale District. Data was collected from 152 respondents using self-administered questionnaires with both quantitative and qualitative methods.

#### 4.1 Socio- Demographic Characteristics

The study looked at the respondents' demographic characteristics in terms of gender, age, marital status, education level and occupation. The main objective for studying the respondents' personal information was to find out whether there were variations in the responses in regard to personal, information. The results of the findings are presented in this sub-section of the report.

**Table 4.1: Showing respondents demographic characteristics**

		Frequency	Percent
<b>Age</b>	10-16 years	16	11
	17-25 years	40	26
	26-35 years	31	20
	36-45 years	35	23
	46 years and above	20	13
<b>Marital status</b>	Single	38	25
	Married	71	47
	Divorced/separated	24	16
	Widowed	19	13
<b>Education level</b>	Primary	51	34
	Secondary	70	46
	College/University	31	20
<b>Occupation</b>	Employed	26	17
	Self-employed	47	31
	Unemployed	79	52

N= 152

Table 4.1 shows the findings on the demographic characteristics of the respondents in terms of age, marital status, education level and occupation. The study found out that 16 (11%) of the respondents were aged between 10 and 16 years, 40 (26%) were aged between 17 and 25 years, 31 (20%) were aged between 26 and 35 years, 35 (23%) were aged between 36 and 45 years and 20 (13%) were aged 46 years and above. Regarding marital status, 38 (25%) of the respondents single, 71 (47%) were married, 24 (16%) were divorced or separated while 19 (13%) were widowed. When it comes to occupation, 26 (17%) of the respondents were employed, 47 (46%) were self-employed while 79 (52%) of the respondents were unemployed.

#### 4.2 Status of reading abilities among learners in Bungokho South sub-county

The first objective of the study was to examine the status of reading abilities among learners in Bungokho South sub-county. The respondents were asked to state the status of reading abilities among learners. The following responses were captured as indicated below:

**Table 4.2: showing the status of reading abilities and literacy**

Status of learner's literacy Development	SA	A	D	SD
1.Children struggle to read at the level of P3 class	62	38	34	18
2. There is an increased rate of illiterate adults	58	40	33	21
3. Seven out of ten children at P2 class cannot read	54	46	36	16
4. P2 children with high exposure to print media can read	60	41	35	16
5. Children from poor financial background can't read	57	45	32	18

Findings from table 4.2 indicate that local language has a great influence on literacy development in Bungokho South sub-county. From the findings,  $62+38=100$  (65.8%) of the respondents agreed that children struggle to read at the level of P3 class. Most children at P.3 class can't read three letter words. According to U.S Department of Education despite noteworthy progress in recent years, one student in early public school eighth graders lacks basic grade level literacy skills. 66% of US fourth graders scored below proficiency on literacy test, meaning they are not literacy at grade level (NAEP, 2013). This is in agreement with EFA (2011), who confirm that there is an increase of illiterate learners despite recent improvement in access to basic education. Literacy remains low in Sub-Saharan Africa with many people not able to read or write at P3 class. Nearly one billion people entered 21st Century unable to read a book or write their names (UNICEF, 1999). EFA (2011) also

indicate that there is need to secure literacy ability in young children to enhance literacy in adulthood. However,  $34+18=52(34.2\%)$  of the respondents disagree with the assertion that children struggle to read at the level of P3 class.

There is an increased rate of illiterate adults was suggested by  $58+40=98(64.5\%)$  of the respondents. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, most adults who speak English can't read or write. This has increased adult illiteracy and led to many people speaking some language that looks like English yet they can't read or write. EFA (2011), supports this when they say that there is an increase of illiterate adults despite recent improvement in access to basic education. Literacy remains low in Sub-Saharan Africa with many people not able to read or write. Nearly one billion people entered 21st Century unable to read a book or write their names (UNICEF, 1999). EFA (2011) also indicate that there is need to secure literacy ability in young children to enhance literacy in adulthood. Nevertheless,  $33+21=54(35.5\%)$  of the respondents disagree that most adults in Bungokho have developed a good literacy skill and can read and write.

Furthermore,  $54+46=100(65.8\%)$  of the respondents strongly agree that seven out of ten children at P2 class cannot read. Children in Bungokho South sub-county develop literacy skills at a later stage. At P.2 class, they struggle to read. Only 3% can read though not so fluently demonstrated. The remaining 7% struggle a lot and pick the skill at a later age. Uwezo's report (2013), titled "Are our children learning?" revealed that nationality, seven out of ten children in grade two cannot read grade two text. The report also showed that 11 out of 100 children in standard eight cannot read a simple English or Kiswahili story. Many children in Kenya fail to read effectively in formative years of primary school – National survey in Kenya found that more than half of pupils in Grade Two are unable to infer meaning from short text passages. Contrary to this assertion,  $36+16=52(34.2\%)$  of the respondents disagreed.

$60+41=101(66.4\%)$  of the respondents agree that P2 children with high exposure to print media can read. In Bungokho South sub-county, there are children whose parents are well to do and educated. These are exposed and can read even at the age of 7. Those who can read at this age don't need much input from the teachers because they are exposed. Cutting & Scarborough, (2006), confirm that class two learners with strong skills to read at an early age experience quite a lot of exposure to print media and eventual advancements in a variety of knowledge domains. On the contrary, children who lag behind in their literacy skills receive less practice in literacy than other children do. They also miss opportunities to develop

literacy comprehension strategies and often encounter literacy material that is too advanced and consequently, may acquire negative attitudes about literacy itself. This suggestion was contrary to 35+16=51(33.6%) of those who said no to the assertion.

