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INSTRUCTIONAL LANGUAGE DILEMMA AND CHALLENGES IN GHANA'S EDUCATION SYSTEM: ANY PROSPECTS?

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ABSTRACT

Language plays a pivotal role in educational provision and its quality as it is the main medium that facilitates communication between the learner and the teacher. Since the introduction of the first official school language policy in 1925, there has been the dilemma of what nature the policy is to take, spanning from first language as medium of instruction for the first three years of primary school, through first language usage for the first year only to an all-English usage throughout school. The study was a baseline cross-sectional survey on the perceptions of stakeholders on the language of instruction in Ghanaian basic schools. Eighty seven respondent comprising 36 pupils, 36 parents, nine teachers and three heads from three basic schools and six tutors from a college of education, were interviewed on their views and perception on the use of the local language as medium of instruction in basic schools.

The literature and the present study reveal that currently stakeholders will not support one exclusive language, English or Ghanaian first language, as medium of instruction at the early stages of school due to entrenched perceptions, notwithstanding whatever possible advantages there may be. The obvious choice is a mother tongue-based bilingual arrangement that effectively combines the advantages of Ghanaian first language and English. But its success calls for commitment by policymakers and the other stakeholders.

Introduction

Language is perhaps the most important communication tool in educational provision. It facilitates the transmission process of educational content both in its oral and written forms. Particularly, in its oral form, language is indispensable in the interaction between the learner and the teacher. But in the written form, it conveys graphically messages and ideas from the teacher to the learner and the learner to the teacher.

In recent times there has been a lot of public outcry about the quality of education in Ghana. One often hears that standards of education have fallen. WAEC examiners' reports on Basic Education Certificate Examinations, for instance, seem to confirm this general notion. Quite a good number of the students reportedly show the lack of understanding of the questions due obviously to their poor English language background and proficiency since basically all questions are in English (WAEC, 2008). At the bottom of this picture is the issue of language and communication. It is when the questions communicate clearly to

they were not to be denationalized. Rather the best attributes of modern civilization were to be skillfully crafted onto their national characteristics as exemplified in their own language. To give impetus to the implementation of the education language policy, emphasis was placed on the training of teachers in the local languages and the expansion of Teacher Training Colleges in the country. Achimota Teacher Training College was at the forefront in training teachers in the local languages.

Right at the dawn of the introduction of school language policy into Ghana's formal education system, opposition and criticisms began to be experienced. Some educated elite and nationalists expressed reservations about the use of Ghanaian local languages in education in the country. Prominent among the critics were such nationalists like Sir Ofori Atta I, Sir Tsibu Darko and J.E Casely-Hayford who expressed the suspicion that the policy was an attempt by the British colonial administration to give Africans an inferior type of education that was likely to hold back advancement into higher education. They attacked particularly Achimota Teacher Training College as preparing graduates for a life of servitude to the colonial masters and for

confinement to tribal life. They rather urged more use of the English language, proposing an educational adaptation that blended English education with the Gold Coast culture.

However, missionary groups that were leading in the provision of education in the country like the Basel Mission countered the nationalist argument and declared their support for the language policy. They viewed effective vernacular teaching at the lower level of schooling as an essential foundation for the satisfactory teaching and learning of English and other subjects at the upper levels.

Between 1925 and 1951, the policy was successfully implemented with Ghanaian language used as the medium of instruction at the lower primary and English taught as a subject. To further strengthen the implementation of the language policy of education, Twi and Fante were recognized as school certificate subjects from the 1930 academic year and included in the Secondary Cambridge Local Examination syndicate for overseas School Certificate Examination. Ewe and Ga were added to the local languages examined in 1935.

The policy on the use of a local language as medium of instruction at

the entire three-year lower primary continued until 1951 when Kwame Nkrumah, on his appointment as head of government business, introduced the Accelerated Development Plan (ADP) of education.

In the ADP, the school instructional language policy was revised to have the use of local language to cover only the first year of primary schooling. English was the language of instruction throughout the rest of the child's education with the local language taught as a subject on the time table. Measures were also outlined to ensure the success of the school instructional language policy among which was the training of more qualified teachers who would be able to handle the entire programme obviously including the effective use of the local language at the beginning of primary education.

