

LOITASA

Language of Instruction in Tanzania and South Africa

Main partners:



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Other partner(s):



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Objectives:

The LOITASA project was meant both to have an element of capacity building and create new knowledge through research. We wanted to give prospective PhD. and master students the opportunity to do research together with more experienced and senior researchers and in this way build their competency. The research component was built up in such a way that it included both an analysis of the language of instruction (LOI) policies in the two countries, an observation of how the policies functioned in the classroom and it had an element of action research where we intended to carry out experiments in both countries, having some children being taught longer in a familiar language and compare them to those taught in a foreign language, in both countries that language was English.

In Tanzania the LOI is Kiswahili in primary school and English in secondary school and above. In the informal settlement in the outskirts of Cape Town where the LOITASA project took place in both phases of the project, the language all parents, children and teachers speak daily, isiXhosa, is the LOI only for the first three years, then the LOI is switched to English. In both phases of the project our experiments in Cape Town took place in standard 4 -6 in primary school. In Tanzania our experiment took place in Form I of secondary school in the first phase while in the second phase we decided to strengthen some government primary schools where the LOI is Kiswahili with textbooks and in-service training for teachers and compare them to some private primary schools where the LOI was English.



The picture shows the three project coordinators, Prof. Zubeida Desai, project coordinator from the start, Prof. Justinian Galabawa, who took over the project leadership from Prof. Suleman Sumra in 2003 and has been the project leader since that time, and the Norwegian project leader, Prof. Birgit Brock-Utne, project coordinator from the start.

Web page: www.loitasa.org

Results:

All the research we have undertaken both in Tanzania and South Africa show that children learn much better when they are taught in a language they master. The spread of scores in the classes is also smaller. This goes for both Tanzania and South Africa. We have also found that the interaction between students and teachers is different, livelier and of a much higher quality if the language is one students and teachers alike master well. In that case students are active, compete to answer, come up with questions and debate with the teacher. In Tanzania we found that when primary government schools were strengthened with extra resources in the form of textbooks for all children and in-service training for the teachers the schools did better than the private ones. In the first phase (2002-2006) four students took their PhD. and 22 wrote their master theses under the project. In the second phase of the project (2007-2012) five students will get their PhD. and 6 their master under the project. We have held yearly workshops. Our web-site contains a list of our most important publications. A DVD was produced in South Africa in the first phase of the project.



The picture shows the three editors of the LOITASA publications, Martha Qorro from the UDSM, Zubeida Desai from the UWC and Birgit Brock-Utne from the UiO.

Publications

- **Brock-Utne, Birgit, Zubeida Desai and Martha Qorro (eds.) (2003):** *Language of Instruction in Tanzania and South Africa*. Dar es Salaam: E & D Publishers. 222 pages.
- **Brock-Utne, Birgit, Zubeida Desai and Martha Qorro (eds.) (2004):** *Researching the Language of Instruction in Tanzania and South Africa*. Cape Town: African Minds. 280 pages.
- **Brock-Utne, Birgit, Zubeida Desai and Martha Qorro (Eds.) (2005):** *LOITASA Research in Progress*. Dar es Salaam: KAD Associates.
- **Brock-Utne, Birgit, Zubeida Desai and Martha Qorro (Eds.) (2006).** *Focus on Fresh Data on the Language of Instruction Debate in Tanzania and South Africa*. Cape Town: African Minds.
- **Qorro, Martha, Zubeida Desai and Birgit Brock-Utne (Eds.) (2008).** *LOITASA reflecting on Phase I and entering Phase II*. Dar es Salaam: E & D Vision Publishing Ltd. *Desai, Zubeida, Martha Qorro and Birgit Brock-Utne (Eds) (2010)* *Educational challenges in multilingual societies: LOITASA Phase Two Research*. Cape Town: African Minds.
- **Brock-Utne, Birgit and Rodney Kofi Hopson (eds.) 2005:** *Languages of instruction for African emancipation: Focus on postcolonial contexts and considerations*. Cape Town: CASAS and Dar es Salaam: Mkuki na Nyota.
- **Brock-Utne, Birgit and Ingse. Skattum (eds) (2009):** *Languages and Education in Africa: A comparative and transdisciplinary analysis*. Oxford: Symposium Books. 2009 paperback 368 pages.
- **Brock-Utne, Birgit and Gunnar Garbo (Eds) (2009):** *Language is Power. The Implications of Language for Peace and Development.*: Dar es Salaam: Mkuki na Nyota. Oxford. African Books Collective. East Lansing : Michigan State University Press.
- **Prah, Kwesi Kwaa and Birgit Brock-Utne (Eds.) (2009):** *Multilingualism - a paradigm shift in African language of instruction policies*. Cape Town: CASAS.
- **Brock-Utne, Birgit, Zubeida Desai and Martha Qorro with Allan Pitman (Eds.) (2010):** *Language of Instruction in Tanzania and South Africa – Highlights from a Project*. Boston/ Rotterdam: Sense Publishers.

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