

Language Ideologies and Schooled Education in Rural Tanzania: The Case of Karagwe

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In this paper I argue that language policies for education have effects on pupils' educational possibilities. With the case of the Karagwe district in Tanzania the research suggests that the policy of 'Swahili only' in primary school education favours the small minority of the children that live in a context where Swahili is used. This appears to lead to inequality in pupils' chances in education and to a low level of achievement of academic content in schools. This also promotes the development and use of safety strategies among teachers and pupils that hide failure and prevent pupils' learning.

Keywords: language ideologies, education, Tanzania, safety strategies

During the years 2000–2003 I carried out field studies for my PhD dissertation in Karagwe in the north-west of Tanzania. The aims of my study were to find ways to link what happens in school with what happens in homes and in the society to make literacy education more efficient and relevant. I spent five field studies of a total of nine months in the area with participant observation as the main activity. As part of my study I studied language ideologies in the area. The first part of this paper will present how language ideologies have developed through history in Karagwe. The second part will present language ideologies in primary school education and in the third part the relationship between language ideologies and education is analysed.

Language Ideologies in a Changing Policy Context

On the one hand is imperialism in its colonial and neo-colonial phases, [...] continu[ing] to control the economy, politics and culture of Africa. [...] On the other hand, and pitted against it, are the ceaseless struggles of African peoples to liberate their economy, politics and culture from that Euro-American based stranglehold to usher a new era of true communal self-regulation and self-determination. [...] The choice of language and the use to which language is put is central to a people's definition of themselves in their relation to their natural and social environment, indeed in relation to the entire universe. Hence language has always been at the heart of the two contending social forces in Africa of the twentieth century. (Ngugi wa Thiong'o, 1986: 4)

That language is connected with power is observable in the language hierarchies created through history. This is particularly obvious in the case of Africa. In the processes of colonisation, liberation and de-colonisation, language was an important factor. Throughout these processes languages were ranked and placed in hierarchies. To understand how languages are used and people's attitudes to languages we have to analyse language in its social context, what have been called language ideologies (by among others Blommaert, 1999; Gee, 1996; Wortham, 2001). In order to understand contemporary language ideologies in Karagwe we need to understand how they have developed through history. The construction of a nation-state, such as in the case of Tanzania, is a far from strictly a politico-economic process; it is also a cultural and a discursive project in which language plays an important role. The historiography of language ideologies in Karagwe can be analysed by a connection to broader political and ideological developments.

The conflict perspective used by, among others, Gardy and Lafont (1981), Martin-Jones (1988) and Rubagumya (1991), recognises the conflict nature of diglossic situations and that language use is connected with social division between dominant and dominated classes. Researchers such as Eckert (1980), Martin-Jones (1988) and Roberts (1987) have argued that diglossia has its roots in the social and political history of a certain area. When we apply this theory to the situation for Karagwe today we can state that Runyambo, the local language spoken by the inhabitants in Karagwe, the Banyambo, is the low variety (L), the mother-tongue acquired at home and used in informal situations. Swahili is the language mainly learned at school and is the language of culture and communication on a national level. Thus there is a diglossic relationship between Runyambo (L) and Swahili as the high variety (H). On the other hand, English is the language of higher education, of the higher judiciary system and of access to technological information. Thus there is also a diglossic situation between Swahili, as L, and English, as H although it is only understood by a small minority of the population. However the language situation is not static and the language policy has changed over time. In Table 1, I present an overview of the language policy, from the perspective of Karagwe, over the last 500 years. To make it clearer, the table only mentions

Table 1 The language policy in Karagwe 1500–2000

<i>Period</i>	<i>Runyambo</i>	<i>Swahili</i>	<i>English</i>	<i>German</i>
1500–1900	H	Additional	–	–
1900–1916	L ↓	L1/H2 ↑	–	H1 ↑
1916–1961	L2 ↑	L1 ↓	H ↑	–
1961–1980	L ↓	H1 ↑	H2 ↓	–
1980–2000	L2 ↓	L1/H2	H1 ↑	–

H, language with high status, a dominate language; L, language with low status, a dominated language; L1/L2, one of the low languages (L1) was dominating the other (L2); H1/H2, one of the high languages (H1) was dominating the other (H2); ↑, the language was gaining new domains; ↓, the language was losing domains.

languages of main importance. Thus languages such as Arabic, Kinyarwanda, Kisukuma and Runyankole are not mentioned, neither are other European languages such as French and Danish, which also exist in the area.

From this table we can understand that prior to 1900 Runyambo was the dominant language, with other languages as additional languages. This means that Runyambo was used in all in-group domains, while other languages were used in communication with visitors and traders from outside. During the period of German rule in the area, which was roughly from 1900 to the British invasion in 1916, the status of Swahili increased, mainly through formal education in schools, christianisation and by being the main tool of communication between the colonisers and the emerging lower African middle class. German was also introduced as an élite language through education and administration. This was the beginning of the devaluing of the local language, Runyambo.

