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MOTIVATION AND FIRST LANGUAGE LEARNING IN SECONDARY SCHOOL: THE CASE OF ITESO STUDENTS OF KUMI DISTRICT- UGANDA

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ARTICLE INFO	**ABSTRACT**
	One of the most popular concepts in the context of language teaching is motivation. In Uganda, the teaching of Ateso as a subject in secondary school curriculum is a relatively new concept, spanning from 2013.Accordingly, this study was carried out between 2014-2015 to establish Iteso students' attitude and motivation towards learning mother tongue in Kumi district (Uganda). It had been realised that Ateso was not widely taught as it should have been; only eight schools out of 76 had embraced the teaching of Ateso. The main objective was to find out students' attitude towards the Ateso language Kumi. The study then sought to find out what motivated the students to learn their mother tongue and the extent of this. The researchers used the qualitative research approach with a survey design. The Instruments of data collection were the questionnaire and interviews. Four schools were selected and a total of 320 respondents were sampled from 480 using simple random sampling and purposive sampling techniques. The study found out that students were strongly motivated to learn Ateso language mainly because of integrative reasons and the fact that it is easy to understand and pass both at local and national exams. It is recommended that language policy makers and other key stakeholders need to popularise the learning of Ateso in all schools in Teso sub region since learners regard it positively and are motivated. The study contributes to the knowledge bulk in the disciplines of language learning, sociolinguistics and social psychology of language, particularly in the field of attitude studies.

INTRODUCTION

One of the most popular concepts in the context of language teaching is motivation. It is a word that both teachers and learners use widely when they speak about language learning success or failure. A huge body of literature concentrates more on motivation towards learning second language rather than the first (Dörnyei, 2017; Gardner, 2001). In second language learning contexts, for a learner to ultimately succeed, it always depends on his level of motivation. This is why, the concept of second language (L2) learning motivation (L2 motivation) has been the target of intensive research in second language acquisition (SLA) for a long time. This study investigated the attitudes of learners towards learning mother tongue (Ateso) as well as their motivation to learn it.

This was because language attitudes affect language learning motivation. In this paper though, we sought to apply the principles of second language motivation in investigating first language motivation. This follows the fact that there are a few schools and students engaged in the learning of their mother tongue - Ateso as a subject. It should however be noted that there are many other local languages in Uganda's secondary school curriculum. These are Luganda, Luo and Runyankole-Rukiga among others. It was therefore important to establish the learner's first language motivation to inform the rest of local languages planned to be taught in the curriculum. Research has shown that many teachers find that problems with motivating pupils are the second most serious source of difficulty after discipline (Dörnyei, 2017). However, it is imperative to note that motivation works wonders and helps

one to beat quite impossible odds. According to Dörnyei' (2017), motivation can turn the lowest-performing students in the school, the "unteachables into high achievers. Our research was interested in language learning motivation because of the wide ranging benefits that accrue from it and the central role it plays in the classroom.

Problem Statement

Ateso is one of the languages that National Curriculum Development Centre (NCDC) identified as one of the major languages to be in the secondary school curriculum, yet Ateso was not widely being taught. It was only taught in eight schools out of seventy six secondary schools registered with the Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Sports. There was a general feeling in the country that attitude of the young people towards local languages is unfortunately negative. There is also an assertion that many Africans view their own ethnic languages as unsuitable for use in official domains (such as education). Further, students' motivation to study mother tongue had also not been known. This was of concern because attitude and motivation are related components that are instrumental in language learning.

Objectives of the study

General objective

The general objective was to investigate the general attitudes towards the Ateso language in Teso sub-region.

