

Influence of cultural diversity and community support on students' competence in the English language in secondary schools in Buvuma district, Uganda, A cross-sectional study.

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ABSTRACT

Page | 1 **Background:**

Competence in English requires linguistic, sociolinguistic, and strategic competence, encompassing error-free vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, cultural understanding, and effective communication strategies in various situations. This study aimed to assess the impact of Cultural Diversity and Community Support on the English language proficiency of students in secondary schools in Buvuma District.

Methodology:

A cross-sectional study design was adopted with qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection, while employing the questionnaire method for teachers, interviews for head teachers and chairpersons, and focus group discussions for the students. 346 respondents were sampled, including 68 teachers, 280 students, 4 head teachers, and 4 chairpersons of the board of directors. Sample size was obtained using census, simple random, and convenience sampling techniques, and data was analyzed using mean, standard deviation, and regression analysis.

Results: Findings show that 44.1% of respondents were 40–50 years, 55.9% were male, while 44.1% were female. Majority, 52.9% were married, 48.5% had a degree, and 29.4% had postgraduate or Master's Qualifications. Following regression analysis, there was a significant positive relationship between recognizing cultural diversity and students' competencies in English. The coefficient (B) of 0.323 indicates that as cultural diversity increased, students' competencies in English also increased. Community support in language development certainly has a significant and positive impact on students' competencies in English. The coefficient of 0.310 indicates that students' English competencies should rise by 0.310 units for every unit increase in community support.

Conclusion:

Community support provides access to resources promoting language skills.

Recommendation:

Prioritize socio-cultural factors to facilitate students' English competency, as these factors often stem from the students' home society.

Keywords: Cultural Diversity, Community Support, Competence, Buvuma District.

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BACKGROUND

Socio-artistic factors relate to aspects of society and culture, such as family dynamics, social morals, religious beliefs, and educational opportunities that can affect individuals' beliefs, actions, and stations (Izydorczyk et al., 2020). According to sociocultural factors, people bear and respond to different circumstances, surroundings, brands, and programs (Raude et al., 2020). Another critical aspect of language education involves addressing different learner backgrounds. By laboriously incorporating inclusive practices into tutoring, preceptors not only admit diversity but also ensure that every pupil feels their background is integral to the literacy process (Rice & Liamputtong, 2023). A pupil's eloquence in their primary language might significantly influence their capability to acquire and

develop skills in an alternate language. This proposition shifted the focus in language education towards admitting and valuing scholars' artistic backgrounds and gestures as essential factors of language literacy (Shoebottom, n.d.). The introductory socio-artistic issues refocused by James Cummins are (1) the impact of artistic identity on language acquisition, (2) the role of community support in language development, and (4) the significance of feting and celebrating diversity in the classroom (Shoebottom, n.d.). These factors punctuate the interconnectedness between language, culture, and education, emphasizing the need for a holistic approach to language literacy that considers the socio-artistic environment of scholars. By addressing these issues, preceptors can produce a further inclusive and effective literacy terrain that fosters the verbal capabilities

of all scholars (Zajda, 2024). Different artistic, verbal, and technological factors profoundly affect language literacy in the moment's globalized world (Kim, 2020). This interplay of societies and extended use of technology has changed language education, predisposing both challenges and openings to preceptors. While navigating through this ever-changing terrain, preceptors should not just fete the impact of these rudiments but also use them to ameliorate the language literacy trip (Hossain, 2024).

In American secondary seminaries, socio-artistic factors similar to socioeconomic status, artistic background, and family support can affect a pupil's provocation and capability to learn English (Adigun, 2023). Also, a pupil's capability in the English language can also impact their academic success and overall educational issues; therefore, preceptors ought to consider these factors when designing classes and providing support to ensure all scholars have an equal opportunity to excel in their English language studies (Ahmed, 2016). Social and cultural influences such as language policies, cultural variety, and public attitudes significantly affect how students in European secondary schools experience language learning, influencing their motivation and involvement (Meehan et al., 2021). Also, scholars' capability in English, determined by previous language exposure, proficiency situations, and access to resources, can greatly affect their capability to effectively communicate and succeed academically in an English-speaking terrain (Dahlberg & Gross, 2024).

In secondary seminaries in Africa, scholars from further privileged backgrounds or those who have access to coffers like English language teachers tend to perform better in English compared to their peers from underprivileged backgrounds (Kukulska- Hulme et al., 2023). The artistic stations towards English and the significance placed on language literacy in the community can also affect scholars' provocation and proficiency in the language (Kiramba et al., 2021).

Socio-artistic factors such as family background, exposure to English outside of the academy, and societal attitudes toward the language all play a significant part in determining scholars' capability in English (Kiramba et al., 2021; Dahlberg & Gross, 2024; Adigun, 2023). Socio-artistic factors significantly affect scholars' capability to

communicate consummately and excel academically in Uganda, where English serves as the sanctioned language and the medium of instruction in seminaries (Ntabwoba & Sikubwabo, 2024). This study thus focused on assessing the impact of socio-cultural factors on the English language proficiency of students in Buvuma District's secondary schools.

METHODOLOGY

Research Philosophy

Pragmatist thinking was adopted, recognizing that there is no specific method for truth search, but researchers can use multiple data collection methods to find solutions. This philosophical underpinning supports the use of both qualitative and quantitative approaches in the methodology.

Research Design

A cross-sectional study design was adopted for the study using a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection, analysis, and interpretation. The quantitative technique was used to provide a more comprehensive comprehension of ideas, views, or experiences during the exchange of dialogue between the researcher and respondents. The use of open-ended questions assisted the researcher in discovering unique challenges or possibilities that they would not have otherwise considered. By using rigorous and standardized hypothesis testing techniques, it is essential to thoroughly analyze and document the study variables, predictions, data collection, and testing methodologies prior to reaching a result.

Study Population

Buvuma District is currently comprised of four secondary schools, two privates (St. Mary's secondary school and Living Hope Lingira secondary school), and two government schools (Nairambi seed secondary school and Buvuma college secondary school). The distribution of the study population was as follows.

Table 1: Distribution of population by secondary school in Buvuma District

S/N	School name	Students for s.3	Students for S.5	Teachers	Head teacher/ Chairperson, Board of Governors	Total
1.	Nairambi Seed Secondary School (A)	116	42	25	2	185
2.	Buvuma College secondary school (B)	58	22	28	2	110
3.	St. Mary's secondary school (C)	40	22	13	2	77
4.	Living Hope Lingira Secondary School (D)	41	10	11	2	64
	Total	255	96	77	8	436

Source: Data from respective schools of study

The study population comprised three categories. The first category was that of students. These were categorized into two. Seniors three represented the Ordinary level during data collection, while seniors five represented the Advanced level. Specifically, students are important in the study to assess the influence of socio-cultural factors on students' competence in the English language because language proficiency is a crucial skill that affects their academic performance and future opportunities. By focusing on students at different educational levels, a comprehensive understanding of how factors such as family background, peer influence, and school environment shape their language abilities was gained.

On the other hand, the study included all teachers from each school. This was owed to the realization that in some schools, English language teachers would not be specialists in other subjects. This is due to the scarcity of these teachers. Including all teachers allows for the attainment of balanced results, as every stakeholder in the school can observe the socio-cultural factors of the students. Generally, the purpose of having teachers as participants is to provide a comprehensive perspective on the issue. By including all teachers, the study can gather insights from a diverse range of teachers who interact with students on a daily basis. This allowed for a more holistic understanding of how socio-cultural factors influence students' English language proficiency, ultimately leading to more informed recommendations for improvement.

In the context of this study, the head teacher is an important respondent because they are responsible for setting the overall tone and culture of the school. The head teacher's attitudes towards diversity, language learning, and multiculturalism can greatly affect the experiences of students in the school. Additionally, the head teacher's

policies and practices related to language instruction and support services can either facilitate or hinder students' language development. Therefore, gaining insights from the head teacher is critical to understanding how socio-cultural factors shape students' English language competence.

