THE AFRICAN STORYBOOK AND TEACHER IDENTITY

by

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Abstract

The African Storybook (ASb) is a digital initiative that promotes multilingual literacy for African children by providing openly licenced children's stories in multiple African languages, as well as English, French, and Portuguese. One of the ASb pilot sites, a primary school in Uganda, served as the focal case in this research, while two other schools and libraries were also included. Data was collected from June to December 2014 in the form of field notes, classroom observations, interview transcripts, and questionnaires, which were coded using retroductive coding. Based on Darvin and Norton's (2015) model of identity and investment, and drawing on the Douglas Fir Group's (2016) framework for second language acquisition, this study investigates Ugandan primary school teachers' investment in the ASb and how their identities change through the process of using the stories and technology provided by the ASb. The findings indicate that the use of stories expands the repertoire of teaching methods and topics, and that this use is influenced by teachers' social capital as well as financial factors and policies. Through the ASb initiative and its stories, the teachers began to imagine themselves as writers and translators; change agents; multimodal, multiliterate educators; and digital educators, reframing what it means to be a reading teacher. Teachers' shifts of identity were indexical of their enhanced social and cultural capital as they engaged with the ASb, notwithstanding ideological constraints associated with mother tongue usage, assessment practices, and teacher supervision. This exploration of teachers' resourcefulness, needs, and realities provides a foundation for enhancing existing practices.

Lay Summary

The African Storybook (ASb) is a digital initiative that promotes multilingual literacy for African children by providing children's stories in African languages, as well as English, French, and Portuguese. Field notes, classroom observations, interview transcripts, and questionnaires from an ASb pilot site and two other schools and libraries were analyzed. Based on Darvin and Norton's (2015) model of identity and investment, this study investigates Ugandan primary school teachers' investment in the ASb and how their identities change through the process of using the stories and technology provided by the ASb. The findings indicate that the use of stories expands the repertoire of teaching methods and topics. Through the ASb initiative and its stories, the teachers began to imagine themselves as writers and translators, change agents and multimodal, multiliterate, digital educators. These changes in identity reflected teachers' enhanced social and cultural capital as they engaged with the ASb, notwithstanding several constraints.

Preface

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This study was approved by the University of British Columbia's Behavioural Research Ethics Board (UBC BREB Number: H14-00788) under the original project title: *Digital storytelling, early reading, and the African Storybook Project*.

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List of Acronyms

ASb	African Storybook
CCT	centre coordinating tutor
CODE	Canadian Organization for Development through Education
CPD	continuous professional development
DFG	Douglas Fir Group
EFA	Education for All
GDP	gross domestic product
HIV/AIDS	human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immune deficiency syndrome
ICT	information and communication technologies
LFE	lingua franca English
NCDC	National Curriculum Development Centre
NGO	non-governmental organization
NLS	New Literacy Studies
OERs	open educational resources
PDF	portable document format
PE	physical education
PLE	Primary Leaving Exam
PTC	Primary Teachers' College
RtL	Reading to Learn
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SHRP	School Health and Reading Program
SMT	senior man teacher

SST	Social Studies
SWT	senior woman teacher
UBC	University of British Columbia
UgCLA	Uganda Community Libraries Association
UGX	Ugandan shillings
UPE	universal primary education
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USD	United States dollars

Transcription Legend

[text]   descriptions or clarifications

–   pause or change in utterance

=   overlapping speech

…   omitted text

Acknowledgements

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Introduction to the Study

Uganda is a landlocked country in East Africa and one of the poorest countries in the world, ranking 165 out of 176 countries measured by gross domestic product (GDP) at purchasing power parity per capita (World Bank, n.d.). This is despite a growth in GDP since the late 1980s, which is currently at 4.6 per cent. Part of the reason for Uganda's poor performance, and the improvements over the last three decades, is the civil war and conflicts that raged in the country after independence. Since the civil war ended in 1986, the Ugandan primary education system has been growing and expanding, but great challenges remain. In the mid-2000s, teacher absenteeism was soaring at 27 per cent, but only 10 per cent were absent due to illness (UNESCO, 2014).

Primary education in Uganda is undergoing great change. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Education for All (EFA) represent an international trend to support universal primary education. With the introduction of universal primary education (UPE) in 1997, enrolment rates doubled, but the increase in quantity has not been matched by an increase in quality of education, as dropout rates, reading performance, and completion rates have not notably improved (Altinyelken, 2010a). It is estimated that only one in three children who start primary school continue up to the last grade in sub-Saharan Africa[1] (UNESCO, 2014). There are many reasons why children do not complete primary school, but one key reason, some scholars

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[1] In keeping with much on the academic and development literature, I henceforth write "Africa" as a short form of sub-Saharan Africa (except when precision is required), which is culturally and developmentally quite distinct from Northern Africa.

argue, is that children are "pushed out" of school since they do not understand the language of instruction, as opposed to dropping out because of lack of motivation (Skutnabb-Kangas, 2008).

The quality of education depends on a number of factors, and their interdependence can be complex. Some factors that are key to educational quality in Uganda and comparable countries include the quality of teacher education, student–teacher ratio, language of instruction, availability of textbooks, and availability of other literacy materials. This dissertation focuses on one of these aspects, namely reading materials (children's stories) in English and a local Ugandan language called Lugbarati[2], as well as the part that teachers play in the process of making use of these stories in early primary education.

The scarcity of reading materials in African schools, particularly in local languages, has been highlighted by many researchers (e.g., Altinyelken, 2010b; Magara & Batambuze, 2009). Print materials in schools and libraries such as textbooks and storybooks are paramount for providing children with adequate reading resources and exposure to print, especially in places where there are few print materials available outside school. Many teachers attempt to address the challenge of lack of books by making wall charts, word cards, and other resources. Yet in spite of these efforts, such resources cannot match books in scope or complexity.

The lack of storybooks to support early reading development in African schools is the major driving force of the African Storybook (ASb; Welch & Glennie, 2016a, 2016b; Welch, Tembe, Wepukhulu, Baker, & Norton, 2014). The ASb was launched in 2013 by the South African organization Saide and seeks to promote multilingual literacy for young African students

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[2] The language is sometimes referred to as *Lugbara* and sometimes as *Lugbarati*. The latter is increasingly common and seems to be preferred by the Lugbara ti Board (http://www.lugbarati.org/en/home-page). The morpheme *ti*, which means "language", is sometimes joined and sometimes not on their webpage.

through the provision of openly licenced digital stories in multiple African languages, as well as English, French, and Portuguese, which are official languages on the African continent. The ASb has a powerful interactive website, and hundreds of stories have been developed for the three pilot countries of Uganda, Kenya, South Africa, as well as over a dozen other African countries, which are freely available for download, translation, and adaptation. Furthermore, new stories can be written and uploaded by teachers, parents, librarians, and other community members.

While other non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and government programs have published and printed thousands of children's stories for African schools, virtually none of these are available online. This situation means that once a project ends, often after a three- to five-year funding cycle, the stories become unavailable, and other initiatives will have to spend large amounts of time and money on recreating similar materials. To avoid this problem, ASb's model focuses on making stories available through an online repository under Creative Commons licenses. In the three pilot countries (not counting Lesotho, with just one site) there are a total of 14 pilot sites at the time of research, predominantly primary schools, which have been given support to use the website and report on their experience of using, writing, and translating stories (African Storybook, n.d.).

One of these pilot sites, Arua Hill Primary School (henceforth "Arua Hill") in the small town of Arua in north-western Uganda, is the main site of this research. From July to December 2014, I carried out fieldwork in Arua Hill while I stayed at Arua Core Primary Teachers College. I also did fieldwork at two other primary schools and two school/community libraries in the region, but the main focus of my research, and hence this dissertation, is on Arua Hill. This research is part of a decade-long tradition of research in this area led by my supervisor Dr. Bonny Norton. My research was perhaps only possible, and at the very least greatly facilitated,

by the prior work done by Norton and her colleagues Dr. Maureen Kendrick and Dr. Margaret Early, as well as the former students that Norton and her colleagues supervised, including PhD graduates Shelley Jones, Harriet Mutonyi, Juliet Tembe, Lauryn Oates, Sam Andema, and Master's graduates Carrie-Jane Williams and Doris Abiria.

1.2 Problem Statement

Literacy rates in early primary school remain low in Uganda, despite concerted efforts from the government and non-governmental organizations, including a new curriculum, universal primary education, and large projects to promote literacy (Piper, 2010). Government initiatives and NGO interventions include comprehensive efforts on in-service training, textbook development, local language orthography development, provision of supplementary readers, and collaboration with educational officials, including efforts to scale up interventions (e.g., Lucas, McEwan, Ngware, and Oketch, 2014; Mango Tree, n.d.; RTI International, n.d.). The success rate of such interventions has varied, but often the outcomes have been lower than expected (Ngware et al., 2014; Sailors et al., 2014; Schweisfurth, 2011), despite comprehensive programs and large investments. Further complicating the situation is the question of how scalable such efforts are (Dubeck, Jukes, Brooker, Drake, and Inyega, 2015). Common approaches such as in-service training, "train the trainer" models, providing books for individual pupils, and developing materials in underserved languages, are all resource intensive. Realistically, the large number of teachers in Africa are unlikely to have the opportunity to take part in extensive training or comprehensive literacy initiatives. This further raises the question of the appropriateness of striving for "best practices", which presupposes adequate resources and satisfactory implementation, and may not sufficiently take into account existing practices and conditions.

Like many other African countries, Uganda is a multilingual nation, which poses a challenge in providing educational materials and teacher training that can adequately meet curricular demands. Of the country's 43 recognized languages (Government of Uganda, 1992), just over 30 languages are used for instructional purposes in schools (LABE, FAWEU, & UNATU, n.d.). In most of these languages, however, reading materials are scarce, and the titles that are available in bookstores are usually unaffordable to most people. Books in English are more prevalent, but are similarly prohibitively expensive for most Ugandans.

The shortage of textbooks and reading materials in Ugandan schools is a major challenge, since reading practice is paramount to develop good reading skills (Krashen, 2004). Particularly detrimental is the dire lack of materials in local languages for lower primary school that are required to provide students with foundational reading skills. Although the curriculum states that the language of instruction in lower primary should be the local language (National Curriculum Development Centre [NCDC], 2008), teachers are struggling to teach reading in a language with few, if any, reading materials. The market for local language books is small, which drives prices for these books up, further exacerbating the situation. Poor and limited teacher training in how to teach local languages is also a contributing factor to low reading skills among students (Kyeyune et al., 2011). School libraries are few, and often little more than a collection of books in a cupboard or an office (Waruingi, 2009). There are approximately 100 community libraries in Uganda (Dent, 2012), but this is clearly not enough to cater to most students in the country, and the size, relevance, and appropriateness of their collections are not always optimal for lower primary students (Parry, 2011).