During British rule, which was 1916–1961 in the area (British rule in Tanganyika began in 1918), German lost its status and was replaced by English as the language of the élite. The role of Swahili was played down during this period, which gave the vernacular a higher position. According to the conflict perspective, the very existence of high and low varieties implies conflict and change. When Swahili lost domains, in this case, some were occupied by English (such as intermediate schooling and lower administration) and some by Runyambo (such as lower schooling and church services).

During the first period of independence, 1961–1980, promotion of Swahili in all official sectors was at the cost of both English and local languages. English preference was denoted as ‘colonial indoctrination’ while the use of vernaculars was seen as connected with tribalism and backwardness. A level of nearly 90% literacy and Swahili knowledge among the inhabitants was reached (see for example Mpogolo, 1985; Rubagumya, 1991). Nearly the whole generation born from the middle of the 1950s up to the middle of 1970s went to school, learned Swahili and the three Rs (reading, writing and arithmetic), that is, basic school skills. Most people also learned at least a few phrases in English.

During the 1980s and 1990s Tanzania was the scene of three major structural (i.e. political and economic) changes: globalisation on an international level; and on a national level deregulation of the economy (the ‘Structural Adjustment Plans’ imposed on Tanzania by IMF and the World Bank) and the lifting of the restriction of private schooling. These policy changes were to have great influence on language ideologies in Tanzania. The Structural Adjustments Plans seriously affected the social sectors as a whole and the educational sector in particular. The introduction of school fees in primary schools (which were withdrawn again in 2002) together with decreasing economic resources for governmental schools led to decreasing school results in governmental schools and a higher rate of school drop-outs. The falling standards in governmental schools together with the lifting of the restriction on private primary schools led to a mushrooming of private schools. This trend was very clear in Karagwe, where a number of private primary schools were established during this period and the number of tuition classes, mainly in English, increased, as all over the country. This created an élite who know English and reproduce themselves by sending their children to private schools or private English tuition. The number of children that left school with basic

skills and knowledge in Swahili was steadily decreasing. Accordingly the number of children growing up without acquiring literacy or Swahili was increasing in rural areas. In urban areas, however, Swahili strengthened its positions. Thus the position of Swahili was weakened in relation to English while, at the same time, it was strengthened in relation to Runyambo. English gained new domains and was at the same time gaining in status. Thus Swahili was both H and L in the official policy. Swahili still served as the official and national language but in the policy implementation English gained domains from Swahili.

Through colonialism and missionary work, the earlier outside/inside conflict between speakers of different languages in the precolonial kingdom Karagwe, was turned into a conflict between speakers of different languages inside the society. Earlier the ruling class of pastoralists and the commoners¹ had spoken the same language. Although pastoralists in Karagwe had much in common with ruling pastoralist clans in neighbouring areas, the conflict between languages was at the same time a conflict between people of different areas. This was now turned into a language conflict within geographical areas and between speakers of different languages. Through colonisation and christianisation, parts of the ruling classes were selected for education, and thus also for knowledge in Swahili and German/English. This was thus a change to valuing people according to their 'linguistic portfolio' (Stroud, 2002), from language constituting an ethnic marker to becoming a gatekeeper and a marker of economic and social status and from defining 'us' and 'them', 'inside' and 'outside', to define social classes.

The policy of today appears effective in building an élite enclosure of English speakers and a lower middle class of Swahili speakers and marginalising the rest of the population. It also effectively devalues local languages, such as Runyambo, and traditional language education. Above it was stated that there has been a conflict between official language policies and the implementation in Tanzania after independence. What has been decided has not always been realised. Sometimes those who agreed on a decision were the very ones who saw to it that it was never implemented. One example was when politicians on a national level decided that Swahili was to be the medium in primary school and then opened the market for private English medium primary schools where they put their own children. The rejection of the proposal for transition to Swahili as the medium in secondary school was another example. Following the national policy in Tanzania after independence, a policy that has been re-affricated in 1969, 1970, 1974, 1979 and 1982 (Trappes-Lomax, 1990), a presidential commission recommended in 1982 a gradual shift to using Swahili as the medium in higher education, starting in January 1985. However the ruling party, CCM, and the Ministry of Education rejected the proposal, a rejection further stressed by the then president, Julius Nyerere (Lwaitama & Rugemalira, 1990). This shows us again the conflict nature of language ideologies, which will be even more obvious when we analyse language ideologies in contemporary Karagwe. We will see that what people think they should do is not always what they really do. I will first analyse language ideologies in Karagwe on a general level before I analyse language ideologies in school.