Finally, children from poor financial background can't read was asserted by 57+45=102(67.1%) of the respondents who confirmed that children from poor families lack support to help them develop the literacy fully. They have limited time in school and miss a lot due to school dues. They have difficulties emanating from the fact that their basic requirements are limited. Uwezo, (2011), further indicate that a significant number of children do not possess foundational grade two levels skills even as they approach the end of primary school education because of low financial status of their parents. Across East Africa, more children are going to school and billions of shillings poured into education with increasing budget every year. Despite this huge allocation Uwezo (2011), indicate that education in East African region seems to have deteriorated whereas on average, only a third of children in the region possess basic literacy. In Kenya, educational achievements lag behind, despite the significant progress which has been made in increasing children's access to schooling (Mugo et al, 2011; NASMLA, 2010; 16). However, 32+18=50(32.9%) of the respondents disagree with the assertion.

#### **4.2 Factors that affect literacy development among learners in lower primary**

The second objective of the study was to analyse the factors that affect literacy development in Bungokho South sub-county. The respondents were asked to state the factors that affect literacy development among learners. The following responses were captured as indicated below:

**Table 4.3: Showing the factors that affect literacy development**

<b>Factors that affect literacy development</b>	<b>SA</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>SD</b>
1. Phonemic awareness affects literacy development	68	36	30	18
2. Alphabet and phonological awareness affects literacy development.	65	37	30	20
3. Print awareness affects literacy development	54	46	36	16
4. Oral language development affects literacy development	60	32	43	17
5. Detecting and manipulating syllables and rhymes affects literacy development	59	40	36	17

Table 4.3 shows the study findings on the factors that affect literacy development. The results show that numerous factors influence literacy development. From the findings, it was suggested that phonemic awareness affects literacy development.  $68+36=104(68.4\%)$  of the respondents strongly agree that phonemic awareness affects literacy development. National Literacy Panel, 2000; Torgeson, (2002), support the idea when they opine that children need the knowledge of phonic awareness in order to develop literacy. Studies have shown that several key factors impede literacy comprehension among learners ranging from phonetics awareness to the ability to process the individual sounding of letters which is needed for word recognition. During preliminary years in pre-schools, literacy instruction focuses on decoding and fluency, which requires both strong phonemic awareness and phonic skills.

Closely related to the above, The National Reading Panel (NRP) of the National Institute of Child Health and Development (NICHD) issued a report that identified five areas that were critical for effective reading instruction: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension (NICHD, 2000). Reading or learning how to read is a combination of all these skills. They are interconnected and interdependent on one another, which makes it difficult to teach them in isolation.

Phonemic awareness is a subset of phonological awareness. Phonemic awareness refers to the ability to recognize, identify and manipulate phonemes in spoken words. Research has found that this element of reading is the single strongest indicator for a child's success at learning to read (NICHD, 2000). Phonemic awareness is grounded in oral language and serves as the foundation for reading development. Children who cannot hear and work with the phonemes of spoken words will have a difficult time learning how to relate these phonemes to graphemes (a letter or a number of letters that represent a phoneme in a word) when they see them in written words. This pre-phonics problem interferes with the learning of letter and sound connections. However,  $30+18=48(31.6\%)$  of the respondents disagreed with the assertion.

Secondly,  $65+37=102(67.1\%)$  of the respondents agreed that Alphabet and phonological awareness affects literacy development. They asserted that unless a child recognizes and reads the alphabet with ease, they can never develop fluency in literacy. This was supported by Shanahan & Lonigan, (2013), who posit that knowledge of the alphabet and phonological awareness are both strong predictors of later decoding and comprehension and teaching these in combination has a consistently positive impact on improving students' literacy and

comprehension abilities. Phonological awareness provides the foundation for phonics. Phonics, the understanding that sounds and print letters are connected, is the first step towards conventional reading.

In a study conducted in Tanzania to determine the effects of phonological sensitivity on language development, Johnston, Anderson and Holligan (2006) asserted that phonological sensitivity refers to skills to manipulate the sound structure of oral language. The study has converged on the finding that phonological sensitivity plays a critical role in the normal acquisition of literacy skills.

Furthermore, Storch and Whitehurst (2002), outlined different components of emergent literacy skills and identified three factors that appear to be associated with class Two school learners' later word-decoding skills; oral language, phonological processing abilities, and print knowledge. In the earliest stages, literacy in an alphabetic system involves decoding letters into corresponding sounds and linking those sounds to single words (Dalton & Grisham, 2011).

Also, Reading is a complex and multifaceted process that involves learning a complicated and often confusing code of letters and sounds known as the alphabetic principle. Research has shown that some children struggle with this element of reading development because they have difficulty with phonemic awareness. They have little knowledge on alphabets and can't sound most of these letters (NICHD, 2000; NELP, 2008; Shanahan & Lonigan, 2013). Nevertheless, 30+20=50(32.9%) of the respondents disagreed with the proposal.

Print awareness which affects literacy development was proposed by 54+46=100(65.8%) respondents. Very few children in Bungokho South sub-county interact with print materials. This is because their parents can't read or write, so no need of having print materials in their houses. This was in agreement with Strickland & Schickedanz, (2009), who content that print awareness is also an important part of developing literacy. For pre and emergent readers, the pictures in books is an important element for developing oral language and vocabulary during storybook reading and independent play. Although picture reading reflects a critical stage in literacy development, it is important for children to understand that print can be read and tells the story. In developing print awareness, a child begins to understand what print looks like, how it works, and the fact that print carries meaning. Concepts of print refer to the ability of a child to understand and recognize the ways in which print functions for the purposes of reading, particularly with regard to books.

According to Landi, (2010), when a child begins to learn to read, their print vocabulary and oral vocabulary tend to be the same, as children use their vocabulary knowledge to match verbal forms of words with written forms. These two forms of vocabulary are usually equal up until grade 3. Because written language is much more diverse than spoken language, print vocabulary begins to expand beyond oral vocabulary. The study further indicated that, by age 10, children's vocabulary development through literacy moves away from learning concrete words to learning abstract words which are necessary for transition into class one. However, 36+16=52(34.2%) of the respondents disagreed with the suggestion.