1.3 Purpose of the Study and Research Questions

Although literacy initiatives may help some schools and widen our understanding of literacy and teacher[3] support, there is also a need to investigate how teachers and schools can improve with less outside support, since this is the situation most teachers are in. Most initiatives to promote early literacy focus on training teachers in a particular set of methods and the use of textbooks to impart foundational skills, including decoding, and otherwise comprehend and construct meaning from text. Researching how teachers use stories to teach literacy in a context of limited methodological support, and what resources and circumstances influence and affect their use, will deepen understanding of teaching practices. This may also serve as a starting point for developing literacy initiatives and other forms of support based on teachers' needs and realities.

While the ASb represents one of many literacy interventions in Africa, it stands out by offering stories in digital format that can be projected onto a screen, but also by not providing a set methodology for the use of the stories or literacy instruction (cf. Lucas et al., 2014; Sailors & Price, 2015). This approach invites teachers to develop their own approaches to literacy instruction and story selection. The fact that the ASb provides stories without a manual or explicit guidelines on their use, allows researchers to explore how teachers integrate stories in their teaching of literacy on their own terms. We can thus come to an understanding of how teachers make use of supplementary readers on their own, and the resources, conditions, challenges, and identity positions they have to navigate in the process. This understanding can

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[3] I use "teacher" throughout this dissertation in a broad sense to also include the teacher-librarians who were part of this study.

inform other interventions and policies on supplementary and integrated stories in early literacy instruction in this part of the world.

The mere availability of stories on an online platform such as the ASb website does not necessarily translate into teachers using these stories. Even if they do use the stories, many questions remain: which stories; how, where, when, and how often they use the stories; and not least how they interpret the place of the stories in the larger educational context of curriculum, timetables, lesson planning, subject matter, language issues, and their own professional development and teacher identity. Teachers' investment in the stories from the ASb is in part a reflection of some of these aspects, such as their interpretation of the curriculum, but also others, which I will explore and analyze in this dissertation. These queries can be seen as aspects of the somewhat broader research questions:

1. In what ways is engagement with the ASb linked to wider educational practices in a small Ugandan town?
2. To what extent are teachers invested in stories from the ASb?
3. How does investment in these stories provide insight into teachers' identities in this context?

1.4   Significance of the Study

The significance of this dissertation is three-fold: On a theoretical level it explores how theories of literacy and identity can shed light on teacher professional development in poor and under-resourced schools, specifically the role of locally relevant digital and print children's stories, and how their use affects teachers' professional identities. Related to this is the question of practical significance: What can this dissertation contribute to pre-service and in-service teacher education as well as to teachers and educators? The novelty of the ASb is a unique

feature of this dissertation research. The opportunity to choose stories and the encouragement to create, write, translate, and adapt stories might engender a sense of ownership that other campaigns, sometimes known as "book floods" (Elley, 2000), are perhaps less likely to instil in teachers and other users.

Previous research has given examples of teachers creating meaningful and personally relevant texts with their students in Western countries (e.g., Cummins & Early, 2011; Early & Marshall, 2008), but in Africa such opportunities are few. Furthermore, at the core of the ASb is the notion of sharing, and the interactive online platform facilitates and encourages creation and sharing of stories, which adds another dimension of meaning to the creation of stories. This research also contributes to informing policies on pre- and in-service teaching, the use of English and local language stories in schools and libraries, and the use of digital technology on teaching in Africa.

1.5 Overview of the Dissertation

This dissertation consists of seven chapters. Chapter 1 introduces the area of study and the problems that this research addresses. It also provides a rationale for why this research matters, outlining its significance for theory, practice, and policy.

Chapter 2 reviews the literature on key areas of this research, including theoretical perspectives. This chapter begins with a brief introduction of a dominant paradigm in literacy research, which considers literacy as a locally situated social practice. Aspects that are central to this dissertation, including digital technology, literacy materials, and pedagogy, are reviewed. Two of the research sites in this study are community libraries, so this chapter also reports on research in this area, as well as students' reading preferences, which often overlaps with research on community libraries in Africa. The chapter concludes with a presentation of the theoretical

framework based on the concepts of identity and investment as theorized by Bonny Norton (2013).

In Chapter 3 I discuss the research design and introduce the participants and the five research sites, including the main one, the ASb pilot site Arua Hill Primary School. I proceed with presenting the data collection instruments and how I analyzed the data. This chapter also includes a discussion on collaboration between researcher and participants, which, I argue, is always present in research, but may differ in degrees of explicitness and other aspects. Ethical considerations regarding my research are also accounted for in this chapter, as are the limitations of this dissertation.

Chapter 4 addresses the first of the three research questions on the relationship between the wider educational practices and the ASb. I do this by introducing the initiative that is the focus of this research – the ASb. This chapter furthermore places this initiative in context, specifically education in Uganda, where the pilot site for this research is located. It also gives an account of the place of digital technology in education in Africa, which is the main mode of delivery for the ASb, as it uses a computer and projector to display stories in classrooms. Finally in this chapter I present the local context, including aspects of local language orthography and other educational interventions in the area that have a bearing on education in general, and the schools and libraries in particular. This chapter then sets the stage for a closer investigation of teachers into the use of stories and teachers' investment in the stories, which I turn to in the following two chapters.

In Chapters 5 and 6 I address the second and third research questions, respectively, concerning teachers' investment in the ASb stories and how this investment provides insights into their identities in this particular context. In addressing these questions, I offer an account of

the findings of this study, as well as a discussion of these findings. The first of these two chapters opens with a description of my experience of doing fieldwork, and how this process was relevant to the data collection and my understanding of the data. This chapter proceeds with a description of teaching and learning from the perspective of the teachers, as well as how I observed these activities. This teaching and learning is then contextualized by the support and skills development the teachers gained from the ASb and elsewhere, as well as financial and ideological factors that circumscribed their teaching. To conclude this chapter, I offer a discussion of these matters by focusing on teaching practices and the structuring forces of these practices in light of the theoretical framework on investment by Darvin and Norton (2015).

Chapter 6, which addresses the research question on teacher identities, applies the Darvin and Norton (2015) framework, and is organized around the three aspects of this model: identity, capital, and ideology. Each of these is discussed in turn with reference to the data, and the chapter concludes with an analysis of teacher investment, which the model seeks to theorize.

Chapter 7, the final chapter, summarizes the findings and concludes this research, and offers a list of recommendations for research, policy, and practice.

Chapter 2: Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

This research is framed with respect to a number of scholarly fields of inquiry, which is reflected in the many subsections of this chapter. The review of the literature is divided into nine sections, since language, identity, education, and information and communication technologies (ICT) are often inextricably linked in practice. This chapter is structured around the three research questions in order to provide a context and background to the research. Section 2.1, however, takes a step back and provides an outline of the underlying epistemology that informs this research, and indeed much research on literacy the last decades. New Literacy Studies and Multiliteracies are two (overlapping) theoretical approaches to literacy (in a broad sense of the word) that underlie much contemporary understanding of how we make meaning from our surroundings. With this general overview of the broader field of literacy research in mind, I proceed with five sections that together provide a foundation for the whole dissertation generally, while specifically addressing the first research question on the wider educational practices in Arua and West Nile. Section 2.2 discusses research on early literacy instruction in Africa, including the many challenges other initiatives have faced, whose aims are similar to those of the African Storybook. This helps provide an understanding of the ASb as part of a larger set of literacy interventions with similar goals of improving literacy, but often with very different approaches. Some interventions, like the ASb, rely on digital technology, which I present in Section 2.3, and printed literacy materials, which I review in Section 2.4.

Literature on pedagogy in the African primary school setting is the topic of Section 2.5, including teacher professional development and the notion of child-centred learning. Section 2.6 presents research on students' reading preferences, an under-researched field in Africa, but an increasingly important one as more and more stories and other literacy materials are made

available to students, not least through initiatives such as the ASb. Community libraries are strongly associated with voluntary reading and reading for pleasure, and the little research on reading preferences in the African context has mostly been carried out at community libraries. For this reason I review the literature on these two topics jointly. The two topics contribute to our understanding of literacy practices in the wider community, as libraries are important in supporting and supplementing the literacy instruction that takes place in schools.

Language is the topic of Section 2.7 – a contentious issue that often finds English pitted against local languages. Because of this tension, literacy providers have to strike a balance between insights from the research, policy stipulations, and local demands with regards to language in education. In this way, language – particularly the language of instruction – is intricately tied up with the wider educational practices in Uganda. Like language, technology in education raises heated debates as discussed in the fifth section of this chapter. Technology is often welcomed by policy-makers, parents, and other stakeholders as it is associated with a well-resourced modern educational system (Kim, Boyle, Zuilkowski, & Nakamura, 2016). However, the teachers who are responsible for using the digital technology often lack the training and experience to adequately fulfill stakeholders' expectations. A larger question is how technology can be made relevant and effective for improving literacy in the African context, which the ASb, along with other technology-centred interventions, attempts to address.

Together, these sections address the issue of the wider educational practices in the communities of the research sites, which are integral to the first research question, but also set the stage for the second and third research questions. The final two sections of this chapter, Sections 2.8 and 2.9, bring the review of the literature to a close by presenting the theoretical framework that informs this study. The final sections of this review of the literature also

contribute a foundation for the discussion and analysis in Chapters 5 and 6, which address the second and third research questions on teacher identity and investment. The first of these two sections introduces and explicates the model of investment that provides the theoretical frame, and discusses the core features of this model – identity, capital, ideology, and investment. The chapter concludes with a section reviewing the literature on (teacher) identity in Africa and elsewhere, as this is a fast-growing, but still emerging area of research, particularly in the African context.

2.1 New Literacy Studies, Multimodality, and Multiliteracies

In the last three decades, theory and research on literacy has grown and developed considerably. In reaction to earlier, cognitively oriented research, the term *New Literacy Studies* (NLS) has become the umbrella term for socio-culturally oriented perspectives on literacy, often informed by ethnographic fieldwork (e.g., Barton, 1994; Barton & Hamilton, 1998; Lankshear & Knobel, 2011; Street, 1984, 1993, 2001, 2005). Much literacy research in the previous decades focused on the differences between the written and spoken mode, and how the skill of writing, particularly alphabetic writing, influenced human cognition and social organization. Literacy was seen as a set of independent skills that could be acquired, and would have similar effects on people regardless of the social context and the uses they made of these skills (e.g., Goody & Watt, 1963; Ong, 1982/2002). In reaction to this, Street (1984) argued that literacy, and our understanding of literacy, is always shaped by ideologies; there is no neutral "nature" of literacy that can be uncovered by "objective" means. In Street's words, "the meaning of literacy depends upon the social institutions in which it is embedded" (Street, 1984, p. 8).