In Table 2, which is constructed from results in the field studies of this study, I present an overview of language use in different domains in Karagwe today. For further information on methodological issues, see Wedin (2004). From this table we may conclude that Swahili in Karagwe has a higher number of domains than Runyambo and that the number of domains for English are few. However we have to remember that the table says nothing about the quantity of use. Domains where Runyambo is mainly used most frequently, such as informal settings (homes, neighbourhood, workplaces and small trade), are domains where a majority of the inhabitants spend most of their

Table 2 Language use in different domains in contemporary Karagwe

<i>Domain</i>	<i>Level/event</i>	<i>Language(s) mainly used</i>
Commercial	National/international	Swa/Eng
	Regional	Swa/Ru
	Small trade	Ru/Swa
Education	Tertiary level	Eng/Swa
	Secondary school	Eng/Swa
	Vocational training	Swa/Ru/Eng
	Adult education	Swa/Ru
	Primary school	Swa/Ru
	Informal	Ru (Swa)
Official	National/international	Swa/Eng
	District/regional	Swa/Ru/Eng
Informal	Workplaces	Ru/Swa
	Home	Ru(Swa)
	Neighbours	Ru (Swa)
Cultural	Worship	Swa/Ara/Ru
	Literature	Swa (Ru)
	Music	Swa/Ru/Eng
	TV/video	Swa/Eng/Ru
	Social events	Swa/Ru
	Newspapers	Swa/Eng
	Village/family related	Swa/Ru

Languages are given in order of estimated frequency, that is Ru/Swa means that Runyambo is used more often. Languages given in brackets are used in certain cases, such as in some families, in towns or in some congregations. Swa, Swahili; Eng, English; Ara, Arabic; Ru, Runyambo, including also the neighbouring language Ruhaya in the case of cultural domains. In regional trade other languages such as Kinyarwanda and Luganda are also used.

time. This means that most people spend most of their lives in a Runyambo context. The domains where English is used are domains with high status, such as higher education and international communication. Furthermore those who use English are mainly persons who are perceived as of high status, such as politicians and administrators in higher posts and foreign experts. Thus the language with the highest status is the one least used, while the situation for Runyambo is the opposite: low status and frequent use.

If we consider the education and socialisation of children we can state that most children are raised in a Runyambo context with Swahili as a language used sometimes among adults or school children, usually only in single sentences or words. Daily communication, songs, dances, tales, riddles and poetry are in Runyambo. In school pupils are supposed to understand and interact in Swahili. Although teachers mainly interact in Runyambo between themselves, teacher–pupil interaction is almost only in Swahili and pupils are generally not allowed to address a teacher in Runyambo. Only pupil–pupil interaction, outside the control of the teachers, is in Runyambo. After having finished standard seven, the majority of the pupils will then return to a Runyambo-dominated setting.

From this I conclude that the application of a conflict perspective on language ideologies in Karagwe has revealed a transformation of language policies. While in the precolonial days language constituted a way to distinguish members of the outside from members of the inside, language has become a tool to distinguish members of different classes inside the community through colonialism and neocolonialism. Knowledge of Swahili and English is today an important gatekeeper to higher posts and status. Thus English and Swahili are the high status languages, relative to Runyambo, which holds low status.

The difference in status for the three main languages in Karagwe may be linked to the difference in perceived status on a global level where the West defines the norms while countries such as Tanzania are perceived as in the periphery.

In the next part I will show that schooling and literacy play important parts in this process of using language as a tool for sorting people and maintaining authority.

Language Ideologies in Schools

Schooling and education hold high esteem in Karagwe. People put a lot of effort into education, both for children and adults. Education is seen as the key to prosperity and for the future development of the family and the country. Expectations for the outcome from schooling of children are high. Parents send their children to primary school although they need their work at home very badly and they spend money, usually more than they can afford, on educating their adolescents. Also many teachers are filled with fervour for their task to educate pupils, although this has decreased following the decreasing status and tougher situation for teachers. The official policy, founded by the former president, Nyerere, that education is the main tool for development, still has strong support. Thus demands and expectations for the outcome is high, which puts high pressure on both teachers and pupils.

The primary school is the base of the Tanzanian school-system. Children are supposed to start school at the age of seven and the seven standards end with a final national exam. Primary school was made compulsory after independence in 1961 and following the Arusha Declaration in 1967 there was a strong egalitarian impetus with education for all and self-reliance. Today pupils are supposed to join preschool before they enter first class although there is a great variance in access and quality. Only a few percent of standard seven leavers get both access to secondary education with its six grades that prepare for tertiary education on tertiary level. Vocational education is available for some of those who pass the standard seven exam. In this paper only language ideologies on primary school level are concerned. For discussion of language issues in higher education in Tanzania see, for example, Rubagumya (1990, 1994).

Schools are important for the socialisation of children. While pupils learn academic knowledge, such as the three Rs, reading, writing and arithmetic, they are also socialised in relation to language, knowledge, learning and literacy. The specific school culture that has developed over time in the specific situation in Karagwe as well as individual teachers' backgrounds are important features that determine how this socialisation is constituted.