Specific objectives

- To identify the attitudes of Iteso students towards the Ateso language in secondary schools in Kumi District.
- To establish students' attitude and its effect on the learning of Ateso as a subject in secondary schools in Teso sub-region.
- To investigate students' motivation in learning Ateso as a subject in secondary schools in Kumi District.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Motivation in Language Learning: Definition and Importance

Defining and applying the construct of motivation in the classroom is one of the most complicated problems of second language learning, yet it gives teachers a simple answer to the mystery of language learning when applied appropriately in the classroom (Brown, 2000) The behaviourists view motivation as "the anticipation of reinforcement" and "the intensity of one's impetus to learn".(Brown, 2000) It is therefore that impetus that we wanted to find out in Teso. Ellis (Ellis, 1994) in Root (2013), in an overview of research on motivation, simply asserted that motivation affects the extent to which language learners persevere in learning, what kinds of behavior they exert, and their actual achievement. Wlodwoski in Root (2013) explained motivation as "the processes that can (a) arouse and instigate behavior, (b) give direction or purpose to behavior, (c) continue to allow behavior to persist, and (d) lead to choosing or preferring a particular behavior" ((Root, 2013):2). Yet to Krannawetter (13:17), motivation refers to the "driving force that initiates the learning process and helps to sustain it in order to promote

the achievement of one's goals". She believes that a high level of motivation can defy deficiencies both in one's language aptitude and learning conditions. Dörnyei (1998) defines motivation as a process whereby a certain amount of instigation force arises, initiates action, and persists as long as no other force comes into play to weaken it and thereby terminate action, or until the planned outcome has been reached. Motivation is an individual's trait which emanates from both his cognitive and affective (emotional) spheres, which is transient and can be derived both from internal and external sources. For instance, externally, a learner's motivation can be affected by socio-political factors within his environment and particularly by language attitudes in his language community (Dörnyei, 2017). We therefore understand that an individual's motivation to do something may change from time to time depending on his cognitive and emotional states. Motivation studies have been greatly influenced by Gardner and Dornyei. Motivation explains a range of possibilities of intensity of feeling of drive, ranging from deeply internal self generated rewards to strong, extremely administered rewards beyond self (Brown, 2000).The concern of the research was to find out the internal and external motivation of the Iteso students.

Two types of motivation have been identified: intrinsic and extrinsic. Deci in Brown describes intrinsic motivation thus: Intrinsically motivated activities are ones for which there is no apparent reward except the activity itself. People seem to engage in the activities for their own sake and not because they lead to extrinsic reward... intrinsically motivated behaviours are aimed at bringing about certain internally rewarding consequences, namely feelings of competence and self determination. (Brown, 2000) Such internally or intrinsically motivated behaviours in Ateso learners had not been identified. The study thus wanted to find this out. The other, extrinsic motivation is where one expects or anticipates rewards from outside and beyond the self, for instance, money, prizes, grades and positive feedback. Some however, warn of the dangers of extrinsic motivation which seeks to give rewards like prizes and praises. They argue that this may discourage, slow or stop learning. This is because external reward system is addictive and if a learner discovers that there is no motivation, his learning desire may be extinguished/ stopped or reduced significantly, or the speed may be reduced (Brown, 2000). On the other hand however, extrinsic motivation is of great advantage: some external rewards can have an effect on intrinsic motivation. For example, positive feedback is perceived by learners as a boost to their feelings of competence and self determination. An honestly delivered positive feedback in a classroom is seen by learners as an approval of their own personally done work, critical thinking ability and self fulfilment. This can therefore increase or maintain intrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation is the more productive of the types of motivation discussed here. This is so because intrinsic drives cause incongruity, uncertainty and disequilibrium. These are viewed to be motivating. As regards incongruity, people tend to find reasonable challenges. These then make them to initiate behaviours that are intended to conquer the challenging situation. Important to note is that incongruity itself is not motivating, but optimal incongruity (i+1 of Krashen (Krashen Krashen, 1982)) is enough to make us have the opportunity of resolving the challenge. Concerning language learning motivation, a number of factors are important: the student, his/her personal background and various external factors, e.g. the teacher, the class mates, the

course materials etc (Gardner, 2001). Important to note is the fact that, motivation is influenced by a great number of factors, which cannot be fully explained and may also vary from situation to situation. To explain motivation connected specifically to the school context, Gardner (Gardner, 2001) suggests viewing it from two different perspectives, the, "Educational Context" and the "Cultural Context." Considering that both contexts "do not operate in isolation of one another," he considers them to be of great importance. The term "Educational Context" refers to the immediate educational situation, such as the teacher, classroom atmosphere, course material, the curriculum etc. Variables linked to the "Educational Context" are directly linked to "Attitudes toward the learning situation" (Gardner, 2001). As far as "Cultural Context" is concerned, Gardner uses the term to refer to the cultural background of the students, their beliefs, ideals and attitudes, their personality characteristics etc., characteristics that have an impact on "integrativeness" (interest in learning the language in order to interact with members of the target culture) Gardner, 2001). This applies to second language. Nevertheless, we need to ascertain whether the Iteso also have the integrative motivation as members of the same community.