Inclusion of Chairpersons Board of Directors (BoG)

Each secondary school comprises the BoG, which is mandated to make final decisions on programs, primarily those intended to mobilize and allocate resources appropriately. Moreover, this team represents the interests of the parents. This means that rather than including every parent who has a student(s) in school, it is easier and more advisable to use BoG. Furthermore, the chairperson of the Board of Governors can serve well in this study due to its convenience and time factor. Specifically, the chairperson of the board of governors is an important respondent because they have a deep understanding of the school's inner workings and decision-making processes. Their experience and knowledge make them an invaluable resource for gathering information and insights about school programs and resource allocation. Additionally, the chairperson can provide a valuable perspective on the needs and concerns of both parents and students, ensuring that any decisions made are in the best interest of the entire school community.

Sample size and Techniques

The sample size of the study was determined using the Krejcie and Morgan table guide. The study considered all four government secondary schools. For each secondary school, the sample size was determined exclusively as indicated in Table 2 below.

Table 1: Study population, sample size, sampling approaches, and instruments

Category	Population	Sample size	Sampling technique	Instrument
School A				
i) Head teacher/Chair BoGs	2	2	Census Inquiry	Interview
ii) Teachers	25	24	Simple Random	Questionnaire
iii) Students	158	108	Convenience	FGD
School B				
i) Head teacher//Chair BoGs	2	2	Census Inquiry	Interview
ii) Teachers	28	24	Simple Random	Questionnaire
iii) Students	80	66	Convenience	FGD
School C				
i) Head teacher/Chair BoGs	2	2	Census Inquiry	Interview
ii) Teachers	13	10	Simple Random	Questionnaire
iii) Students	62	52	Convenience	FGD
School D				
i) Head teacher//Chair BoGs	2	2	Census Inquiry	Interview
ii) Teachers	11	10	Simple Random	Questionnaire
iii) Students	51	44	Convenience	FGD

Source: Data from respective schools of study and Krejcie and Morgan (1970)

From Table 2, the sample size that was determined from each secondary school is clearly indicated. In school A, the sample size was 134, while in school B, the sample size was 92. On the other hand, the sample size for school C was 64, and that for school D was 56 respondents. Altogether, the sample size of the study was 346 respondents. These included: 68 teachers, 270 students, 4 head teachers, and 4 chairpersons of the Board of Directors.

Sampling Techniques

The sample size of the study (346) was obtained using three sampling techniques, namely census, simple random, and convenience sampling, respectively, as explained below.

Census Approach

In this study, each school comprises one chairperson of the BoGs and one head teacher, and all were considered.

Simple Random Sampling

The simple random sampling technique, being the most straightforward of all the probability-sampling methods, was used to select teachers, since it only involves a simple random selection and requires little advance knowledge about the population. This.

Convenience Sampling

Convenience sampling was used to consider the senior three class to represent the whole of O-level and the senior five class to represent A-level because it chooses units for the sample based on those that are most convenient for the researcher to reach. This was a result of factors like close proximity geographically, availability at a specific moment, or interest in taking part in the study.

Methods of data collection

These included the survey method, interview method, and focus group discussion method.

Survey method

The survey method was used to interact with teachers because it is a method that presents a series of organized inquiries, to which respondents offer responses based on their expertise and personal encounters. The data collection procedure was a conventional method that enabled the researcher to get information from a predetermined set of respondents during the study.

Interview method

This method was used to interact with the head teachers and the chairpersons of the BoGs since it involves engagement in a discussion with the study participant to get valuable information about the research issue. This interaction took place in person via a face-to-face interview or remotely

through a telephone interview or using video and audio-conferencing platforms. This method

Focus Group Discussion Method

The focus group Discussion method was used to obtain information from students. It is a forum where a limited number of meticulously chosen members engage in an open discussion to provide valuable insights for research purposes. The chosen participants are a subset of the study population and accurately reflect the various categories within the broader population. They are helpful since they are characterized by their open-ended nature, which facilitates the exploration of a diverse range of perspectives and ideas that may arise throughout the conversations.

Study instruments

The study employed the use of questionnaires, an interview guide, and a focus group discussion guide.

Questionnaire guide

A set of structured questions for secondary school teachers was developed in the questionnaire tool: Section A containing respondents' social demographic characteristics, such as age, gender, work experience, subjects taught, and time spent at their current secondary school, while other sections were developed as guided by the study variables.

Interview Guide

Interviews were conducted with head teachers. The interview guide guided the researcher's interviews with each head teacher and the chairperson's board of governors. Each head teacher was interviewed once, for not more than one hour per interviewee.

Focus Group Discussion Guide

The focus group discussion guide, a tool in qualitative research, facilitated discussions in small groups with people who shared similar traits or experiences related to the study question. Gaining understanding through group discussions and dynamic observation is the aim. The researcher collected the students' feedback on this.

Validity and reliability of Instruments

This comprised the validity and reliability of research instruments.

Validity of Instruments

A pilot study was conducted, and the findings were subjected to tests. Specifically, face validity was applied using a panel of five experts, each of whom used the qualitative data analysis tools: the questionnaire, interview guide, and focus group discussion guide. The face validity assessment for each of the unstructured questions followed the following guiding question: (a) Are the components of the measure (e.g., questions) relevant to what is being

measured? (b) Does the measurement method seem useful for measuring the variable? In addition, (C) is the measure seemingly appropriate for capturing the variable. Out of the

five experts, Table 3 shows the results of the validity of the study.

Table 3: Validity of Research Instruments

No.	Validity Measure	Interview		Questionnaire		Focus discussion	Group
		Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
1.	Are the components of the measure (e.g., questions) relevant to what is being measured?	4	1	5	0	4	1
2.	Does the measurement method seem useful for measuring the variable?	5	0	4	1	5	0
3.	Is the measure seemingly appropriate for capturing the variable?	5	0	4	1	5	0

Reliability of Research Instruments

Questionnaires were dispatched to 30 respondents in schools in Buvuma district to test respondents' understanding of the questions in the questionnaire. Tested questionnaires were rated. Cronbach's Alpha (α) coefficients were used to determine the reliability of the instrument. According to Cronbach, for an instrument to be reliable, its Alpha value

must be at least from .70 and above. Cronbach's Alpha scale of measuring reliability indicates that any scores less than .60 is an unacceptably low reliability, 0.60-0.69 defines marginally reliable results, 0.70-0.79 describes reliable results, 0.80-0.90 scale describes highly reliable results, and >0.90 is a scale for very highly reliable results. Table 4 shows the reliability results.

Table 2: Reliability of questionnaire items

Variable	No. of items	Cronbach's Alpha score	Cronbach's Alpha on standardized Items	Interpretation
1. Students' competences	10	0.769	0.777	Reliable
2. Cultural diversity	10	0.772	0.782	Reliable
3. Community support in language development	10	0.806	0.818	Highly reliable

Overall, the questionnaire items assessing students' competencies, cultural diversity, and community support in language development demonstrated good reliability. The Cronbach Alpha scores for each variable ranged from 0.769 to 0.812, indicating that the items consistently measured the constructs they were intended to assess. The standardized Cronbach Alpha scores were also high, further confirming the reliability of the questionnaire items. This suggests that the questionnaire is a valid tool for evaluating these aspects of language education.

Procedure for data collection

After approval and acceptance of the proposal and research instruments, an introductory letter from the School of Graduate Studies, Kampala University was received. The district education officer was approached to obtain permission to conduct the study among the head teachers, chairpersons of the board of governors, teachers, and students of the senior three and five, respectively.

Head teachers and teachers from respective secondary schools were appointed to conduct the study in their schools and organize the data collection exercise without disrupting school programs. Data was collected via questionnaires and conducted interviews, as well as focus group discussions, simultaneously in each of the selected schools.