Not only have that but findings also showed that 60+32=92(60.5%) of the respondents agree that oral language development affects literacy development. A child who has a good proficiency in oral language stands a high chance of gaining literacy development at an early age. In Bungokho South sub-county, children delay to speak because of the multilingual nature of the area. This, puts them at risk of developing the literacy skills. Pikulski & Chard, (2005), confirmed to this assertion when they said that oral language development provides students with the foundation for comprehending text and communicating effectively. Fluency is inextricably tied to decoding and reading comprehension. It serves as the bridge between literacy development and comprehension. . Oral language provides a foundation where children learn about the alphabetic principle and subsequently learn about the structure of spoken English words. NICHD, (2000), say that oral language development is a term used to describe the development of knowledge and skills that allow children to understand, speak, and use words to communicate and read. During the preschool years, children become fluent in the language spoken at home. With appropriate guidance and support, children's oral language will develop as they begin to use more complex grammar and vocabulary which normally affects the literacy development skills. Children's oral language skills serve as the foundation for both aspects of reading ability:

Cain & Oakhill, (2007), assert that knowledge of these concepts is essential to conventional reading and writing in English. Children with print awareness will begin to understand how written language is connected to oral language. Oral language skills are linked to the code-related skills that help word reading to develop and they also provide the foundation for the development of the more-advanced language skills needed for comprehension. Print awareness also supports children's ability to recognize words as components of both oral and written communication. The concepts of word are predictive of how well children will be able

to read in the early grades. Word reading and language comprehension (Shanahan & Lonigan, 2013). Nevertheless, 43+17=60(39.5%) of the respondents disagreed with the declaration.

Detecting and manipulating syllables and rhymes that affects literacy development was declared by 59+40=99(65.1%) of the respondents. Children in the Sub-county struggle with syllabic detection since most of them have a unique way of their portrayal. They only can manipulate normal syllables other than silent ones. This creates difficulty in literacy development. Bakunda et al. (2003), opines that the development of good reading habits largely depended on the way children were introduced to reading. According to Cain & Oakhill, (2007), usually teachers taught pupils to identify the different letters of the alphabet before introducing them to the reading of syllables and simple sentences. For instance, asserts that in order to improve literacy development, practice with the objective of developing learners' reading skills, the Enhancement of Universal Primary Education in Kampala (EUPEK) project decided to use a phonic approach to teach reading. A method known as 'jolly phonics' was considered a better alternative because it is a multi-sensory approach which involved the use of letters, sounds, actions and storylines. It made reading alive, enjoyable and comprehensible. The jolly phonics method helped learners to be able to decode words by understanding the sounds that letters represent. Hence the pupils were taught the 42 sounds of the English language, not just the alphabet names. With this knowledge pupils were taken through stages of blending sounds and forming words and then reading. At the same time they were taught to write by identifying sounds in words relating the letters to those sounds and forming the letters correctly. This approach to teaching reading gave the learner a sound foundation for reading and writing.

#### **4.4 How to improve literacy development among lower learners in the Sub-county**

The third objective of the study was to find out ways of curbing literacy development challenges in Bungokho South sub-county. The respondents were asked to suggest ways to improve literacy development among learners. The following responses were captured as indicated below:

**Table 4.4: Showing the ways of curbing literacy challenges in the Sub-county**

<b>Improving Literacy Development</b>	<b>SA</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>SD</b>
1. Training of teachers helps in the development of good literacy skills.	<b>66</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>12</b>
2. Providing relevant literature to the learners improves literacy development	<b>61</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>18</b>
3. Rewarding of both teachers and learners improves literacy development	<b>56</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>22</b>
4. Practicing skills in the specific subject helps improve literacy skills	<b>60</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>20</b>
5. Studying story books, lullabies, proverbs and tongue twisters boosts literacy skills	<b>58</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>9</b>

Table 4.4 shows the study findings on the ways of curbing literacy challenges. The results revealed that local language has influence on literacy development. In interview with the heads of schools, it was revealed that poor literacy development was due to poor teacher training.  $66+39 = 105(69.1\%)$  of the respondents agreed that training of teachers helps in the development of good literacy skills. On top of having teachers trained generally, more refresher courses rare needed for literacy development skills. One of the head teachers said that;

*“Teachers who were trained some years back didn’t pick the skills of teaching literacy. Most of them gamble during reading lessons. Some of them only teach what they can. Teachers ought to be trained in order to best teach literacy to the learners much as most of them think they know it all...”*

Magara and Batambuze (2005), are in agreement when they stated that training of teachers to teach literacy lessons would be the best method as a means of promoting literacy among the learners. Teachers needed to be trained to teach pupils how to read. It has also been argued that traditional methods of teaching, which are based on a single textbook, were much less effective than a book-based approach. This meant that, instead of the traditional method of reading, the pupils should come in contact with many different kinds of books that are relevant to them (Elley, 2001). These teaching methods could be seen as one way of changing the pupils’ perception of reading as schoolwork. This aspect was important since it is believed that a literacy development could not flourish if reading was seen as something

that pupils were obliged to do but do not enjoy doing. However, 35+12=47(30.9%) disagreed with the suggestion.