Studies in the communication system of schools are studies of situated language use in one social setting. Courtney Cazden (2001) states that in classrooms, different to other institutions such as hospitals or manufacturing industries, the basic purpose is achieved through communication. She identifies three features of language and a core of categorisations of language functions in classroom life:

- (1) the language of the curriculum: communication of propositional information;
- (2) the language of control: establishment and maintenance of social relationships;
- (3) the language of personal identity: the expression of the speaker's identity and attitudes.

These features and functions are not restricted to classrooms but are also found in school-related communication elsewhere, for example on the school compound. Cazden (2001: 3) also gives three important educational questions that may be answered by an applied linguist:

- How do patterns of language use affect what counts as 'knowledge', and what counts as learning?
- How do these patterns affect the equality, or inequality, of students' educational purposes?
- What communication competence do these patterns presume and/or foster?

To analyse this in Karagwe it is necessary to understand language ideologies and communicative patterns. In the following I will first analyse language ideologies through teachers' perspectives. Then I will link this to what happens in school.

Teachers' ideologies

This study was carried out through extensive field studies with a longitudinal, ethnographic perspective. Participant observations and interviews were the main techniques used. For further information on methodological issues see Wedin (2004).

In the beginning of the study I interviewed 29 teachers in the five schools involved in the study about their views on literacy, learning and education. The interviews were carried out individually, except for in one case where two teachers were interviewed together, and the interviews were recorded and transcribed. In a later stage in the study I distributed a questionnaire in Kiswahili among teachers in the involved schools, answered by 53 teachers in all, which were all available teachers at these schools. The questionnaire was about teachers' language attitudes and language use and pupils' skills (see the Appendix for questionnaire translated into English). In each school I also carried out formal discussions with teachers during seminars and discussions at staff meetings. Some teachers were interviewed before observed lessons and in follow-up interviews after lessons and follow-up interviews were also carried out after seminars. Apart from this, extensive participant observations in schools and formal and informal interviews and discussions with teachers in different situations have given important information on teachers' perspectives. I visited each of the five schools for several days during each field study and spent several days in teachers' offices. I also made visits to several teachers' private homes (see Wedin, 2004, for further information).

Teachers have seen a decrease in socioeconomic status. What used to be a high status occupation is now in some cases an ordinary one. While they used to enjoy high status, many teachers now have their performance questioned. Parents claim that teachers do not do their job and that they use pupils for their own profit. Teachers feel that they are blamed for pupils' low results while they find their workload increasing. The increase in the number of pupils in some schools has not been followed by an increase in salaries and status. When pupils were to be taught in shifts, without an increase in the number of teachers following the low results in standard seven exams 2001, this was also experienced as a punishment by many teachers.

This means that, although teachers generally see themselves and their work as important, they doubt that others recognise their importance. Teachers' influence on their own situation is low and their role is to carry out what others have told them to do. The authoritative socialisation pattern from early schooling has continued throughout the school system. In this type of authoritarian system, what is promoted is that obedience is shown. For teachers this means to show that one carries out what has been prescribed in teacher training, in curricula and textbooks. However demands on teachers are not realistic, such as having to teach up to 200 pupils at a time, teaching 30–50 lessons per week with a low salary, correcting exercises, carrying out other duties such as collecting statistical materials, supervising exams, taking care of school premises and the school economy, and collecting school fees of different types, among other duties.

At the same time every teacher faces his or her private situation with decreasing economic standards due to decreasing coffee prices, increasing numbers of people relying on them due to the health situation (HIV, malaria and tuberculosis are among the diseases that prevail) and rising costs for the schooling of their own and relatives' children. The upgrading of teachers to Grade A put extra demands on many teachers. This means that it is in reality not possible for teachers to carry out all their duties, such as teaching all prescribed lessons. A rough estimation according to my observations is that an ordinary teacher teaches less than half of the lessons stated in the curriculum. However variations are great between different schools, time of year and subjects and also between individual teachers.

Literacy, learning and language are central in primary school education so I will first focus on teachers' attitudes to literacy and learning and then on teachers' language attitudes.

Teachers' attitudes to literacy and learning

The perspectives expressed by teachers on literacy and learning are in general very homogenous. Teachers stress that they follow the teacher aid and the textbooks. Both teacher aids and textbooks are centrally produced, by *Taasisi ya Elimu* (The Institute for Education). These follow the curriculum closely and give detailed instruction on procedures and steps to follow. The adaptation to the situation in rural schools is low. Some plans and pictures give the impression that the author seems to assume a class size of 7–10 pupils and an abundance of materials, which is far from the real situation facing teachers. Teachers' lesson plans follow the pattern given at Teacher Training Colleges: Objectives, Teacher activities, Pupils activities and Evaluation. Generally most teachers are confident and proud to show that they follow given patterns. On literacy acquisition teachers state that pupils first have to learn the vowels and then all syllables, words and sentences in turn. That this is how literacy is taught is confirmed by observations. Only a few teachers mention the teaching of consonants separately. Learning to read and write is something that pupils are supposed to do in lower classes, with the aid of preschool. An elder male teacher in Standard 2 says:

