

**A CASE STUDY ON THE INFLUENCE OF ENGLISH AS A MEDIUM
OF INSTRUCTION ON LEARNERS ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE
AT ELLA DU PLESSIS SECONDARY SCHOOL AND SHIKONGO
IIPINGE SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL**

BY

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APPROVAL PAGE

This research project has been examined and is approved as meeting the required standards for partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to investigate the influence of English as a medium of instruction on learners academic performance. The study attempted to find out factors that might hinder the performance of learners.

Ella du Plessis and Shikongo Iiping Secondary schools were selected for the case study. Learners questionnaire, teachers interviews and observations were used by the researcher to collect data. 80 learners completed the questionnaire and 12 teachers were interviewed.

The data were analyzed by means of frequency tables and direct quotes from the interview were provided. The findings of the study indicated that various factors affect learners' academic performance. Some of these factors are:

- Learners do not understand English concepts.
- Some textbooks are difficult to read and understand.
- In most cases, learners are rote learning.
- Failure to understand questions posed as well as instructions given.

The study concludes that the academic performance of learners is influenced negatively and slightly positively by English as a medium of instruction. The study recommends that it is imperative that the Ministry of Basic Education Sport and Culture, teachers and learners to take

note of the recommendations made in order to improve the status of English as a medium of instruction in Namibia.

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Finally, I extend my most sincere appreciation to my brothers and sisters, parents, niece and nephews and to all my friends who contributed through many ways towards the completion of this study. Thank you for remembering me in your prayers.

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to:

My parents: Johannes and Emilie Mvula

My Husband: Wilson L. Benjamin

My sons: Shali Shawapala Benjamin

Twahafa Tanga-omwene (T.T) Benjamin

My nephew: Stanley Lineekela Kambonde

for all their support, love and patience during my study.

STATEMENT OF ORIGINALITY

I testify that the Research on **“The Influence of English as a Medium of Instruction on Learners Academic Performance”** was completed by the author at the University of Namibia. This is the original work of the author, except where references are made and all references used in the dissertation are accurately reported.

Signature of Student /Author

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

IGCSE:	International General Certificate for Secondary Education
HIGCSE:	Higher International General Certificate for Secondary Education
MBESC:	Ministry of Basic Education Sport and Culture
NBC:	Namibian Broadcasting Corporation
NIED:	National Institute for Educational Development
UNESCO:	United Nations Education Science and Cultural Organization

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background

Namibia is one of the richest countries in Africa in terms of languages spoken and different cultures. It is a multilingual and multicultural society. Some of the languages spoken in the country are Oshiwambo, Otjiherero, Damara/ Nama, Rukwangari, Silozi, and Setswana. It is therefore difficult for people who speak only one of the above mentioned languages to understand one another and to harmonize especially when it comes to education, business, and official matters. In the colonial era, Afrikaans was and perhaps is still the lingua franca in this diverse Namibian society. For instance, the language is spoken mostly in the central and southern part of the country. In these parts, Afrikaans is used in business and for social settings.

Another language spoken in Namibia especially in the tourism industry is German. This language is important because the majority of tourists hail from Germany. Furthermore, this language is being offered at a substantial number of schools as a foreign language. As from 1990 when Namibia attained its independence, French has been accommodated in some schools as another foreign language. In some instances, learners have been given a chance to learn French and travel to France on exchange programmes. According to Harlech –Jones (1990), Namibia is a multilingual society, which aims at uniting its

people behind one language. Our new government in 1990 saw English as a neutral and international language. Therefore, it was officially chosen as a medium of instruction as well as the sole official language.

This chapter gives the overview of language policy before and after independence. The theoretical framework of the study, the statement of the problem, the research questions, rationale, delimitation and the limitations will be highlighted.

Language Policy before Independence

Before independence, the education system in Namibia was segregated along ethnic racial lines. There were eleven educational authorities and each authority ran its own education affairs for that specific racial group. Afrikaans was the official language and a medium of instruction. This language spread rapidly in the central areas of Namibia and it was used mostly in government, administration, commerce, industry, education and media. Although the majority of blacks were illiterate, few of those who were literate were educated in Afrikaans.

According to Harlech – Jones (1990), in schools where Afrikaans was a medium of instruction, English was taught as a second language and was a compulsory subject. However, English was only used as a medium of instruction for some white English speaking community and also in some private schools. For example in the northern part

of the country, Oshigambo and Odimbo High Schools were the only two missionary schools; where English was the medium of instruction. The mother tongue was used as a language of instruction up to Sub B (Grade 2) for all the different education Administrations or Second Tier Authorities. Most whites supported the different education and mother tongue education because it promoted racial segregation. This policy encountered many problems such as the transition from vernacular language to Afrikaans as a medium of instruction, especially in the areas where Afrikaans was not spoken daily. Therefore, many blacks wanted to learn in the language of power (Afrikaans) rather than the vernacular language, thus some of them immigrated to the central part of the country for better education as well as for employment. Afrikaans continued to be dominant as the language of instruction in the black schools in the central areas and it was implemented much earlier in Sub A, now Grade 1 (Harlech – Jones 1990).

According to Cluver (1991), English was implemented at the junior and senior level in Caprivi region in 1980 and also in the former Ovamboland in 1981 as a medium of instruction. However, schools in the central and the southern parts of the country continued to use Afrikaans as the medium of instruction.

Language Policy after Independence

Since independence in 1990, the education system has changed dramatically. The eleven education authorities were abolished and combined into one ministry (The Ministry of

Basic Education and Culture). The whole education system was reformed in order to fit the needs of the new Namibian nation. The goals of the education reform were fourfold: accessibility, equity, quality and democracy. Furthermore, Afrikaans was abolished as an official language and as a medium of instruction because it was viewed as a language of the oppressors and was not significant in the development of the country as a whole. English was adopted as the sole official language as well as the medium of instruction in the new Republic of Namibia. As mentioned before, English was regarded as a unifying language to all Namibians, irrespective of race and culture. In addition, it is seen as a language of international connection not of foreign domination (MBEC 1992).

In 1990, the Ministry of Education introduced two documents; **Education and Transition** in July and **Change with Continuity** in November. These documents stipulated that:

- 1. At a lower primary level the home language should be the medium of instruction and a subject.*
- 2. Where parents choose English to be the medium of instruction and a subject, the home language will be taught as a subject.*
- 3. At the junior and senior levels, English will be the medium of instruction and a subject.*
- 4. The home language or any other language will be a subject.*
- 5. A language or any other subject than the official language may be taken as a Pre Vocational Skill Component requirement.*

These language policy statements were followed by another official statement in 1991 titled **Provisional language Policy for Schools – A Draft for Discussion**, which stated that:

- 1. 1992 would be the year of initial preparation for the introduction of English as a medium of instruction in Grade 4-7.*
- 2. The phasing in policy will be on the sequence of subjects to be taught through English.*
- 3. English is to be a compulsory subject, starting from Grade 1 and continuing throughout the school system.*
- 4. Learners should study two languages as subjects from grade 1 onwards; one of which must be English. These options are Afrikaans, German, Khoekhoegowab, Oshikwanyama, Oshindonga, Otjiherero, Ruciriku, Setwana, and Silozi. Rukwangali and Thimbukushu.*
- 5. All these languages will have the same weighting for promotional purposes.*

The 1992 language policy statement was again followed by another language policy statement titled, **The Language Policy for 1993-1996 and Beyond covering 1993-1996**. This policy stated that:

- 1. The situation in 1992 will continue for the lower primary Grades 1-3.*

2. *From 1993 to 1996 the phasing of English as a medium of instruction will take place in the upper primary Grade 4-7.*
3. *From 1993 Mathematics should be taught through the medium of English.*
4. *From 1994 Mathematics, Science and Social Studies should be taught in the English.*
5. *From 1995 Mathematics, Science and Social Studies should be taught through the medium of English.*
6. *From 1996 onwards Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies, the major promotional subjects for the primary phase should continue to be taught through the medium of English.*
7. All other subjects in these grades 1993 to 1996 may, with permission from the Regional Office, be taught in a language other than English.

At the junior secondary level Grade 8-10, English is the medium of instruction and this is the same for the senior secondary level, Grade 11- 12. At senior secondary level, English as a subject is chosen at International General Certificate for Secondary Education (IGCSE) as Core or Extended and at Higher International General Certificate for Secondary Education (HIGCSE).

A survey conducted and published in the National Institute for Educational and Development (NIED) in 1995 reported that English as a medium of instruction was strongly supported as opposed to a combination of English and a home language. The rationale is that learners would perform better when taught in English. Yet, Pflaum

(1995) stated that despite the popularity of English as a medium of instruction, learners at junior and senior secondary schools continued to perform poorly in academic subjects such as History, Business and Geography. It was hypothesized that this problem is compounded by the learners' inability to express themselves in oral and written English. Pflaum also found a high correlation between low performance in these subjects and English. Therefore, this contributes to the lower status of English as a second language and as the medium of instruction in Namibia.

As an English teacher for five years, I have experienced many language problems through my interaction with learners. In addition, there are reports from other subject teachers that the major problems of learners in classrooms are poor expression in English and their written work showed general lack of proficiency. It would thus seem that English as a medium of instruction has a negative influence on the learners' performance in subjects that need academic reading, and this warrants a further investigation and detailed study.

Theoretical Framework of the Study

Being bilingual is a way of life because every part of you is affected in some way as you struggle to reach beyond the confines of your first language and into a new language, a new culture, a new way of thinking, feeling and acting. In order to successfully send and receive messages in a second language, total commitment, total involvement and a total physical, intellectual and emotional response is necessary.

Some educational psychologists such as Brown (1980), Ausubel (1964) and Bruner (1966) have highlighted theories of second language acquisition.

According to Brown (1980) the cognitive domain of human behavior plays a major role in learning a second language. He agreed with Piaget that human cognition develops rapidly throughout the first sixteen years of life and less rapidly after adulthood. He pointed out that according to Piaget's stages of development, the most critical stage for consideration of first and second language acquisition appeared to occur at puberty. He further highlighted the point that this is a stage where a person becomes capable of abstractions of formal thinking which transcend concrete experience and direct perception. This is a critical period of language acquisition by connecting language acquisition and the concrete/ formal stage transition.