Unfortunately at the gaining of independence in 1957, the indigenous government reversed the entire school instructional language policy with English used as the medium of instruction right from the beginning of primary education. Ghanaian language could be used in the first year only in newly established schools. In all other schools, it was a subject of study on the time table. This continued

until 1966 when a military government took over affairs in the country. The Kwapong Committee set up by the military government to review education recommended a reversal to the earliest school instructional policy of using a local language as medium of instruction in the first three years of schooling. However, the government rejected the recommendation and rather endorsed the use of local language in the first year only. The constitutional government that came to power in 1969 implemented fully the Kwapong Committee recommendation. Thus between 1970 and 1974 a local language was used as medium of instruction for the first three years and where found necessary, up to the end of primary school. From 1974, the policy was revised again to restrict the use of local language medium of instruction at the lower primary only while English was to be used thereafter. The policy was stable from 1974 up to 2002, with all the major policy pronouncements or actions that came up during those years, reemphasizing the policy or reechoing it. For instance, the operational guidelines for the implementation of the 1987 Educational Reform affirmed that "the local Ghanaian language should be the medium of instruction for the first three years of primary school. English shall be learnt as a subject

from the first year at school and shall gradually become the medium of instruction from primary four” (MOE, 1988, p.6).

The Education Reform Review Committee of 1994 gave a hint of supporting the language policy when it recommended the intensification of training of Ghanaian language teachers, adding that the posting of newly trained teachers should as far as possible consider their ability to teach the Ghanaian language where they were posted (MOE, 1996).

However, in 2002, the government gave approval to abolish the use of Ghanaian language as medium of instruction for the use of English throughout all the levels of education. This policy change generated a lot of debate in the country much of which was an expression of disapproval to the change. In 2007, the government introduced a new educational reform which, among other issues, prescribed the use of both English and a Ghanaian language instructional delivery at the lower primary. This was based on a government White Paper released in 2004 on the Anamua-Mensah Education Review Committee Report that had been presented in 2002. The White Paper stated the government’s acceptance of the

recommendation that both the first home language of the child and Ghana’s official language, English, should be used as the language of instruction at the kindergarten and primary level. The White Paper acknowledged that generally children learn faster if early education is conducted in a familiar language. But it also observed that early and routine acquaintance with second or even more languages confer on children great advantages in their lifelong proficiency in those languages. Thus an equally early exposure to English, which is Ghana’s official language, will enable the learners to benefit from this lifelong proficiency among other advantages. Consequently, since September 2007, the school instructional policy in the country has been the use of both a local language and English as instructional languages and subjects at school right from the start of school at the pre-primary level till the end of the lower primary. From the fourth grade onwards, English is the medium of instruction while the local language is studied as a subject on the time table.

Benefits in First Language Usage

The introduction of the school language policy over the years to use the local language as a medium

of instruction in the early years of schooling has been based on the belief and recognition of the practical usefulness of the child's first language, the mother tongue (UNESCO 2005, Agbedor, 1994, MOE, 1988). Since the child already has some vocabulary in the first language, he is able to formulate and express his ideas quite meaningfully in his early years in this language. He will therefore be able to learn more quickly at the early years through the mother tongue than through an unfamiliar linguistic medium. Indeed the first language constitutes the system of meaningful signs needed for understanding and expression in the early years of a person's life. It is also recognized as a means of identifying with members of the community to which one belongs. Language is the natural and necessary expression of the mental heritage of a people and that the use of the mother tongue at school during the instructional process will deepen the child's love and respect for the mental heritage of his own people.