Learning to read and write they do in Standard 1 and 2. After that it's mainly to answer questions. That's what they write, answers to questions. We do it together in class. If everyone is to do it individually some will only write single letters.²

The main objective teachers mention for literacy activities in class for Standards 3–7 is to test pupils' skills. Writing is stressed and the dominant type of writing mentioned by teachers is the answering of 'questions'. An elder male teacher says:

First we give our lecture, we explain, some examples on the blackboard. Then we give them questions that they answer in their exercise books. Then we correct the answers.

When explicitly asked for other writing activities, some teachers mention writing summaries from lessons, taking notes, writing essays and poetry, but this was nothing that I could see either during my observations or in pupils' exercise books, thus I assume that these activities are very rare. The most common reading activity mentioned by teachers is reading aloud in class. An elder female teacher in Standard 1 says:

When they read aloud they read all together or one at a time with the others listening.

Also in Standards 3–7 reading aloud is the dominant reading activity for pupils. A young male teacher says:

They read to exercise. They sit together many pupils with one book. Some only watch, they don't read. Every pupil maybe reads three times a week. They are given one book for every desk. First the teacher reads and they follow in the text and listen to the pronunciation. Then one at a time reads aloud in class. Then you see that everyone can read.

If we look at what this teacher says, we find that he estimates that every pupil reads three times a week. But we should consider that according to the plan for Swahili followed by teachers roughly one lesson a week is planned for reading. The teacher aid (*Kitabu cha Kiswahili 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7*) gives six lessons for each chapter, which are 30 for each year. One lesson is silent reading and one reading aloud but the silent reading seems to be seldom realised in classrooms in these schools. We should also consider that there are often about 70 pupils in a Standard 5, 6 or 7. As about 20 minutes was used for pupils' reading aloud during the observed reading lessons, one may state that at least during Swahili lessons it was not possible for most pupils to read three times a week in class. According to observations about five to ten pupils read aloud during one Swahili lesson. This would mean that every pupil would read aloud in class once in five to ten weeks. However observations also have shown that the frequency of pupils' reading cannot be calculated this way. Taking into consideration that not all lessons are taught, that a few pupils are frequently chosen to expose their skills for many tasks in class while others are not and the fact that some pupils read also during other lessons, one can state that a few pupils probably read quite frequently, both silent and aloud, while most pupils do not read frequently in school. As many pupils often use different types of avoidance strategies, such as avoiding putting their hands up, hiding in the back of the classroom or not showing up at all in school, some of them do probably not read at all. Thus we can state that although teachers stress the importance of testing pupils' reading skills by having them read aloud in class, they only test the skills of a few pupils, and probably mainly the most successful readers among them, while the majority of the pupils may or may not practise reading during class. That some pupils do not read is confirmed by one of the younger teachers:

There are always some pupils slipping away. About one fourth of pupils in Standard 4 do not read well. In Standard 7 there are only 35 pupils and their attendance is good. There is a bigger problem with Standard 4

because there we also have those who didn't pass the test last year. They may only attend one day a week as they have already given up. If you force them to read they will not attend the next lesson.

The test mentioned by the teacher is the test at the end of Standard 4. Pupils who fail are generally to repeat the year. Note the low number of pupils in Standard 7. In this particular school there are generally 70–80 pupils in the standards above 2. One may suspect that the drop-out rate has been high in this Class 7. It is also worth noticing the order of activities given by the previous teacher; first the text is read by the teacher and then by individual pupils. The chance that some pupils do not actually read but instead repeat from memory what they have heard is obvious.

The few teachers that mention silent reading say that this is something pupils may do in their spare time, such as during a pause or when there is no teacher in the classroom. Some teachers also mention that pupils may borrow books and read them at home, although they say that this is rare and it is not encouraged. According to my observations silent reading among pupils in primary schools in Karagwe is extremely rare. Many teachers also say that most pupils are not allowed to read at home as parents need them to work in the household. From this we may conclude that reading activities are rare in class for most pupils.

The importance of evaluation is stressed by many teachers. Also this follows a given pattern:

When I correct I check the results of each pupil. Then I can see how many have understood. If more than half of the pupils have managed half of the questions it's okay. In other case I'll have to repeat. If 40% have not understood I'll repeat once more. (A young male teacher)

The evaluation is invariably in the form of a few questions written on the blackboard at the end of the lesson. These questions are usually of fill-in type with gaps and answers are commonly given as alternatives.