However Ausubel (1964) hinted at the relevance of such a connection. He noted that older people learning the second language could benefit from certain grammatical explanation and deductive thinking that obviously would be pointless for a child. By comparison, children learn the second language well without a hindrance to formal operational thoughts.

The distinction which Ausubel made in the cognitive domain in second language acquisition is between rote and meaningful learning. He notes that people of all ages have little need for rote, mechanistic learning that is not related to existing knowledge and

experience. In many classes where the content is in the second language, excessive numbers of rote learning procedures are sometimes utilized by both teachers and learners.

Bruner (1966) emphasizes the influence of language on cognitive development. He further singles out sources of language which can influence intellectual development.

These sources are; words shaping concept, dialogues between parents and child or teacher and child, serving to orient and educate. Therefore it is clear that cognitive and linguistic developments are intertwined with dependencies in both directions.

Brown (1980) highlighted the humanistic point of view of Carl Rodgers on language teaching and learning that a learner is an organism who needs to understand him/herself and to communicate with others freely and non-defensively. The teacher as a facilitator must provide the nurturing context for learning and not to see his or her mission as one of programmatically feeding students quantities of knowledge which they subsequently devour. Classroom activities and materials in second language learning should therefore utilize meaningful contexts of genuine communication. Therefore, the aspect of language learning may call upon a conditioning process and others aspects which require meaningful cognitive process and other that depend on the security of supporting fellow learners interacting freely and willingly with one another.

Statement of the Problem

A medium of instruction can have an influence on the learners' academic performance.

The purpose of this study is to investigate the effectiveness of English as a medium of

instruction on learners' academic performance. This study attempts to examine whether English as taught presently in schools equips learners with the necessary skills to master academic work in all subjects.

Questions of the Study

The research questions of this study are as follows;

1. Is there any relationship between the teaching of English as a second language and the level of English usage in other content subjects?
2. Does correlation exist between learners' performance in English and in all subjects taught in English?
3. What role do teachers of English and teachers of subject contents play in the acquisition of the English skills needed by the learners?
4. What are the problems experienced by learners and teachers in the learning and teaching process as a result of using English as a medium of instruction?

Rationale of the study

The significance of this study is to enlighten the teachers, learners, and the policy makers on the status of English in the education sector and to establish the relationship between English as a medium of instruction, its status as a second language and the academic performance of the learners. The outcome of the study would be used to encourage hard

work to all parties involved (teachers, learners, parents and policy makers). This information will guide the teachers to adjust teaching methods, and enlighten the advisory service on the status of English as a medium of instructions in schools.

Limitation of the study

The researcher's intention was to have the study cover all seven educational regions countrywide. However due to long distance from Windhoek to schools, time constrain, limited financial resources, a case study involving two schools from 2 regions was carried out.

Delimitation of the study

The study focused on the influence of English as a medium of instruction on learners' academic performance. The participants were the learners and teachers at Ella du Plessis and Shikongo Iiping Secondary Schools. These schools were chosen because of the multilingual and monolingual status respectively.

Definition of terms

1. Bilingual

-Able to use two languages for communication.

2. Home language

-It refers to a language that is used as the first language that a child is exposed to.

3. Medium of instruction

-A language through which school instruction takes place.

4. Monolingual

-Able to use one language for communication.

5. Multicultural

-People with diverse ethnic cultural background.

6. Multilingual

- Able to use more than two languages for communication

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This chapter will examine how others have discussed the issue of the influence of English as a medium of instructions on learning and conclusions that have been drawn from the discussions. Therefore, the literature review will comprise mainly on research done in other countries and in Namibia.

In many multilingual societies, the issue of a medium of instruction in the sphere of education is or has been a battlefield. Therefore, some countries such as South Africa, Canada and India just to mention a few, adapted two or more languages as media of instruction as well as official languages for the sake of political compromise and stability. However, in some multilingual settings like Namibia, English overpowered other languages and it has been used as the official language as well as the medium of instruction. Yet to those countries that are using English as a medium of instruction like Namibia, one wonders why a multilingual society adopted a foreign language as a medium of instruction.

Why adopt English?

Firstly, English is regarded as a language of communication among people of different cultural backgrounds. Putz (1995) cited the Namibian Prime Minister, Hage Geingob in the document entitled **“Our Official Language Should Be English”** that English is spoken widely by millions of people in the world and therefore it is a global language. Additionally, it is the language of communication of many of our African neighbors. He further emphasized that English is the neutral language and it is the language of national unity. However, Campbell and Quorro (1997) refuted Geingob’s view mentioned above. They argued that communication with the outside world does not depend on English but it depends on the willingness to learn of other languages. They further argue that, learners in most countries in Europe and elsewhere learn at least two or more major foreign languages. In addition, they argue that English ties people with English speaking countries and isolates non-English speaking countries.

Again Geingob (1995) emphasized the point that English is regarded as a language of science, technology, and trade, and it is given a high status in education. In most cases, scientific and technological terms are written in English. However, Campbell and Qorro (1997) argued that science and technology do not belong exclusively to English. Historically, Greek was a language of science and technology and after the fall of Greece, with the emergence of the Roman Empire, Latin acquired this status. English, which is a recent language, only became the language of science and technology in the twentieth century. This explains the reason why most scientific words in English have origin in

Greek or Latin from which English has borrowed heavily. Many countries in the world like Germany, France, Russia, Japan, and China just to mention a few, have made major contributions toward science and technology as well as trade in their own languages.

From the argument above, one can therefore conclude that English has not been and will not be a language of science and technology. As Mbala (2001) pointed out on Namibian Broadcasting Corporation (NBC) “Talk of the Nation” show on Language Policy, “it is about time we as African countries develop science and technology terms in our own national languages and make them popular and recognized by the outside world.”

English is regarded as a language of national unity. Again Putz (1995) quoted Geingob thus, “The aim of introducing English is to introduce an official language that will steer the people away from the lingua tribal affiliation and create conditions conducive to national unity in the realm of language.” Since Namibia is a multilingual society, the language policy tends to unite people of different background and avoid tribalism that will oppose national unity. The main objective of this policy is to harmonize the Namibians in education, economic, politic and social sectors. The policy makers see English as a unique and neutral language that can bring the unification among different cultures. It is also seen as a language of economic advancement and social mobility. All these associations make English easily accepted by some Namibians as the official language and a medium of instruction.

Although English is viewed as a neutral, unique and unifying language in Namibia, Cluver (1991) highlighted the risk of introducing a foreign language of wider

communication in a multilingual and multicultural society like Namibia. He noted that a monolanguage (English) as a medium of instruction couldn't fulfil all functions in the multilingual nation like Namibia because different languages may have different functions. I totally agree with the points made by Cluver (1991) but in a country like Namibia it is difficult to choose one national language as a medium of instruction as in Tanzania where Kiswahili is a neutral national language that is spoken and understood by the majority of Tanzanians although they are from different cultural backgrounds. For example, if we choose Oshiwambo or any other language, this will definitely cause chaos among other ethnic groups since they would like their languages to be recognized as well. Again, it will cause tribalism and others may view their languages as not important. However, this was a problem in South Africa on what language should be chosen to be an official language as well as a medium of instruction. Therefore, to make it easier, all eleven national languages as well as English were made official languages and a media of instruction.

Harlech- Jones (1998) suggested that language policy in terms of a medium of instruction should be reformed and guided by the constitution, the aim of education, the relationship between schools variables and other variables impinging on education and the contribution of education towards national development.

Some Namibian people question the hegemony of English language. Thus, some view English as a language of elites and those who are economically stable or from upper and middle classes that speak English fluently because they are the ones who are more

exposed to English. However, those who are living in rural areas and from poor economic background feel unfortunate that they are not afforded the opportunity to be exposed to English due to their economic status. Consequently, they also feel neglected by others who foster development especially the government. Furthermore, such individuals have no access to television, English newspapers or magazines and there is often little or no contact with an English speaking person. These people feel left out, neglected and they fear to be stereotyped as stupid and uncivilized if they cannot speak, write and read English.

There are those who view English as a language of modernization or civilization and a language of a better future. Therefore, in order to escape poverty some parents invest in their children's education for a better future. They make it possible for their children to have good education by sending them to English medium schools from pre-primary education. In addition, some adults who were not exposed to English earlier are trying hard to expose themselves to English by learning how to speak, write, and read. They view their effort as a passport to enter the world of development as well as employment.

Tollefson (1991) supported the point made above that “ a language of modernization is perceived by indigenous people as a language of development, one that will help to transform undeveloped, traditional society into modern, educated, technologically competitive and affluent country”. This perception may lead indigenous language speakers to forsake or neglect their language in the belief that the second language is the

power to uplift one's social position mobility, improve their access to learning, employment and opportunity generally improve one's quality of life.

The influence of mother tongue in learning

The use of the national language as a medium of instruction at some level of school system is a question that has been widely debated. UNESCO (1953) defined mother tongue as the language in which a child first learns to express his/her ideas about himself or herself and about the world in which he or she lives.

Cummins and Skutnabb (1988) used four different criteria to define mother tongue.

These criteria are: origin, competence, function and identification.

1. Origin- the language one learned first.
2. Competence – the language one knows best.
3. Function- the language one uses most.
4. Identification-
 - a. Internal - the language one identifies with.
 - b. External – the language others identify you with.

Three points about the definitions of mother tongue are brought forward again by

Cummins and Skutnabb (1988):

1. The same person can have different mother tongues, depending on which definition is used.

2. A person's mother tongue can change during her/his lifetime, even several times, according to all definitions except the definition by origin.
3. The mother tongue definitions can be organized hierarchically according to the degree of linguistic human rights awareness of a society.