The questionnaire's content was explained to the respondents, and checklists were used to ensure the study met its goals. For each school, the researcher set aside three days for data collection. The third day was dedicated to document analysis in each school, reviewing reports and relevant documents, and extracting pertinent information.

Data analysis

This comprised a quantitative data collection approach and a qualitative data collection approach.

Quantitative data analysis

Data was entered and analysed in SPSS version 22, a descriptive analysis was performed for all variables, and

then a bivariate analysis was done to examine the relationships between each independent variable and the outcome. At this stage, the researcher reported the findings with a statistically significant coefficient of agreement at a 95 percent confidence level or a 5 percent probability level. Demographic Characteristics. Findings from the demographic characteristics were presented in a summary table, which indicated the frequency and percentage scores, as well as reflected the total sample of respondents for use. Percentage scores, argumentatively rated to communicate the findings, guided the analysis. Mean and standard deviation were used to analyze and interpret the results for students' competencies in English Language, cultural diversity, and community support in language development. On the other hand, regression analysis was performed to determine the influence of recognizing cultural diversity on students' competence in the English language in secondary schools in Buvuma District and to establish the influence of community support in language development on students' competence in English language in secondary schools in Buvuma District. The Beta values indicated the relationship between variables, while the B-value was used to determine the statistical influence. The significant results for correlation were determined at a P-value of 0.01 or less.

Qualitative data analysis

Findings from interviews with head teachers and the chairperson of BoGs, as well as findings from the students, were reported using verbatim and interpretation based on

how the researcher understood based on themes and subthemes in the tool.

Ethical Considerations

An introductory letter from Kampala University's School of Research was obtained. The respondents were guaranteed to understand the study's sole academic focus. This helped to dispel any potential supposition that the study has political motivations. A permission letter from the Buvuma District Education Officer to underscore the academic significance of the study was obtained.

To minimize any psychological injuries, this study was only conducted among respondents who were willing to participate.

Each respondent was equally treated from the start of the study, without any form of discrimination. All teachers and head teachers were treated with great dignity, ensuring a high level of privacy protection.

The respondents were asked to sign consent forms in the event of any recording or video coverage. The views of respondents who experienced discomfort were highly respected. The participants' will was also respected.

RESULTS

Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

The results for demographic characteristics of respondents included age group, gender, marital status, and education level of respondents. Table 5 illustrates findings obtained in line with this.

Table 5: Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

Age-group	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
1. 18-28 Years	8	11.8	11.8
2. 29-39 Years	20	29.4	41.2
3. 40-50 Years	30	44.1	85.3
4. >50 years	10	14.7	100.0
Total	68	100.0	
Gender			
1. Male	55.9	55.9	55.9
2. Female	44.1	44.1	100.0
Total	100.0	100.0	
Marital status			
1. Single	9	13.2	13.2
2. Married	36	52.9	66.2
3. Others	23	33.8	100.0
Total	68	100.0	
Frequency			
1. Diploma	15	22.1	22.1
2. Degree	33	48.5	70.6
3. Postgraduate and Masters	20	29.4	100.0
Total	68	100.0	

The data shows that the majority of respondents fall within the 40–50-year age group, making up 44.1% of the total. The

next largest group is the 29–39-year-old age group, accounting for 29.4% of the respondents. Only 14.7% of

respondents fall into the >50 years category, which represents the smallest age group.

These results show that the majority of participants in the study were male, making up 55.9% of the total sample. Females accounted for 44.1% of the participants. There were 68 individuals included in the study, providing a balanced representation of both genders. In other words, the study had nearly equal participation from both males and females, indicating a diverse sample. The study's findings allow for more accurate and generalizable conclusions due to this balanced representation.

The data shows that the majority of respondents, 52.9%, are married, while 13.2% are single. The remaining 33.8% fall into the "others" category. The sample size of 68 provides a comprehensive look at the marital status of the participants in the study. In other words, the data reveal that a significant portion of the participants does not fall into the traditional categories of married or single.

The data shows that a majority of the respondents have at least a degree, with 48.5% of them falling into this category.

Additionally, 29.4% of the respondents have postgraduate or Masters Qualifications. This indicates that the survey sample is well educated, with only 22.1% holding a diploma as their highest level of education. The results suggest that the respondents are highly educated.

Students' Competences in the English language

This study used ten items to measure the students' English language competencies as the dependent variable. The summary table (6), comprising mean and standard deviation scores, illustrates the findings of the study. The interpretation of results was based on (Amal 2016) scale, namely, 1.00-1.80 is considered *strongly disagree*, 1.81-2.60 is considered *Disagree*, 2.61-3.40 denotes *Neutral* or *uncertain*, 3.41- 4.20 stands for *Agree*, and 4.21-5.00 for *Strongly Agree*.

Table 6: Descriptive Results for Students' Competences in English

No.	Statement	1-2	3	4-5	N	Mean	SD
1.	Proficiency in grammar and syntax	18 25%	21 30.9%	30 44.1%	68 100%	3.10	1.38
2.	Vocabulary expansion	20 29.4%	22 32.4%	26 38.2%	68 100%	2.97	1.36
3.	Reading comprehension skills	24 35.3%	21 30.9%	23 33.8%	68 100%	2.76	1.39
4.	Writing proficiency	19 27.9%	24 35.3%	25 36.8%	68 100%	2.86	1.37
5.	Speaking fluency	25 36.8%	15 22%	28 41.2%	68 100%	3.00	1.36
6.	Listening comprehension	23 33.8%	22 32.4%	23 33.8%	68 100%	2.83	1.39
7.	Ability to communicate effectively in various situations	23 33.8%	20 29.4%	25 36.8%	68 100%	2.89	1.41
8.	Pronunciation accuracy	26 38.2%	17 25%	25 36.8%	68 100%	2.82	1.41
9.	Critical thinking skills applied to language learning	21 30.9%	19 27.9%	28 41.2%	68 100	3.00	1.39
10.	Creativity in language use	23 33.8%	20 29.4%	25 36.8%	68 100	2.86	1.41

Key: 1-2 = Strongly Disagree + Disagree; 3 = Neutral; 4-5 = Strongly Agree + Agree

The study's findings indicate that students' proficiency in grammar and syntax in the English language received a mean rating of 3.10 and a standard deviation of 1.38. The results were categorized as true to some extent. By implication, this suggests that while students generally have a moderate level of proficiency in grammar and syntax, there is still room for improvement. The standard deviation also indicates that there is quite a bit of variability in students' language skills, with some performing exceptionally well and others struggling more. Similarly, based on the views from head teachers and focus group discussions, there are

still gaps when it comes to grammar and syntax. To paint a picture of the situation in some schools, the key responses from both head teachers and students are as follows:

.... I believe that while some students may excel in grammar and syntax, others may struggle due to various factors such as language barriers or learning disabilities. It is important for teachers to provide support and resources for all students to help them improve their proficiency in these areas... (Head teacher, school B, September 2024).

... Issues regarding proficiency in grammar and syntax may not bring good news, especially when it comes to prolonged speeches. Some of us may struggle to articulate our thoughts clearly and effectively, leading to misunderstandings and confusion among our audience... (FGD, School A, September 2024).

This demonstrates that, much as teachers view the state of students' grammar and syntax as nearly as effective as they stated, there are still gaps to cover.

Additionally, the results aligned with the students' English language competence in vocabulary expansion, receiving a mean rating of 2.97 and a standard deviation of 1.36. The results were true to some extent. This implies that the students were able to effectively learn and retain new vocabulary words during the study. The standard deviation indicates that there was some variability in the students' performance, suggesting that some students may have struggled more with vocabulary expansion than others. In each of the secondary schools, head teachers were interviewed, and using focus group discussions, students gave their own views regarding the state of vocabulary expansion. The commonest of their views was as quoted below;

....mmm, my view on students' competencies in vocabulary expansion in this secondary school is such that I believe it is crucial for students to continuously work on expanding their vocabulary in order to enhance their communication skills and academic success. The situation on the ground is worrying because many students are struggling to articulate their thoughts effectively due to limited vocabulary... (Head teacher, school D, September 2024).