Teachers' language attitudes

In the questionnaire given to teachers they were asked about their language attitudes (see Appendix). The answers together with observations revealed some interesting things about language attitudes held among teachers. Teachers were asked about what language they use in different domains (see Table 3).

Most teachers claim to use mainly Swahili and some also English in school. However observations revealed that this is an overestimation of the use of high status languages. None of the teachers know enough English to use it in the teachers' office and in the schoolyard. At the same time the most frequently used language in both teachers' and headmasters' offices according to observations is Runyambo. While nearly no teachers say they use Runyambo in school, my observations reveal that Runyambo is the most frequently used language together with Swahili outside classrooms. In classrooms Runyambo is only used by teachers sometimes in lower classes. Pupils are generally not allowed to use Runyambo in class. This pattern of

Table 3 Teachers self-report on language use in different domains

<i>Domain</i>	<i>Swahili</i>	<i>Swahili/ English</i>	<i>English</i>	<i>Swahili/ Runyambo</i>	<i>Runyambo</i>
In classrooms	32	18	0	3	0
In the schoolyard	36	1	0	7	2
In teachers' office	43	9	0	0	0
At home with children	12	0	0	23 ¹	15
With neighbours	3	0	0	25	25
At home to elders	1	0	0	18	34
At the market and in shops	26	0	0	22	3
Preferred language to use	43	2	1	2	1

$n = 53$ although not all teachers answered all questions. In the table Runyambo stands for both Runyambo and Ruhaya. No teacher used the word 'Runyambo' for the local language; instead they used Kilugha (a Swahili derogative for language), Kinyambo (Swahili for Runyambo), Lugha ya Mama (Swahili for mother tongue) or Lugha kieneji (Swahili for vernacular or local language).

¹One of the teachers also reported the use of Kinyarwanda with children and elders in the home.

overestimation of the use of high status languages is obvious also for teachers' claims for other domains. Half of the teachers claim to use only Swahili in market places while observations show that Runyambo and Swahili are used parallel to each other, with Runyambo as the most frequent. Twelve of the 53 teachers claim to use only Swahili to children at home, although observations showed that Runyambo is very dominant in homes, with Swahili mainly used among adults in certain contexts such as reading the Bible. There is thus a clear pattern of overestimation of the use of Swahili and English, while the use of Runyambo is underestimated by teachers.

Relations Between Language Ideologies and Education

The analysis of teachers' attitudes to literacy and learning and their language ideologies has revealed the sorting function of language and schooling in Karagwe. It is obvious that language ideologies in schools favour the small minority of children that are raised in an environment where Swahili is used, such as urban middle-class contexts, while for the far majority schooling implies drastic changes in language use. The stigmatisation of use of Runyambo becomes more evident when we see teachers' overestimation of their own use of Swahili and of pupils' proficiency in Swahili, and when pupils' denial of any difficulties with Swahili whatsoever is observed. This

may also be perceived as safety strategies as it is in the interest of both teachers and pupils to overestimate pupils' Swahili proficiency. Safety strategies in this context denote strategies used by teachers and pupils to escape punishment, that is to hide failure and to create an image of successful teaching and learning. Among these safety strategies are avoidance and resistance. Examples of avoidance are when pupils do not hand their exercise books in or hide in the back of the classroom and when teachers do not teach all stipulated lessons or break rules such as being on time or not using pupils to work in their own gardens. Resistance is seen for example when pupils do not hand their exercise books in or do not show up at all in school. Also the typical interactional pattern in classrooms, call-response with chorusing and stereotypic patterns, is a safety strategy that hides pupils' (lack of) knowledge (see Wedin, 2004, for further information on interactional patterns in classrooms). However, these strategies at the same time constitute a barrier for pupils' learning, as neither pupils nor teachers become aware of pupils' actual knowledge or lack of knowledge.

If we return to Cazden's language functions in school, language of the curriculum, of control and of personal identity, I conclude that teachers mainly use Swahili as the language of the curriculum and of control while they use Runyambo to express their personal feelings. However pupils, who at least in the lower classes do not master Swahili, do not have access to a language to express *their selves* at all, except for in the secret, sub-rosa³ pupil–pupil interaction. This probably makes the controlling task for teachers easier.

What counts as knowledge and learning in schools is affected by patterns of language use and by the fact that focus in school is on repetition and copying of 'school knowledge' in Swahili and English. Hence important knowledge from the pupils' perspective, such as to be able to guess the teachers' intentions and to be able to memorise without reflection, is connected with Swahili and English at the same time as pupils' understanding of the academic content is not treated as important. As Runyambo is devalued it follows that traditional uses of Runyambo that were used to develop language skills are also devalued.

This also affects teachers' and pupils' perceptions of literacy and different literacy practices. What counts as literacy in school is the formal repeating and copying in Swahili and English. Important knowledge is to be able to copy and repeat and to follow given patterns, mainly thought to be learned by observation and imitation, while actually much of the learning may take place in pupils' sub-rosa activities where they help each other secretly. The level of literacy skills pupils are expected to acquire is low, mainly rudimentary skills such as coding and decoding written text, and there is little awareness that pupils need to develop more advanced literacy skills, such as fluency and speed, or of the amount of exercise needed to acquire these skills.