The University of Ife in Nigeria conducted an experimental study on the use of the mother tongue in primary school in which selected schools used Yoruba as the medium of instruction for the first six years

of primary education and compared with regular schools where English was basically the medium of instruction for the same period. At the end of the study, pupils in the Ife project were found to score higher than their counterparts in the regular schools both academically and cognitively. It was further revealed that the pupils who were taught in Yoruba were no less skilled in English than those who were taught in English throughout the primary school. The conclusion drawn from the outcome of the study was that children who are taught in their first language gain academic success, in addition to gaining emotional, cognitive, cultural and socio-psychological advantages (Fafunwa, McCauley & Soyinka, 1975).

Again, before a child enters school he has acquired quite an amount of first language phonology, vocabulary, syntax, semantics etc, but the process would not be complete before reaching the school age. From age six when the child enters school, he still needs to develop the first language by the gradual acquisition of the complex rules of morphology and syntax, elaboration of speech act, expansion of vocabulary, as well as the special uses of language for the various subject areas (Agbedor, 1994). Thus when the child's

classroom in the early years at school does not offer him this opportunity, he will forfeit these possibilities and grow up being functionally handicapped in his own first language. It is this handicap that shows up in many a Ghanaian adult unable to construct whole sentences in the local language without having to mix them up with some English words.

A study cited by Agbedor (1994) showed further that the lack of continuing cognitive development of the first language during second language acquisition may lead to lowered proficiency levels in the second language and in general cognitive academic growth. The continuous cognitive development of the first language is therefore necessary for enhancing the development of second language and general academic growth. Perhaps, as observed by Andoh-Kumi (1994), this accounts for the fall in English language proficiency levels of students below the adopted threshold during the period after independence (1957 – 1966) when the English language was made the medium of instruction throughout school. On the other hand during the 1940s when the mother tongue occupied an important place in the curriculum, English as a subject did not suffer (Boadi, 1976).

Another importance of the use of the local language as a medium of instruction that seems to be lost sight of is the opportunity for the language itself to develop. Language grows through contact and exposure to the challenges and dynamics of everyday life. By the use of the local languages in education, they will be challenged by scientific and modern technology including modern agricultural practices to adopt and thereby grow and develop. The non-use of the local languages in education tends to put a freeze on the languages to develop functionally.

Challenges to Instructional Language Policy Implementation in Ghana

The various instructional language policies of Ghana have been bedeviled with a number of challenges that have adversely affected their success at implementation since the first promulgation of one in 1925 by the Guggisberg colonial administration. One notable challenge is that there does not seem to be the political will to ensure the full implementation of the language policies whenever they are promulgated. Apart from the statements introducing the policies or re-echoing them, there have not been any clearly defined

measures outlined towards their effective implementation. For instance, a cursory observation across the rural schools which are in the majority in the country indicates that only pockets of the schools make any attempt to use English as the medium of instruction in the upper primary classes. Teachers generally use the local language throughout the primary school and even in some of the junior high schools. Eventually, pupils in the schools perform poorly in English language and in the other subject areas, a situation which is erroneously blamed on the policy to use the first language as medium of instruction at the lower primary (Boadi, 1976).

Directly relating to the above challenge is the calibre of teachers found in most of the rural schools. A good number of the rural teachers had been untrained until the recent country-wide attempt to train all the untrained teachers in the basic schools. Most of these teachers have very weak background in the English language. A study by Andoh-Kumi (2003) in the West Akim District of the Eastern Region of Ghana revealed that none of the teachers in the schools involved in the study had a credit pass in English. Since most teachers in the rural schools do not have good

passes in English, they are likely to demonstrate poor proficiency in its use both orally and written in the classroom. This obviously will negatively impact on the performance of their pupils in all the subject areas both at the lower and upper primary classes.

Another aspect of the teacher factor is the lack of qualified teachers who are able to speak the language of the community where they teach. Whereas the policy of the MOE stipulates that the posting of teachers should take into account their ability to communicate in and teach the Ghanaian language of the community where they are posted (MOE, 1996), this remains an ideal rather than the practice. Evidently teachers are posted and transferred to basic schools irrespective of their linguistic background. For those who are able to communicate in these local languages, most lack the capacity to teach effectively in them due to the lack of effective training in that respect. Indeed merely being able to speak a Ghanaian language does not mean one can teach in it, as noted by Prof Ameyaw-Akumfi (2002), when he was arguing for the introduction of an all-English medium primary education in Ghana. The training provided by the teacher training colleges in the dominant

Ghanaian languages of their specific locations is quite minimal and does not equip the teacher trainees with enough competence and confidence to be able to teach effectively in them. This is against the background of the colleges admitting candidates from all over the country irrespective of their linguistic background.