In the edited volume *Literacies across educational contexts* (Street, 2005), Street expresses his views on education and how his theory has relevance for practice. Central to this is

a perspective on learning that goes beyond the narrow cognitive focus of teaching skills to one that includes the social context of learning and draws on students' existing practices and goes beyond the traditional emphasis on print literacy. The authors in this volume write about literacy that goes beyond one particular setting, using concepts like *mediating*, *bridging* and *crossing*, and these terms are used about home/school, spoken/written, and local/translocal. In terms of practice, this could include making genres and styles explicit and demonstrating how they are grounded in institutional power relations.

The reconceptualization of "literacy" that took place in the 1980s and 1990s now commonly includes non-verbal ways of conveying meaning, such as visual, auditory, and kinesthetic modes. Some authors still use the term *new literacies* to capture this expanded notion of literacy, notably digital (verbal and non-verbal) creation and interaction (Lankshear & Knobel, 2011). Other scholars prefer the term *multimodality*, which stresses the joint use of multiple modes (e.g., visual, aural) to refer to the meaning-making process (e.g., Early & Yeung, 2009; Kendrick, 2016). This recognition of other modes has led to great emphasis on visual analysis (e.g., Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006; Rose, 2001) and exploration of how digital technology provides new affordances of reading and writing, integration of text and media, and collaboration (Lankshear & Knobel, 2011; Rowsell & Walsh, 2011). Research on multimodality is also concerned with how different modes affect and are affected by social interaction (Kleifgen, 2006).

While *multimodality* can be seen as a conceptual lens or a methodological approach, *multiliteracies* was developed as a pedagogical tool for drawing on multiple modes in teaching (Rowsell & Walsh, 2011). The group of scholars attributed with the creation of multiliteracies conceptualize literacy in this sense as forms of *design* (New London Group, 1996). In addition to

linguistic design as a mode of meaning making, the group suggests audio design, spatial design, gestural design, and visual design. None of these modes is new in their own right – graphs, dance, sound effects, and other forms of conveying meaning have existed for a long time. But given the relatively new presence of digital technology, particularly its ubiquity, interactive features, and other advances that have led to new social interactional patterns and new possibilities, the concept of multiliteracies is particularly relevant to the world we live in.

The new literacies, particularly in their digital and interactive form, have wide implications: "The affordances of new media have revolutionized social literacy practices: New orthographic and discourse conventions are proliferating, authorship is moving from individual construction to collaborative remix, and genres such as games have become canvasses for complex literacy practices" (Lotherington, 2011, p. 227). Some of the affordances of ASb include remixing, versioning, and translating stories – stories that may have been told through generations, but in a written form will usually be attributed to a single person. In this way ASb is part of the new trend towards blurring traditional boundaries related to literacy. All the ASb stories are also illustrated, which is likely to facilitate the reading of the story as well as invite pupils to anticipate and talk about the story, which I will turn to in Chapter 5.2.

2.2 Education in Uganda

After independence in 1962 the education system in Uganda was considered relatively good (Altinyelken, 2010a), but the political chaos and civil war that ravaged the country in the following two decades severely damaged the educational system (Altinyelken, 2010b). The state of education is reflected in poor student performance and retention. After the introduction of universal primary education and the dropping of school fees in 1997, enrolment rose

dramatically (Grogan, 2009). However, in 2003 only 22% of the 1997 cohort graduated from P7, which suggests that retention is a bigger challenge than enrolment.

There have been several educational reforms in Uganda since independence (Altinyelken, 2010a). In 1992 the Government White Paper on Education recommended the use of the mother tongue as the language of instruction up to P4, while English was to be used as the language of instruction from P5, and "area languages" (regional languages) was to be taught as a subject (LABE et al., n.d.). This was implemented with the current *Thematic curriculum*, introduced nationwide in 2007. The curriculum emphasises a set of themes across all subjects, child-centred learning, and mother tongue instruction in the Lower Primary Cycle, which is Grades 1–3 (Altinyelken, 2010b). Each academic year is divided into 12 themes with a total of 36 sub-themes (one per week), which cut across all subjects, and are intended to provide cohesion and an integrated learning experience. The themes are broad, such as "Health in our sub-county/division" and "Livelihood in our sub-county/division", and are intended to reflect the students' everyday lives. Previous subjects like "Social Studies" and "Science" have been merged with the subject "Literacy" in an attempt to integrate subjects and provide a stronger focus on literacy in the local language (Lugbarati in Arua).

In the subjects English and Literacy in Grade 3 (P3), "reading/tactile", "listening and speaking", and "writing/Brailling" are the major components, in addition to "vocabulary" and "structures" in English (NCDC, 2008). A search for "stories" and "story" in the P3 curriculum gave a total of 226 hits, such as "Reading stories describing the environment" and "Predicting endings of stories" (NCDC, 2008). Similarly, a search for "poem" gives 40 hits, the majority without reference to a specific topic, such as "reading a poem". The subject "English" is a separate subject of the curriculum. Specific learning outcomes are described as follows:

The major expected learning outcomes of this cycle are that children will develop:

- basic literacy, mathematics concepts, and life skills and values, in a first language or familiar language, at a level that will enable the child to mature and be prepared for further learning;

- sufficient skills in English to act as a basis for developing English as the medium of instruction in the Upper Primary Cycle;

- an appreciation of their culture and the roles they can play in the society. (NCDC, 2008, p. 3)

Despite this attention to reading, the scarcity of reading materials in African schools, particularly in local languages, makes this difficult to implement (Altinyelken, 2010b; Magara & Batambuze, 2009). Print materials in schools and libraries, such as textbooks and storybooks, are of paramount importance for providing children with adequate reading resources and exposure to print, especially in places where there are few print materials available outside school (see Chapter 2.4).

The 2013/2014 *Education for All Global Monitoring Report* (UNESCO, 2014) draws on an extensive body of research to outline the educational challenges facing Africa, including the fact that over a third of children do not reach Grade 4 (P4), and that over half of those who do reach P4 are not learning basic reading skills. Such findings, contextualized in a range of recent research in language education (e.g., Bamgbose, 2014; McIlwraith, 2014; Norton, 2014b; Romaine, 2013), present an image of crowded classrooms, lost educational opportunity, gender disparities, urban/rural divides, and lack of reading materials (Altinyelken, 2010a; Magara & Batambuze, 2009). The African Storybook notes that conventional publishing models, which rely

on economies of scale, are unable to provide sufficient numbers or variety of books in the multitude of languages on the African continent (Welch & Glennie, 2016b).

2.3   Digital Technology in African Classrooms

The notion of digital literacy can be seen as part of the larger umbrella term of multiliteracies. In the context of Africa, digital literacy is often associated with the digital divide – the acute discrepancy between the Global North and the Global South in terms of access and skills regarding ICT (Fuchs & Horak, 2008). The narrow focus on technology and connectivity has been critiqued for ignoring the fact that

> access to ICT is embedded in a complex array of factors encompassing physical, digital, human, and social resources and relationships. Content and language, literacy and education, and community and institutional structures must all be taken into account if meaningful access to new technologies is to be provided. (Warschauer, 2003, p. 6)

This view of digital literacy, which takes into account social resources and relations, is cognizant of local conditions. It is also in keeping with the theoretical understanding of literacy within new literacy studies. Andema, Kendrick, and Norton (2010) argue that ICT might have potential in Africa, but successful implementation should consider local conditions, including conditions for contributing to global knowledge, not just passively retrieving information. Oates (2009) gives an indication of some of the shortcomings of open educational resources (OERs) with regards to African languages and culture, arguing that they tend to be English-centric, which goes against the philosophy of access to information and openness that is part of the OER movement.

Prinsloo (2005) advances that digital devices such as computers play a different role in different social contexts. The meaning of such devices is situated in local practices, and can depend on power relations and social circumstances. The term *digital divide* tends to focus on technical aspects and shortcomings of technology in developing countries, rather than the circumstances in which technology is used and people's purposes of using technology. This can be seen as a parallel to the concepts *autonomous* and *ideological* models of literacy (Street, 1984). Rather than assuming that technology has an intrinsic value and will bring about particular changes or provide particular opportunities, researchers should investigate the local effect of technology; what it means to people in a particular context.

A similar perspective that focuses on the centrality of local conditions with regards to ICT in Africa is Osborn's (2010) concept of *localization ecology*, which is associated with the tradition of language ecology (van Lier, 2004, 2010). "Localization" refers to a set of technical adaptations required to make software and content appropriate and relevant to a given location, including the broader efforts to create a system where software, content, and technology serve a community. Central to this is language, since the use of an appropriate language is key to being locally relevant. This includes text/encoding features, such as Unicode, fonts, and keyboard input methods; content aspects, such as web and software content; and interface aspects, including translation and terminology development.

There is little research supporting the effects of information and communication technologies (ICT) for educational outcomes in Africa (Piper, Jepkemei, Kwayumba, & Kibukho, 2015), and questions have been raised about appropriate monitoring and evaluation methods (Hollow, 2010). A major critique of the use of ICT, and technology more generally, is the often implicit assumption that the technology itself will bring about change, and that the

emphasis on technology comes at the expense of the educational and social aspects that ultimately determine its use (Fajebe, Best, & Smyth, 2013). Another line of critique relates to the relevance and appropriateness of the usually constructivist pedagogy that often accompanies ICT interventions, raising questions about underlying assumptions and the risk of imposing Western pedagogical traditions on Africa (Hollow, 2010).

Despite these cautions, the potential of ICT for education is widely embraced by African policy makers (Piper et al., 2015) and is subject to a vast range of interventions and, increasingly, research. The ASb invites teachers to use a laptop to access its website and a projector to deliver these stories to their pupils. This mode of delivery differs from most other ways reported in the literature, such as e-readers, cell phones, laptops, tablets, and an e-granary.

Although research on e-readers and other devices has found some benefits to literacy (e.g., Jere-Folotiya et al., 2014; Piper et al., 2015), some question the legitimacy of such claims (JBS International, 2014; Wagner, Castillo, Murphy, Crofton, & Zahra, 2014). The One Laptop Per Child program, which is present in 11 African countries (One Laptop Per Child, n.d.), is arguably the best-known educational intervention providing devices in the hands of children, but in Rwanda and more generally it has been critiqued for being used by teachers rather than pupils (Fajebe, Best, & Smyth, 2013; Warschauer, 2003). Another device that offers access to large amounts of information is the e-granary, a searchable hard drive database nicknamed "Internet in a box", has been shown to positively affect students' sense of future possibilities (Norton, 2014a).

Kendrick, Chemjor, & Early (2012; see also Kendrick, Early, & Chemjor, 2013) discuss how ICT resources are "taken up" by teenage girls in an after-school journalism club in Kenya. Thirty-two teenage girls were equipped with a digital audio recorder and camera, and an Internet

connection was provided to the school's computer lab. The researchers collaborated with the after-school journalism club teacher, one of the co-authors of the paper. The technology had a different status in this poorly resourced community compared to rich countries and places where it was ubiquitous. The technology imparted status and facilitated shifts in power relations. In addition to learning about the use of ICT, the girls shifted their identity performance, developed journalistic competence, and challenged hierarchical distinctions. There were also indications of growing writer activism and new audiences. These activities took place after school, and might not have been possible within the formalized structures of the traditional classroom. However, there were also challenges, including misuse of technology, such as the access that Internet connectivity gave to exams online (Kendrick, Chemjor, & Early, 2012).