From the findings, it was strongly agreed by 61+33=94(61.8%) of the respondents that providing relevant literature to the learners improves literacy development. Children need to be exposed to reading materials such as the alphabet and readers to better their literacy. A head teacher during an interview session commented that;

*“In Bungokho South sub-county, parents look at the readers as a waste of resources. Those from families where exposure is even, they develop literacy at an early stage. In lower primary where practical literacy lessons must be taken, teachers’ innovativeness is too limited. Classrooms are bare. Children are not exposed and thus miss out on the literacy development...”*

This is in agreement with Magara, (2005), who opined that availing relevant literature to the learners helps them to develop good literacy skills. The relevance of the material depends on the context and the children. The best judges of what material is stimulating and relevant for children, were the children themselves

When children got the opportunity to select their own books based on their own needs, it could make them become more interested and engaged in reading. This was important since the children’s own interest and engagement were vital components of a good learning environment and the ability to promote literacy skills. Although it is stated that the best way to promote reading as an enjoyable activity is to let the children choose the books they wanted to read by themselves, this is not always possible Ibid.

Closely related to the above, Greaney, (1996), contents that in most cases, when children got to choose books they still had to pick from a limited selection. Thus, it was interesting to see on what grounds these books were selected. In most of the literature that we came across, it was stressed that books should be selected with the specific context in mind. For instance, it was acknowledged that developing countries required books printed in local languages which reflected local knowledge, traditions and culture (Magara, (2005). Books that dealt with subjects that were relevant for the children’s daily lives and reflected their world both inside and outside school were also believed to promote engaged readers (Verhoeven and Snow, 2001). Nevertheless, 40+18=58(38.2%) of the respondents disagreed with the idea.

Rewarding of both teachers and learners improves literacy development was proposed by 56+43=99(65.1%). Appreciation of teachers for teaching the learners and the children for

making an effort to read needs to be done in order to boost their literacy development. In an interaction with the head teachers one of them said;

*“Much as the culture of appreciation has diminished, there is need to reward the efforts of both teachers and learners who try to read and write. Some head teachers can’t even say thank you to the teachers. Because of this, even the very few teachers who can carry a small biscuit or even a pencil to reward a learner who tries to read and write is lowered. Both teachers and learners need to be awarded in order to grow their talent of literacy development...”*

Elley, (2001), is in agreement when she reveals in so many studies that teachers rewarded pupils who had performed even moderately well in reading with small tokens like sweets or biscuits. Some of the ways in which teachers rewarded their pupils were through showing off the pupils’ books to their fellow pupils, asking pupils to read in front of the class and putting stars in the pupils’ exercise books. Such rewards encouraged pupils to indulge more in reading since they anticipated being rewarded. Teachers in return were rewarded by their head teachers, depending on the pupils’ performance in class. This assertion was refuted by 38+22=60(39.5%) of the respondents.

Furthermore, 60+40=100(65.8%) of the respondents agree that practicing skills in the specific subject helps improve literacy skills. According to Schleppegrell (2004), language resources improve on a functional linguistic perspective which includes context. Learners must practise and master the skills for successful literacy development in schools through context. When a few head teachers were asked, they suggested that;

*“Literacy development is a skill which needs to be practised. Teachers need to avail those learners with appropriate materials for even practice. Since practice makes perfect, their classrooms must have relevant materials in form of readers to facilitate incidental learning. This, will enable them to do a lot of practice that will encourage literacy development...”*

Martins & Marques, (2010), confirmed that literacy is a learning skill which aids all other learning activities. The more one reads the better one learns. Therefore, for any individual to develop a literacy skill, they need to practice reading. Furthermore, he pointed out that children must read at different paces. Indeed, Cox and Guthrie (2001) agreed that the amount of reading that children do for enjoyment and for school was found to be a major contributor to their literacy achievement. For a reading culture to be possible reading must be part of all aspects of life and not only certain parts such as school or work (Magara and Batambuze, 2005). Similar findings were also made by the Reading for Change study (2002),

which showed that reading enjoyment is more important for children's educational success than their family's socio-economic status. However, 32+20=52(34.2%) of the respondents disagreed with the proposal.

Studying story books, lullabies, proverbs and tongue twisters boosts literacy skills was proposed by 58+45=103(67.8%) respondents. Children need to learn some songs, tongue twisters and proverbs to help build their literacy. The development of good reading habits largely depended on the way children were introduced to reading in their lower primary. Usually teachers taught pupils to identify the different letters of the alphabet before introducing them to the reading of syllables and simple sentences. For instance, Bakunda et al. (2003) asserts that in order to improve literacy development, practice with the objective of developing learners' reading skills, the Enhancement of Universal Primary Education in Kampala (EUPEK) project decided to use a phonic approach to teach reading, songs, stories and lullabies. In an interaction with the head teachers they said;

*“There are short stories and songs that teachers of lower primary can use to teacher literacy development. Songs that have special connection to the lesson and can teach literacy...”*

Dike (1995), is in agreement when he says stories, lullabies, proverbs, tongue twisters, riddles, legends, fables, myths and songs are all part of the children's everyday life that boost their literacy skills, so they should be acknowledged as something that can lay the foundation for reading practices among children. She further noted that it is mostly at home that this form of literacy is practised. Dike also stated that in almost all the homes, of the children in the Nigerian study, someone told stories to 99 per cent of the children. According to the study, when the teachers told stories, something that was occasional, it was frequently as time filler after examinations had ended rather than as part of the curriculum. Storytelling took place in informal settings such as the home and the playground. Further still the way literacy was manifested was different at home and in school. Dike argued that literacy mediation, through oral tradition and other cultural expressions, was required to promote a reading culture in Africa. However 36+17=53(34.9%) of the respondents disagreed to the assertion.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.0 Introduction

This chapter gives a summary of the major findings, conclusions drawn from the findings and recommendations to address the strategies for developing literacy among learners of lower primary in Bungokho South sub-county, Mbale District. The study involved 152 respondents, of whom 133 were pupils from primary one to primary three, seventy five (75) teacher and five (05) head teachers. The study sought to examine the status of children's literacy development abilities among learners in lower primary in Bungokho South sub-county, Mbale District; to analyse the factors that affect literacy development among learners in lower primary in Bungokho South sub-county, Mbale District; to find out possible ways to improve literacy development skills among learners in lower primary in Bungokho South sub-county, Mbale District.