A major drawback in the effective implementation of Ghana's instructional language policies has been the lack of resources to facilitate the implementation. Except for issues relating to aspects of the particular Ghanaian languages themselves such as grammar, syntax, literature (stories, poems), which are written in the various Ghanaian languages, virtually all content areas are written in English right from the pre-primary level. There are no textbooks written in the local languages of the various subject areas. The individual teachers who themselves have very weak background in the local languages have to struggle for ways to express concepts in Mathematics, Science, Geography, Environmental Studies, etc. in the local language. This poses a great challenge to the teachers.

Ghana's multilingual character has also been another issue that has threatened the effective implementation of school language policies in the country. It is estimated that there are more than 40 languages spoken in Ghana. Some estimate them to be between 45 and 80. Consequently some argue that it is impossible to use them as languages of instruction across the country (Agbedor, 1994). However, it can be observed that these languages may be grouped into about 10 broad areas or families to which the various languages can conveniently relate. These are Fante, Twi, Ga, Ewe, Nzema, and Guan for the seven regions of southern Ghana, and Dagbani, Dagaare, Kasem and Gurune for the three northern regions. It should therefore not be too difficult to work with these as languages of instruction for basic schools. All across the country, people who speak minority languages have been able to communicate quite effectively in and with the dominant languages to which their languages share close affinity.

Another challenge that seems to play a leading role in the ineffectiveness of Ghana's instructional policies is the obvious halfhearted attitudes shown towards the use of the Ghanaian

languages in educational communication by various stakeholders in the provision of education in the country (government, parents, community members, teachers and pupils alike), a situation obviously based on the cherished perceptions held about the Ghanaian languages vis-a-vis the English language. The English language by its international status is held in Ghana as a language of prestige, and mere oral fluency in it is seen by many as a mark of intelligence and scholarship. This perception has been held since the colonial times to date. Boadi (1976) noted that in the first report of the Advisory Committee on Native Education in Tropical Africa that was released in 1927, it was observed that *the natives were desirous of hearing English*. It was for this reason that although they were recommending the use of the indigenous language in education, they stressed that English should be taught in all schools in the country.

It will also be recalled that the nationalists stood against the first introduction of the policy on the use of the indigenous language as a medium of instruction and the subsequent training of teachers, particularly at the Achimota Teacher Training College for effective implementation of the

policy in the schools. Their argument was that teaching in the local language was tantamount to providing an inferior type of education that was preparing graduates for a life of servitude to the colonial masters and confinement to tribal life. Today, many parents prefer their children being taught in English rather than in a Ghanaian language right from the beginning of school. In addition to the cherished perception that ability to speak English is a mark of prestige and academic intelligence, there is also the belief that being taught in English will ensure children's better performance in academic work. The latter perception has largely been informed by evidences of academic achievement as indicated by examination results which consistently reveal private school pupils' superior performance over those of public schools (Opare, 1998; EARC, 2003).

One major characteristic of the private schools is their strict use of the English language in all communications by both pupils and teachers. Many attribute their superior performance in examinations to this strict use of English in communications. As noted by Andoh-Kumi (1994), these private schools remain the average Ghanaian parent's ideal school and

therefore they feel unhappy about the idea of using local language in their children's education as they think that will make the products of the private schools continue to have an edge over their children in their quest for places in secondary and higher education. Of course, those who cherish this perception have ignored or perhaps are not aware of the other inputs of educational provision such as the availability of adequate teaching and learning resources, parental show of concern and commitment in meeting the needs of their wards, effective teacher time on task backed by regular supervision (call it regular administrative presence) etc. which are normal features of the private schools unlike the public schools where the opposite is the case in many of the aspects.