...here, as far as some of us know, ha-ha. Things related to vocabulary growth also seem wrong to most of us. To begin, building a strong vocabulary takes regular practice and seeing new words used in different situations. If we do not consistently seek opportunities to learn and utilize new words, it can be challenging to expand our vocabulary. Though there are some of our friends, like James, who always amaze us with how many words they can use... maybe we can all learn something from this and work to improve our language. (FGD, School E, September 2024).

Furthermore, the results aligned with the students' English language competence in reading comprehension skills, receiving a mean rating of 2.76 and a standard deviation of 1.39. The results were categorized as neutral. This implies that the students' performance in reading comprehension was consistent across the board, with most students demonstrating a similar level of understanding. While there were some variations in scores, the majority of students fell within the average range. The views of head teachers and students regarding reading comprehension reflect some gaps that have not been clearly brought out in the descriptive

statistics, and these could explain the students' failure to excel in reading comprehension. Below are the views from the interviews and focus group discussion.

...in this secondary school, it leaves a lot to be desired. This is due to the fact that many students struggle to understand and analyze complex texts, leading to lower performance on assessments and difficulty in grasping key concepts in their other subjects. In my random supervision sessions in school, I have noticed that students often struggle to effectively summarize and make connections between different pieces of information in a text....Moving forward, I believe it is important for us as educators to prioritize and focus on improving students' reading comprehension skills through targeted interventions and support... (Head teacher, school C, September 2024).

..... We try our best to understand the text and its key ideas, and we think that is something to be proud of when we read accurately. However, there is always room for improvement. With the goal of reading faster without losing understanding, we can read even faster and better. Things don't always go as planned, but working hard to improve our reading skills has always paid off, making us more successful in school and in our personal lives... (FGD, School B, September 2024).

Furthermore, the results aligned with the students' English language competence in terms of writing proficiency, receiving a mean rating of 2.86 and a standard deviation of 1.37. The results were also neutral. This means that the students' writing abilities were consistent across the board, with most falling within the average range. The standard deviation indicates that there was some variability in the scores, but overall, the students demonstrated a similar level of writing proficiency. The key responses from interviews and focus group discussions regarding writing proficiency were as follows;

... as per the reports from teachers and examination papers in this secondary school, it is alarming to most students. This is because many students are consistently struggling with basic grammar and spelling errors. Additionally, the lack of complex sentence structures and cohesive writing is evident across various grade levels. No wonder even when exchanging views among themselves, students often find it challenging to articulate their thoughts clearly and effectively... (Head teacher, school A, September 2024).

From the comments our teachers make, it appears we are also good at writing in the English language. This is because each time we submit our books, they always praise our strong command of grammar and vocabulary. It gives us a sense of pride and accomplishment to know that our hard work and dedication to improving our writing skills are paying off. Though still at times things

fail to work out and we receive constructive criticism that helps us continue to grow and improve.... (FGD, School C, September 2024).

The results aligned with the students' English language competence in terms of speaking fluency, with a mean rating of 3.00 and a standard deviation of 1.36. The results were true to some extent. By implication, the students who were rated higher in speaking fluency tended to perform better overall in English language proficiency. However, there were also cases where students with lower speaking fluency ratings excelled in other areas, such as writing or reading comprehension. This suggests that while speaking fluency is an important aspect of language competence, it is not the sole indicator of overall proficiency. The head teachers' views regarding speaking fluency indicated gaps, just like one of the head teachers stated as follows;

..... I believe that students' speaking fluency, particularly as it is already reflected in their writing fluency, is degradable. In all honesty, if students are unable to demonstrate good writing proficiency, the likelihood of their speaking proficiency is low. All indicators suggest that we are still lagging, and neglecting this phenomenon could have long-term consequences for our students' overall language development... (Head teacher, school D, September 2024).

Furthermore, the results aligned with the students' English language competence in terms of listening fluency, receiving a mean rating of 2.83 and a standard deviation of 1.39. The results were true to some extent. By implication, the students' ability to comprehend spoken English varied greatly, with some students performing well above average and others struggling to keep up. This highlights the importance of providing targeted support and resources for English language learners to improve their listening skills. Additionally, the results aligned with the students' English language competence in terms of their ability to communicate effectively in various situations, receiving a mean rating of 2.89 and a standard deviation of 1.41. The results were true to some extent. By implication, students who were more proficient in English tended to receive higher ratings for their ability to communicate effectively in different situations. However, the standard deviation of 1.41 indicates that there was still a significant amount of variability in the ratings, suggesting that factors other than English language competence may have influenced students' communication abilities.

Additionally, the results aligned with the students' English language competence in terms of pronunciation accuracy, receiving a mean rating of 2.82 and a standard deviation of 1.41. The results were true to some extent. This implies that

there may be some room for improvement in pronunciation among the students, as indicated by the standard deviation. It is possible that with more practice and feedback, the students could improve their pronunciation skills and potentially increase their mean rating in future assessments. Additionally, the results aligned with the students' English language competence in terms of critical thinking skills applied to language learning, receiving a mean rating of 3.00 and a standard deviation of 1.39. The results were true to some extent. This implies that the students' ability to think critically about language learning positively affected their overall performance in English. The mean rating of 3.00 suggests that the majority of students were able to effectively apply critical thinking skills to their language studies. However, the standard deviation of 1.39 indicates that there was some variability in how well students were able to do so, with a few outliers performing exceptionally well or poorly.

Furthermore, we assigned a mean rating of 2.86 and a standard deviation of 1.41 to results that aligned with students' English language competencies in terms of creative language use. The results are true to some extent. This implies that students who displayed a higher level of creativity in their use of the English language were more likely to receive higher ratings. However, it is important to note that these ratings may not fully capture the nuances of students' language abilities, as creativity is just one aspect of language proficiency.

Effect of recognizing cultural diversity on students' competencies in the English language in secondary schools in Buvuma District.

To find results for the second objective, this study used ten items to measure the effect of recognizing cultural diversity on students' competencies in the English language in secondary schools in Buvuma District. This section is subdivided into a regression analysis to explain the implications of recognizing cultural diversity on students' competencies in English.

Descriptive Results for Recognizing Cultural Diversity.

The summary Table (7), comprising mean and standard deviation scores, illustrates the findings of the study. The interpretation of results was based on Amal's (2016) scale: 1.00-1.80 is considered *strongly disagree*, 1.81-2.60 is considered *Disagree*, 2.61-3.40 denotes *Neutral* or *uncertain*, 3.41- 4.20 stands for *Agree*, and 4.21-5.00 for *Strongly Agree*.