The Namibian language policy in 1993 stipulated clearly that the initial educational stage (grades 1-3) should be taught in Home language, Local language or English. In addition, English should be a subject. This policy has not been easy to implement in our society especially in Windhoek and in towns. In these areas, there are multicultural schools and it is difficult to teach one home language because the learners hail from different backgrounds. However, the policy is exercised mostly in rural schools especially in the northern, southern and eastern parts because almost one local language used by the community. Nevertheless, in some schools, parents, communities have opted for English medium as from grade 1 upwards.

Chamberlain (1981) stressed the hegemony of the mother tongue is stressed in the early schooling in his document "**Towards a Language policy**". He argued that:

1. The child will already have internalized the basics of the mother tongue in pre-school years.

2. Concepts formation in the child's early years is better facilitated by a language which he or she speaks and uses in his daily life than a foreign language whose values and symbols he or she does not know.
3. The mother tongue helps to safeguard the child's cultural identity.
4. Uses of the mother tongue will promote better adjustment between home and school.
5. Since many students do not go beyond primary school, there would be a little need for them to know and fewer opportunities; hence knowledge of the mother tongue would be more useful.

According to Brock-Utne (1997), the mother tongue plays an important part in molding the child's early concepts. In this respect it should be noted that language is closely related to the mind. It is the means by which we conceptualize and think. Normally we cannot think without language. The mother tongue is also the tool in which orientation in the cultural environment is made. Therefore, language is related to culture. The mother tongue as the first language learned by a child to express her or his ideas about herself or himself and about the world she or he lives, will tend to have certain psychological and socio-cultural effect on a child. The use of the mother tongue in the first years of schooling enhances continuity in the child's learning process and therefore maximizes his or her intellectual development. The situation where a child uses one language at home, one that he or she is intimately related to, and has to switch to a foreign language, a vehicle of a foreign culture, psychologically distant from the child, creates a gap between the home and school. The gap between the school and home might lead to feelings of inadequacy and resentment towards the self, the teacher and school (UNESCO, 1953).

Generally, learning will not be optimally achieved under these conditions and this will slow the child's process of learning.

Furthermore, linguists have agreed that at school age (six or seven years) the child has already acquired a reasonable degree of competence in his/ her mother tongue and can express himself or herself adequately and be able to count and perform complex tasks like addition, subtraction to a certain level. However, if a child is faced with a different language rather than expanding on the knowledge already acquired in the mother tongue, he or she has to start again to learn to express himself or herself in the new medium. Emenanjo (1990) argued that if a child is taught in a new medium of instruction, then a child's cognitive maturation and the development of his or her intellectual capacities would be retarded. Cummins and Skutnab-Kangas (1988) did not support the point above; he believed that if a child is taught or acquired the language skills in the first language then she/ he would be more proficient in his or her second language.

In addition, Taylor (2002) referred to suggestions that was made by Wolfaardt that children should be taught in their mother tongue for the first three years of their schooling. Therefore, if children are taught in their mother tongue for the first three years, they are at an advantage over those who learn in English from the start. Again Taylor (2002) quoted Wolfaardt on her proposal for a gradual transition from mother tongue to English instruction that "instruction should be done in 10% English leading up to 90% by grade 7 if learners hail from different backgrounds, there should be separate classes for grade 1 to grade 3 for the same mother tongue speakers".

A hypothesis was developed by Krashen (1985) to support Cummins (1988) views that a child learns a second language best when their first language is maintained and developed: He stated that education in the student's first language can greatly facilitate acquisition in English. He gave a scenario of two limited English proficient children entering the fourth grade to support the point mention above. This case is child **number 1** has studied mathematics in his first language and understands grade three Mathematics thoroughly. **Child number2** has studied Mathematics in his second language and did not understand grade three Mathematics. If Mathematics is taught in English in grade four, **child 1** will understand it far better than **child 2** will. **Child 1** will also, however, acquire more English, since the input will be more comprehensible, thanks to his superior cognitive academic language proficiency and greater specific knowledge of Mathematics, gained in his first language. **Child 2** loses in two ways: he will fall further behind in Mathematics and also fail to improve English language skills.

Krashen (1995) concluded that this may be the explanation for the better performance and more successful acquisition of English in students who arrived late in the United States e.g. by grade six, with no English but with good schooling in their home country, as compared with those who have been in the USA longer. The latecomer's superior cognitive academic language proficiency and specific subject matter knowledge helps make English input more comprehensible.

Parents Attitudes towards English as a Medium of Instruction

Nowadays some rural parents tend to send their children to English medium schools that are mostly in urban areas. They believe that urban English medium schools are the best, have high academic standards and more qualified teachers. Therefore, younger children are sent to boarding schools for a better education. Some parents believe that if their children are exposed to English at an early stage, they will be successful and it will help them to acquire skills faster. By the time they reach secondary school or tertiary level, they will be well off in terms of competence in English because of the solid foundation at their early schooling. Even though some parents send their children to English medium schools they fail to develop their children' first language. They communicate with their children in English only because they feel that it is a language of development. They do not see the importance of speaking the first language with their children. Sometimes the children are confused because they do not know which language they can be identified with beside English.

By contrast, some parents believe in the importance of mother tongue. They want their children to be educated first in the mother tongue because they view this as part of their cultural identity. Even though some parents send their children to English medium schools, they believe it is necessary for their children to maintain the mother tongue. At home these parents try harder to develop their children's first language either by means of communicating with them without code switching in English or make them participate in cultural activities.

Putz (1995) suggested that home language maintenance is based largely on family related social activities. Through such activities, an individual may establish an identity of ethnicity that may encourage continual use of the first language. Thus, the exposure to a rich environment increases the likelihood of home language maintenance. If the learner's first language is not maintained, there may be social and psychological problems later on.

Children's attitudes towards English as a medium of instruction

Some children are shy to speak or do not know how to speak the first language because of the situation created by parents at home or by the society they live in. They do not want to be identified with their home language. They would rather give the impression that they can only communicate in English. In most cases, these children respond in English if spoken to in their home language. This means that there is nothing wrong with their understanding of their mother tongue but they just refuse to respond in their mother tongue. To them English is a "cool" language because their peers, parents, teachers and the media are using it. Thus, children mostly use slang when they communicate.

However, there are those children who are proud to be identified with their first language. They are comfortable to speak their first language because of their parents who taught them the importance of their home language. One of the Namibian learners who was interviewed by Taylor (2002) said that although her mother tongue is Oshiwambo, she

can speak many other languages such as English, Afrikaans, Portuguese and a bit of German. She thinks that her mother tongue is great and she is actually proud of it. Another learner from Henties Bay whose mother tongue is Damara but can speak Afrikaans and English felt that her home language is special because it is passed on from person to person. Again, a 20 years old learner from Rietfontein felt that she is proud to be a Herero because her language is definitely part of her culture and she is trying to conserve the culture.

According to Corson (1993) if a child is bilingual or multilingual, either a child develops language skills in both languages or neglects one of the languages.

Academic performance of Learners

Since the implementation of English as a medium of instruction in Namibia, government documents and other literature have revealed poor performance of learners and falling of standards of teaching.

The probable causes for learner's poor performance are linked to the following:

Inaccessible to standard curriculum

The success of students is not only hampered by their limited command of English, but also by the challenge of learning materials. In most schools, learning materials are not

enough and this slows down the learning process of a child. According to Harlech- Jones (1998), there has been little attempt to harmonize language policy with wider educational goals. These goals are such as developing methodologies that are child- centered, participative, and enquiry based. The use of English in education does not always provide chances of good academic performance but it often blocks opportunities for students' acquisition of knowledge, skills, attitudes and understanding of the various subjects of the curriculum (Campbell and Qorro, 1997).

Poor Instructional strategies

Since the teachers are the main implementers of the English as a medium of instruction, it is vital that they are competent and, able to teach in English. Teaching methods are an important part of language learning. Approaches and methods should be examined along several lines such as theory of language, theory of learning, design objectives, the syllabus, types of learning and teaching activities, the role of instructional materials and procedures (Otaala, 2001).

Otaala (2001) did her study in all seven educational regions on Namibian primary and secondary teachers who were doing the University of Namibia Diploma in Education in African Languages for two- years and through the distance mode. She found that the teaching strategies that were used by some teachers were irrelevant. For instance, teachers talked most of the time during the lesson while learners took lots of notes from the chalkboard, during English classes, the teachers used Afrikaans or other mother

tongues, and many teachers did not encourage questions from the learners. Furthermore, she found that many teachers were not qualified to teach English or other subjects, many teachers taught to complete the syllabus and they viewed the development of oratory and other communicative skills as a waste of time. Many teachers could not interpret the syllabus and if guides were given, they followed them precisely because they were scared to make mistakes.

To the majority of Namibian teachers, English is their second or third language and during their schooling, Afrikaans was their medium of instruction. They might have difficulties in expressing themselves in English, or worse not understanding their subject content. It is difficult for a teacher to develop lessons based on communication and interaction when they themselves lack fluency in English.

England and Lawrence (1996) observed some teachers in Ondangwa and Oshakati schools and found out that some teachers tend to use the home language in content area classes rather than English in order to assist learners in the understanding of difficult concepts. Thus, in subject content learners tend to rely on rote learning due to lack of proficiency in English. They also observed that teachers were put under stress by the language policy. For example, one teacher felt so uncomfortable about her English that she refused to read a listening comprehension passage as part of assessment.

Henderson (1994), who served as a consultant to the Ministry of Basic Education and Culture, found out that:

“Many teachers have difficulties in using English across the curriculum. The problem seems to be academic at level of basic education, it is greater at the primary level than at the junior secondary level. The inability to cope with English as a teaching language forces the teachers to use the regional language in the classroom, and also to teach in a more formal way so as to control the use of language in classroom.

Eventually teachers may find themselves overtaken by their pupils in terms of ability to speak English. Insufficient English language competence is a massive problem that affects the vast majority of teachers teaching at all levels in Namibian schools “(pp41-42).

Some teachers feel that code switching is the only way to help learners to overcome problems they face through learning in English as a medium of instruction. In Tanzania, code switching is common and it decreases the opportunity of learners to be competent in English and they do not have to struggle to understand their work since they depend too much on their teachers to translate to Kiswahili (Campbell and Qorro 1997).