Gardner Gardner, 2001) cogently argues that it is impossible to define the complex phenomenon of motivation. He nevertheless, enumerated various characteristics of the motivated individuals. According to him, the motivated individual is "goal directed, expends effort, is persistent, is attentive, has desires (wants), exhibits positive affect, is aroused, has expectancies, demonstrates self-confidence (self-efficacy), and has reasons (motives)." No study in Teso had affirmed or denied this. We did not know whether the Iteso learners possessed those characteristics of motivated learners or not. In the educational context, Gardner makes a distinction between language learning motivation and classroom learning motivation. The former refers to the motivation to acquire a second/foreign language "relevant in any second language-learning context", whereas the latter relates to the individual's learning motivation in the classroom. Needless to say, this type of motivation is influenced by a variety of factors such as learning materials, course content, classroom atmosphere and, of course, the teacher Gardner, 2001).

Gardner's Socio-Educational Model

In his socio-educational model, Gardner views motivation to learn a second language as comprising three components: effort, desire, and affect. Effort, as Gardner puts it, refers to the individual's "persistent and consistent attempt to learn (a language)." Gardner, 2001) What is more, in order to be successful in second language achievement, the desire to do so is vitally important.Whereas Gardner postulated the motivational components, he did not go ahead to find out whether the Iteso students have them and also whether the same factors apply to learning ones first language, in this case Ateso. This was reason enough to warrant this study. A student who truly indulges in the learning of a language will develop positive affect and, consequently, be more enthusiastic and thus might be more likely to achieve success in second/foreign language learningGardner, 2001). Affect is what was actually discussed by Krashen as the level of anxiety or feelings and emotions that an individual has towards the language and its people.

This is directly linked to the affective pillar of the Mentalist theory. This kind of affect had not yet been established among the Iteso.

Summary of Gardner's Model

Gardner, one of the pioneering researchers in second language acquisition (SLA) to focus on motivation, specified four aspects of motivation: (a) a goal, (b)effortful behavior to reach the goal, (c) a desire to attain the goal, and (d) positive attitudes toward the goal ((Gardner, 1985): 50) To clarify this concept further he, within his model, identified two orientations as earlier on discussed. The first is integrative: a favourable attitude toward the target language community; possibly a wish to integrate and adapt to a new target culture through use of the language. Secondly, there is the instrumental: a more functional reason for learning the target language, such as job promotion, or a language requirement.

Crookes and Schmidt (Crookes, 1991) in Root (2013) on their part also discussed the concept of motivation. They opined that motivation includes both internal and external factors. They identified four internal and attitudinal factors:

- interest in the language based on existing attitudes, experience and background knowledge. It follows that learners who have positive attitude are interested or motivated to learn a language.
- relevance (some needs being met by language learning).it is worthy to note that if a learner sees the language as helping him in the immediacy of learning it or the future, they are likely to carry on with language learning.
- expectancy of success or failure. Equally cognizant to note is the fact that if a learner anticipates success, he will enjoy his learning and the vice- versa is likely to be the case.
- outcomes (extrinsic/intrinsic rewards).

They further specified three internal characteristics of motivated individuals. These are:

- the language learner decides to engage in language learning
- the language learner persists over time and interruptions
- the language learner maintains a high activity level