#### 5.1 Summary of the Findings

Objective one of the study found out that the reading status had a leading factor which stated that children from poor financial background can't read with 102(67.1%) of the respondents. This was followed by other findings such as; P2 children with high exposure to print media can read which was supported by 101(66.4%), seven out of ten children at P2 class cannot read was suggested by 100(65.9%), children struggle to read at the level of P3 class was proposed by 100(65.9%) and there is an increased rate of illiterate adults which was suggested by 98(64.5%) respectively.

Objective two of the study found out that there are various factors that influence literacy development with the leading factor; phonemic awareness affects literacy development which was suggested by 104(68.4%) of the respondents. This was followed by the assertion that alphabet and phonological awareness affects literacy development which was proposed by 102(67.1%), print awareness affects literacy development was suggested by 100(65.8%), detecting and manipulating syllables and rhymes affects literacy development was suggested by 99(65.1%) and oral language development affects literacy development which was proposed by 92(60.5%) respectively.

Objective three sought to determine the ways of improving literacy development. Majority of the respondents  $66+39 = 105(69.1\%)$  agreed that training of teachers helps in the development of good literacy skills. On top of having teachers trained generally, more refresher courses are needed for literacy development skills. One of the head teachers said that;

*“Teachers who were trained some years back didn’t pick the skills of teaching literacy. Most of them gamble during reading lessons. Some of them only teach what they can. Teachers ought to be trained in order to best teach literacy to the learners much as most of them think they know it all...”*

Magara and Batambuze (2005), are in agreement when they stated that training of teachers to teach literacy lessons would be the best method as a means of promoting literacy among the learners. Teachers needed to be trained to teach pupils how to read. It has also been argued that traditional methods of teaching, which are based on a single textbook, were much less effective than a book-based approach. This meant that, instead of the traditional method of reading, the pupils should come in contact with many different kinds of books that are relevant to them (Elley, 2001). These teaching methods could be seen as one way of changing the pupils’ perception of reading as schoolwork. This aspect was important since it is believed that a literacy development could not flourish if reading was seen as something that pupils were obliged to do but do not enjoy doing. However,  $35+12=47(30.9\%)$  disagreed with the suggestion.

This was followed by  $58+45=103(67.8\%)$  who proposed that studying story books, lullabies, proverbs and tongue twisters boosts literacy skills was proposed by respondents. Children need to learn some songs, tongue twisters and proverbs to help build their literacy. The development of good reading habits largely depended on the way children were introduced to reading in their lower primary. Usually teachers taught pupils to identify the different letters of the alphabet before introducing them to the reading of syllables and simple sentences. For instance, Bakunda et al. (2003), asserts that in order to improve literacy development, practice with the objective of developing learners’ reading skills, the Enhancement of Universal Primary Education in Kampala (EUPEK) project decided to use a phonic approach to teach reading, songs, stories and lullabies. In an interaction with the head teachers they said;

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Furthermore, 60+40=100(65.8%) of the respondents agreed that practicing skills in the specific subject helps improve literacy skills. According to Schleppegrell (2004), language resources improve on a functional linguistic perspective which includes context. Learners must practise and master the skills for successful literacy development in schools through context. When a few head teachers were asked, they suggested that;

*“Literacy development is a skill which needs to be practised. Teachers need to avail those learners with appropriate materials for even practice. Since practice makes perfect, their classrooms must have relevant materials in form of readers to facilitate incidental learning. This, will enable them to do a lot of practice that will encourage literacy development...”*

Martins & Marques, (2010), confirmed that literacy is a learning skill which aids all other learning activities. The more one reads the better one learns. Therefore, for any individual to develop a literacy skill, they need to practice reading. Furthermore, he pointed out that children must read at different paces. Indeed, Cox and Guthrie (2001) agreed that the amount of reading that children do for enjoyment and for school was found to be a major contributor to their literacy achievement. For a reading culture to be possible reading must be part of all aspects of life and not only certain parts such as school or work (Magara and Batambuze, 2005). Similar findings were also made by the Reading for Change study (2002),

which showed that reading enjoyment is more important for children's educational success than their family's socio-economic status. However, 32+20=52(34.2%) of the respondents disagreed with the proposal.

Rewarding of both teachers and learners improves literacy development was proposed by 56+43=99(65.1%). Appreciation of teachers for teaching the learners and the children for making an effort to read needs to be done in order to boost their literacy development. In an interaction with the head teachers one of them said;

*“Much as the culture of appreciation has diminished, there is need to reward the efforts of both teachers and learners who try to read and write. Some head teachers can't even say thank you to the teachers. Because of this, even the very few teachers who can carry a small biscuit or even a pencil to reward a learner who tries to read and write is lowered. Both teachers and learners need to be awarded in order to grow their talent of literacy development...”*

Elley, (2001), is in agreement when she reveals in so many studies that teachers rewarded pupils who had performed even moderately well in reading with small tokens like sweets or biscuits. Some of the ways in which teachers rewarded their pupils were through showing off the pupils' books to their fellow pupils, asking pupils to read in front of the class and putting stars in the pupils' exercise books. Such rewards encouraged pupils to indulge more in reading since they anticipated being rewarded. Teachers in return were rewarded by their head teachers, depending on the pupils' performance in class. This assertion was refuted by 38+22=60(39.5%) of the respondents.