Furthermore, teachers do not need to work hard to enable students to understand the message in English because the primary concern of the subject matter is to ensure that the learners understand the content of the subject. However, Baker (1996) discouraged code switching by stating that the translation into a child’s home language may prevent a child from developing the kind of language that must be one of the objectives of the sound bilingual programme. Further, Baker found that if learners are operating at the context embedded level in the language of the classroom they may fail to understand the

content of the curriculum and also fail to engage in the high order cognitive processes of the classroom such as synthesis, discussion, analysis, evaluation, and interpretation.

Donald, Lawrence and Lolwane (1997) emphasized the point that where neither a student nor a teacher feels comfortable and competent enough in using a second language as a medium of instruction, it could have a negative influence on the quality of teaching and learning process.

Teachers and learners need to be motivated to feel comfortable in using English in the classroom and outside the classroom. They should be willing to explore knowledge and experiment with ideas and thoughts through language interaction. The positive academic performance will come from the proficiency and how comfortably the teachers and learners are in using English as a medium of instruction. Also, adequate in- service training for teachers is needed in order for the teachers to improve the quality of teaching.

Learners ability and motivation

There are affective factors that affect second language learning and they include personality, needs and aptitude (Otaala, 2001). Learners need to have self-motivation that will lead them to better achievement.

Genessee (1987) conducted a research in Canada on the academic and linguistic development of bilingual learners. He found that bilingual learners experience linguistic and academic deficits when compared with monolinguals. From the academic point of

view, this often leads to poor academic achievement because the student lacks requisite language skills to carry out their schoolwork.

Other linguists differed with Genessee, s findings, they argued that if a learner has a strong foundation in the native language, it makes a second language both easier and faster to learn (Baker, 1996; Cummins 1988). In fact, it is clear that the ability to transfer to English what is learnt in the first language does not only apply to subject contents but also to the skill of reading, speaking, writing and listening. Additionally, if a child grasps these skills in his or her first language, then it will be easier to acquire skills and knowledge in a second language.

Language problem is not the only thing that can hinder learners' academic performance. Intellectual development should also be considered (Harlech-Jones 1990). In fact, it is true in the sense that there are some bilingual or multilingual learners who can perform academically better than monolinguals. The learners' academic performance and acquisition of a second language rely on how motivated the learner is to learn a second language, early education background and whether the environment where the learner came from is conducive to making learning positive and successful.

Research has been carried out to prove the point that bilingual learners may outperform native English speakers. Cummins and Skutnabb- Kangas (1988) found that Canadian born children whose parents migrated to Canada performed as well and even better than Anglo- students. They also found the sample of Finish children who migrated to Australia

performed well in academic areas. These studies provided the evidence that bilingual children are able to excel in both languages (mother tongue and a second language) and achieve well in academic work.

The next chapter presents the methodology of the study.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This is a case study and descriptive method is used to describe and identify the influence of the medium of instructions on learners' academic performance. In this chapter, the researcher describes the procedures that were used in the study to collect and analyze data. Specifically, the subjects of the study are identified, the research instruments, administration of the instruments and the methods of data analyses are highlighted.

Population

An ideal population would have been from all educational regions in Namibia. However, due to lack of financial resource and time constraints, two government schools, Ella du Plessis High school in Windhoek Region and Shikongo Ipinge Secondary School in Ondangwa –West were purposefully selected. The reasons for choosing these schools as stated in Chapter 1 were because of the multilingual status (Ella du Plessis) and for monolingual status (Shikongo Ipinge) of the two schools. The researcher wanted to find

out how English as a medium of instructions influence learning in these different environments.

Participants

Random sampling of eighty learners from grade 10 and 12 took place. To ensure the proportional representation, forty learners from grade 10 and 12 represented each school. Four content subjects and two English as second language teachers in each school were randomly selected from the teachers' lists and interviewed.

Research Instruments

Questionnaire, interviews and observation were used to collect data in order to present a more comprehensive and richer picture.

Questionnaire

The questionnaire was divided into four sections whereby learners have to answer to factual, ranking and structured questions format. The first section dealt with the biographical data such as gender, age, home language, previous school, length of study at current school, and length of learning through the English medium.

The second section included ten items regarded as sources of acquiring English. Learners were asked to rank them from 1 as the highest to 10 as the lowest. The third section was to identify major problems experienced through learning in medium of English. The problems were listed and the response ranged from; *never, often and very often*.

The fourth section was to identify how satisfied they are to learn through English as a medium of instruction. The responses ranged from, *not satisfied, mildly satisfied, extremely satisfied* and reasons were sought. Again, in that section they had to respond by **yes** or **no** if they think that English should remain a medium of instruction and their reasons were given.

According to Bless & Higson –Smith, the advantages of questionnaire are that it is relatively economical, easily standardized, can ensure anonymity and the questions can be written for a specific purpose. However, the primary disadvantage of the questionnaire is that it is difficult to check that the subject understands the questions and responds truthfully.

Interview

Structured and semi- structured interview questions were developed based on the major research questions given in chapter 1. Two different types of interview questions were developed to cater the subject contents and English subject teachers Twelve teachers were interviewed from the schools selected. Interviews were conducted by the researcher

to solicit the views, belief, and experience of participants as these relate to teaching through English as a medium of instruction.

According to Cantrell (1993), the purpose of interviews is to allow the researcher to gather descriptive data in the participants' own words and access the unobservable. In addition, the interview enables the inquirer to develop insights into how the participants interpret and make meaning of the world.

Observations

The researcher observed some of the twelve classes of the teachers selected for the interview. Teacher- learner interactions and the use of English as a medium of instruction were observed in content classes and in English classes.

Data Collection Procedures

Permission was granted by the principals of the sampled schools to carry out the research.

The purpose of the study was clearly explained to all the parties involved.

Questionnaire: The researcher handed and collected the questionnaire from the subjects.

The researcher went through the questionnaire with the learners involved to make sure they understood it. Learners were assured of the confidentiality of the information given.

Interviews: The researcher conducted interviews with the teachers involved. At the beginning of each session, the researcher briefed the participants about the nature and purpose of the session and assured them of the anonymity of their participation. Thereafter, 11 open –ended questions were posed to the subject contents teachers and 10 open- ended questions to the English subject teachers. The responses from the interviewees were recorded in writing by the interviewer. The interview session for each teacher took about 30- 45 minutes.

Observations: The researcher observed some selected classes as a non- participant observer. A period of 40- 45 minutes was allocated for observation in each class.

Data Analysis

The data was systematically coded. Percentages were calculated and presented in frequency tables. Responses from the two schools were compared to find out whether differences existed in the learners' and teachers' responses.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents the results of the study. It presents interpretation and discussions of the findings. Data analysis for this study was based on learners' responses to questionnaires, teachers' responses to interview questions and lesson observation. Some of the results of the analysis are presented in frequency tables.

The first part of this chapter presents results from the biographical information of the learners, as it was the first section in the questionnaire.

Results of Biographical information

The variables that were included in the biographical part were *age, gender, current grade, previous school, length of studying at current school, medium of instruction used in grade 1-3, home language and grade(s) repeated.*

The results show that there were more female participants in grade10 at Shikongo Ipinge than male participants. Their ages ranged from 15-18 years old. Only two learners out of eighteen were taught in the medium of English while the rest were taught in their mother tongue in as from Grade 1-3. All twenty participants indicated that Oshiwambo is their home language. Four learners repeated grades at primary school level.

Ella du Plessis Secondary school is a multilingual school and learners hail from different parts of the country. This was indicated on the item of their previous school attended and almost every region is represented. By contrast all learners from Shikongo Iipinge previously attended school in their region.

Eight learners from Ella du Plessis indicated that in Grade 1-3 were taught in English while the rest were taught in their home language. Their ages ranged from 15- 18 years and in this study male participants were more than female. Twelve learners indicated that they have repeated grades mostly in the primary schools. As already mentioned, Ella du Plessis is a multilingual school and the participants' home language range from Oshiwambo, Silozi, Afrikaans, Tswana, Damara\Nama, Otjiherero etc.

Sources for acquiring English language skills

Table 1-4. The following tables below show information with regard to learners' sources of acquiring English language skills. Learners were asked to tick by ranking various sources from 1- being the highest influence to 10 – being the least influence. These tables present the responses from Grade 10 and 12 learners of Ella du Plessis and Shikongo Iipinge Secondary Schools.

Table 1 presents responses from 20 grade 10 learners from Ella du Plessis

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Parents	2	0	4	4	0	0	2	4	2	2
Teachers	18	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0
Friends	0	10	3	6	0	0	0	0	1	0
Magazines	0	0	0	8	0	2	2	2	2	4
Newspapers	0	0	0	0	1	10	2	0	4	2
Television	0	4	6	2	2	4	0	2	0	0
Radio	0	3	2	0	5	3	0	2	5	0
Internet	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	2	3	12
Textbook	0	0	2	0	3	1	8	4	2	0
Library	0	3	0	0	6	0	6	4	1	0

Table 2 represents responses from 20 grade 10 learners from Shikongo Ipinge

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Parents	0	0	0	0	2	2	3	12	0	1
Teachers	11	2	2	1	2	0	2	0	0	0
Friends	0	8	4	0	3	3	2	0	0	0
Magazines	3	1	0	3	0	4	0	1	7	1
Newspapers	2	0	3	0	0	1	9	0	3	2
Television	0	0	1	8	3	1	0	0	4	3
Radio	2	2	1	4	2	7	1	0	1	0
Internet	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	4	13
Textbook	2	3	9	2	0	0	0	4	0	0

Library	0	4	0	2	8	2	3	0	1	0
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	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Parents	1	2	3	0	2	1	2	2	4	3
Teachers	10	5	0	2	0	1	0	2	0	0
Friends	2	6	2	0	3	5	0	0	2	0
Magazines	0	4	0	4	6	0	0	4	2	0
Newspapers	0	0	3	2	0	0	6	3	3	3
Television	4	1	7	3	4	0	1	0	0	0
Radio	1	0	3	4	3	2	3	1	3	0
Internet	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	14
Textbook	2	1	0	2	1	4	2	8	0	0
Library	0	1	2	3	1	7	6	0	0	0

Shikongo Ipinge Grade	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
12										
Parents	0	0	0	0	2	0	1	11	2	4
Teachers	13	0	2	1	0	2	0	1	1	0
Friends	3	2	2	5	3	4	0	0	1	0
Magazines	1	0	5	2	2	3	3	0	0	4
Newspapers	0	4	3	3	5	0	0	5	0	0
Television	0	0	0	1	4	0	12	2	1	0
Radio	2	11	2	2	2	0	1	0	0	0
Internet	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	13	7
Textbook	1	2	4	3	0	9	1	0	0	0
Library	0	1	2	3	2	2	2	1	2	5

Table 5. The following tables show the rank order of sources of English as indicated by learners in Table 1-4. Again, 1 represents the highest source while 10 is the least. The comparison in ranking is done for the Grade 10 learners at both schools.