Piper and colleagues (2015) suggest that teachers and teacher trainers/educators might be more appropriate recipients of devices in ICT interventions, partly for cost-effectiveness reasons. Hollow (2010) raises the question of whether ICT efforts should be directed towards secondary and tertiary education, where there are fewer and more advanced students, and the pedagogical benefits might be higher. Oates (2012) studied how primary teachers in Gulu, Uganda, used ICT for planning and carrying out lessons, in English and the local language. The ICT equipment and Internet access was provided by the research project that this study was part of at the University of British Columbia. The study found that the teachers appreciated the use of technology and used it in planning and carrying out lessons and formed peer networks to help each other. But there were a number of challenges, including excessive focus on the equipment at the expense of developing human resources, and problems with the equipment and Internet access, which sometimes led to truncated learning since time was not spent efficiently.

Whether, and more importantly *how* teaching and learning of literacy and English can be supported through ICT, remains a key question in a time when educational quality is at the centre of the research and policy agenda for Africa (Norton, 2014b). The ASb's approach of an online database and projecting stories is a novelty. At the outset it was not clear how this will work, let alone compare with other digital modes of delivery. The online repository of stories is also available for printing, and as part of this research I printed booklets that the teachers used (see Chapter 4.5.2). This is a form of hybrid approach that combines the versatility of the digital and the familiarity and gadget-independence of the print medium. However, successful use of digital devices (and technology more generally) in primary schools do not only, not even primarily, depend on the technology itself or its localization. Rather, the structural support and social context in which they are being used are key. Cell phones, e-readers and projectors do not teach themselves – it is the teachers' integration of such technology, and the structural framework and conditions they work in, that ultimately determine the benefits and contributions of any technology. Teachers' agency and structural working conditions are thus central to the question of the place of technology in education, which requires a theoretical framework that places teachers at the centre of analysis (see Chapter 2.8).

2.4 Literacy Materials

There is little doubt that literacy materials such as storybooks are important for literacy development, since print materials are required to read, and research has repeatedly demonstrated the importance of reading (Clark & Rumbold, 2006; Garan & DeVoogd, 2008; Krashen, 2004). Not only are such texts important for the development of literacy in the mother tongue, they also serve as the foundation for the development of literacy in other languages (Cummins, 2006), a very important consideration in a country of 37 million people where English is the official

language and over 40 African languages are spoken (Lewis, 2009). Equipping classrooms with books is a way of making stories available to children, and some studies report on the success of such book floods (Elley, 1991, 2000; Mangubhai, 2001; McGill-Franzen, Allington, Yokoi, & Brooks, 1999; see also Kevane & Sissao, 2008). In Uganda, however, storybooks (and textbooks) are often lacking, particularly in local languages (Dent & Goodman, 2015; Ssentanda, 2014).

Books found in African schools and libraries are often donated (sometimes discarded) from Western countries, reflecting foreign curricula, themes, and imagery (Dent & Yannotta, 2005; Rubagumya, 2009; Waruingi, 2009). However, the market for children's storybooks in Africa, particularly in African languages, is small, partly for economic and political reasons (Opoku-Amankwa, Edu-Buandoh, & Brew-Hammond, 2014), and partly because many languages have few speakers.

Since the introduction of formal schooling, teachers have relied heavily on chalk and talk as their main resource for teaching literacy (and other subjects), and thus have had little opportunity to develop teaching methodologies for using storybooks in their teaching. This is slowly changing, as education, particularly primary education, is receiving increasing support and attention from governments and donors (Altinyelken, 2010a).

The last two decades have seen a boost in primary education across Africa, starting with higher enrolment rates in many countries, which paved the way for a shift in focus towards quality education (Gove & Wetterberg, 2011). This shift has entailed a greater focus on the language of instruction, since lack of understanding of the language of instruction makes literacy development, and a meaningful education more generally, much harder (Cummins, 2001; Trudell, 2013). This shift also increased the attention towards other aspects of quality education,

such as class size, teacher training, textbooks, and other literacy materials. While considerable efforts in Uganda went towards building more schools in the mid-2000s to meet the goal of universal primary education, the focus is now on the above-mentioned quality aspects, as well as school leadership and other features of education (Lucas et al., 2014). Several interventions in Africa have coupled provision of supplementary readers with an element of teacher training, but with mixed results, as discussed in the following paragraphs.

In 2000 and 2002, the Minds Across African Schools Club in Uganda gave 150 poorly resourced schools in and around Kampala a library-in-a-box, containing 300 non-textbook reading materials. The researchers found that the books were often left in the box unused (Muwanga et al., 2007). Research from Kenya on the provision of textbooks to rural primary schools similarly point to a lack of outcome, which the authors attributed to the students' low English proficiency (Glewwe, Kremer & Moulin, 1998, 2009). These and other experiences of limited use or poor outcome has led several scholars to point out that some teacher training or support may be necessary, or at least beneficial to increase the use and potential of storybooks, as research from the United States indicates (McGill-Franzen et al., 1999).

A project in South Africa provided 60 schools with 300 storybooks each, but an evaluation of 20 of the schools showed that books were not used much, which was attributed to lack of training (Nassimbeni & Desmond, 2011). In response to that, the teachers received training, which gave some positive effects, but still one quarter of the schools did not display the books in a library or classroom collection.

These studies report on the provision of print materials such as storybooks without any other support or follow-up suggest that providing books alone may not be enough. But even with some elements of training, the provision of storybooks does not always lead to desired outcomes.

In an intervention in rural South Africa that included teacher training, three preschools were given 120 children's books. This improved children's performance on several measures, but the teachers did not use the storybooks as often as they were asked to, and one school hardly used them at all (Pretorius & Machet, 2008).

Other studies also report that equipping schools and teachers with books and training does not always lead to notable improvements. Ngware and colleagues (2014) report on an impact evaluation of an early literacy and numeracy intervention in Kenya and Uganda carried out by the Aga Khan Foundation from 2009 to 2011. They found that there was no indication of improvement of numeracy in any of the countries, and a small increase in literacy levels in Uganda only. They further suggest that prior experience with interventions that have not shown results might create lack of expectations with the schools that participated.

A project by United States Agency for International Development (USAID) in collaboration with local researchers in Malawi describes an intervention where schools were equipped with about 4000 books in English and Chichewa (Sailors et al., 2014). The teachers were coached in methods such as read-alouds, guided reading, and comprehension strategy. The research was designed as an intervention, with an intervention group and a delayed control group. Using quantitative and qualitative methods, the researchers found that although the coaching model was successful in changing teachers' beliefs, it had less effect on their actual practice. Nevertheless, they conclude that the coaching method they used and the local connections were central to the relative success of the project. This and other studies (Hardman et al., 2009; Piper & Korda, 2010; Pouezevara, Costello, & Banda, 2012) have provided teachers with textbooks, readers, and other materials and used coaching as a way of training the teachers.

However, it can be hard to identify and isolate the benefits of certain interventional features, such as coaching, from other aspects of the intervention (Kim et al., 2016).

Whereas these studies point out some shortcomings and challenges, a few studies offer more positive results. In South Africa, READ Educational Trust provided many books and trained teachers in how to use these books in local languages, and the schools (including control schools) were compared for reading results. The schools with books, especially the high-implementing schools, performed best in reading in the local language and English (Sailors, Hoffman, Pearson, Beretvas, & Matthee, 2010).

Maganda (2012) describes an intervention at a primary school in rural Tanzania where the author started a writing workshop for the two sixth grade classes at the school. In the workshop the students worked in groups, but wrote individual stories on topics of their choosing in Swahili (their dominant language), and these stories were compiled into books. Parents and teachers were used as a source of information, and the topics were on factual issues like education, health, and the history of their school. The analysis showed that through the workshop the students and teachers were *repositioned*: The role and relationships of and between students, teachers and parents changed – for the better. Although the author did not frame this study theoretically as a question of identity, it resembles other work with this focus, notably Cummins's and Early's (2011) *Identity texts*, but also to some extent research on technology in education in Uganda.

In another study from Tanzania, Plonski (2009, n.d.) writes about the donations of millions of American books to secondary school libraries through the NGO *Books for Africa*, and found that students increased their level of English fluency when they had access to the donated books. The author also raises the issue of relevance of the donated books in terms of content and

language, but concludes that for financial reasons and the current role of English, the books are a valuable contribution. The teacher and administrator participants of the study claimed that the donated books did not cause any "cultural harm". However, it seems this concept of "cultural harm" was conflated with the use of books in English (as opposed to the content of the books), since all quotes from participants on this issue addressed the use of English (as opposed to Kiswahili). There was no mention of local/African books other than the need for textbooks that matched the national curriculum, and a recommendation to provide "books more tailored to the local cultural situation and especially tailored to the local syllabus/curriculum could be very valuable" (Plonski, 2009, p. 122).

These studies point to different outcomes of initiatives where teachers have been trained and given books, suggesting that storybooks and other literacy materials may be an integral part of literacy development, but materials alone are unlikely to be sufficient to engender change, and large interventions may not always meet expectations. Local differences, and perhaps differences between interventions, play a central role in their success, as do other factors. These studies on the (quantitative) benefits of using stories and other print materials have been an important contribution to the field, but they have hardly addressed the question *how* teachers use stories in their teaching, and why they sometimes opt not to teach with stories even when they are made available. How teachers negotiate their identities in the process of teaching stories is also related to this line of inquiry. Answers to these questions might help explain why some interventions are more successful than others.

To explore these questions, there is need to investigate teachers' conditions, understanding, and practice of teaching and learning, as well as teachers' identities, which this research aims to address. Unlike many other initiatives, the ASb did not provide extensive

training or a specific methodology on the use of stories, but offered basic computer training, requested translations and original stories, and followed up with occasional visits. In this way the ASb left it mostly to the teachers themselves to fit the stories in with the rest of the teaching schedule and the curriculum. This approach also gave the teachers the agency to decide how to go about teaching the stories, and whether to use the booklets or project them – or not use them at all. This space – and responsibility – for the teachers to take the initiative (or not) to use the stories opens up possibilities for researching qualitative aspects of storybook use, including teacher agency and teacher identity, which few other studies have done.

2.5 Pedagogy

The question of quality education is often raised in the context of education in Africa. This is partly a reflection of a shift away from quantity – notably the rates of enrolment and retention, which were important indicators in the 1970s and 1980s. But concern for quality at the school level is also a reflection of the need to upgrade facilities, materials, school management, and, perhaps most importantly, the quality of teachers' performance in the classroom. Teaching in Africa is often critiqued for its teacher-centred rote learning and fact-based recitation (e.g., Buckler, 2011; Hardman et al., 2009; O'Sullivan, 2006a, 2006b). Large class sizes, lack of materials, workload, and the nature of the exams contribute to maintaining this practice. As Buckler puts it, "Well-thought out, pedagogically innovative lesson plans are often abandoned in favour of what is or what is perceived to be possible" (Buckler, 2011, p. 248).