It is a truism to say that a good knowledge of and proficiency in an internationally acceptable form of English is needed for effective participation in today's competitive world as well as in government, commerce and official business. A good grasp of the English language will enhance ability to understand and apply concepts in Science, Mathematics and all other disciplines. Again the English language occupies a unique position

as a unifying force that binds the peoples of the over 40 linguistic groups together as one people with a common destiny. Any undue emphasis on particular local languages will have the potential to whip up ethnocentric sentiments that are likely to result in inter-ethnic conflicts and eventually divide the ranks of the Ghanaian populace.

Baseline Study on Language and Literacy: Purpose of Study

A baseline cross-sectional survey was conducted in the Central Region of Ghana in 2006 by the Institute for Educational Planning and Administration (IEPA) of the University of Cape Coast on the use of the local language as medium of instruction in basic schools. The purpose of the study was to find out the current perceptions of stakeholders regarding the language of instruction in Ghanaian basic schools. Questions that guided the study included: How stakeholders view the use of the local language as medium of instruction in basic schools; What language they prefer as language of instruction in basic schools; and, What they perceive as the current challenges associated with using local language as medium of instruction in schools.

Method

One rural and one urban public schools as well as one private school were selected to participate in the study. The study which is part of an ongoing DFID-sponsored *Edqual* project on improving language and literacy in low income countries, involved pupils and teachers of primary classes 3 and 4, as well as parents, educators and education officials. There are three components of the *Edqual* study, namely, observation of classroom instructions, pupil tests, and interview of stakeholders on perceptions and views on instructional language. The relevant component for this presentation is the interview of stakeholders.

Six pupils, three males and three females, were randomly selected from each of primary classes 3 and 4 in each of the three selected schools totaling 36, a parent each of the 36 selected pupils, all the teachers of the classes involved and the heads of the 3 schools, giving a total of 9 teachers and heads, as well as 6 teacher training college tutors. There were altogether 87 participants. Structured interview schedules of similar items were used to interview each of the selected participants. The interviewers comprised two lecturers of the University and six

other researchers who are part of the local research team of the *Edqual* project.

Study Findings

The findings of the study are reported according to the various categories of the respondents. The respondents were teachers, head teachers, teacher educators, pupils and parents.

Teachers. Teachers from the private school indicated that the use of the local language alone in lower primary was not good because of the differing backgrounds of the pupils. However, most of their counterparts from the public schools were of the view that the use of the local language as medium of instruction is a very good idea because it will help the pupils to understand lessons in the classroom. Both groups were in favor of using both English and the local language in teaching at the lower primary.

All the teachers interviewed indicated that the language of all textbooks throughout the primary level is English (except those on the local language as a subject) and that the situation poses some challenges since teachers must translate the English language to the local language during lessons. The

teachers indicated that it is sometimes very difficult to translate from the English language to the local language. They all recommended the use of both local and English languages as media of instruction throughout the primary level and said that they used both local language and English in teaching so as to facilitate easy understanding of lessons by pupils in the classroom.

Head Teachers. All the heads interviewed indicated that using the local language throughout the lower primary level was a good idea but it becomes a problem when the pupils are from different language backgrounds. Thus although some teachers in their schools were using the local language, others had resorted to an all English usage. All the head teachers interviewed cited the problem of translating from English to the local language as a major hindrance to the effective implementation of the language policy. They also cited the lack of in-service training by the Ghana Education Service (GES) in the use of the local languages in teaching.

Teacher educators. Majority of the respondents supported the use of first language as a medium of instruction at the lower primary school. They explained that the use

of the first language at the lower primary will enable pupils to pick and understand certain concepts more easily. Most of the teacher educators interviewed conceded that they did not have enough resources to adequately prepare teachers.

The respondents indicated that teaching and learning materials were not available. They also indicated that the number of years students spent to receive instruction in the local language was inadequate. The teacher educators further mentioned the difficulty of translating certain concepts from English to the local language as a major challenge to the effective implementation of a local language policy. Majority of them recommended the use of both the first language and English at the lower primary level because it would enable pupils to learn better from the beginning.