From the foregoing, we can easily discern that what Crookes and Schmidt (Crookes, 1991) propose is similar to the earlier proposals expounded by Gardner and his peers. What remains is an attempt to find out from students if they exhibit such characteristics. Such was the preoccupation of our study. According to Dörnyei' (Dörnyei, 2017), motivation can turn the lowest-performing students in the school, the "unteachables into high achievers. He writes: Motivational and group-building strategies can work even in such a tough environment, and therefore an understanding of the motivational dimension of classrooms can offer teachers very powerful tools to combat a range of possible problems, from student lethargy to an unproductive classroom climate. (2014: 518). In the above citation, we see how useful motivation is in language learning. To expose the advantages further, Dörnyei' (Dörnyei, 1998) explains that, "motivation provides the primary impetus to initiate learning the L2 and later the

driving force to sustain the long and often tedious learning process; indeed, all other factors involved in L2 acquisition presuppose motivation to some extent". He further elucidates the importance of this concept thus: Motivation determines the direction and magnitude of human behavior or, in other words, the choice of a particular action, the persistence with it, and the effort expended on it. This seems to be fairly straightforward: Motivation is responsible for *why* people decide to do something, *how long* they are willing to sustain the activity, and *how hard* they are going to pursue it… (Dornyei 2017: 519)

In order to ensure that teachers emphasise this concept, he went ahead to recommend a number strategies.

Motivational strategies focusing on the learning experience: Individual learner level Dörnyei (Dörnyei, 2017) identified some strategies that teachers can use to keep learners motivated. The following list is a summary of them.

- Whetting the students' appetite. (The key in generating interest in learning is to whet the students' appetite, that is, to arouse the learners' curiosity and attention to create an attractive image for the L2 course)
- Increasing the learners' expectancy of success. (People do things best if they believe they can succeed in them).
- Making the teaching materials relevant to the learners. One of the least motivating factors for learners is to have to learn something that has no apparent relevance to their lives.
- Breaking the monotony of learning.
- Making the learning tasks more interesting
- Increasing the learners' self-confidence
- Allowing learners to maintain a positive social image.(they should not be made to feel small)
- Increasing learner satisfaction.
- Offering grades in a motivational manner.

METHODOLOGY

The study used a descriptive survey design. A survey, according to Grifee, (2012) "is an umbrella term that allows for many data collection procedures including questionnaires, interviews and observations." Griffee further states that "Survey design studies purport to measure a construct which is theoretical (for example opinions, beliefs and attitudes)." (Giffee, 2012) The design was therefore found to be appropriate for use since this study dealt with attitudes and motivation. The design helped the researchers to answer the questions of what the attitudes of the students' were and their motivation to learn Ateso language. The data collection tools were interviews and questionnaires. The questionnaire had 7 items in general, 6 of which were closed ended. Respondents were provided with statements which they were required to tick. These ranged from strongly agree, agree, strongly disagree, disagree, to not sure. One other question was open ended where they were supposed to answer freely. 317 students were sampled out of the 465 students doing Ateso in four schools. We used Krejcie and Morgan (1970) table to arrive at the specific numbers required for each school. Only three teachers of Ateso were interviewed. For data analysis, we used SPSS software. SPSS tables were mainly interpreted qualitatively, although there were aspects of percentages that produced a limited level of quantitative analysis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Motivation to Learn Ateso in Secondary Schools

The third objective of the study was to investigate the motivation of students in learning Ateso in secondary schools in Teso sub region. The tables below show the summary of the responses of the subjects regarding this issue of language learning motivation. Discussions of those findings follow the tables. There were mixed feelings as to whether the students deliberately miss (dodge) the Ateso lessons. However, the overriding stand was that of the students who did not agree that they deliberately dodge lessons of Ateso. This was represented by 112 (35.3 per cent) and 59 (18.6 per cent). This therefore shows that students are motivated to learn the language without being pushed. This had already been discussed by Gardner when he said the motivated individual is "goal directed, expends effort, is persistent, is attentive, has desires (wants), exhibits positive affect, is aroused, has expectancies, demonstrates self-confidence (self-efficacy), and has reasons (motives)."(Gardner, 2007) Also, pockets of students, 25(7.9 per cent) and 43 (13.6 per cent) embodied varying levels of agreement, implying that they sometimes deliberately dodge Ateso lessons. This behaviour could be brought about by the feeling that since Ateso is their mother tongue, they already know what is being taught to them, so it is insignificant whether they attend the lessons or not.