Apart from what is made possible by material, organizational, and structural constraints, innovative pedagogies are also a matter of what teachers think is good pedagogy. This includes how they respond to attempts of innovation, typically from professional development and other forms of training, often from NGOs. Understanding and supporting teachers is central to research

on education in Africa, but reports on teacher education are discouraging (e.g., Bhalalusesa, Westbrook, & Lussier, 2011; Kyeyune et al., 2011; O'Sullivan, 2010). The issue of teachers' understanding and practice are closely related, since understanding informs practice (and vice versa), and since changing teachers' practice is difficult without also attending to their conceptions of teaching and learning (Akyeampong & Stephens, 2002).

Research on African teachers' knowledge and conception of pedagogy is limited, but some aspects have been identified. Tabulawa (1997, 1998) points out that the teachers in his study saw teaching as imparting knowledge, and learning was seen as acquiring and assimilating knowledge. Akyeampong, Pryor, and Ampiah (2006) also report on this banking view of education (Freire, 1972) in their research with about 50 teachers and head teachers from Ghana. But further inquiries – using more practically oriented examples instead of eliciting statements – showed a more nuanced view that leaned strongly towards a constructivist view of learning. Continuous assessment was mainly seen as imposed from above, but some teachers gave examples of how they practiced continuous assessment. In other words, the approach to obtaining teachers' views mattered greatly.

> In visualizing real contexts where children actually learned, as opposed to participating in the rituals of schooling, teachers articulated a consistent understanding of how learning is built up through social interaction and the interrogation of ideas. Constructivist learning was therefore recognizable to the teachers; it had just not received any validation. (Akyeampong et al., 2006, p. 164)

At the same time, the relationship between what teachers think and what they do is complex, and the two are not necessarily in congruence (Borg, 2006). Akyeampong and

Stephens (2002) point out that teachers in their study generally gave much support for group work, but this was not reflected in practice. Sailors and colleagues (2014) report similar findings in a large literacy intervention in Malawi.

Research on literacy interventions in Africa tends to focus on the intervention as a whole, reporting on the measurable effects of teacher training and support, and the effects on student performance (e.g., Piper & Zuilkowski, 2015; Piper, Zuilkowski, & Mugenda, 2014; Sailors et al., 2014). However, such studies provide little insight into what such projects mean for the target audience and implementers – the teachers. A focus on the individual teacher allows for a different vantage point, and reminds us that behind the quantitative measures are individual teachers in large classrooms who navigate professional and personal challenges while seeking to meet the expectations of parents, school leadership, the government, and NGOs (O'Sullivan, 2002; Tao, 2013, 2014).

There are many programs that include elements of teacher professional development as an integral part in a bid to change teachers' practice. Large interventions often use scripted lessons (e.g., Davidson and Hobbs, 2013; Piper & Korda, 2010; Piper & Zuilkowski, 2015; Piper et al., 2014; Pouezevara, Costello, & Banda, 2012), which require teachers to learn how to follow the many steps that make up a lesson. Other programs have other ideas for how teachers should change, often in the form of learner-centred methods (e.g., Sailors et al., 2014).

The notion of learner-centred education central in the Ugandan curriculum (NCDC, 2008). Learner-centred education is prevalent, according to Chisholm and Leyendecker, to the point of being "one of the most pervasive educational ideas in contemporary sub-Saharan Africa and elsewhere" (Chisholm & Leyendecker, 2008, p. 197). Learner-centred education is sometimes seen as intrinsically good (Barrett et al., 2007; Vavrus, Thomas, & Bartlett, 2011), but

increasingly questioned and problematized for not being appropriate or feasible in Africa (e.g., Chisholm & Leyendecker, 2008; Guthrie, 2011; Mtika & Gates, 2010; Schweisfurth, 2011). At the same time, the term is not always clearly defined. Child-centered learning is on the one hand seen in broad terms as concern and care for the individual student. On the other hand, it's a more technical approach emphasising appropriate tasks that promote an active construction of meaning (Dembélé & Lefoka, 2007). Benson (2012) writes that the notion of learner-centred language learning entails a shift away from grammar and vocabulary acquisition and towards "acquisition of language skills, participation in communicative processes and the construction of language knowledge" (Benson, 2012, p. 31). Guthrie (1990, 2011), a strong opponent of the haphazard introduction of Western-style pedagogy in non-Western countries, offers a warning about what good intentions that lack proper insight can do: "The schools of lesser-developed countries are littered with the remnants of attempts to change the quality of teaching. Well-meant but inappropriate reforms of syllabuses, teacher training, teaching styles, inspection systems, and examinations have been marked by considerable failure" (Guthrie, 1990, p. 219).

2.6 Students' Reading Preferences and Community Libraries

Most African students have had so little access to materials for voluntary reading that the question of their reading preferences and engagement with stories and other literature might seem irrelevant. But getting students to read is not just about providing books – students read more when they get to choose the books they want, and are given the opportunity to read (Krashen, 2004). As the national economies grow and government and NGO initiatives increasingly focus on providing books (as discussed above), there is increasingly a need to also pay attention to *what* students like to read.

While children's reading preferences is an established field of inquiry going back to 1889 in North America (Weintraub, 1977), such research about Africa is very scarce, where most research on children's engagement with books and stories is carried out in community libraries (see below). Libraries, and in parts of Africa particularly community libraries, have been important for adult literacy campaigns, but are now more frequently associated with voluntary reading and reading for enjoyment, sometimes contrasted with the more regulated reading that typically takes place in the classroom. Reading for pleasure is a core part of the ASb's philosophy, which requires high-quality, engaging stories that appeal to young readers. The stories are not part of a textbook with comprehension questions, which are common in printed African storybooks. This is not to say that the stories from the ASb are fundamentally different from other stories, but it is important to pay attention to the children's interest and preference in reading.

Research on reading preferences in Africa is quite limited, but Pawlitzky's (2005) studied adults' reading preferences in Kenya. She found that there were considerable differences between people depending on which languages they were able to speak (L1, Kiswahili, English). Speakers of English tended to be younger, better educated, and interested in reading about current affairs and politics, while religious materials was popular with all groups. There were also differences in terms of socio-economic status, reading ability, and motivation, and Pawlitzky argues that such differences are important to keep in mind when it comes to promoting reading.

Community libraries differ from schools in that they promote rather than impose reading, making them important supplements to schools, and ideal sites for investigating voluntary reading and reading preferences. With this in mind, the following reviews research on

community libraries in Uganda and Africa, particularly with regards to children's reading preferences.

Indications are strong that the number of community libraries and related institutions in Africa is growing, even mushrooming, in several African countries (Dent, Goodman, & Kevane, 2014; 2012; Dent Goodman, 2008; Doiron & Asselin, 2011; Ernst, 2012; Lehnhard, 2012; Namhila & Niskala, 2013; Parry, 2011). The scholarly literature on community libraries has also increased from the 1980s to the present, in absolute numbers as well as the breadth of perspectives (Stranger-Johannessen, 2014b). There is also an increasing support for community libraries from NGOs and individuals, with organizations such as African Library Project,[4] Book Aid International,[5] Books for Africa,[6] Canadian Organization for Development through Education (CODE),[7] Friends of African Village Libraries,[8] Osu Children's Library Fund,[9] Room to Read,[10] and Uganda Community Libraries Association, setting up and/or supporting community libraries, school libraries, and other libraries across Africa.

Central to much of the literature on community libraries in Africa and the developing world in general is the need to look beyond restricted views of libraries as purveyors of literacy and knowledge. This is sometimes expressed in terms of "reading culture," where community libraries are seen as a valuable contribution to school and home practices (Doiron & Asselin, 2010, 2011; Kachala, 2007; Lehnhard, 2012; Stranger-Johannessen, 2014a, 2014b). A reading

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[4] https://www.africanlibraryproject.org
[5] http://www.bookaid.org
[6] https://www.booksforafrica.org
[7] https://www.codecan.org
[8] http://www.favl.org
[9] http://www.osuchildrenslibraryfund.ca
[10] https://www.roomtoread.org

culture presupposes adequate and appropriate materials, but also a culture where reading of various kinds is part of everyday life. A community library usually addresses the supply of materials and reading space and makes efforts to promote reading. But identifying contributions to reading culture can be difficult in practice, and the literature on community libraries in Uganda and other African countries tends to focus on materials offered, statistics of borrowed items, and programs for adults, among other aspects. Not much is written about ways in which librarians actively engage with users at the library, or how they promote books and reading through outreach activities.

In the academic literature on community libraries in Africa, Uganda appears to be the country with the highest number of studies. One library in particular, Kitengesa Community Library,[11] has been the subject of numerous studies from various perspectives. This is perhaps not very surprising given that one of the rationales for setting up this library was that it would serve as a research site (Parry 2009, 2014). Parry (2002) reports about Kitengesa Community Library in Uganda that many students read aloud or lent the book they had borrowed to friends and family members, so that each borrowed book was effectively read by several people. Parry (2005) expands on the topic of borrowed books by providing an overview of what users borrow, based on the library's records of the collection and borrowed books. She points out that fiction, particularly traditional stories, are very popular, contrary to the popular notion that Africans don't read for pleasure. Equally important is the fact that more than 60% of the library's 1618 books were borrowed in the course of 14 months. The library had a very strict acquisition policy – initially only buying Ugandan books, and selectively accepting foreign books into its

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[11] http://kitengesalibrary.org

collection. This is in stark contrast to the stories of libraries in Africa full of donated foreign and often inappropriate books (Dent & Yannotta, 2005; Rubagumya, 2009; Waruingi, 2009).

Another study from Kitengesa Community Library (Dent & Yannotta 2005) confirms all user groups' (students, teachers, and other adults) interest in storybooks, and also stresses the importance of the acquisition policy. The study draws on an array of data collection methods and sources, including interviews (39), focus groups (8), door-to-door visits, spontaneous interviews, smaller group interviews, and circulation and patron statistics (from a database). In spite of this wealth of data there is little information in the article stemming from the qualitative data. The data from the interviews are mainly used to quantify reading preferences and habits. All students interviewed stated that they shared books with family and friends. Girls read more, and more varied literature, than boys. Teachers were eager users, and used the library to prepare lessons. The library staff had set up informal literacy activities, and at least five adults had learned to read and write because of this. Some adult users said they were able to attend important meetings and gained business opportunities after learning to read and write through the library. Lastly, the authors argue that a relevant collection can increase the amount of leisure reading taking place, and they take this as a sign that a reading culture is developing. In later studies Dent (2013, 2015, 2016) suggests that a reading culture may be developing, and that reading serves a number of purposes, including personal improvement, reducing isolation, and learning independence.