Lastly, from the findings, it was strongly agreed by 61+33=94(61.8%) of the respondents that providing relevant literature to the learners improves literacy development. Children need to be exposed to reading materials such as the alphabet and readers to better their literacy. A head teacher during an interview session commented that;

*“In Bungokho South sub-county, parents look at the readers as a waste of resources. Those from families where exposure is even, they develop literacy at an early stage. In lower primary where practical literacy lessons must be taken, teachers' innovativeness is too limited. Classrooms are bare. Children are not exposed and thus miss out on the literacy development...”*

This is in agreement with Magara, (2005), who opined that availing relevant literature to the learners helps them to develop good literacy skills. The relevance of the material depends on the context and the children. The best judges of what material is stimulating and relevant for children, were the children themselves

When children got the opportunity to select their own books based on their own needs, it could make them become more interested and engaged in reading. This was important since the children's own interest and engagement were vital components of a good learning environment and the ability to promote literacy skills. Although it is stated that the best way to promote reading as an enjoyable activity is to let the children choose the books they wanted to read by themselves, this is not always possible Ibid.

Closely related to the above, Greaney, (1996), contents that in most cases, when children got to choose books they still had to pick from a limited selection. Thus, it was interesting to see on what grounds these books were selected. In most of the literature that we came across, it was stressed that books should be selected with the specific context in mind. For instance, it was acknowledged that developing countries required books printed in local languages which reflected local knowledge, traditions and culture (Magara, (2005). Books that dealt with subjects that were relevant for the children's daily lives and reflected their world both inside and outside school were also believed to promote engaged readers (Verhoeven and Snow, 2001). Nevertheless, 40+18=58(38.2%) of the respondents disagreed with the idea.

## **5.2 Conclusion**

The study concluded that status of reading abilities, phonemic awareness, alphabet and phonological awareness, oral language development and print awareness are serious factors that affect literacy development and have potential negative effects on learners' literacy development. Coupled with the challenges that both teachers and learners go through, for instance, financial family background, low pay among others, local language could have a serious bearing on their literacy development in general.

## **5.3 Recommendations**

The following recommendations are based on the study findings and are driven by the belief that significant gaps in the literacy development among lower learners in UPE primary school; children need to be addressed through a comprehensive and multi-faceted approach to the literacy problem at different levels of the school system. This view reflects a shift in focus, away from supply side concerns to demand side concerns at different intervention levels, school and policy.

## **Supply of Non-Textbook Reading Materials (NTBRMs)**

There is need to increase the quantities and variety of NTBRMs to improve pupil: NTBRMs ratios in UPE primary schools. Interesting stories can make reading enjoyable, and this is important for children as they learn to read as well as for the development of the reading culture. Hence there is need for the government to avail pupils with reading materials that are educative and interesting, especially those written by authors who relate their stories with the local setting in Uganda. This will enable pupils to identify themselves with the stories and thus develop interest in reading.

## **Interventions by Schools in Reading**

Schools should take the responsibility to develop explicitly stated objectives for developing a reading culture for all children, including children with visual or other impairments. To ensure that reading thrives in Uganda, concerted efforts would be required to improve the social and reading infrastructure to promote reading across the school curriculum and develop reading extension services (Magara and Batambuze, 2005).

## **Readers' Clubs**

There is need to strengthen reading practices among pupils in order to help them develop a reading culture at school and at home. Schools should set up reading activities that involve all pupils. This can be done through teachers organizing debates, reading competitions, quizzes, setting up readers and writers clubs, and sharing of pupils' stories through storytelling. Once pupils realize that they do not have adequate knowledge as they share ideas with their peers through reading activities they will wake up to the benefits of reading. They are more likely to become more curious about the reading various materials available to them both at school and at home and might decide to read them.

## **Training of Teachers**

The Ministry of Education and Sports also needs to re-orient teacher supervision from fault-finding to supportive and facilitative supervision to provide teachers with support and to enforce and sustain teacher's interest in reading. This can be done by training teachers on how they can influence pupils to develop interest in reading.

## **Encouraging Storytelling and Pupil Authors**

Inviting local authors to the various schools will allow them to share their experiences with the pupils about how they came up with ideas for the stories that they wrote. In this way the pupils will be inspired to read and create their own stories which they can share with their peers in class. This will enable pupils to broaden and enrich their imagination through reading widely in order to get ideas for their stories. These stories can be published later or displayed in their classrooms for other pupils to read. Hence through such activities pupil's morale to read is boosted.

In addition to the above system, the schools can encourage story reading and writing for example before class timetable lessons begin like from 7:30 am to 8:00 am in the morning.

## **Rewarding Pupils and Teachers**

Through displaying stories created by pupils, pupils reading to their peers, and teachers giving them gifts such as pencils or other reading materials as a reward, pupils are likely to become motivated to read and create more. This creates confidence in them and encourages them to read more regularly to come up with good results. Such rewards tend to encourage pupils to engage more in reading.

### **5.4 Areas for Further Study**

The researcher recommends the following areas for further study:

- a) For pupils to engage in reading as lifelong learners there is need for them to have role models who should encourage them to read. However for this to be fulfilled there is need for teachers and parents to develop means through which they can support pupils to read.
- b) The MOEs has played a role of putting in place a national text book policy and implemented it through the Decentralized Instructional Materials Programme. However, there is still need for the Ministry to streamline means through which they can balance supply of NTBRMs by providing a variety of reading materials which are relevant to pupils' reading levels which can be used in UPE schools to encourage reading amongst the pupils.

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## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX: I

#### QUESTIONNAIRE FOR LOWER TEACHERS

IMPACT OF LOCAL LANGUAGE ON LITERACY DEVELOPMENT AMONG LOWER LEARNERS IN GOVERNMENT AIDED SCHOOLS OF BUNGOKHO SOUTH, MBALE DISTRICT -UGANDA

Dear respondent,

I am Wanasolo Richard, a student of Uganda Christian University in the Department of Education conducting research on the above stated topic. The aim of carrying out this research is purely for academic purposes and the findings can be useful to people of Bungokho South-Uganda. I kindly request you to read and answer the questions that best describe your views, opinions and understanding. All information you provide herein will be highly *confidential*, thus, your name will not appear anywhere. Your response will be highly appreciated. This will take just a little of your time and am grateful for giving your fortified audience.