Table 5

Sources	Ella du Plessis	Shikongo Iipinge
Teachers	1	1
Friends	2	2
Television	3	4
Reading magazines	4	9
Library	5	5
Reading Newspapers	6	7
Textbooks	7	3
Parents	8	8
Radio	9	6
Internet	10	10

Discussion of the Analysis

The results above (Table 5) show some similarities and differences of the learners' responses regarding the source for acquiring English language basic skills. Both schools, Ella du Plessis and Shikongo Iipinge ranked **teachers** as the most influential source of

acquiring English language skills. The two schools also ranked friends as the second **most** influential source of acquiring English language skills. However, Ella du Plessis ranked **television** as the third source while Shikongo Iipingwe picked **textbooks**. Again, Ella du Plessis ranked **magazines** as the fourth most influential source of acquiring English language skills while Shikongo Iipingwe chose **television**.

Both schools ranked **library** as the fifth most influential source of acquiring English language skills. **Newspapers** are ranked as the sixth source by Ella du Plessis while Shikongo Iipingwe ranked it source seven. The vast difference occurs at the ranking of **textbooks**; Ella ranked it source seven while Shikongo Iipingwe ranked it as the third source.

Again the similarity occurs in ranking the parents. Both schools ranked **parents** as being the eighth source of acquiring English language skills. Ella du Plessis ranked **radio** as the ninth source while Shikongo Iipingwe ranked it as source six. Lastly, both schools ranked **Internet** as the tenth source.

Table 6. The following table will illustrate the ranking order of the grade 12 at Ella du Plessis and Shikongo Iipingwe

Table 6

Sources	Ella du Plessis	Shikongo Ipinge
Teachers	1	1
Friends	2	4
Television	3	7
Radio	4	2
Reading Magazines	5	3
Library	6	10
Reading Newspapers	7	5
Textbooks	8	6
Parents	9	8
Internet	10	9

The results of Grade 12 learners show differences in the ranking of sources of acquiring English. Both schools rank **teachers** as the most influential source in acquiring English language skills. However, Ella du Plessis ranked friends as the second source while Shikongo Ipinge ranked it fourth. **Television** is ranked third by Ella du Plessis and Shikongo Ipinge ranked it source seven. The fourth most influential source of acquiring English language skills ranked by Ella is **radio** while to Shikongo Ipinge is the second source.

Magazines is ranked fifth by Ella du Plessis while Shikongo Ipinge ranked it third. The two schools differ in their ranking of **library** as being their source of acquiring English; Ella du Plessis ranked it source six while to Shikongo Ipinge is the tenth source. **Newspapers** is ranked seventh by Ella du Plessis while Shikongo Ipinge ranked it fifth.. **Textbooks** is ranked eighth by Ella du Plessis while Shikongo Ipinge ranked it sixth. **Parents** are ranked source nine by Ella du Plessis while Shikongo Ipinge ranked it as the eight source. Again, Internet is ranked as the least source of acquiring English language skills. Ella du Plessis ranked it source ten while Shikongo Ipinge ranked it ninth.

The results from both schools and grades revealed that teachers play vital role in being the sources of acquiring English. Therefore it is safe to assume that learners depend a lot on their teachers in acquiring English as language skills. It is of utmost important that the teacher should prepare their lessons accurately and present them thoroughly. They should pronounce and spell words correctly to avoid teaching the wrong things.

According to Otaala (2002), teachers are the implementers of English as a medium of instruction. Even though English is a second or third language to some teachers; they should try to improve their standard of English. In addition, they should feel comfortable and confident in using a medium of instruction.

Learners indicated that Internet is the least common source in learning English. This is probably true because Internet facilities are not always available at schools. Suffice it to say that it is costly and not yet popular at some schools in Namibia. Although these

schools are from different backgrounds; rural (Shikongo Iipinga) and urban (Ella du Plessis), both learners have limited access to Internet.

The researcher observed that some of these facilities that are ranked least are available at both schools and may serve as valuable sources in acquiring English language skills. For example, the textbook can be a good source of acquiring English language skills. There are vocabulary or glossary list and concepts that could enhance the learners' opportunity to learn new words and to familiarize themselves with new concepts regarding the subjects. The library is the other facility that was ranked least by learners from both schools but could assist the learners to acquire English language skills. The two schools have libraries, but they lack order and organizations. The library at Ella du Plessis is being used as a classroom and the books in it are mishelved and out dated. At Shikongo Iipinga, the library was not used as a classroom however, there were few books and they were out dated. It is very important for these schools to update their libraries with useful materials so that learners benefit immensely from this valuable resource center.

Problems experienced by learners in learning through English as a medium of instructions

Learners were asked to tick the right response ranging from **Never** (not a problem), **Often** (sometimes a problem) and **Very often** (very much a problem). Sixteen statements were brought forward by the researcher to find out if there are problems in learning through English as a medium of instruction.

Table 7 presents the results of 20 Grade 10 learners from Ella du Plessis and 20 Grade 10 learners from Shikongo Ipinge on the problems experienced in learning through English as a medium of instruction.

Table 7

Ella du Plessis

Shikongo Ipinge

PROBLEMS	N	O	VO	N	O	VO
a. Shortage of textbooks.	6 = 6.2%	8 = 12.4%	6 = 3.6%	8 = 10.2%	9 = 7.3%	3 = 3.3%
b Academic schoolwork is too difficult.	4 = 4.2%	16 = 24.8%	0 = 0%	5 = 6.4%	8 = 6.5%	7 = 7.7%
c. Do not understand English concepts.	6 = 6.2%	10 = 15.5%	4 = 2.4%	20 = 25.6%	0 = 0%	2 = 2.1%
d. Not motivated by parents.	2 = 2.1%	12 = 18.6%	6 = 3.6%	4 = 5.1%	8 = 6.5%	8 = 8.8%
e. Not Motivated by teachers.	8 = 8.3%	12 = 18.6%	0 = 0%	12 = 15.3%	8 = 6.5%	0 = 0%
f. No academic help from parents since they cannot understand English.	3 = 3.1%	10 = 15.5%	7 = 4.2%	0 = 0%	4 = 3.2%	16 = 17.6%
g. Teachers not expressing themselves clearly in English.	12 = 12.4%	6 = 9.3%	2 = 1.2%	20 = 25.6%	0 = 0%	0 = 0%
h. Teachers sometimes using another language to teach then English.	8 = 8.3%	10 = 15.5%	2 = 1.2%	11 = 14.0%	8 = 6.5%	1 = 1.1%
i. My command of English is poor.	7 = 7.9%	7 = 10.8%	6 = 3.6%	4 = 5.1%	10 = 8.2%	6 = 6.6%
j. Shy to speak in English.	8 = 8.3%	10 = 15.5%	2 = 1.2 %	16 = 20.4%	2 = 1.8%	2 = 2.2%
k. Shy to ask questions in class.	10 = 10.4%	10 = 15.5%	0 = 0%	14 = 17.9%	3 = 2.4%	3 = 3.3%
l. Textbooks are too difficult to read and understand.	10 = 10.4%	10 = 15.5%	0 = 0%	5 = 6.4%	7 = 5.7%	8 = 8.8%
m. Do not speak in English during interval and after school.	6 = 6.2%	10 = 15.5%	4 = 2.4%	3 = 3.8%	3 = 2.4%	14 = 15.4%
n. My friends always speak in my home language.	4 = 4.2%	4 = 6.2%	12 = 7.3%	4 = 5.1%	10 = 4.9%	6 = 6.6%
o. I sometimes learn things of by heart without understanding what I am learning.	0 = 0%	14 = 21.7%	6 = 3.6%	2 = 2.5%	2 = 1.6%	16 = 17.6%
p. Each time I read a new word, I look up a meaning in a dictionary.	10 = 10.4 %	6 = 9.3%	4 = 2.4%	0 = 0%	0 = 0%	20 = 22.0%

Table 8 presents results of 20 Grade 12 learners from Ella du Plessis and 20 grade 12 learners from Shikongo Ipinge.