One severe effect of the fact that traditional language use and traditional language education have become stigmatised is obvious, mainly in literacy education, particularly in the lower classes. Traditional uses of elaborate language, such as poetry, riddles, proverbs, tales, *ng'oma* (tradi-

tional drumdances), *echivugo* (self-praising exercised mainly by men) and ambiguous talk are in Runyambo and are not used in school settings. These traditional language uses exercise skills that are relevant particularly for literacy development, such as the exercising of monologues and focus on formal linguistic features such as rhymes and decontextualised language. Although curricula and textbooks promote the use of riddles and proverbs, they are always in Swahili and often from a coastal context, which is an alien context for the majority of both pupils and teachers in Karagwe. As a consequence teachers in Karagwe neither read nor tell tales or stories to pupils in lower grades as they realise that children would not understand stories told in Swahili. This deprives teachers and pupils of relevant ways to promote both the acquisition of language and literacy.

The school context in which teachers – and pupils – act in Karagwe may be described with the image of two curricula,⁴ one intended and one actual. The intended curriculum is represented by regulations and stipulations such as official curricula, text-books, teacher aids and teacher training, while the actual curriculum is what is actually carried out, which may also be called the hidden curriculum. Following the intended curriculum, obedience is central. Teachers make their plans, following text books, teacher aids and patterns learned in teacher training and during their own schooling. They fulfil demands from authorities with formulaic teaching of separate skills and little room either for their own creativity and reflection or for their pupils', and they make evaluations to show that they have succeeded in teaching what they should. Following this pattern, literacy is mainly used to test pupils' skills to create an image of successful literacy acquisition. In case the façade crumbles, for example in the case of tests or exams, the blame is put on pupils for being lazy, stubborn and disobedient. In this context it is relevant for teachers to see failure in tests as disobedience as it is the pupils' responsibility in school to obey, which includes learning what they are supposed to.

In this authoritative system, teachers and pupils are accordingly not creative in their implementation of official given directives, as this would not imply obedience. However to carry out this task under prevailing conditions, one needs both creativity and reflexivity. This is seen in the different types of safety strategies developed with the aim to save the face of teachers/pupils and to create an image of successful teaching/learning. This makes it relevant to talk about the actual, or hidden, curriculum, where we see teachers/pupils striving to cope with the situation and to solve the seemingly unsolvable equation of, on the one hand, high expectations and demands and, on the other hand, harsh conditions in life. Examples of creativity among teachers are the tendency not to teach stipulated subjects that are less valued, such as *Siansi kimu* (Home science), to exclude lessons of silent reading and to avoid prescribed exercises such as group discussions.

Also for language attitudes and language use in school we may talk about two curricula: the intended, which states that Swahili and English are the languages that should be used and developed in school, and the actual

curriculum in which teachers and pupils use the languages that suit their needs, Swahili and Runyambo. However power relations are evident in the fact that pupils are not allowed to use Runyambo to teachers and only secretly in child–child discourse. Thus we can state that teachers' language ideologies and the way language is used socialise pupils into certain patterns of language use with Swahili and English as high status languages and Runyambo as a language with low status.

Conclusions

The strong relationship between, on the one hand, language ideologies and, on the other, what happens in school and educational outcome stated by Blommaert (1999), Gee (1996) and Wortham (2001), among others, has become clear in this study. Also the conflict perspective expressed by Gardy and Lafont (1981), Martin-Jones (1988) and Rubagumya (1991) has been applicable to the situation in Karagwe, with stigmatisation of the local language, Runyambo, and overestimation of the use of Swahili and English. For education in Karagwe I claim that the high level of bilingualism could be an asset for future development. As Runyambo is frequently used in central parts of life at the same time as most Banyambo have a fairly high command of Swahili, the majority of the inhabitants in Karagwe have access to at least two languages for effective communication both inside Karagwe and in the Swahili-speaking part of Africa. However, the tendency among middle-class parents to raise their children in Swahili is a sign of emergent language shift to monolingualism.

In what remains of the traditional language education there is also much that may be used for the development of language knowledge in schools, especially in the lower classes and for literacy acquisition. As these traditional speech acts exercise skills that are important for schooled education and the development of literacy skills, they have a potential for schooled education.

The discontinuity between language use in homes and in schools, however, constitutes an important barrier for academic learning in schools. The fact that most children do not understand the language used in class during the important first years in school leads to low outcome and unequal educational chances. Also the fact that teachers are not given relevant tools to handle the task of teaching in a second language has severe effects both on what happens in school and on the outcome. If teachers and policy makers could get access to research that shows effective ways to organise education in a bilingual setting, the high level of bilingualism in the district could be made an asset. This can, however, only be done if policy makers and those responsible for curricula and teacher training face the actual language situation and make use of relevant research on multilingualism.