As regards the factor of paying attention in class when Ateso is being taught, majority asseverated to this. They certified that they pay attention in class. This was numerically represented by 163 (51.4 per cent) and 59 (18.6 per cent). When students pay attention, this is in line with Gardner's principles of motivation when he discussed the characteristics of a motivated learner. He pointed out being attentive as one of them (Gardner, 2007). The fact that a majority indicated that they are always attentive in class means they are motivated to learn Ateso. The composition of responses on this particular item revealed that 125 (39.4 per cent) of the respondents affirmed highly that they were intrinsically motivated to learn Ateso. A further 105(33.1 per cent) agreed to the same, while 49 (15.5 per cent) were blank minded on the same. However, 21 (6.6 per cent) strongly disagreed whereas 17 (5.4 percent) just disagreed. Scholars illuminated the characteristics of motivated learners as "goal directed, expends effort, is persistent, is attentive, has desires (wants), exhibits positive affect, is aroused, has expectancies, demonstrates self-confidence (self-efficacy), and has reasons (motives)."

The table above As for the respondents' view on whether or not they persistently learn Ateso in class, outside class and at home. 141 (44.5 per cent) strongly agreed that they do, 85 (26.8) agreed, 48(14.8) were not sure, while 30 (9.5 per cent) strongly disagreed and 13 (4.1 per cent) disagreed. These findings mean that those who strongly agreed are also strongly motivated to learn Ateso because of their enjoyment to learn it and also because they attach value to it as their mother tongue. Those who agreed were also motivated with the most probable reason that it is easy to understand and is enjoyable. Those who were not sure could be taken as those who did not venture into the learning of Ateso regularly outside class. On the other hand, those who disagreed clearly showed that they do not study Ateso regularly outside class.

Most of the time I miss Ateso lessons deliberately

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	25	7.9	7.9	7.9
	Agree	43	13.6	13.6	21.5
	Not Sure	78	24.6	24.6	46.1
	Strongly Disagree	112	35.3	35.3	81.4
	Disagree	59	18.6	18.6	100.0
	Total	317	100.0	100.0	

Source: Primary data, 2015

I Never Pay Enough Attention when Ateso is being taught

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	21	6.6	6.6	6.6
	Agree	18	5.7	5.7	12.3
	Not Sure	56	17.7	17.7	30.0
	Strongly Disagree	163	51.4	51.4	81.4
	Disagree	59	18.6	18.6	100.0
	Total	317	100.0	100.0	

Source: Primary data, 2015

I have a Strong Desire from inside Me most of the time to Learn Ateso

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	125	39.4	39.4	39.4
	Agree	105	33.1	33.1	72.6
	Not Sure	49	15.5	15.5	88.0
	Strongly Disagree	21	6.6	6.6	94.6
	Disagree	17	5.4	5.4	100.0
	Total	317	100.0	100.0	

Source: Primary data, 2015

I Consistently/ Persistently Learn Ateso in Class, Outside Class and at Home

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	141	44.5	44.5	44.5
	Agree	85	26.8	26.8	71.3
	Not Sure	48	15.1	15.1	86.4
	Strongly Disagree	30	9.5	9.5	95.9
	Disagree	13	4.1	4.1	100.0
	Total	317	100.0	100.0	

Source: Primary data, 2015

I put a lot of Effort to Learn Ateso

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	144	45.4	45.4	45.4
	Agree	85	26.8	26.8	72.2
	Not Sure	47	14.8	14.8	87.1
	Strongly Disagree	25	7.9	7.9	95.0
	Disagree	16	5.0	5.0	100.0
	Total	317	100.0	100.0	

Source: Primary data, 2015

This could be because they are forced to take Ateso as a subject. No wonder, in line with this, research has found that motivation explains a range of possibilities of intensity of feeling of drive, ranging from deeply internal self generated rewards to strong, extremely administered rewards beyond self.(Brown, 2000) This drive (intrinsic and extrinsic motivation) could be seen in the students' persistence to learn Ateso as shown in the responses above. Table 4.6. The last table above shows respondents views on whether they expend a lot of effort in their pursuit to learn Ateso as a subjectin secondary schools in Teso sub region or not. The results were: 144 (45.4 per cent) in strong agreement, 85 (26.8 per cent) in agreement, 47 (14.8 per cent) who were not sure and 25 (7.9 per cent) in strong disagreement and 16 (5.0 per cent) in disagreement. From the above we surmise that a large number of the