The question of the relevance of materials and the language they are written in is a recurring concern in the literature. As noted above, Plonski (2009, n.d.) dismissed the notion that the donated books in English could cause cultural harm. Parry (2011) discusses whether community libraries in Africa can be seen as linguistic imperialism (Phillipson 1992), inasmuch as they offer mainly, sometimes exclusively, books in English/French donated from overseas. To

counter this rather pessimistic perspective on libraries, Parry describes the state of community libraries in Uganda in general and that of Kitengesa Community Library in particular, and argues that this library has taken several measures to ensure that it is not a foreign imposition. Materials at Kitengesa Community Library are largely purchased locally, and all titles available in the local language Luganda have been added to the collection. The Luganda books are typically short, illustrated children's stories written and published in Uganda.

In the Western context, educators recommend that education of students from cultural and linguistic minorities should draw on cultural and linguistic practices that are familiar to those children (Marshall & Toohey, 2010). This connection between students' home culture and languages is particularly important in Africa, where colonial curricula and donated books have had a strong influence. Like the books at Kitengesa, the stories in the ASb repository are available in both English and African languages (although some African languages have few titles), and almost all stories are written and illustrated by Africans. While this may ensure a relatively high degree of relevance, generally speaking, regional and cultural differences within Africa may not always be fully reflected. For instance, the illustrations and stories have so far largely come from southern and eastern Africa, and people in Muslim attire are under-represented. The ASb collection consists almost exclusively of fiction (mostly stories, but also some poems, songs, and rhymes), which might be seen as a limitation, given that non-fiction titles are popular reading materials among students everywhere (e.g., Dent & Yannotta, 2005; Mohr, 2006). On a more philosophical level is the question of whether Western schooling, stories, and technology can be seen as a form of neo-colonialism, similar to the dominant role of English on the continent, as Phillipson (2009) argues. It is beyond the scope of this dissertation

to discuss these issues in greater depth, but the question of language in education in Africa merits further remarks.

2.7 Language in Education

The question of language is one of the major issues in education in Africa (Bamgbose, 2014; Brock-Utne, 2000; Kamwangamalu, 2016; Romaine, 2013). There are some 2110 languages spoken in Africa (Lewis, 2009), and only a few Sub-Saharan countries have one language spoken by the vast majority of its population as their mother tongue. However, these countries (Botswana, Burundi, Lesotho, Madagascar, Rwanda, and Somalia, not counting small island states) also have several ethno-linguistic minorities. This abundance of languages, coupled with a colonial history that for the most part promoted the colonial languages, seems to speak in favour of the use of a colonial language as the medium of instruction. However, Brock-Utne (2000) argues that English, French, and Portuguese are colonial languages imposed on students and impede their education, as most of them do not speak these languages well enough. Skutnabb-Kangas (2000) considers learning and speaking one's mother tongue a linguistic human right – a right that is seriously under attack, particularly in Africa. There are many arguments on either side, and this is a heated debate among teachers, parents, donors, policy makers, and ordinary citizens.

Most researchers have been strongly advocating mother tongue instruction for several years of schooling. There is ample research in support of instruction in students' mother tongue, since students need to understand in order to learn (Cummins, 2000; Heugh, 2011; Ouane & Glanz, 2010; Trudell, 2013). Nevertheless, there is considerable resistance towards this, notably from parents, but also from teachers and policy-makers. English is seen as a language of science and technology, a means of social advancement. Many parents prefer English from day one,

based on the assumption that English as the medium of instruction equates optimal acquisition of the English language (Banda, 2000; Obondo, 2007; Opoku-Amankwa, 2009; Tembe & Norton, 2008; Ssentanda, 2016). Several African countries, including Uganda, transition from instruction in the local language to English in P4. But this is too early, research suggests (see Heugh, 2011 for an overview).

In a study from southeastern Uganda, Tembe and Norton (2011) studied parents' and other stakeholders' knowledge of the new curriculum that introduced the mother tongue as the medium of instruction in lower primary. Their findings support a previous study (Muthwii, 2004), indicating that parents suspect policies on mother tongue to be politically, rather than socio-linguistically, motivated. Through interviews the authors also explored the participants' own use of language, as well as their opinions about language in instruction. The authors found an ambivalence towards the language policy as expressed in the curriculum: the local language (Lunyole) was important for their and their children's identity, and tied to home culture, while English was strategically important and tied to school and professional and academic success in life. The participants also raised concerns of a potential conflict between the language of exams (English, at the end of primary school) and the language of instruction (the local language, in lower primary). The language of wider communication in the region, Luganda, was mentioned as a possible language of instruction since Luganda had served as a language of instruction previously, and it had a more established orthography and materials (e.g., there is a daily newspaper in Luganda). Summing up, three languages (or languages at three levels) were of concern, and were considered important for different reasons and in different contexts: the local language, the regional language, and an international language.

In multilingual contexts where students do not share a mother tongue, the little research available on instruction in the predominant mother tongue suggests that potential language barriers are not a problem and all students benefit (Walter & Chuo, 2012; Walter & Trammell, 2010). Nyaga and Anthonissen's (2012) research from Kenya suggest that the policy of mother tongue instruction is interpreted in various ways in multilingual classrooms, with differences between urban and rural schools, and "the interpretations of the term [mother tongue] are as varied as the teachers themselves are" Nyaga & Anthonissen, 2012, p. 871). In Uganda, Abiria (2011) found that many students speaking other mother tongues had learnt the local language Lugbarati better than English.

The educational language policy in Uganda has changed several times, with emphasis shifting between local languages, regional languages, Swahili, and English (Altinyelken, 2010b; Meierkord, Isingoma, & Namyalo, 2016; Tembe & Norton, 2008). On the school timetable, language subjects take up nine periods in a week (more than any other subject), which gives an indication of the centrality of languages (mainly English) as a subject. The Ugandan English curriculum describes the role of English as follows: "English is an important international language, used widely not only in Anglophone countries but also by millions of speakers of other languages as their common means of communication" (NCDC, 2013, p. 7). The latest curriculum reform stresses that the student's "home language or at least a language that is familiar to the child" (NCDC, 2008, p. 5) should be the language of instruction in lower primary school (in rural areas), while P4 should serve as a transitional year to English, after which all instruction should take place in English. Abiria, Early, and Kendrick (2013) give an account of how Ugandan students and teachers deal with and resist studying in English, a language that the students only master to a limited extent. Translations, drawings, drama, demonstration, and

group talk were among the strategies used. Teachers expressed concern that if they focused too much on the local language, the Ministry of Education and Sports might consider them "saboteurs" (p. 582).

Language is one of the most central elements of one's identity (e.g., Guardado, 2010), and like identity, language is connected to power: different languages and language varieties have different status and value in different contexts, and these vary over time. In Africa the question of language is central to educational debate, although it is more often seen in pragmatic and societal terms (such as availability of materials, importance of a unifying and international language) than in psychological or interpersonal terms. There is little research on what different languages and different uses of languages in education mean to students. By and large, the linguistic fault lines in Africa go between the mother tongue on the one hand, and the colonial language, such as English, on the other (Gunderson & D'Silva, 2017).

English is one of the most widely spoken languages in the world and is an official language in 56 countries. One of the countries is Uganda, where English serves as an official, unifying language, as well as a means of international communication (Plonski, Teferra, & Brady, 2013). In spite of being an official language, English is spoken as a second language and only by about 10% of the population in Uganda, although this number is dated and probably too low (Crystal, 2003/2012; estimate from 2001). This is something of a puzzle: English is an official language, yet few people grow up speaking it as their mother tongue. At the same time, English is the medium of instruction from the middle (or beginning) of primary school, and is widely used in politics, commerce, and other elite areas of communication. Providing a numerical estimate of the number of speakers is anyway problematic, as there is s cline of

bilingualism (Hosali, 2005) – many people speak some English, but there is considerable variation in the degree of proficiency.

English is also an international language, and this is often cited as one of the reasons for making it the official language and language of instruction in schools (Nsibambi, 2000). In urban areas of Uganda, particularly among the middle class and in formal settings such as higher education and other public institutions, English is often widely used (Tembe, 2006). As such, English is the prevalent, or even *de facto* language in certain areas and domains in Uganda. This raises the question of whether English can be seen as a "foreign" or imposed language in Uganda (Ramanathan, 2006). But English remains a language used by only some of the population, but it is highly desired as a vehicle of economic advancement and social status.

The debate about English in post-colonial countries (and elsewhere) stretches far beyond Uganda and Africa. The global spread of English worldwide is sometimes embraced as a blessing of globalization (e.g., Crystal, 2003/2012), while others see it as an example of a negative effect of globalization, where a colonial tradition of English dominance diffuses to the detriment of other languages and multilingualism (Phillipson, 2009; Phillipson & Skutnabb-Kangas, 1996; see also Skutnabb-Kangas, 2000). Pennycook (2003, 2007a, 2007b) rejects both these stands, arguing that the effect of globalization is cultural hybridity, where English is taken up to express local cultures and practices (see also Norton Peirce, 1995). But he is also cognizant of the potential problems associated with English in a post-colonial context.

Some scholars (Canagarajah, 1999, 2004; McKay, 2010; Norton, 2017; Pennycook, 1994, 2007a, 2007b) stress the fluid nature of languages and emphasise the agency of language users, arguing that "English" is no longer a uniform construct. Instead, they point to the plurality of World Englishes, claiming that language users appropriate and adapt English for their own

purposes. Key to the notion of World Englishes is the shift to a "pluricentric view of English" (McKay, 2010, p. 91), where varieties such as Indian English and Ugandan English compete with British English. Canagarajah (2007, p. 928) argues, "in the case of LFE [lingua franca English], there is no meaning for form, grammar, or language ability outside the realm of practice. LFE is not a product located in the mind of the speaker; it is a form of social action". For assessment, Canagarajah (2006) calls for a move from a focus on grammar and competence (which may depend on one variety) to strategies of negotiation, pragmatics, and performance.

Since English is a second language to most students in Uganda, teachers have an additional burden of teaching both language and subject content at the same time. The use of drawing, drama, and other multimodal means of communication are one way of bridging language gaps. Kendrick, Jones, Mutonyi, and Norton (2006) posed the question of how students can learn English through multimodal ways of teaching, and use primary students' drawings as a window into their perceptions of the English language. The students acknowledge the importance of English, and depict reading in social contexts, including with siblings, friends, and teachers. Somewhat older girls were given cameras, and were asked to write journals and talk about the experience of taking photos and using the manual and camera. The girls saw this as an opportunity to learn operating a camera (which, one girl suggested, could give them a job as a photographer), learning photographic techniques (artistic skills) or opened doors for learning about other technologies (confidence), and improve and practice their English skills by using the manual and participating in discussions and other activities (language development). The use of cameras (including the manual), writing of journals, meetings and discussions were, at least to some degree, *authentic* literacy events (Purcell-Gates, Jacobson & Degener, 2004); they served a purpose of their own, as opposed to only serving the purpose of learning English.