Table 8

Ella du Plessis

Shikongo Ipinge

PROBLEMS	N	O	VO	N	O	VO
a. Shortage of textbooks.	13 = 17.9%	5 = 6.4%	2 = 1.0%	9 = 8.2%	6 = 6.4%	5 = 5.5%
b. Academic schoolwork are too difficult.	11 = 15.1%	7 = 8.9%	2 = 1.0%	8 = 7.3%	12 = 12.9%	0 = 0%
c. Do not understand English concepts.	8 = 11.0%	11 = 14.0%	1 = 0.5%	0 = 0%	20 = 21.6%	0 = 0%
d. Not motivated by parents.	1 = 1.3%	15 = 19.2%	4 = 2.1%	5 = 4.6%	5 = 5.4%	10 = 11.0%
e. Not Motivated by teachers.	14 = 19.3%	5 = 6.4%	1 = 0.5%	12 = 11.0%	0 = 0%	8 = 8.8%
f. No academic help from parents since they cannot understand English.	2 = 2.7%	12 = 15.3%	6 = 3.2%	4 = 3.6%	6 = 6.4%	10 = 11.0%
g. Teachers not expressing themselves clearly in English.	9 = 12.4%	6 = 7.6%	5 = 2.7%	12 = 11.0%	0 = 0%	8 = 8.8%
h. Teachers sometimes using another language to teach then English.	10 = 13.8%	7 = 8.9%	3 = 1.6%	10 = 9.2%	5 = 5.4%	5 = 5.5%
i. My command of English is poor.	13 = 17.9%	2 = 7.5%	5 = 2.7%	5 = 4.6%	9 = 9.7%	6 = 6.6%
j. Shy to speak in English.	18 = 24.8%	1.2%	1 = 0.5%	2 = 1.8%	16 = 17.2%	2 = 2.2%
k. Shy to ask questions in class.	6 = 8.2%	6 = 7.6%	8 = 4.3%	4 = 3.6%	4 = 4.3%	12 = 13.2%
l. Textbooks too difficult to read and understand.	7 = 9.6%	8 = 10.2%	5 = 2.7%	6 = 5.5%	4 = 4.3%	10 = 11.0%
m. Do not speak in English during interval and after school.	9 = 12.4%	8 = 10.2%	3 = 1.6%	2 = 1.8%	8 = 8.6%	10 = 11.0%
n. My friends always speak in my home language.	5 = 6.9%	11 = 14.0%	4 = 2.1%	3 = 2.7%	10 = 10.8%	7 = 7.7%
o. I sometimes learn things of by heart without understanding what I am learning.	9 = 12.4%	10 = 12.8%	1 = 0.5%	5 = 4.6%	7 = 7.5%	8 = 8.8%
p. Each time I read a new word, I look up a meaning in a dictionary.	3 = 4.1%	14 = 17.9%	3 = 1.6%	5 = 4.6%	6 = 6.4%	9 = 9.9%

Discussion of Analysis

Shortage of textbooks

As it was indicated in Table 7 and 8, the respondents from both schools cited that lack of textbooks at their schools as a problem. 12.4% of grade 10 learners at Ella du Plessis revealed that the shortage of textbooks is *often* a problem. However, 7.3% of grade 10 learners at Shikongo Ipinge indicated that the shortage of textbooks is *often* a problem. At senior level, the two schools indicated that the shortage of textbooks is not as serious as it is at the junior level.

Academic work is too difficult

Table 7, gives an indication that the learners at junior level view the statement above as *often* a problem (24.8% at Ella du Plessis) while at Shikongo Ipinge (7.7%) indicated that it is *very often* a problem. At senior level, 12.9% of the participants at Shikongo Ipinge and 8.9% Ella du Plessis participants indicated that academic schoolwork is *often* a problem.

Do not understand English concepts

The junior (15.5%) and senior (14%) at Ella du Plessis as well as 21.6% grade 12 participants at Shikongo Ipinge indicated that they *often* do not understand English

concepts. However, 25.6% grade 10 learners from Shikongo Iipinge revealed that it is *never* a problem to understand English concepts.

No academic help from the parents since they cannot understand English

This was also identified as one of the problem learners experienced in learning through English as a medium of instruction. 15.5% junior and 15.3% senior participants at Ella du Plessis revealed that this is *often* a problem. While at Shikongo Iipinge it is very *often* a problem (17.6% juniors and 11% seniors).

Teachers do not express themselves clearly in English

8.8% of the senior participants at Shikongo Iipinge indicated that it is *very often* a problem while 25.6% junior participants revealed it is *never* a problem. However, Ella du Plessis junior (9.3%) and senior (7.6%) participants indicated that *often* teachers do not express themselves clearly in English. .

Textbooks are too difficult to read and understand

11% senior and 8.8% participants at Shikongo Iipinge responded that this is very *often* a problem. However 10.2% senior and 15.5% junior participants at Ella du Plessis revealed that it is *often* a problem (15.5%) juniors and (10.2%) seniors).

Friends always speak my home language

7.3% participants at Ella du Plessis and 6.6% at Shikongo Ipinge junior level revealed that it is *very often* a problem. However, 12.8 % seniors at Ella du Plessis indicated that it is *often* a problem while 8.8% Shikongo Ipinge revealed that it is *very often* a problem.

I sometimes learn things off by heart without understanding what I am learning

At junior level, 21.7% participants at Ella du Plessis responded as *often* a problem while 17.6 % participants at Shikongo Ipinge indicated that it is *very often* a problem. However, senior participants responded that it is often a problem (14% Ella and 10.8% Shikongo).

Are you satisfied with English as a medium of instruction? Give reasons.

Table 9 below illustrates the responses whereby learners had to reveal how satisfied they are that English is medium of instruction.

Table 9	Ella- Gr10	Shikongo-Gr10	Ella Gr12	ShikongoGr12
Not Satisfied	2=10%	0=0%	1=5%	0=0%
Mildly Satisfied	6=30%	0=0%	2=10%	3=15%
Extremely Satisfied	12=60%	20=100%	17=85%	17=85%
Total	20	20	20	20

The result of this table reveals that the majority of the learners at both schools are extremely satisfied that English is the medium of instruction. Some of the reasons given were that:

- It is an international language
- It is easy to read
- It helps us to communicate with people from different backgrounds
- It increases vocabulary.

However, three learners at Ella du Plessis were not satisfied that English is a medium of instruction. Some of the reasons given were that:

- It could be better if each school choose its own medium of instruction.
- One learner even revealed that the performance of learners was better when Afrikaans was a medium of instruction.

Do you think that English should remain a medium of instruction? Give reasons.

Table 10 shows the responses to the question above. Learners were asked to tick **yes** or **no** if they think that English should remain the medium of instructions.

Table 10 **Ella-Gr10** **Shikongo-Gr10** **Ella-Gr12** **ShikongoGr12**

YES	16	20	18	20
NO	4	0	2	0
TOTAL	20	20	20	20

All participants at Shikongo Ipinge accommodated the suggestion and the majority of learners at Ella du Plessis also responded **yes**. Some of the reasons given were:

- English as a medium of instruction will open doors for success.
- It will unite learners since they are from different backgrounds.
- It is a language of employment.
- It is enjoyable to study in English.

Some of the reasons given by the learners support relate the remarks made by Geingob (1995) in chapter 2 that, English is the neutral language and it is a language of national unity. It is also a language of economic advancement and social mobility.

However four learners at junior level and two at senior level said **no**. Some of the reasons they gave were:

- English is very difficult to study.
- Some parents cannot help with academic work since they lack understanding of English.

INTERVIEWS

The researcher interviewed orally twelve teachers from these two schools. Their names were randomly chosen. Four subject content teachers and two English as second language teachers were randomly chosen from Ella du Plessis and Shikongo Iiping schools respectively.

Biographical data of subject contents teachers

Table 11

	Qualifications	Subject (s)	Teaching Exp.	School
T1	B.ED, Diploma in TFL	Physics	14years	Ella du Plessis
T2	HED	Accounting	5years	Ella du Plessis
T3	B. Tech, SED, HED	Economics	11years	Ella du Plessis
T4	B. SC	Physics	2years	Ella du Plessis
T5	B.SC	Maths & Physics	10years	Shikongo Iiping
T6	B. ED	Geography & History	9months	Shikongo Iiping
T7	B. ED	Business Studies	2 years	Shikongo Iiping
T8	B.SC	Physics	18years	Shikongo Iiping

In order to establish the nature of teaching English as a medium of instruction, it is important to understand the backgrounds of the teachers involved. The variables included in the interview regarding the teachers' biographical data are; *level of qualifications, subject taught, years of teaching the subjects.*

The findings indicated that most of the teachers are qualified to teach at junior and senior levels. Some teachers have many years of teaching experiences except for one teacher at Shikongo Ipinge who has been teaching for 9 months only.

Responses from Subject Content Teachers

Eight open-ended interview questions were posed to subject content teachers and their responses were coded in writing by the interviewer. The questions were aimed to find out the teachers' experience in teaching through English as a medium of instruction.

Question 1

Are you satisfied with the standard of English used in the textbook?

Six teachers responded that “yes” while two teachers said “no”. Some of the reasons given by the teachers who responded “yes” were:

-The textbook meets the needs of learners as well as the requirements to study in English language (Physics-12)

It is easy for learners to understand (Accounting-10, Economics –12).

It is at the level of the learners (Geography-10)

However, those who are not satisfied with the standard of English used in the textbooks responded that:

- English in the textbook is from British perspectives; it should be localized (Physics- Grade 12)
- Language used is difficult for the learners to interpret scientific expressions (Physics – Grade 10).

Question 2

Problems experienced in teaching through English as a medium of instructions.

The teachers identified learners' problems as hindrance to teach in English as a medium of instructions. Some of the shortcomings are:

- lack of fluency in English.
- difficulties in pronunciations and spelling.
- some concepts are too difficult to understand.
- failure to understand questions posed as well as instructions given.
- poor English language background.
- using other languages to explain things.
- failure to understand scientific concepts.
- some learners are confused when a teacher explains something because of poor English language proficiency.

Question 3

What factors do you think contribute to the problems found in teaching through English as a medium of instruction?

The teachers responded that the major factors that contributed to problems mentioned in question 2 are: -

- unwillingness by learners to speak in English with peers.
- no access to media and other technology.
- poor English language background from primary school level.
- lack of interest in subjects.
- poor command of English.
- influence of mother tongue.
- lack of reading literature and other materials in English.
- lack of understanding the questions and instructions.
- learners have a relaxed attitude towards learning the English language.
- Some teachers are not fluent in English language and this influences the learners' performance.

Question 4

Any specific language problem(s) noticed in your learners?

The teachers mentioned that all language skills (speaking, writing, reading and listening) are the major problems in their classes. Poor vocabulary, pronunciation, spelling and grammatical error were also highlighted as problems.

Question 5

How do you help if you notice that a learner has a language problem?

Some teachers responded that they try to help them as much as they can even by giving the extra classes, work after classes. However, learners are motivated to speak, read and write a lot and also to get help especially from English language teachers. They are encouraged to use dictionaries in order to spell correctly, understand difficult words and improve their vocabulary.