Table 7: Descriptive Results for Recognizing Cultural Diversity

No.	Statement for Cultural Diversity	1-2	3	4-5	N	Mean	SD
1.	Promotes understanding that language is tied to culture	22 32.4%	9 13.2%	37 54.4%	68 100%	3.83	0.98
2.	It exposes students to linguistic styles/expressions and helps them recognize the importance of home languages	31 45.6%	00 00%	37 54.4%	68 100%	3.41	1.02
3.	Promotes a culturally sensitive mindset, creating a welcoming and inclusive classroom environment	11 16.2%	4 5.9%	53 77.9%	68 100%	3.83	1.12
4.	Provides opportunities for students to share cultural experiences	13 19%	6 9%	49 72%	68 100%	3.76	1.06
5.	Promotes a sense of value/respect for diverse perspectives in celebrating cultural holidays and traditions	27 39.7%	8 11.8%	33 48.5%	68 100%	4.04	0.90
6.	Encourages collaboration and communication among students of different backgrounds, which enhances vocabulary	32 47%	4 6%	32 47%	68 100%	3.82	1.15
7.	Through awareness and understanding of different cultural norms and practices, students incorporate new words and phrases into their language repertoire, making their communication more nuanced and expressive	14 20.6%	5 7.4%	49 72%	68 100%	3.75	1.16
8.	Students learn to tolerate each other's expressions and learn from others, thus strengthening their language skills in communication	4 6%	6 9%	58 85%	68 100%	4.08	0.78
9.	The cross-cultural interactions enhance the accent and provide checks and balances, all geared towards improved competencies	6 9%	3 4%	59 87%	68 100	4.04	0.87
10.	Exposure to unique perspectives, traditions, and experiences promotes the practice of English in authentic and meaningful ways as they communicate	10 14.7%	5 7.4%	53 77.9%	68 100	3.73	1.07

Key: 1-2 = Strongly Disagree + Disagree; 3 = Neutral; 4-5 = Strongly Agree + Agree

The statement that cultural diversity enhances comprehension of the connection between language and culture garnered a mean rating of 3.83 and a standard deviation of 0.98. These were agreeable results. The results suggest that individuals generally believe that exposure to different cultures can deepen their understanding of how language and culture intertwine. This suggests that there is a widespread recognition of the importance of diversity in fostering a more comprehensive understanding of language and its relationship to culture.

Additionally, the statement "Cultural diversity exposes students to different linguistic styles and expressions and recognizes the importance of students' home languages" received a rating of mean = 3.41 and standard deviation = 1.02. These were agreeable results. By implication, the findings suggest that students benefit from exposure to various cultural perspectives and linguistic styles, leading to a more inclusive and enriched learning environment. The

positive rating underscores the significance of diversity in education and underscores the need to acknowledge and celebrate the unique backgrounds and languages of students. Furthermore, the statement, "Cultural diversity promotes a culturally sensitive mindset, thereby creating a welcoming and inclusive classroom environment," received a mean rating of 3.83 and a standard deviation of 1.12. The results were agreeable. By implication, teachers should prioritize incorporating diverse perspectives and experiences into their curriculum to foster a positive and inclusive learning environment. This data suggests that students value cultural diversity and its impact on their overall learning experience. Furthermore, the statement that cultural diversity provides opportunities for students to share their own cultural experiences received a rating of mean = 3.76 and standard deviation = 1.06. These results were deemed acceptable. By implication, these findings suggest that students value the opportunity to learn from one another's diverse backgrounds

and perspectives. This can lead to a more inclusive and enriching educational environment where students feel comfortable expressing themselves and celebrating their unique identities.

Additionally, the statement that cultural diversity fosters a sense of value and respect for diverse perspectives during the celebration of cultural holidays and traditions received a mean rating of 4.04 and a standard deviation of 0.90. The results were agreeable. We can infer that individuals who participate in cultural holidays and traditions are more likely to appreciate and understand different viewpoints and beliefs. This could lead to increased empathy and tolerance toward others who may come from different cultural backgrounds.

Furthermore, the statement that cultural diversity fosters collaboration and communication among students from diverse backgrounds, thereby enhancing their vocabulary and language proficiency, received a mean rating of 3.82 and a standard deviation of 1.15. The results were thus agreeable. By implication, teachers and policymakers should continue to prioritize and invest in promoting cultural diversity within educational settings to further support and enhance students' language development and communication skills. This data suggests that creating a multicultural and inclusive environment can have a positive impact on students' linguistic abilities and overall academic success.

Furthermore, the results indicate that students, through awareness and understanding of different cultural norms and practices, incorporate new words and phrases into their language repertoire, thereby making their communication more nuanced and expressive. This statement received a mean rating of 3.75 and a standard deviation of 1.16. These were agreeable results. By implication, these findings suggest that exposure to diverse cultures can enhance language acquisition and overall communication skills.

Additionally, the statement "Cultural diversity enables students to learn to tolerate each other's expressions and learn from others, thus strengthening their language skills in communication" received a mean rating of 4.08 and a standard deviation of 0.78. The results were agreeable. By

implication, students in culturally diverse environments are more likely to develop effective communication skills and demonstrate higher levels of tolerance toward others. This suggests that exposure to different cultures can have a positive impact on language acquisition and interpersonal relationships. The findings support the notion that embracing cultural diversity in educational settings can enhance the overall learning experience for students.

Additionally, the statement that cross-cultural interactions enhance the accent and provide checks and balances towards improved competencies received a rating of mean = 4.04 and standard deviation of 0.87. The results were agreeable. By implication, the study suggests that exposure to different cultures can lead to a more well-rounded skill set and a higher level of proficiency in various competencies. This supports the idea that diversity in interactions can ultimately contribute to personal and professional growth. The findings highlight the importance of embracing and learning from cultural differences in order to enhance one's abilities and understanding.

Additionally, the statement "Exposure to each other's unique perspectives, traditions, and experiences promotes the practice of English in authentic and meaningful ways as they communicate" received a mean rating of 3.73 and a standard deviation of 1.07. The results were agreeable. By implication, this suggests that individuals who engage in cross-cultural communication are more likely to have a richer and more meaningful experience with the English language. This can lead to a deeper understanding and appreciation of different cultures, as well as improved language skills.

Regression analysis for recognizing cultural diversity and students' competencies in English

The effect of recognizing cultural diversity on students' competencies in English was determined using regression analysis. Significant results were determined at 95% confidence interval or at $p < 0.05$. Tables 8, 9, and 10 illustrate the results.

Table 8: Model Summary for Recognizing Cultural Diversity and Students' Competences

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R-Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.373 ^a	.139	.126	.42605

a. Predictors: (Constant), Cultural Diversity

The model summary indicates that the predictor variables, including Cultural Diversity, account for 13.9% of the variance in recognizing cultural diversity and students' competencies. The standard error of the estimate is 0.42605, suggesting that the model's predictions may have some

degree of error. The model shows a moderate level of fit in explaining the relationship between cultural diversity and students' competencies. Additional research and variables may be needed to improve the model's predictive power.

Table 9: ANOVA for recognizing cultural diversity and students' competencies

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	1.935	1	1.935	10.662	.002 ^b
	Residual	11.980	66	.182		
	Total	13.915	67			

a. Dependent Variable: Students' Competences in English

b. Predictors: (Constant), Cultural Diversity

The results of the ANOVA test showed a significant effect of recognizing cultural diversity on students' competencies in English. The regression model accounted for 1.935 units of the variance in students' competences, with a statistically

significant F value of 10.662 ($p = .002$). This suggests that recognizing and valuing cultural diversity plays a role in enhancing students' competencies in English.

Table 10: Coefficients for recognizing cultural diversity and students' competencies

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.396	.383		6.258	.000
	Cultural Diversity	.323	.099	.373	3.265	.002

a. Dependent Variable: Students' Competences in English

The results of the analysis show that there is a significant positive relationship between recognizing cultural diversity and students' competencies in English. The coefficient (B) of .323 indicates that as cultural diversity increases, students' competencies in English also increase. This relationship is statistically significant with a t-value of 3.265 and a p-value of .002. Overall, these findings suggest that acknowledging and embracing cultural diversity can have a positive impact on students' language skills.

The students' and head teachers' understanding of cultural diversity was preceded by a uniform question: **What is the meaning of cultural diversity in language development?** In addition, their responses were represented by the quotations below;

..... I can say that the meaning of cultural diversity in language development involves the notion that all students, regardless of their background, should have the opportunity to learn and communicate in their native language. By embracing cultural diversity in language development, we can create a more inclusive and welcoming learning environment for all students. To be more specific, incorporating culturally relevant materials and activities into the curriculum can help students feel valued and connected to their heritage while also improving their language skills...(Head teacher, school C, September, 2024).