Official curricula in Tanzania presume pupils' knowledge of Swahili as a first language and although nearly all pupils in primary schools in Karagwe have Swahili as a second language, teachers have no guidance in how to teach Swahili as a second language to children, except for the explicit rule of 'Swahili only' in school, which implicitly concerns only pupils. I conclude that these attitudes to and uses of literacy and language mainly have three effects:

- inequality in pupils' educational possibilities, with the favouring of pupils who have been exposed to Swahili and literacy before school;
- safety strategies that hide failure while at the same time preventing pupils' learning;
- low level of achievement of academic content in schools.

It is clear that in the case of Karagwe, a combination of language ideologies and an authoritarian school system have resulted in a situation where a minority of the children, in urban, Swahili-speaking environments, are privileged in schooled education, while the majority are disadvantaged. Although the official policy of Tanzania has been equal educational rights and development in rural areas, we see that what has explicitly been decided, in many cases, has come out otherwise. This shows us that implicit language ideologies may work contrary to explicitly stated policies.

That language and power are related becomes even more obvious when we consider the case of Tanzania on a global level. For Tanzania, as a country at the periphery of the global market, the situation is that important political and economic decisions are in fact taken elsewhere, in parts of the world where the influence of Tanzanian policy makers is small. In a situation where the country and its formal education rely on donors and aid, most influential decision makers are actually not inside but outside the country. As much of what is revealed in this study may seem to blame certain actions taken by the élite in Tanzania, such as the stigmatisation of local languages and the economic investment in private education, it is important to remember that much of what members of the élite strive for, or manage to achieve, is far below what most Westerners see as their fundamental right, such as access to relevant basic education for their children. Thus it is important not to forget the role of the global economy in educational policies and the educational outcome in Tanzania.

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Notes

1. From around the 16th century the Banyambo has consisted of two main classes: the ruling pastoralists, that is cattle-keeping nomads with close relations to pastoralist clans in neighbouring areas, and the settled agriculturalist clans.

2. Interviews were carried out in Swahili; the translations are the author's.
3. I use the term *sub-rosa* for the private, secret and intimate interaction among pupils in classrooms outside the supervision of teachers, following Gilmore (1986).
4. Curriculum is here used in a wide sense, as demands put on teachers and pupils.

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Appendix

QUESTIONNAIRE¹ To teachers in primary schools in Karagwe 2002:2

The purpose of this questionnaire is to understand more about the language situation in school and the language attitudes of the teachers. I ask you to write your answers on the lines. If you need to write more, please use the other side of the paper. I thank you very much for your help!

Ms Åsa Wedin

1.

a) Your name: _____

b) School: _____

c) You are the main teacher of class: _____

d) Number of pupils in your class: _____

e) Other assignments you have at the school are: _____

2.

What is your opinion about the pupils of your school this year, on the whole?

3.

If you try to guess the future for your pupils, what would you say?

a) How many will pass standard seven? _____

b) How many will enter secondary school? _____

c) How many will study something else (that is not secondary school)? _____

d) How many will become agriculturalists? _____

e) How many will not finish standard seven? _____

4.

Usually in a class there are pupils who learn quickly and others who learn slowly. How do you deal with this?

5.

What language do you usually use:

a) in class _____

b) in teachers' office _____

c) in the school yard _____

¹ This is a translation from the original questionnaire, which was in Swahili (for original see Wedin, 2004).

- d) at home to children _____
- e) at home to neighbours _____
- f) at home to elders _____
- g) in shops and in the market _____

6.

What language do you prefer to use? Why? _____

7.

Please explain to me what you yourself, outside your work

- a) like to read? _____
- _____
- b) like to write? _____
- _____

8.

If you estimate yourself,

- a) how many times per year do you write or receive a letter? _____
- b) how many times per month do you read a news paper? _____
- c) how many times per month do you read a book that is not a school-book? _____
- d) how many times per month do you write things down that are not connected to school work? _____

9.

In your opinion, what could be gained if the reading and writing skills of Tanzanians were to increased? Could something be lost?

10.

What language, in your opinion, could contribute most to a positive development of Tanzania? Why?

11.

Try to estimate the level of the pupils in your class regarding understanding and using Swahili.

- a) How many understand Swahili without problems? _____
- b) How many can explain themselves in Swahili? _____
- c) How many can understand a radio programme? _____
- d) How many can read a news paper such as Uhuru or Maendeleo? _____
- _____
- e) How many could read a story book for children? _____
- f) How many can explain themselves in Swahili? _____

12.

You, as a teacher, in what way do you want to develop the Swahili (speaking, listening, reading and writing) among your pupils?

Thank you very much for your cooperation!