The illustrated ASb stories are also a way for students to engage with English in a meaningful way. At the same time, the stories give the teachers more choice with regards to language, as the stories are available in both English and Lugbarati (and other African languages). This option also brings the contentious question of language to the forefront, with NGOs, policymakers, school administration, parents, all having opinions about the language of instruction and all trying to influence the teachers (see Chapter 5.7 for a discussion of such influence).

2.8 Theoretical Framework: Identity and a Model of Investment

Classroom practices are in large part shaped by the teacher, and cannot be reduced to a mere set of technical approaches or techniques applicable across classrooms and cultures. This insight has led to increased focus on the teacher and his/her role, including teacher identity (Varghese, Morgan, Johnston, & Johnson, 2005). Identity has proved to be a powerful analytical tool for investigating language learning and teaching in diverse international contexts (e.g., Barkhuizen 2016, 2017; Cheung, 2015; De Costa, 2015; De Costa & Norton, 2017; Morgan, 2004; Norton, 2013; Preece, 2016; Stille, 2014). While there are many perspectives on teacher identity (Beauchamp and Thomas, 2009), a strong trend is that of a poststructuralist view with an emphasis on the multiple and shifting nature of identity, which is constructed through discourse and practice (Block, 2007; Clarke, 2008; Norton, 2013; Varghese et al., 2005).

The notion of different practices is central to several scholars. Varghese and colleagues (2005) discuss the theoretical contributions of Tajfel (1978; social identity theory), Lave and Wenger (1991; theory of situated learning), and Simon (1995; concept of the image-text). Varghese and colleagues conclude with arguing for a multiplicity of theoretical perspectives on identity, as each perspective provides a unique contribution to our understanding. Varghese and

colleagues (2005) further distinguish between *claimed* and *assigned* identities; those that originate from oneself and from others, respectively. Related to this are *practice* and *discourse* – the two elements from which teacher identity comes and develops in relation to:

> [P]oststructuralist theories of language teacher identity present a concept of identity-in-discourse. In the social or group theories of language, teacher identity on the other hand presents a concept of identity-in-practice—language teacher identity is seen to be constituted by the practices in relation to a group and the process of individual identification or nonidentification with the group. (Varghese et al., 2005, p. 39)

Building on these concepts, Kanno and Stuart (2011) argue that teachers' identity develops through practice; teachers' practice and identity are intertwined and the two inform each other. They used the concept *identity-in-practice* to express how identity and practice constitute each other, and found that the teachers developed identities gradually – from identifying with students and focusing on formal aspects, to being more confident and identifying as teachers. Teacher knowledge is part of teacher identity, they argue, and the latter deserves more focus. Central to a poststructural view of teacher identity is the role of power in shaping identities and relations, including possibilities of agency and the space people have to resist and negotiate their identities (Zembylas, 2003).

Norton and Toohey (2011) provide a thorough overview of identity research, identifying common themes in their state-of-the-art article. They point out that identities are complex and shifting, and simplistic binaries like "motivated" and "unmotivated" do not do justice to this complexity. They further stress the centrality of power, as it is implicated in learners' opportunities to speak and the conditions under which their interactions take place. The "social

turn" in second language acquisition research (Block, 2003) has highlighted the socially

embedded nature of language learning and teaching. This has two implications, according to

Norton and McKinney (2011): there is need for a comprehensive theory of identity that places

the language learner in the larger social context, and one that addresses relations of power that

may determine the extent to which learners can participate in formal and informal language

learning settings. Identities are socially constructed, shifting, and even "possibly coexisting in

contradictory ways within a single individual" (Norton & McKinney, 2011, p. 73). These ideas

were put forth earlier by Norton, and have since been developed and refined.

Drawing on Bourdieu's work on language and power and Weedon's work on feminism,

Norton (Norton Peirce 1995; Norton 2013) developed a theory of identity that places relations of

power at the centre of language learning and teaching. Norton defines identity as "the way a

person understands his or her relationship to the world, how that relationship is structured across

time and space, and how the person understands possibilities for the future" (Norton, 2013, p. 4).

Previous research had predominantly emphasized personal traits and motivation, such as

learners' willingness to practice their language. Norton critiqued these views, arguing that while

language learners may be highly motivated, they may not be *invested* in the language practices of

their classroom if it is, for example, racist, sexist, or homophobic. While motivation is often

considered a characteristic of a learner, investment is theorized as co-constructed by learners,

teachers, and community practices, in the context of shifting relations of power.

The concept of investment is related to an understanding of identity as being variable,

socially constructed and intertwined with power relations, in keeping with the socio-cultural

paradigm as outlined above. Rather than seeing students as introverted or extroverted, motivated

or unmotivated, Norton argues that these traits vary over time, depend on the social context and

are tied to power relations. In her study of adult English learners in Canada, which the theory is based on, Norton found that all the participants were motivated, but "all the women [participants] felt uncomfortable talking to people *in whom they had a particular symbolic or material investment*" (Norton, 2013, p. 157, emphasis in original). Doctors and teachers, but also countrymen and women who spoke English, were mentioned as people with whom the participants felt inhibited in speaking English.

This work was originally developed for language learners, but it has been taken up and extended to teacher identity (e.g., Cheung, Said, & Park, 2015; Gao, 2012; Reeves, 2009; Stranger-Johannessen & Norton, 2017). Learner and teacher identities are connected since, as Norton (2017) notes, the promotion of learner investment often accompanies shifts in teacher identity, and conceptions of what it means to be a legitimate teacher. Like learners, teachers can redefine their relationship to the world – the social networks and communities they are part of – and claim more powerful positions from which to speak in order to "impose reception" (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 649).

As Cummins (2006) and Kramsch (2013) point out, the construct of investment has become increasingly influential in the field of language education, and has been integrated into the Douglas Fir Group (DFG, 2016) framework of second language acquisition. The DFG model, which "embrace[s] explicit educational goals for the field" (p. 21), locates identity and investment at the meso level, which focuses on sociocultural institutions and communities:

> Importantly, the institutions and communities at the meso level are powerfully
>
> characterized by pervasive social conditions (e.g. economic, cultural, religious, political),
>
> which affect the possibility and nature of persons creating social identities in terms of
>
> investment, agency, and power. Together, these institutions, communities, conditions,

and possible identities provide or restrict access to particular types of social experiences.

(DFG, 2016, p. 24)

Figure 2.1 Darvin and Norton's 2015 Model of Investment. Reprinted from "Identity and a model of investment in applied linguistics", by R. Darvin and B. Norton, 2015, *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, 35, p. 42. Copyright (2015) by Cambridge University Press. Reprinted with permission.

After 20 years of scholarly work within this framework of identity and investment, Norton saw the need to further develop this theory in response to dominant societal forces such as neo-liberalism and the digital revolution. Given our increasingly digital and mobile world (themes also dominant in the DFG framework), Darvin and Norton (2015) have developed an expanded model of investment, locating it at the intersection of identity, capital, and ideology (see Figure 2.1). They draw on Norton (2013) to conceptualize identity as multiple, changing, and a site of struggle; capital as associated with economic, social, and cultural resources (see Bourdieu, 1986); and ideology as "dominant ways of thinking that organize and stabilize

societies while simultaneously determining modes of inclusion and exclusion" (Darvin &

Norton, 2015, p. 72). With reference to research in both Uganda and Canada, Darvin and Norton

illustrate the ways in which the model might prove analytically useful as learners and teachers

negotiate increasingly invisible relations of power in the 21st century. The model also seeks to

bridge what the DFG describes as micro, meso, and macro relationships in language learning and

teaching. In this spirit, the 2015 model seeks "to go beyond the microstructures of power in

specific communicative events and to investigate the systemic patterns of control that

communicative events are indexical of" (Darvin & Norton, 2015, p. 42).

Apart from identity and investment, another component of the model of investment is

Bourdieu's concept of capital. Bourdieu (1986) distinguishes between cultural, social, and

economic capital – resources that a person accumulates over time in different fields. This study is

limited in scope to teachers' professional lives, and cannot give a thorough account of the

participants' habitus or full account of their forms of capital. Frank, Zhao, and Borman (2004)

used the notion of social capital to explain the diffusion of innovations (computer use) in schools

in the United States, moving away from previous work that was limited to functional, technical,

institutional, and individual factors. Social capital, operationalized as informal access to

expertise and responses to social pressure from fellow teachers, were as good at explaining the

use of computers as previously used measures had been. In this sense, social capital is the

potential of benefitting from social networks, such as in the workplace.

Economic capital is conventionally seen as the financial resources a person has or has

access to, such as property, which has a monetary value. In this dissertation, I focus not on the

economic capital the teachers already have, but the effects that precarious financial situations,

possibilities for earning more, and timeliness of salaries have on the teachers and their work. In

this sense economic capital is not a tangible resource that people already have, but – to varying degrees – access to these financial resources.

Writing about teacher agency in the context of the ASb, Welch (2015) draws on Darvin and Norton (2015) and reflects on what the initiative means for teachers' capital:

> It is being embraced as leading to **increased capital** – increased technology skills, which people understand as essential for participation in the global economy. But at the same time it acknowledges ordinary teachers' own capital – people's own stories, and people's own languages. On a global internet platform it shows off the language and cultural heritage of people whose languages or cultures are not mainstream. Existing identities are affirmed, but there is also the scope for **extending identity** according to desire. Both of these are essential for real professional growth. (Welch, 2015, emphasis in original)

Welch conceptualizes capital as a set of skills, but also references teachers' cultural capital in the form of stories and languages. Given the long history of donations of Western books with culturally foreign content that often fail to match African curricula (Dent & Yannotta, 2005; Rubagumya, 2009; Waruingi, 2009) and the precarious place of African languages in education (Heugh, 2011; Romaine, 2013), these are key aspects to take into consideration. Dagenais (2003) describes how Canadian parents consider multilingualism important capital for their children, and this is probably a view shared by many Ugandan parents, particularly the capital associated with speaking English. With regards to cultural capital, Darvin and Norton (2015) write:

> Functions that are valid in local settings are imposed on the ways of speaking of transnationals, and discourses only gain value when others grant them value. These two

points compel teachers to reflect on the importance of treating the linguistic and cultural

capital of learners as affordances rather than constraints and to question and reevaluate

the taken-for-granted value systems they use to assess this capital. (Darvin & Norton,

2015, p. 45)

Ideology is the fourth element of Darin and Norton's model, and also central to the

Douglas Fir Group framework, which locates ideology at the macro level. Ideologies are often

associated with abstract external forces, but as Douglas Fir Group (2016) make clear, ideologies

permeate all levels (micro, meso, and micro), such as policy and planning, and at the individual

level, access, investment, and agency. Dominant ideologies in a particular context influence

which pedagogies, languages, discourses, and practices are valued, and by the same token, which

are not valued. Ideologically valued practices tend to be supported through legal frameworks and

institutionalized practices, including language policies, learner assessment practices, and teacher

evaluation. In addition, teachers' classroom practices are informed by discourses on what

constitutes good teaching. With regards to ideology, it is important to keep in mind that few

ideologies are hegemonic. Some are changing, others are resisted, while others are

(re)interpreted in different ways. This ambiguity contributes to teachers' different responses to

the same policy, for instance. As we will see in Chapters 5 and 6, there are differences in

teachers' practices and conceptions of language, pedagogical discourses, and curriculum, and

these differences are part of the reason why teachers' investment in the ASb also differ. Related

to the notion of ideology and teacher investment are also learners' and teachers' hopes and

desires for the future, which are powerful sources of investment. Several studies from East

Africa, for example, have found evidence of the potential of digital technology to expand

students' and teachers' conceptions of themselves, and their hopes for the future (Norton, 2013).