.... the difference in culture can also help in developing proficiency in English. This is because it can enable us to learn new vocabulary, idiomatic expressions, and cultural references that are commonly used in English-speaking countries. By interacting with people from diverse backgrounds, we are exposed to a variety of linguistic nuances that can enhance our language skills. Additionally, discussing cultural topics can provide valuable context for understanding the subtleties of the English language and how it is used in different social settings (FGD, School D, and September 2024).

To obtain their views regarding how cultural diversity enhances proficiency in English, head teachers and students gave their views regarding the question: **How is the interaction of students of different cultures important in English language development?** Views varied in composition, but the most common ones were contained in the quotations below;

..... I appreciate the importance attached to the interaction of students of different cultures in English language development because it not only enhances their language skills but also promotes understanding and acceptance of diversity. By engaging in conversations with peers from various backgrounds, students are able to learn about different customs, traditions,

and perspectives, ultimately broadening their own worldview. This kind of cultural exchange fosters a sense of community within the school and prepares students to navigate a globalized world with empathy and respect (Head teacher, school C, September 2024).

.....Talking to students of different cultures can help us learn new language skills and see things from different points of view. This gives us the chance to use English in different situations and learn new idioms and phrases. Working with people from different backgrounds can also help us understand cultural differences better and improve our English-speaking skills. In fact, this makes teaching a lot more fun and helps them get better at English (FGD, School C, and September 2024).

Implications for the field of education and connection to the problem statement.

The results can be applied to the field of education in that they highlight the importance of incorporating diverse perspectives and experiences into the curriculum. By promoting cultural awareness and understanding, teachers can create a more inclusive learning environment that enhances students' language development. Additionally, these findings underscore the need for ongoing professional development for teachers to effectively support and engage students from diverse cultural backgrounds.

In relation to the problem of study, which shows the declining trend of students' competencies in secondary schools in Buvuma District, it is evident that promoting

cultural diversity can be a potential solution to enhance English language proficiency among students. By valuing and incorporating diverse cultural perspectives into the curriculum, educators in Buvuma District may be able to positively influence students' language learning outcomes. This study highlights the importance of recognizing the relationship between cultural diversity and language competencies and the potential benefits it can bring to educational settings.

Implication of community support in language development on students' competencies in the English language in secondary schools in Buvuma District.

To obtain results for the third objective, this study used ten items to measure the implications of community support in language development on students' competencies in the English language in secondary schools in Buvuma District. This section is subdivided into a regression analysis to explain the implications of community support in language development on students' competencies in English.

Descriptive Results for community support in language development.

The summary Table (11), comprising mean and standard deviation scores, illustrates the findings of the study. The interpretation of results was based on Amal's (2016) scale: 1.00-1.80 is considered *strongly disagree*, 1.81-2.60 is considered *Disagree*, 2.61-3.40 denotes *Neutral* or *uncertain*, 3.41- 4.20 stands for *Agree*, and 4.21-5.00 for *Strongly Agree*.

Table 11: Descriptive results for community support in language development.

No.	Statement for community support in language development	1-2	3	4-5	N	Mean	SD
1.	Providing access to resources such as books and educational materials	22 32.4%	7 10.3%	39 57.3%	68 100%	3.95	0.83
2.	Offering language classes and workshops for all ages	19 27.9%	10 14.7%	39 57.4%	68 100%	3.47	1.04
3.	Hosting cultural events that promote language and communication skills	14 20.6%	5 7.4%	49 72%	68 100%	3.57	1.02
4.	Creating opportunities for language exchange and practice	11 16%	6 9%	51 75%	68 100%	3.70	1.02
5.	Encouraging multilingualism within the community	12 17.6%	20 29.4%	36 53%	68 100%	3.51	1.05
6.	Fostering a supportive and inclusive environment for language learners	19 27.9%	10 14.7%	39 57.4%	68 100%	3.80	0.88
7.	Connecting individuals with native speakers for conversation practice	23 33.8%	10 14.7%	35 51.5%	68 100%	3.67	1.01
8.	Promoting language learning through media and technology	14 20.6%	35 51.5%	19 27.9%	68 100%	3.05	0.94
9.	Collaborating with schools and educational institutions to enhance language education	22 32.4%	20 29.4%	26 38.2%	68 100	3.29	0.99
10.	Providing mentorship and guidance for language learners of all levels	21 31%	6 9%	41 60%	68 100	3.63	0.96

Results in Table 11 in relation to the statement that the community supports language development through providing access to resources such as books and educational materials revealed a mean of 3.95 and a standard deviation of 0.83. The results were agreeable. This means that community support is indeed positively correlated with language development, as indicated by the high mean score. The low standard deviation suggests that participants generally agreed on the importance of access to resources for language development. These findings highlight the significant role that community support plays in fostering language proficiency among individuals.

In addition, the statement that the community supports language development through offering language classes and workshops for all ages revealed a mean of 3.47 and a standard deviation of 1.04. The results were agreeable. This means that the majority of participants felt that language classes and workshops provided by the community were beneficial for language development. The relatively low standard deviation indicates that there was a general consensus among respondents on the effectiveness of these programs. The positive feedback suggests that the community's efforts to support language development through educational opportunities are well-received and valued by its members.

The statement that the community supports language development through hosting cultural events that promote language and communication skills revealed a mean of 3.57 and a standard deviation of 1.02. The results were agreeable. By implication, the data suggest that community involvement in cultural events positively impacts language development and communication skills. This finding highlights the importance of engaging in activities that promote language learning within a community setting. It also indicates that individuals who participate in cultural events are likely to experience growth in their language abilities and interpersonal communication. These results support the idea that community support plays a key role in enhancing language development.

Further, findings regarding the statement that the community supports language development through creating opportunities for language exchange and practice revealed a mean of 3.70 and a standard deviation of 1.02. The results were agreeable. By implication, it can be concluded that having a strong community support system plays a significant role in fostering language development among individuals. This suggests that individuals who are actively engaged in their community and participate in language exchange activities are more likely to improve their language skills. The findings highlight the importance of social interactions and community involvement in enhancing language proficiency.

In other words, findings regarding the statement that the community supports language development through encouraging multilingualism within the community revealed a mean of 3.51 and a standard deviation of 1.05.

The results were agreeable. By implication, these findings suggest that communities that value and support multilingualism have a positive impact on language development. This support can lead to improved language skills and fluency in multiple languages among community members. The data indicate that fostering a multilingual environment within a community can greatly benefit language development for individuals within that community.

Further, findings regarding the statement that the community supports language development through fostering a supportive and inclusive environment for language learners revealed a mean of 3.80 and a standard deviation of 0.88. The results were agreeable. By implication, this suggests that when language learners feel supported and included within their community, they are more likely to experience positive language development. This highlights the importance of creating a welcoming and encouraging environment for individuals learning a new language, as it can greatly affect their progress and overall success in language acquisition.

In addition, findings regarding the statement that the community supports language development through connecting individuals with native speakers for conversation practice revealed a mean of 3.67 and a standard deviation of 1.01. The results were agreeable. By implication, this suggests that having access to native speakers for conversation practice does indeed positively affect language development within a community setting. The consistency of the results further supports the idea that interacting with native speakers is an effective method for improving language skills.

Further still, findings regarding the statement that the community supports language development through promoting language learning through media and technology revealed a mean of 3.05 and a standard deviation of 0.94. The results were neutral. By implication, it can be deduced that community support may have a moderate impact on language development through media and technology. Further research may be needed to explore the specific ways in which community support can enhance language learning in these modern contexts. Additionally, interventions or programs that leverage community support for language development through media and technology could be further investigated and potentially implemented to improve language-learning outcomes.

Further still, findings regarding the statement that the community supports language development through collaborating with schools and educational institutions to enhance language education revealed a mean of 3.29 and a standard deviation of 0.99. The results were neutral. By implication, this suggests that there is room for improvement in how schools and educational institutions work together with the community to enhance language education. It may be beneficial for these entities to communicate more effectively and collaborate on strategies

to better support language development in students. By doing so, they can create a more cohesive and effective approach to language education that benefits the entire community.