Question 6

Do you attend workshop in your subjects?

Two teachers responded that they do attend workshops while six teachers said that they do not at all attend workshops.

Question 7

What should be the major focus in English classes that will help the learners in your subject?

The teachers responded that it would help if teaching English across the curriculum is strengthened. In addition, it will help if more reading comprehensions are given and this would improve learners' comprehension ability. English teachers should try to give more written assignments and oral exercise to enable the learners to answer different level of questions such as define, describe, analyze, evaluate etc. English classes should emphasize the teaching of basic communication skills through debates, drama and interviews. In addition, basic rules of grammar should be strengthened.

Question 8

Any suggestion to curriculum planners in your subject?

The planners should make sure that the prescribed textbooks correspond with the syllabus. They should make provisions for frequent consultations, workshops, reviewing and updating textbook edition. The curriculum should be localized and the content should be relevant to learners' situation. One of the teachers complained that the Grade ten accounting syllabus is too long and it cannot be completed in the short time given before

the examination. The textbook should accommodate slow and fast learner. Furthermore, workshops should be done often to familiarize teachers with the curriculum.

Biographical Data of Teachers of English as a Second Language

Table 12 indicates the biographical data of English as second language teachers

	Qualification	Subject	Teaching Expe.	Homelanguage	School
T1	B. ED	English	18yrs	Silozi	Ella du Plessis
T2	B. ED	English	14yrs	Oshiwambo	Ella du Plessis
T3	B.ED	English	7yrs	Oshiwambo	Shikongo Ipinge
T4	B.ED	English	2yrs	Oshiwambo	Shikongo Ipinge

Responses from Teachers of English as a Second Language

Seven open – ended interview questions were posed to English subject teachers and their responses were as follows:

Question 1

Are you satisfied with the standard of English used in the textbook you are currently using? Please explain.

Three teachers said that they are not satisfied while one said she is satisfied.

The reasons given by those who are not satisfied are that:

- the textbook contains too easy exercises for grade 12 level; therefore the learners are not challenged at all.
- there is too little emphasis in figurative language,
- the junior and senior English as a second language prescribed textbooks do not contain sufficient grammar practices.

However the reason for the teacher who responded that she is satisfied is that the textbook promotes communication skill.

Question 2

What are the problems experienced in teaching English?

The participants revealed that some learners fail to understand explanation and grammatical errors are noticed (verbally and in writing). The influence of mother tongue in pronunciation and spelling is the major problem because learners are literally translating from mother tongue to English. Shortage and low standard of textbooks are hindering teaching.

Other problems that are experienced by teachers in their classes are that learners are lacking commitment to their work. They have poor English language background and discipline is lacking.

Question 3

What components of English (reading, writing, speaking and listening) do you find difficult to teach and why?

All four skills were identified as difficult to teach.

One teacher mentioned that writing is difficult to teach because the way the learners pronounce is the way they spell and this affect their writing skill. Another teacher said that speaking is difficult to teach since learners are not cooperative and they are shy to express themselves. Reading is another problem because learners have poor reading abilities and they do not read to understand especially in comprehension texts. Furthermore, listening is difficult to teach because learners are not familiar with the various English pronunciations and accent.

Questions 4

Do you attend workshop in you subject? If yes how often?

Three of the teachers responded that they attended workshops once or twice a year. However, one teacher revealed that she had never attended a workshop.

Question 5

Do learners communicate with you and with each other in English?

The teachers responded that the learners interact with them in English but not with each other especially in group work.

Question 6

Do you think English should remain a medium of instructions?

All the teachers interviewed feel that English should remain the medium of instruction.

Some of the reasons given are that:

- English will unite the learners since they are from different backgrounds.
- it will avoid national prejudice in case one of the local languages become the medium of instruction.

The second reason stated by the teachers supports Geingob (1995) that “ the aim of introducing English is to introduce an official language that will steer people away from the lingua tribal affiliation and create conditions conducive to national unity in the realm of language.”

Question7

What should be the major focus in other subjects to help the learners in English class?

The English teachers feel that it is very important if grammatical errors are corrected and not left to the English teacher to do so alone. They feel that group discussion and feedback should be done in English. In addition, more written assignments and oral exercises should be given so those learners can improve their writing and speaking skills. Teachers should always make an attempt to teach in English, they should not codeswitch. Baker (1996) discouraged code switching that it may prevent a learner from developing the language skills needed in English.

OBSERVATION

The researcher was not guided by observation schedules because she did not want to be restricted to certain things to observe. The intention was to observe holistically and see what to find in the classroom regarding the teaching methodology, interaction between the learners to learners and learners to teachers, the use of English language and the classroom atmosphere.

The researcher observed some of the classes taught by teachers selected for the interview. In some classes teacher centered mode of learning was evident more than learner – centered mode of learning. Some teachers took almost the whole lesson speaking instead of involving learners in the discussion or giving them a chance to ask or answer questions

or even do group work. In those classes where groupwork was implemented, either a teacher was busy with other work e.g. marking or reading, while learners were not given proper supervision. There was disturbance and some learners were chatting in their mother tongue.

The researcher was very impressed when she entered one class in which learners were given groupwork. Firstly, the teacher gave the instructions and then learners started to work in groups. They were constantly participating and the teacher kept monitoring them closely. Furthermore, the researcher observed that teachers used English throughout the lessons and learners responded in English as well. Some grammatical errors were detected from the learners and some teachers made an effort to correct them straight away especially in English classes.

In some classes, the textbooks were not enough, therefore two or three learners were sharing one textbook or a teacher had to teach and write on a chalkboard then learners have to copy from it. This does not leave learners a chance to listen and actively participate in the lesson. Instead, they tend to copy down what is on the chalkboard than listening to the teacher.

Learners were chusing a lot instead of rising their hands and given a chance by a teacher to answer. For example in one English class, the learners were debating about the topic “Capital punishment”. Firstly, the learners were given a topic for discussion as well as the instructions to adhere to. However, some of them were out of the topic and did not follow

the instructions. Furthermore, the debate was dominated by few learners who were not giving others a chance to contribute.

Some learners were speaking in their home languages. even though the teacher tried to encourage everyone to speak in English. Some learners were shy to express their views, and those who could express their views dominated the debate. There were also some learners who made fun of those who made mistakes and it did not give a researcher a good impression.

The use of the English language was fair; however, one can hear how the home languages have great impact on pronunciations. For example, the word **borrow** was pronounced **mborrow** or the word **second** was pronounced **shecond**. Also some of these learners are extremely influence by the use of slang. This made it difficult to express their point of view clearly.

The findings from the observation were contributing positively and negatively to learning and teaching through the English as a medium of instruction.

The next chapter concludes and gives recommendation to the study.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter will deal with the summary, conclusion, and recommendations of the study based on the research finding and discussions.

SUMMARY

The purpose of this study was to find out whether English as a medium of instruction has an impact on learners' academic performance. It also attempted to examine if English as taught presently in schools equipped learners with the necessary skills to master academic work in all subjects. Further, the study sought to find factors, which might hinder learners and teachers in using English as a medium of instructions.

The following questions were addressed in the study

1. Is there a relationship between the teaching of English as a second language and the level of English usage in the other subject contents?
2. Does a correlation exist between learner's performance in English as a subject and in all subjects taught in English?

3. What are the roles of teachers of English and content subjects in acquisition of the English skills needed by the learners?
4. What are the problems experienced by learners and teachers in learning/ teaching process as a result of using English as a medium of instruction?

In order to find out the responses to these questions, the researcher interviewed English second language teachers as well as content subjects teachers. Questionnaires were also handed to learners and observations were carried out in some classes.

The research questions are discussed in the same order as stated

1. The result of the interview showed that the standard of English used in some of the textbook is not challenging enough to learners. For example, one of the English second language teachers interviewed revealed that she does not even use the textbook prescribed for grade 12 because it does not challenge the learners. The skills that they are supposed to master are not well emphasized in the exercises therefore she has to look for additional resources to make teaching more effective. Therefore it was suggested that it could be better if the curriculum would be localized to fit the level of learners.

2. The result from the interview inferred that there is a correlation between the performance of learners in English classes and in content subjects. The findings revealed that learners have difficulties in expressing themselves verbally and in written form. They are extremely influenced by the mother tongue, therefore their pronunciations and spellings are

affected. Some of the learners try to think and transfer directly from their mother tongue to English and this influence word order in English. Furthermore, teachers felt that learners should be taught essential terms for example analyze, evaluate, define, describe etc as early as in grade 8 so that by the time they come to grade 10 and 12 they are already mastered these concepts. This will enable them to answer according to the instructions given in the tests and examinations.

3. The results of the interview indicated further that the teacher felt that their role in helping learners in acquiring English is to correct grammatical errors as soon as they are noticed. This should be done in all classes not just to be left for English subject teachers to correct. Teachers felt that they need to encourage and motivate the learners to improve their four skills (reading, writing, speaking and listening) because they are required in all the subjects.

Teachers felt that it would be much easier for them if English subject teachers could also teach across the curriculum. Some of the reading comprehension and oral or debate topics should be taken from History or Biology or Geography etc. This will stimulate learners thinking process and they will gain knowledge and skills. In addition, it might be easier to relate to certain concepts by using prior knowledge from their content subject classes.

In one section of the questionnaire learners were asked to rank their sources of acquiring English. The results were astonishing, as teachers were ranked number one source.

Therefore it is of utmost important that the teachers be more prepared for each lesson because their learners depend on them to acquire English. Their choice of vocabulary, pronunciations, spelling and whatever they teach should be correct to ensure that correct information is learned. It is important that all subjects be taught in English. Likewise discussions should always take place in English. The teacher should create a conducive environment in which learners are comfortable in expressing themselves in English. More reading, written and oral assignment should be given to learners so that they can improve their skills.

4. Learners and teachers identified some factors that contribute to the problems in learning and teaching through the English as a medium of instruction. Some of these problems identified by the learners are:

-lack of textbooks

-academic schoolwork is too difficult.