respondents strongly agreed that they put a lot of effort in learning Ateso. Those who agreed were as well many. This means that they are motivated to learn Ateso, owing to the fact that Gardner pointed out that, one of the characteristics of motivated language learners is that they expend effort in learning a given language. The reason for this could be that they are well aware of the advantages and career opportunities that come with learning Ateso as were pointed out by ISALLU (Uganda.org/publications/implementation strategy for advocacy of local languages in Uganda.pdf on January 4th 2015). Those who were not sure were those who could be ignorant of their own actions as regards learning Ateso. However, those who strongly disagreed and disagreed were those who thought that they already know the language and so there was no need of investing a lot of energy. It could also be that they were the ones who were forced to learn Ateso

TEACHERS' RESPONSES

Teachers were also asked about the motivation of their learners to learn Ateso, whether learners put effort and are desirous to learn the language among others. They revealed that the learners did not need to be persuaded to choose Ateso as a subject nor did they need the persuasion to learn Ateso. The teachers were all in agreement that their learners were motivated intrinsically to learn the subject. One teacher commented that:

Yes, to a certain extent students were motivated because some of them had been so excited that they wanted to discover much about Ateso, yet some of them had a discouraging attitude that being a mother tongue, it was not necessary for them to study (Mr. Ekwaja). To further show this level of motivation, one teacher indicated that students did not wish that he gets out of class. To quote him verbatim, he said, "in fact the moment I enter class they speak very lively and the moment the lesson ends, they don't even feel like me getting out." This phenomenon may be a result because they fully understand the concepts and linguistic structures the teacher presents to them as they are fully proficient in the language, it being their mother tongue. Another teacher revealed that the level of enthusiasm to learn the language was high to the extent that they would look for him if he delayed to go to their class. This can be substantiated by the text below:

Well, as for motivation, I would say they are self motivated ...because just since I started I didn't need any persuasion to have anybody offer the subject. In fact at times when I am tied up in meetings they come for me when it is time for lessons in Ateso....Unlike other subjects, they don't want to miss, so to me I see they're self motivated to learn – to continue learning the subject.(Mr. Opolot, Teacher Atutur Seed Secondary School). It is important to note that the responses of the teachers on the question of motivation directly agree with those of the students. For instance, 83.9 per cent of the students affirmed that they regularly attend Ateso lessons, 72.6 per cent had a strong desire inside them (intrinsic motivation) to learn Ateso, and 72.2 per cent attested that they put a lot of effort in studying Ateso. Furthermore, 71.3 per cent asseverated that they learn Ateso persistently and consistently outside class, that is to say at home and other environments. Also, 70 per cent confirmed that they pay attention in class during Ateso lessons. All these are elements or constructs of motivation that were upheld by the teachers and students themselves. This means the learners are motivated to learn Ateso.

Conclusion

Creating and maintaining motivation is one of the most serious problems of both first and second language teaching. Yet it is a variable that can invigorate students to learn language. It shapes learners behaviour, and it is strongly influenced by the attitudes of learners towards the target language. Teachers can consciously motivate their learners by employing a range of strategies and giving them a reason(s) to learn language. They can use such strategies to turn around and transform even the most difficult of learners and those that are usually said to be unteachable into enthusiastic and achieving students. Further, looking at the constructs of motivation, the respondents largely attested that they exhibit intrinsic motivation because, first, they expend a lot of effort and are desirous to learn the language. Second, students were motivated to learn the language because it is their mother tongue, they can easily follow and understand the lessons, as well as that Ateso is an easy subject to pass. Third, their motivation was shown in their urge to read, and study Ateso outside the class. Finally, we have seen that motivation is a highly complex phenomenon whose importance is crucial in the classroom. It is a phenomenon that learners sometimes bring with them to the classroom and indeed in other instances, it is something they acquire through classroom experiences with the help of a teacher. Moreover, the issue of learning a language is already complicated and when it is associated with demotivation it is even worse. What is clear however is the fact that motivation is a salient facilitative factor for success in language learning. Indeed mother tongue has been found to be a motivating factor in the learning of a second language (Banos 2009). What is more is that mother tongue is in itself, a motivation to learn mother tongue, at least among the Iteso students in secondary school in Kumi district.

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