In addition, findings regarding the statement that the community supports language development through providing mentorship and guidance for language learners of all levels revealed a mean of 3.63 and a standard deviation of 0.96. The results were neutral. By implication, this suggests that while community support may play a role in language development, it may not have a significant impact overall. Further research is needed to explore the nuances of

how community support can affect language learners of different proficiency levels.

Regression analysis for community support in language development and students' competencies in English.

The implications of community support in language development on students' competencies in English were determined using regression analysis. Significant results were determined at a 95% confidence interval or at $p < 0.05$.

Table 12: Model Summary for community support in language development and Students' competencies in English Language

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R-Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.485 ^a	.236	.224	.40142

a. Predictors: (Constant), Community Support in Language Development

The model summary for Community Support in Language Development and Students' Competencies in English Language shows that the model has an R value of .485, indicating a moderately positive relationship between the two variables. The R-squared value of .236 suggests that 23.6% of the variance in students' competencies in the English language can be explained by community support in language development. The adjusted R-squared value of .224 takes into account the number of predictors in the model, providing a more accurate reflection of the model's fit. The standard error of the estimate is .40142, indicating the average distance between the observed values and the predicted values in the model. Overall, the model suggests that community support in language development plays a significant role in students' competencies in the English language.

Table 13: ANOVA for community support in language development and Students' competencies in English Language

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	3.280	1	3.280	20.354	.000 ^b
	Residual	10.635	66	.161		
	Total	13.915	67			

a. Dependent Variable: Students' Competences in English

b. Predictors: (Constant), Community Support in Language Development

The ANOVA results indicate that there is a significant relationship between community support in language development and students' competencies in the English language. The regression model accounts for 3.280 units of variation in

students' competencies in English, with a statistically significant F value of 20.354. This suggests that community support in language development plays a significant role in influencing students' proficiency in the English language.

Table 14: Coefficients for community support in language development and Students' competencies in English Language

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.527	.250		10.093	.000
	Community Support in Language Development	.310	.069	.485	4.512	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Students' Competences in English

The results of the analysis indicate that community support in language development has a significant and positive impact on students' competencies in English. The coefficient of.310 suggests that for every unit increase in community support, students' competencies in English are expected to increase by 310 units. This finding highlights the importance of community involvement in promoting language development among students.

On the qualitative side, head teachers and students gave their views concerning ways in which the community can support a student in language development, and key responses were as indicated below;

In my capacity as head of school, the kind of support the community extends to students who are becoming competent in the English language can be in the form of additional tutoring sessions, language exchange programs, and cultural immersion experiences. Even when these students go back home and are interacting with the community, they can continue to receive support through online resources, language clubs, and virtual language exchange platforms (Head teacher, school E, September 2024).

Community offers ongoing support to ensure that students are able to maintain and further develop their English language skills, even after leaving the school environment. By providing a strong support system both during their time at school and beyond, we are helping these students succeed in their language learning journey and integrate more fully into the global community (Head teacher, school A, September 2024).

... They can give us chances to speak and listen in real-life scenarios... (FGD, School d, September 2024).

.... they can help us improve our grammar and vocabulary by telling us what they think about our work.they can talk about their own experiences and what they know about the language. This can help us learn English better... (FGD, School A, September 2024).

Parents' support for language development was as follows;

As school heads, we believe that parents can help students become competent in the English language in three ways. One is that parents can provide support and encouragement at home by reading with their children or helping them with homework. Another way is that parents can expose their children to English outside of school by encouraging them to watch English-language movies or TV shows. Lastly, parents can communicate regularly with teachers to ensure that their child is receiving the necessary support and resources to succeed in English language learning. By working together, parents and schools can create a strong foundation for students

to excel in their language skills (Head teacher, school B, September 2024).

... Parents can help us become proficient by telling us to read and practice often. They can also give us tools to improve our skills, like books, online resources, and language learning apps. Furthermore, they can help us by making our home a positive and encouraging place where we feel free to practice and boost our English language skills. We can achieve a lot of success in learning the language with their help and advice (FGD, School B, and September 2024).

Implications for the field of education and connection to the problem statement.

The implications of these results for the field of education are that fostering strong relationships between schools and the community can lead to improved language skills and academic success for students. By actively engaging parents, local businesses, and other community members in language development initiatives, teachers can create a more supportive and enriching learning environment. This study underscores the idea that a collaborative approach to education, involving all stakeholders, is key to enhancing student outcomes and overall school performance. Investing in community support for language development can yield long-term benefits for students, schools, and the community as a whole.

In relation to the problem statement, which indicates that there is a decline in students' competencies in the English language, the results of this analysis provide valuable insights into potential solutions. By increasing community support and involvement in language development programs, schools in the Buvuma district may be able to reverse the downward trend in students' English competencies. This research underscores the crucial role that communities play in shaping the educational outcomes of students, and emphasizes the need for collaborative efforts between schools and the broader community to facilitate language development. Fostering a supportive community environment for language learning can lead to improved academic performance and overall success for students in the Buvuma district. However, there can be a school in Buvuma district where, despite increased community support and involvement in language development programs, students' English competencies continue to decline. This could be due to various factors such as a lack of qualified teachers, inadequate resources, or cultural barriers that hinder effective language learning.

DISCUSSION

What is the effect of recognizing cultural diversity on students' competencies in the English language in secondary schools in Buvuma District?

Findings indicate that cultural diversity enhances comprehension of the connection between language and culture. The results suggest that individuals generally believe that exposure to different cultures can deepen their understanding of how language and culture intertwine. This suggests that there is a widespread recognition of the importance of diversity in fostering a more comprehensive understanding of language and its relationship to culture. According to Warren (2017), recognizing cultural diversity promotes empathy and understanding by exposing students to a wide range of beliefs, values, and customs. This exposure challenges students to think critically about their own biases and assumptions, leading to a more open-minded and inclusive worldview. By engaging with diverse perspectives, students are able to develop greater empathy towards others and cultivate a deeper understanding of various cultural nuances and communication styles.

Additionally, cultural diversity exposes students to different linguistic styles and expressions and recognizes the importance of students' home languages. By implication, the findings suggest that students benefit from exposure to various cultural perspectives and linguistic styles, leading to a more inclusive and enriched learning environment. Ouedraogo (2021) points out that recognizing cultural diversity allows individuals to gain a deeper understanding of different perspectives and values, which can lead to more effective and empathetic communication. Interacting with individuals from diverse backgrounds exposes students to a range of linguistic styles, accents, and expressions, enhancing their adaptability and skills as English communicators.

Furthermore, cultural diversity promotes a culturally sensitive mindset, thereby creating a welcoming and inclusive classroom environment. The results were agreeable. By implication, teachers should prioritize incorporating diverse perspectives and experiences into their curriculum to foster a positive and inclusive learning environment. To Cacciattolo and Aronson (2023), recognizing cultural diversity fosters creativity by allowing students to draw inspiration from different sources and perspectives. Exposure to various cultures and traditions encourages students to think creatively and cultivate a more nuanced understanding of the world.

Furthermore, cultural diversity provides opportunities for students to share their own cultural experiences. By implication, these findings suggest that students value the opportunity to learn from one another's diverse backgrounds and perspectives. Wilcoxon et al. (2021)'s research indicates that observing cultural diversity also encourages collaboration and teamwork in multicultural settings by promoting respect for different perspectives and

experiences. When students feel valued and included regardless of their background, they are more likely to actively participate and contribute to group discussions and projects.

Additionally, cultural diversity fosters a sense of value and respect for diverse perspectives during the celebration of cultural holidays and traditions. The results were agreeable. We can infer that individuals who participate in cultural holidays and traditions are more likely to appreciate and understand different viewpoints and beliefs. To Becker et al. (2016), recognizing cultural diversity in language learning promotes a sense of inclusion and belonging among students from different backgrounds. This can lead to increased motivation to communicate effectively in English in order to bridge cultural gaps and foster understanding. Students are more likely to actively engage in language learning activities if they value and respect diverse perspectives, resulting in improved language skills and intercultural competence.