-not motivated by parents

-do not understand English concepts

-textbooks too difficult to read and understand.

- friends always speak a home language.

-learners do sometimes memorize without understanding what they have learned.

The teachers highlighted problems in teaching through English as medium of instructions.

Some of these problems are as follow:

- unwillingness to speak in English with peers.
- poor English language background.
- lack of guidance in teaching through English as a medium of instruction.
- learners lack understanding the questions and instructions.
- learners and teachers are not fluent in English language.

Conclusion of the Study

The key research question of the study was to find out whether English as a medium of instruction has an influence on learners' academic performance. The study concludes that the academic performance of the learners is influence by the use of English as a medium of instruction.

The positive influence of English as a medium of instruction on learners' academic performance:

The researcher observed that despite the fact that some learners are poor in English proficiency, they are willing to communicate in English. Some learners have good command of English and they could follow instructions correctly. Additionally, some learners expressed their views clearly especially in tasks that require critical thinking. It should be emphasized that the positive influence of English as a medium of instruction to learner's academic performance is only observed in the minority of learners who have a solid background in English language.

The negative influence of English as a medium of Instruction on learners academic performance:

As indicated by the teachers interviewed, lack of basic language skills (reading, speaking, listening, writing and grammar) is hampering the learner's academic performance. In any subject, it is difficult to carry out academic work if the learners have not mastered the basic language skills.

Some specific factors identified that may hinder the academic performance of the learners especially in the English language skills mentioned are mother tongue influence and poor English language background. These factors were noticed mostly in speaking, writing, listening and reading. In speaking and reading aloud, some pronunciation is affected by mother tongue. Therefore it was in some classes that when learners speak, they either add sound since some of the sounds are strange or common in their mother tongue. As a results, it makes it difficult for learners to be understood when posing questions and also when expressing their views. According to teachers interviewed, some learners written work are affected by mother tongue. Therefore, words are misspelled, in some cases ideas are translated from mother tongue to English and it affects the sentences structure in English.

The results revealed that most learners have poor English background and it makes it difficult to learn in the medium of English. As a result, 60% of the learners responded in the questionnaire that textbooks are difficult to read and comprehend. They also indicated

that some concepts are difficult to read and understand. In addition, 52.2% of the learners indicated that they memorize content by heart without understanding.

In conclusion, poor English proficiency derived from mother tongue influence and poor English background could be the reasons for negative impact of English as a medium of instruction on learners' academic performance.

Recommendations

The recommendations of this study are based on the finding of the research. Therefore the aim of the study is to enlighten the Ministry of Basic Education Sports and Culture, teachers, learners, advisory service and NIED on the status of English as a medium of instruction in schools. However, the most important factor is to improve the standard of education in the country and to sensitize all the parties involved on what role to play in order to uplift and improve the standard of teaching and learning through the medium of English

Ministry of Basic Education Sports and Culture

It is recommended that the MBESC do the following in order to improve the teaching and learning through English as a medium of instruction.

1. The Ministry should make sure that workshops for all subjects are conducted each year and teachers should attend these workshops. Additionally, it will give them a chance to improve their teaching skills and to be able to teach in English. Experts in English language should be brought in these workshops to help the teachers with the language problems they experience in their subjects. Thus, teachers will be competent in the language of medium of instructions.
2. The Ministry should supply enough teaching and learning resources on time. The lack of textbooks has been a major problem in most schools and this affects the academic performance of learners. It is advisable that schools should place their textbook orders in good time to avoid unnecessary delays during the distribution of the textbooks.
3. The Ministry should make sure that the teaching of Grade 11-12 IGCSE Literature in all the languages especially in English should be reviewed. The teaching of literacy lays foundation for language and learning skills. In the process, the learners gain new vocabulary and improve comprehension. Again, literature will teach them to think critically, analyze and evaluate any situation and these skills can be transferred to any subject content.
4. The Ministry should make sure that the advisory service is working closely with teachers. The subject advisers should extend their assistance to the teachers so that

teaching and learning can be effective. Workshops should be conducted regularly and school visit should take place.

5. Curriculum planners should make sure that the teachers are also involved in writing and revising syllabuses. They should localize the syllabus as well as the textbooks to make it easier for learners and teachers.

6. The Ministry should review the automatic learners' promotion to the next grade. This is probably one of the reasons why there is a high rate of failure in the county because these learners have not mastered the specific competence required for promotion to the next grade. Therefore, it will be difficult for them to cope in the next grade they have been promoted to. Furthermore, automatic promotion will create empty vessels that cannot be utilized in the future.

7. The Ministry should make sure that each school has a resourceful library and laboratory, which can be used effectively by learners and teachers. However, this should not only be the duty of the Ministry, but the schools should also make sure that they upgrade or establish facilities through the assistance of the community, donors and other stakeholders.

Teachers

The following recommendations will be helpful to teachers in implementing the use of English as a medium of instruction in their subjects.

- 1 Teachers should try to create a conducive environment whereby the implementation of English, as a medium of instruction will run smoothly. Such environment should enable learners to feel comfortable to learn without been laughed at or belittled when they make mistakes. There is a need to create a platform where learners express themselves freely in English.

- 2 As indicated from the results of the study, teachers are perceived by learners as the most influential source of acquiring English language skills. It is therefore important that teachers should always come to class prepared; the lesson plan should be taken into consideration and objectives of the lesson should be clearly stipulated and achieved. Although English is their second or third language, they should teach through it effectively for example, words should be pronounced and spelt correctly because if this part is neglected, it will have a negative impact on learners. It is imperative that teachers improve their English skills so that they can teach effectively.

3. Teachers should bring in all kinds of different teaching aids rather than relying on textbooks. They should make their subjects interesting, learners should be kept actively involved and task should be set purposefully. For instance, teachers should take their learners to field trips, invited guest speakers and have debate or writing competitions.

4. Teachers should attend workshop if invited and they should also invite the subject advisors if they face a problem in teaching. They should work closely with each other especially the subject content teacher and an English language teacher so that they assist learners with language skills needed for content subjects. Teachers should encourage critical thinking and argument.
5. They should encourage communication and co-operation in the classroom between the learners and teachers and among themselves.

Learners

The following recommendation will be helpful to learners in learning through the medium of instruction.

1. Learners should be self-motivated to enable them to study and practice language skills instead of relying too much on their teachers to motivate them. This will assist them to improve their academic performance and work independently.
2. Learners should try to improve their writing, reading, speaking skills as well as their grammar. This will be attained if learners are willing to practice these skills more often. If these skills are mastered, then the performance of the learners in all subjects will surely improve.

3. Learners should use the library at schools or resource centers available in their vicinity. They will be more knowledgeable and this will improve their standard of English. Learners should read a lot, not just from their textbooks but from other resources as well e.g newspapers, magazines etc. They should also listen to the radio and television in order to improve their vocabulary as well as their listening skills.

RESEARCH DIRECTION

A broader study at a national level should be carried out to find out how English as a medium of instruction is affecting the academic performance of learners in Namibian schools.

Further research should be done to identify ways of improving the level of English proficiency for both learners and teachers at all level of education in Namibia.

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Annexure 1

Learners' Questionnaires

Section A

Please answer the following by filling in the correct information or by ticking as appropriate.

1. Gender

Male

Female

2. Age

3. Current Grade

Grade 10

Grade 12

4. Previous School and Grade before coming to this school

Name-----

Grade-----

5. Length of studying at this school

1 year

2 years

3 years

4 years

5 years

6. Have you repeated a Grade

YES

NO

7. Medium of instruction in which you were taught in Grade 1-3

English

Home language

8. Home Language:

Tswana

Afrikaans

English

Oshiwambo

Damara/ Nama

Rukavango

Magazines										
Newspapers										
Television										
Radio										
Internet										
Textbook										
Library										

Others (Please Mention)-----

Section C

10. Problems experienced in learning through English as a medium of instruction

	NEVER	OFTEN	VERY OFTEN
a. Shortage of textbooks			
b. Academic school work is too difficult			
c. Do not understand English concepts			
d. Not motivated by parents			
e. Not motivated by teachers			

f. No academic help from parents since they cannot understand English.			
g. Teachers do not express themselves clearly in English			
h. Teachers sometimes uses another language to teach than English			
i. My command of English is poor			
j. Shy to speak in English			
k. Shy to ask questions in class			
l. Textbooks are too difficult to read and understand			
m. Do not speak in English during interval and after school			
n. My friends always speak in my home language			
o. I sometimes learn things off by heart without understanding what I am learning			
p. Each time I read a new word, I look up the meaning in a dictionary			

Section D

11. Are you satisfied that English is the medium of instruction? Tick the correct box and give your reason (s).

Not Satisfied

Mildly Satisfied

Extremely satisfied

Reasons -----

12. Do you think that English should remain the medium of instruction?

YES

NO

Reasons-----

Annexure 2

Subject Content Teachers Interview Questions

1. Teacher's Qualification

2. Subject (s) taught

3 Years of teaching experience in a subject.

4. Are you satisfied with the standard of English used in the textbook you are currently using?

Yes

No

Reason (s)-----

5. Problems experienced in teaching through English as a medium of instruction

6. What factors do you think contribute to the problems found in teaching through English as a medium of instruction?

7. Language problem (s) noticed in your learner

8. How do you help if notice that a learner has a language problem?

9. Do you attend workshops in your subject?

10. What should be a major focus in English classes that will help the learners in your subject?

11. Any suggestion to curriculum planner in your subject?

Annexure3

English as a second language teachers interview questions

1. Years of teaching English

2. Are you qualified to teach English?

3. What is your home language?

4. Are you satisfied with a standard of English used in the textbook you are currently using? Please explain.

5. Problem (s) experienced in teaching English

-

6. What components of English (reading, writing, speaking and listening) do you find difficult to teach and why?

7. Do you attend workshops in you subject? If yes, how often?

8. Do learners communicate in English with you and each other in your class?

9. Do you think English should remain a medium of instruction? Give your reason (s)

10. What should be a major focus in other subjects to help the learners in English class?