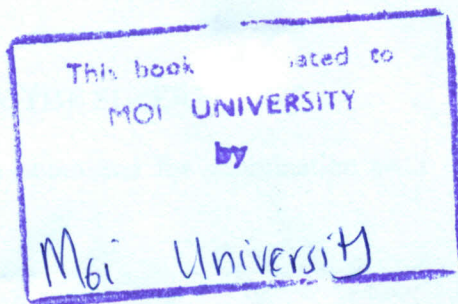




**THE INFLUENCE OF MULTILINGUALISM ON THE TEACHING AND  
LEARNING OF ENGLISH IN UPPER PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN  
MARAkwET EAST DISTRICT, KENYA**

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## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to investigate the influence of multilingualism on the teaching and learning of English in upper primary schools in Marakwet East district. The study was carried out to: find out the languages spoken by pupils in upper primary school, find out the teachers' perceptions of languages used by learners outside class in primary school and how they influence the learning of English, investigate the languages used by teachers of English during instruction in upper primary school and investigate the challenges teachers face in enforcing English as the medium of instruction in upper primary school. The study was based on Vygotsky's social constructivism and language also referred to as social development theory. It postulates that people use language based on various social factors within the environment and that the adult is the major facilitator and determiner in language acquisition and use. The study utilized the mixed methods approach. The study adopted descriptive survey design. The study focused on public primary schools as they use mother tongue as the medium of instruction from standard 1 to 3. Simple random sampling was used to select 21 out of 70 public primary schools that took part in the study. Standard 7 classes were purposefully selected on the premise that they have already had an experience with various languages in school and are also already aware that the official language of communication in school and class is English. Twenty standard 7 pupils from the selected schools were randomly selected to take part in the pupils' focus group interviews and one teacher of English language from the selected class in each school was automatically selected to take part in the study. The study collected data using pupils' focus group interviews and teacher questionnaires. The data collected was analyzed qualitatively and quantitatively with the help of SPSS through the use of numbers, descriptive statistics and presented in frequency tables, percentages, and pie-charts. The study found out that pupils in upper primary school speak mostly Kiswahili and mother tongue in and outside school, the speaking of Kiswahili and mother tongue by pupils in upper primary school influence the teaching and learning of English negatively, teachers use other languages when teaching English in upper primary school and teachers face challenges in enforcing English as the medium of instruction in upper primary school; such challenges include lack of understanding of concepts taught in English among pupils. The findings of this study are useful to teacher educators and teachers of English language in developing new methods of teaching English in multilingual contexts. It will also assist teachers of language to devise new approaches such as the use of communicative language teaching to tackle the influence of multilingualism in schools and finally it will assist language planners and policy makers to review the use of first language as a medium of instruction in lower primary classes so that English can be introduced to learners at an early stage and age.