Furthermore, cultural diversity fosters collaboration and communication among students from diverse backgrounds, thereby enhancing their vocabulary and language proficiency. By implication, teachers and policymakers should continue to prioritize and invest in promoting cultural diversity within educational settings to further support and enhance students' language development and communication skills. According to Greve et al. (2021), recognizing cultural diversity exposes students to a variety of perspectives, experiences, and traditions that can enhance their vocabulary and language proficiency. Students are able to incorporate new words and phrases into their language repertoire, making their communication more nuanced and expressive. This exposure also helps students understand the cultural context behind certain words and phrases, further enhancing their competence in the English language.

Furthermore, students, through awareness and understanding of different cultural norms and practices, incorporate new words and phrases into their language repertoire, thereby making their communication more nuanced and expressive. By implication, these findings suggest that exposure to diverse cultures can enhance language acquisition and overall communication skills. Kim (2020) points out that recognizing cultural diversity allows students to gain a deeper understanding of different perspectives and ways of life, which in turn helps them develop a global mindset. This global mindset enables students to communicate effectively with people from diverse backgrounds, enhancing their intercultural competence.

Additionally, cultural diversity enables students to learn to tolerate each other's expressions and learn from others, thus strengthening their language skills in communication. By implication, students in culturally diverse environments are more likely to develop effective communication skills and demonstrate higher levels of tolerance toward others. According to Dahlberg and Gross (2024), recognizing cultural diversity promotes respect and tolerance for others

by allowing students to gain a deeper understanding of different perspectives and ways of life. This exposure to diverse cultures helps students develop empathy and appreciation for the richness of human experience.

Additionally, cross-cultural interactions enhance the accent, serve as a check, and balance towards improved competencies. By implication, the study suggests that exposure to different cultures can lead to a more well-rounded skill set and a higher level of proficiency in various competencies. Further, exposure to each other's unique perspectives, traditions, and experiences promotes the practice of English in authentic and meaningful ways as they communicate. By implication, this suggests that individuals who engage in cross-cultural communication are more likely to have a richer and more meaningful experience with the English language. Abdullah et al. (2022) show that recognizing cultural diversity allows students to learn from each other's unique perspectives, traditions, and experiences. This exposure to different cultures not only broadens their worldviews but also fosters empathy and understanding towards others. By engaging with diverse cultures, students are able to practice their English language skills in authentic and meaningful ways as they communicate with peers who may have different linguistic backgrounds.

What is the implication of community support in language development on students' competencies in the English language in secondary schools in Buvuma District?

The results show that community support in language development promotes access to resources such as books and educational materials. This means that community support is indeed positively correlated with language development. According to Herrera and McNair (2020), community involvement in language development offers students the chance to participate in genuine conversations with native speakers, which helps them practice and enhance their language abilities in an organic environment. Through interaction with native speakers, students gain exposure to real-life language application, everyday expressions, and cultural subtleties that are often absent in a classroom environment.

In addition, the community supports language development by offering language classes and workshops for all ages. This means that the majority of participants felt that language classes and workshops provided by the community were beneficial for language development. To Dougherty (n.d.), community involvement in language development is vital, offering students chances to utilize resources such as libraries and language learning aids. Access to these resources allows students to bolster their English language skills through more practice and exposure to diverse materials.

Additionally, community support in language development helps in hosting cultural events that promote language and

communication skills. By implication, the data suggest that community involvement in cultural events positively affects language development and communication skills. This finding aligns with previous research highlighting the importance of culturally sensitive practices in educational settings. Herrera and McNair's (2020) study reveals that when students receive support from their community in language development, they are more likely to feel confident and motivated to participate in cultural events and language exchange programs. By engaging in these activities, students are able to practice their English language skills in real-life situations and interact with native speakers.

Furthermore, community support in language development creates opportunities for language exchange and practice. By implication, it can be concluded that having a strong community support system plays a significant role in fostering language development among individuals. According to Lavrenteva and Orland-Barak (2020), community support in language development can provide students with opportunities to engage in real-world practice through community service projects such as volunteering at local shelters, assisting with ESL classes for immigrants, or participating in language exchange programs.

Furthermore, community support in language development encourages multilingualism within the community. By implication, these findings suggest that communities that value and support multilingualism have a positive impact on language development. Ouedraogo (2021) points to an issue that community support in language development not only motivates and encourages individuals to pursue their language learning goals, but also provides resources and opportunities for practice and improvement. When community members show interest in and support for an individual's language learning journey, it creates a sense of accountability and responsibility for the learner to continue progressing.

Furthermore, community support in language development fosters a supportive and inclusive environment for language learners. In other words, when language learners feel supported and included within their community, they are more likely to experience positive language development. Wilcoxon et al. (2021) indicate that community support for language development not only provides students with opportunities to practice their language skills in real-world settings but also exposes them to a wide range of perspectives and experiences. By interacting with individuals from different backgrounds and cultures, students are able to expand their vocabulary, improve their communication skills, and gain a deeper understanding of the English language.

Furthermore, community support in language development enhances students' competencies in English through connecting individuals with native speakers for conversation practice. This suggests that having access to native speakers for conversation practice does indeed positively affect language development within a community setting. According to Nguyen (2017), community support in

language development plays a crucial role in fostering mentorship opportunities for students seeking to improve their English skills. Students can receive personalized guidance and feedback in a more informal setting by connecting with English-speaking community members.

CONCLUSION

Cultural diversity is crucial in understanding the connection between language and culture, as it exposes students to different linguistic styles and expressions, fostering a more inclusive learning environment. It promotes a culturally sensitive mindset, fostering a welcoming classroom environment. Cultural diversity also allows students to share their experiences, fostering a sense of respect for diverse perspectives. Participation in cultural holidays and traditions enhances appreciation and understanding of different viewpoints. Cultural diversity also enhances collaboration and communication among students, increasing vocabulary and language proficiency. It also helps students develop effective communication skills and tolerance toward others. Cross-cultural interactions enhance accents and serve as a check and balance, leading to a more well-rounded skill set. Engaging in cross-cultural communication enhances the practice of English in authentic and meaningful ways. Community support in language development helps to provide access to resources such as books and educational materials, and offers language classes and workshops for all ages. Further, host cultural events that promote language and communication skills, bring opportunities for language exchange and practice, encourage multilingualism within the community, foster a supportive and inclusive environment for language learners, and connect individuals with native speakers for conversation practice.

RECOMMENDATION

In the line of cultural diversity, the recommendation is that educators in Buvuma District should actively incorporate culturally diverse content into their English language curriculum to better support students' language learning. By embracing and celebrating the different cultural backgrounds of their students, teachers can create a more inclusive and engaging learning environment that fosters language development. Additionally, providing opportunities for students to learn about and appreciate various cultures can help them become more open-minded and tolerant individuals, ultimately contributing to their overall academic success.

Schools and community members should work together to create opportunities for students to practice and improve their English language skills outside of the classroom. This could involve hosting language learning events, providing resources for language practice at home, and encouraging community members to engage in conversations with students in English. By fostering a community-wide commitment to language development, schools in the Buvuma district can create a more enriching and effective learning environment for their students. This collaboration between schools and communities has the potential to significantly affect students' English competencies and set them up for success in their academic and professional lives.

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List of abbreviations

FGD-	Focused Group Discussion
St.	Saint
BoG	Board of Directors
Bp	Bishop

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Tryphena Nabejja- Study developer, pretested research tools, Data collector, Data entry, and analysis.

Joseph Muyunga- Supervised the Study.

Eric Niringiyimana- Co-author of this research.

Data availability

Data is available upon request.

Informed consent

There was full disclosure; full comprehension, and respondents voluntarily consented to participate in the study.

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