Parents. While majority of the parent respondents from the rural areas opted for the use of the local language at the lower primary level, most of those from the urban areas advocated for a mixture of both the local language and English. The parents from the urban areas who were against the use of the local language gave reasons such as

English becoming difficult for the pupils to use in the upper levels if they do not start using it in their early years at school, pupils performing poorly in final examinations, and teachers finding it difficult to explain some terminologies in the first language alone. One of them remarked, "What joy will it be to be a native who is learning everything in one's native language alone?"

Pupils. Most pupils in the public schools indicated that they preferred instruction in local language since it made them understand lessons better. Most of the pupils in the private school on the other hand stated that they wanted to be instructed in both the first language and English. They indicated that the use of the first language made them understand lessons better whereas the use of English will make them fluent in the language. Although most pupils said that they were comfortable using local language and understood lessons better in the local language, they wished to be instructed in English in order to be fluent in the language.

Conclusions and Prospects for Successful Language Policy

It seems obvious from the literature and the findings from the current

study that regardless of whatever advantages there are, a purely mother tongue instructional language arrangement for lower primary or even primary one alone cannot receive much support from stakeholders due to the entrenched perceptions held by different stakeholders. This is heightened by the generally poor performance of public basic school pupils in examinations as against the relatively better performance of their counterparts in private basic schools. The stakeholders are not prepared for other explanations that may be responsible for the poor performance in the public schools including parents' own poor attitudes towards the education of children in the public schools.

On the other hand the demerits of an all-English medium arrangement which include the loss of touch with the cultural heritage, lack of growth of the local languages, the high potential for dropout in the early years, the difficulty of enforcement particularly in the rural areas, etc. are very far-reaching. Unfortunately many stakeholders are not able to realise these as they are not quite obvious at the initial stages and are further discouraged by the poor results of the public schools. Consequently, it is not a better choice either.

The obvious choice at the present stage is a compromise arrangement that combines both the mother tongue and the English language advantages. Bilingual arrangement is therefore the appropriate choice which is able to capture the benefits of both the mother tongue medium and the English language medium. In that case therefore, the current school language policy that came into effect in September 2007 seems to be the beginning of reaching a permanent solution to the dilemmas that have existed since the introduction of the first school language policy in 1925.

Merits of a Bilingual arrangement. It is observed that bilingual schooling offers significant pedagogical advantages as have been reported consistently in the academic literature (Baker 2001; Cummins 2000; CAL 2001). The effectiveness is heightened when it is mother tongue-based, particularly at the early stages. Mother tongue-based bilingual programmes use the learner's first language to teach beginning reading and writing skills along with academic content. The second or foreign language is taught systematically so that the learner gradually transfers skills from the familiar language to the unfamiliar one.

- (1) Combining a familiar language with an unfamiliar one facilitates an understanding of sound-symbol or meaning-symbol correspondence. Learning to read is most efficient when students know the language and can employ psycholinguistic guessing strategies. Similarly, pupils can communicate through writing as soon as they understand the rules of the orthographic (or other written) system of their language.
- (2) Since content area instruction is provided in the first language, the learning of new concepts is not postponed until children become competent in the second language. Bilingual instructions allow teachers and students to interact naturally and negotiate meanings together, creating participatory learning environments that are conducive to cognitive as well as linguistic development.
- (3) Explicit teaching of the second language beginning with oral skills as offered in bilingual classrooms allows students to learn the

new language through communication rather than memorization.

- (4) Transfer of linguistic and cognitive skills is facilitated in bilingual programmes. Once pupils have basic literacy skills in the first language and communicative skills in the second language, they can begin reading and writing in the second language, efficiently transferring the literacy skills they have acquired in the familiar language.
- (5) Students' learning can be accurately assessed in bilingual classrooms. When students can express themselves, the teacher can diagnose what has been learned, what remains to be taught and which students need further assistance.
- (6) The affective domain, involving confidence, self-esteem and identity, is strengthened by the use of the first language, increasing motivation and initiative as well as creativity. First language classrooms allow children

to be themselves and develop their personalities as well as their intellects.