#### SECTION A (PERSONAL INFORMATION)

Sex: Male ( ) Female ( )

1. Age: 10-16 ( ), 17-25 ( ), 26-35 ( ), 36-45 ( ), 46-above ( )
2. Marital status: Single ( ), Married ( ), Widowed ( ), Separated ( )
3. Educational level: Primary ( ), Secondary ( ), College/University ( )
4. Occupation: Employed ( ), Self-employed ( ), Unemployed ( )

## SECTION B: QUESTIONS ON THE VARIABLES OF THE STUDY

Please tick what best applies to you.

Key: 4. strongly agree (SA) 3. Agree (A) 2. Disagree (D) 1. Strongly disagree (SD)

<b>Status of learner's literacy Development</b>	<b>SA</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>SD</b>
1. Children struggle to read at the level of P3 class				
2. There is an increased rate of illiterate adults				
3. Seven out of ten children at P2 class cannot read				
4. P2 children with high exposure to print media can read				
5. Children from poor financial background can't read				
<b>Factors that affect literacy development</b>	<b>SA</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>SD</b>
6. Phonemic awareness affects literacy development.				
7. Alphabet and phonological awareness affects literacy development.				
8. Print awareness affects literacy development.				
9. Oral language development affects literacy development				
10. Detecting and manipulating syllables and rhymes affects literacy development.				
<b>Improving Literacy Development</b>	<b>SA</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>SD</b>
11. Training of teachers helps in the development of good literacy skills.				
12. Providing relevant literature to the learners improves literacy development				
13. Rewarding of both teachers and learners improves literacy development				
14. Practicing skills in the specific subject helps improve literacy skills				
15. Studying story books, lullabies, proverbs and tongue twisters boosts literacy skills.				

### SECTION C

1. What are the indicators of literacy development in Bungokho South, Mbale District-Uganda?

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2. Give other factors that affect literacy development in Bungokho South, Mbale District

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3. Suggest other ways through which literacy can be improved among the lower learners in primary schools in the Sub-county.

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*Thank you very much*

## APPENDIX: II

### QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PARENTS

IMPACT OF LOCAL LANGUAGE ON LITERACY DEVELOPMENT AMONG LOWER LEARNERS IN GOVERNMENT AIDED SCHOOLS OF BUNGOKHO SOUTH, MBALE DISTRICT -UGANDA

Dear respondent,

I am Wanasolo Richard, a student of Uganda Christian University in the Department of Education conducting research on the above stated topic. The aim of carrying out this research is purely for academic purposes and the findings can be useful to people of Bungokho South-Uganda. I kindly request you to read and answer the questions that best describe your views, opinions and understanding. All information you provide herein will be highly *confidential*, thus, your name will not appear anywhere. Your response will be highly appreciated. This will take just a little of your time and am grateful for giving your fortified audience.

#### SECTION A (PERSONAL INFORMATION)

Sex: Male ( ) Female ( )

5. Age: 10-16 ( ), 17-25 ( ), 26-35 ( ), 36-45 ( ), 46-above ( )

6. Marital status: Single ( ), Married ( ), Widowed ( ), Separated ( )

7. Educational level: Primary ( ), Secondary ( ), College/University ( )

8. Occupation: Employed ( ), Self-employed ( ), Unemployed ( )

## SECTION B: Questions on the variables of the study

Please tick what best applies to you.

Key: 4. strongly agree (SA) 3. Agree (A) 2. Disagree (D) 1. Strongly disagree (SD)

<b>Status of learner's literacy Development</b>	<b>SA</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>SD</b>
1. Children struggle to read at the level of P3 class				
2. There is an increased rate of illiterate adults				
3. Seven out of ten children at P2 class cannot read				
4. P2 children with high exposure to print media can read				
5. Children from poor financial background can't read				
<b>Factors that affect literacy development</b>	<b>SA</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>SD</b>
6. Phonemic awareness affects literacy development.				
7. Alphabet and phonological awareness affects literacy development.				
8. Print awareness affects literacy development.				
9. Oral language development affects literacy development				
10. Detecting and manipulating syllables and rhymes affects literacy development.				
<b>Improving Literacy Development</b>	<b>SA</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>SD</b>
11. Training of teachers helps in the development of good literacy skills.				
12. Providing relevant literature to the learners improves literacy development				
13. Rewarding of both teachers and learners improves literacy development				
14. Practicing skills in the specific subject helps improve literacy skills				
15. Studying story books, lullabies, proverbs and tongue twisters boosts literacy skills.				

**SECTION C**

4. What are the indicators of literacy development in Bungokho South, Mbale District-Uganda?

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5. Give other factors that affect literacy development in Bungokho South, Mbale District

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6. Suggest other ways through which literacy can be improved among the lower learners in primary schools in the Sub-county.

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*Thank you very much*

## APPENDIX: III

### QUESTIONNAIRE FOR LEARNERS

IMPACT OF LOCAL LANGUAGE ON LITERACY DEVELOPMENT AMONG LOWER LEARNERS IN GOVERNMENT AIDED SCHOOLS OF BUNGOKHO SOUTH, MBALE DISTRICT -UGANDA

Dear respondent,

I am Wanasolo Richard, a student of Uganda Christian University in the Department of Education conducting research on the above stated topic. The aim of carrying out this research is purely for academic purposes and the findings can be useful to people of Bungokho South-Uganda. I kindly request you to read and answer the questions that best describe your views, opinions and understanding. All information you provide herein will be highly *confidential*, thus, your name will not appear anywhere. Your response will be highly appreciated. This will take just a little of your time and am grateful for giving your fortified audience.