- (7) Students become bilingual and biliterate. Bilingual programmes encourage learners to understand, speak, read and write in more than one language.

A bilingual arrangement in Ghanaian basic schools means a combination of the use of both a Ghanaian local language and the English language. This arrangement will effectively address the concerns revealed in the entrenched perceptions and views held by stakeholders.

Policy Implications and Actions

In order for the policy to work to produce results culminating in improved learning outcomes as evidenced in appreciable general academic standards among products of the schools and improved examination results, pragmatic measures need to be put in place.

1. Government needs to show commitment in ensuring the provision of resources in the various languages. Particularly, textbooks in the various subject areas need to be translated and

published and supplied to the various schools for use by the teachers. This will enable the teachers to use the local language more effectively as they will no more need to struggle to translate concepts from the English language.

Government should ensure that initial teacher training incorporates methodologies in effective teaching in the local languages. More language education specialists need to be trained at the Universities of Cape Coast and Winneba and sent to the Teacher Training Colleges (TTCs) to train the teachers in language teaching and usage. Each TTC needs to have specialists in more than one language area to enable the students with different linguistic backgrounds to benefit from.

2. It is observed that a good number of the teachers especially in the rural schools, many of whom are untrained, have the tendency to use only the local language at all times if left alone.

To these teachers, English is heavy (*Brofoyedur*). These teachers need consistent support and encouragement in using the English language particularly while at school both in class and out of class.

To address this concern, the Basic Education Directorate of the GES in collaboration with other departments or agencies need to organize intensive in-service training workshops in communicative skills in the English language for all teachers at the initial stages. For some of the teachers, this will only be a good revision but it will surely impact positively on their performance. They will also be equipped to support their colleagues who have weaknesses in a more organized and systematic way. For the others, who may be the vast majority, there will definitely be new learning needed for the implementation of the policy.

Thereafter, School Heads and Circuit Supervisors will need to continue organizing regular workshops on the basics of simple English grammar and oral and written language usage for especially the rural teachers with support from specialists from the Education offices, Senior High Schools or Teacher Training Colleges. This will help the teachers to steadily improve their proficiency in English usage.

3. Similar in-service training workshops should be conducted for the teachers in the grammar and use of the local languages. Particularly at the initial stages there should be an intensification of these workshops to ensure that the teachers have built a firm foundation for the effective implementation of the language policy.
4. Especially at the lower primary, teachers need to be encouraged to use both the English and local languages in their teaching. Leanings to one or the other may be permitted given the linguistic background of the

teacher and other considerations but not a complete use of one only. At the upper primary level, while the bilingual mode may still be permitted at class 4, there should be more English than the first language. By class 6 the medium of instruction should have become exclusively English. To this end, the GES needs to ensure that Circuit Supervisors visit the schools regularly and who in turn will ensure that teachers effectively use the bilingual mode in their instructional process.

5. School heads must be more proactive in their leadership and supervisory practices to collaborate the efforts of the education officials. They need to pay quick visits to the classrooms on regular basis to ensure that the teachers are using the bilingual mode and to note their needs so that appropriate help can be organized for them. It should be part of their daily schedules to visit some classrooms even if they are themselves class teachers. They need not to stay long in any one classroom.

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Their regular presence in the classrooms is what matters to motivate the teachers to make the effort to do the right thing. The heads must also be exemplary in endeavouring to use the English language on regular basis in order to encourage the other teachers to use it.

Conclusion

It cannot be gainsaid that the success of the language policy will significantly impact on the quality of education in the country and thereby improve educational standards which today stakeholders consider to have fallen. Quality education is not only found in the output and outcomes but also in the inputs and the process. Language plays a pivotal role in the process factor and therefore demands a much more urgent attention than it has hitherto received if quality education is to be achieved. At the same time, it is to be noted that educational provision is a combination and interplay of all the various factors. The recognition of these factors and their effective engagement in the educational process will inevitably affect the implementation of the school language policy.

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