#### SECTION A (PERSONAL INFORMATION)

Sex: Male ( ) Female ( )

1. Age: 10-16 ( ), 17 and above ( )

2. Educational level: Primary ( ), others ( )

3. Occupation: Employed ( ), Self-employed ( ), Unemployed ( )

## SECTION B: Questions on the variables of the study

Please tick what best applies to you.

Key: 4. strongly agree (SA) 3. Agree (A) 2. Disagree (D) 1. Strongly disagree (SD)

<b>Status of learner's literacy Development</b>	<b>SA</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>SD</b>
1. Children struggle to read at the level of P3 class				
2. There is an increased rate of illiterate adults				
3. Seven out of ten children at P2 class cannot read				
4. P2 children with high exposure to print media can read				
5. Children from poor financial background can't read				
<b>Factors that affect literacy development</b>	<b>SA</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>SD</b>
6. Phonemic awareness affects literacy development.				
7. Alphabet and phonological awareness affects literacy development.				
8. Print awareness affects literacy development.				
9. Oral language development affects literacy development				
10. Detecting and manipulating syllables and rhymes affects literacy development.				
<b>Improving Literacy Development</b>	<b>SA</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>SD</b>
11. Training of teachers helps in the development of good literacy skills.				
12. Providing relevant literature to the learners improves literacy development				
13. Rewarding of both teachers and learners improves literacy development				
14. Practicing skills in the specific subject helps improve literacy skills				
15. Studying story books, lullabies, proverbs and tongue twisters boosts literacy skills.				

**SECTION C**

3. What are the indicators of literacy development in Bungokho South, Mbale District-Uganda?

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4. Give other factors that affect literacy development in Bungokho South, Mbale District

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5. Suggest other ways through which literacy can be improved among the lower learners in primary schools in the Sub-county.

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***Thank you very much***

## APPENDIX IV

### INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR HEALTHY WORKERS

IMPACT OF LOCAL LANGUAGE ON LITERACY DEVELOPMENT AMONG LOWER LEARNERS IN GOVERNMENT AIDED SCHOOLS OF BUNGOKHO SOUTH, MBALE DISTRICT –UGANDA

I am Wanasolo Richard, a student of Uganda Christian University, department of education conducting a research project on the above stated topic. The aim of carrying out this research is purely for academic purposes. I kindly request you to read and answer the questions that best describe your views, opinions and understanding. All information you provide will be highly *confidential*, thus, your name will not appear anywhere. Your response will be highly appreciated. This will take just a little of your time and am grateful for giving your fortified audience.

1. What are the indicators of literacy development in Bungokho South, Mbale District-Uganda?

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2. Do you think there are other factors that influence children's literacy Development?

Yes ( )                      No ( )

b) If yes, please explain how.

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3. What is the state of literacy development in Bungokho South sub-county?

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4. Does mother tongue affect literacy development among learners?

Yes ( )                      No ( )

If yes, please, explain how?

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4. What are some of the ways you should put forward to help boost the literacy development among lower class learners in the Sub-county?

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*Thank you very much*

**APPENDIX: V**

**Krejercie & Morgan Table for Sample Size**

<b>N</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>S</b>
10	10	100	80	280	162	800	260	2800	338
15	14	110	86	290	165	850	265	3000	341
20	19	120	92	300	169	900	269	3500	246
25	24	130	97	320	175	950	274	4000	351
30	28	140	103	340	181	1000	278	4500	351
35	32	150	108	360	186	1100	285	5000	357
40	36	160	113	380	181	1200	291	6000	361
45	40	180	118	400	196	1300	297	7000	364
50	44	190	123	420	201	1400	302	8000	367
55	48	200	127	440	205	1500	306	9000	368
60	52	210	132	460	210	1600	310	10000	373
65	56	220	136	480	214	1700	313	15000	375
70	59	230	140	500	217	1800	317	20000	377
75	63	240	144	550	225	1900	320	30000	379
80	66	250	148	600	234	2000	322	40000	380
85	70	260	152	650	242	2200	327	50000	381
90	73	270	155	700	248	2400	331	75000	382
95	76	270	159	750	256	2600	335	100000	384

**Key: N= Population. S= Sample**

APPENDIX VI

INTRODUCTORY LETTER



UGANDA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY  
A Centre of Excellence in the Heart of Africa  
MBALE UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

Office of the Academic Registrar

To .....

Dear Sir/Madam,

Re: Academic Research

Christian greetings!

We are honored to introduce to you Mr. Mrs. /Miss. WANASOLO RICHARD

Of Registration Number; RS.22/muc/BED/1043 pursuing a Masters' Degree/Postgraduate Diploma / Bachelor's Degree BACHELOR OF EDUCATION

He/ she is required to carry out an academic research on the topic

IMPACT OF LOCAL LANGUAGE ON LITERACY DEVELOPMENT AMONG LOWER PRIMARY LEARNERS IN GOVERNMENT AIDED SCHOOLS IN BUIGOKHO SOUTH SUB COUNTY, MBALE DISTRICT

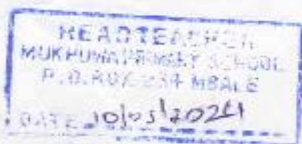
and thereafter produce a well bound hard cover research report (MAROON) in color for undergraduate and three (BLACK) copies for Postgraduate students as a University requirement for the award of a degree/diploma in the academic discipline that he / she is pursuing.

We shall be grateful for the help you may offer to him or her accordingly.

Thank you.

Yours faithfully,

Mr. Akampurira Timothy  
Academic Registrar.



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## APPENDIX VII

### MAP OF MBALE DISTRICT SHOWING THE AREA OF STUDY