2.9 Identity, Teachers, and Educational Change

There is a wider literature on teacher identity in other developing countries such as the United Arab Emirates (Clarke, 2008) and China (Tsui, 2007; Liu & Xu, 2011), but such research in African countries is still in a nascent stage, with little unity in the scholarly literature (however, see Stranger-Johannessen & Norton, 2017). Welmond's (2002) study from Benin takes a historical perspective on the role of teachers over time. Starting with a critique of the current neoliberal agenda, it identifies four schemata for teachers: Teacher as *phare* (beacon), *fonctionnaire* (civil servant), *sacerdoce* (dedicated teacher), and *efficace* (efficient teacher). Teachers' position and status in society has diminished over time in Benin, but this trend cannot be turned without consideration of the historical circumstances, contrary to the wishes of the neoliberal international development agencies.

In a study from Tanzania, Barrett (2006, 2008) also creates categories of teachers, in this case of individual teachers. A typology of three (one with two sub-types) types of teachers focuses on their personal relation to their profession, and the tensions herein. One type of teacher, the self-improvers, find that their job does not give them personal satisfaction, and they experience a conflict between their self-image and their profession. The types are indexical of age and gender, giving a seemingly more static view, but Barrett warns against letting such categories "fix" teacher identity.

Another approach is found by Norton and Early (2011), who discuss researcher identity within a study on digital literacy and identity in Uganda. They identify four identities they as researchers have in their interactions with the teachers they were doing research with. This shows the multifaceted nature of identities. Their study did not explicitly discuss the shifting and evolving nature of identities, perhaps because of the limited time of fieldwork. The current study,

however, inspired by Norton and Early (2011), takes this into account, facilitated by the longitudinal nature of the research.

Several other studies from East Africa have found evidence of the potential of digital technology to expand students' and teachers' conceptions of themselves, and their future aspirations. Norton, Early, and Tembe (2010), Norton, Jones, and Ahimbisibwe (2011) and Norton and Williams (2012) use Norton's (2013) construct *investment* in their research on an eGranary in a rural Ugandan community library, pseudonymously called Kyato Community Library. These studies have shown how access to an eGranary[12] – a hard disk of digital resources, gave students access to knowledge previously controlled by teachers, provided valued computer skills, and enhanced student expectations for the future, expanding the range of identities available to them (Norton, Jones, & Ahimbisibwe, 2011; Norton & Williams, 2012). In the preliminary findings, Norton and colleagues (2010) describe the excitement students and teachers show towards the eGranary and its potential, and raise the question of whether the eGranary will shift the identity of the teacher from the sole possessor of knowledge to that of a mentor or facilitator using the eGranary.

Norton and Williams (2012) studied six secondary school students' use of an eGranary at Kyato Community Library. The authors conclude that through increased knowledge and improved digital literacy skills the students have a wider range of "imagined futures and imagined identities" (Norton & Williams, 2012, p. 327), such as those of a student of higher education and a person who travels. The authors argued that students were invested in the eGranary because it expands a range of present and future identities for them.

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[12] http://egranary.org

Norton and colleagues' (2011) article is based on research with 12 young women, using interviews and qualitative questionnaires. The research project designed a health literacy course to help the participants use the Internet to locate information on HIV/AIDS, and sought to address the question of the users' investment in the language practices of the course. With access to the Internet and health information, the participants engaged in explorations of health, gender, information and other issues, and "were able to imagine and appropriate identities as autonomous learners, informed global citizens, and HIV/AIDS counsellors" (Norton et al., 2011, pp. 585–586).

A study from a girls' after-school journalism club from Kenya similarly found identity shifts as a result of the impact of technology, in this case an Internet connection, audio recorder, and camera (Kendrick, Chemjor, & Early, 2012; Kendrick, Early, & Chemjor, 2013). In addition to learning about the use of the technology, the girls shifted their identity performance, developed journalistic competence, and challenged hierarchical distinctions. There were also indications of growing writer activism that took place after school, and might not have been possible within the formalized structures of the traditional classroom.

While these studies were conducted with students, research from Uganda with teacher trainers also shows how access to technology can have significant effects on teachers' identities and conceptions of self. Andema (2014) equipped language teacher educators and teachers at a primary teachers' college with a digital camera to take photos of their surroundings. One of the female participants asserted that she felt "very powerful" and assumed a position of power and authority as she used the camera.

I feel very powerful like a man because I had never held a camera in my life. I have always seen only men carrying cameras and taking photos in big public functions like

may be independence celebration, political rallies and wedding ceremonies. But now as I move in the community taking pictures with my camera, I feel I am also very powerful, like a man. (Andema, 2014, p. 96)

2.10 Chapter Summary

This chapter provided an overview of the theories and literature pertinent to this field of study. At a broad level, I drew on frameworks of New Literacy Studies that consider literacy a social practice, and multimodality and multiliteracies, that theorize and highlight the multifaceted nature of literacy and its interconnectedness with non-print forms of meaning-making. With this broad understanding as a foundation, as well as an overview of education in Uganda, I proceeded to address the key areas that this research draws from and contributes to. I then turned to digital technology and literacy materials, both of which are central to the ASb. The use of materials is closely associated with pedagogy, and in this chapter I discussed research on experiences with using materials in the classroom. This chapter also reviews the literature on community libraries, which are important sites for print literacy materials and literacy engagement. Language issues permeate this dissertation, and I review the literature on English and the question of language of instruction, which are salient aspects of this research. To conclude this chapter, I presented the theoretical frame that informed this study – Darvin and Norton's (2015) model of investment, and research on identity more generally, in order to situate this research on teacher identity within the scholarly literature.

The next chapter presents the methodology employed in this research.

Chapter 3: Methodology

This chapter gives a detailed account of how the research was conceptualized, planned, carried out, and analyzed. Specifically, it presents the case study as a research design and the use of ethnographic methods of data collection, such as interviews and participant observation. It introduces the main research site – Arua Hill Primary School, which is also one of the pilot sites of the ASb. In addition to the main site, this chapter provides a brief introduction to the four other sites – two primary schools in Arua town and two libraries north of Arua, which also provided data for this research.

This chapter introduces the participants of this study from all five research sites: teachers, head teachers, librarians, and the centre coordinating tutor (CCT) of the district. (The CCT is a liaison between the government and a cluster of schools, who provides in-service training and otherwise supports the schools she is working with.) I interviewed all of these participants and the transcribed interviews constitute the core of my data. In addition to the interviews I also took field notes from observations in classrooms and elsewhere, and collected data in other forms, as outlined below. In the fifth section I turn to the analysis of these data, including the process of coding and developing themes that served to inform the analysis and thesis of the dissertation.

The researcher's role in the data collection is not always fully accounted for in written reports of research, which may inadvertently conceal aspects of the research process. As I argue in this chapter, the researcher is always an integral part of the research, and indeed the data itself. I further discuss my direct involvement in the research, partly by invitation of the participants, and argue that in social research in general, the notion of collaboration and researcher involvement should be considered a continuum that is present in varying degrees in all research. All research on human beings at most (if not all) North American universities, including the

University of British Columbia (UBC), needs a formal ethics approval. However, research ethics is more than filling out a form. I base the account of ethics regarding this research on some of Lipson's (1994) aspects of ethics: (a) consent procedures; (b) confidentiality and anonymity; (c) benefits, rewards, and risks; and (d) participant requests. To conclude this chapter, I discuss some limitations of this research.

3.1 Research Design

A research design provides the road map for a research project. But, as Yin (2014) notes, "a research design is much more than a work plan. The main purpose of the design is to help to avoid the situation in which the evidence does not address the initial research questions. In this sense, a research design deals with a *logical* problem and not a *logistical* problem" (Yin, 2014, p. 29, italics in original). The research design of the present study is that of a multiple case study (Duff, 2008; Yin, 2014) consisting of three institutions, each constituting a case, with the teachers' activities, including teacher-led literacy events, as the unit of analysis.

The purpose of case studies is to develop an in-depth understanding of the case(s) in question, or to explore an issue or problem through the study of a case. It is contested whether case study constitutes a methodology, or a choice of what is to be studied, and terms such as "comprehensive research strategy" and "strategy of inquiry" are also used to describe the nature of case studies (Creswell, 2013, p. 97). I view case studies along these latter lines, focusing on the strategies involved in designing the study. In this research the main case is represented by Arua Hill, with the other institutions providing illustrating and enriching examples that can shed further light on and capture additional nuances to the main case. As such Arua Hill is the *focal case*, while the other institutions are *peripheral cases*.

Case studies are bounded – delineated – by time and space, take place over time and involve detailed data collection, typically using numerous forms of data. Each school is considered a bounded case (Yin, 2014), and within each of these the focus is on what teachers do, plan on doing, and how they reflect on this. Although the cases are delineated geographically and temporally, the line between the case and its context is not sharp. For instance, parents and national exams do not clearly belong within the boundaries of a school in a physical sense, but are part of the larger context of the case. Exams, the curriculum, and other guidelines and documents do not fall squarely within or outside the school, attesting to the fluidity of case boundaries.

Case studies may be chosen to illustrate a unique phenomenon of particular interest, what is called an *intrinsic case* (Stake, 1995). Another type of case study is the *instrumental case*, which sheds light on a general phenomenon through the in-depth study of one or a few cases. In this research, Arua Hill was chosen since it is the only primary school ASb pilot site in Uganda, making it a "unique phenomenon" – an intrinsic case. At the same time the school is similar to the thousands of other primary schools in Uganda. The two other schools and libraries were chosen to expand the perspective of the data obtained from Arua Hill, and as such served an instrumental purpose. This mix of unique and general properties can be of value from the perspective of the generalizing potential of the study. Yin (2014) argues that a single case design can serve a revelatory function and pave the way for new research, but generally recommends (at least) a two-case design rather than one. He further points out that case studies can yield analytical generalization, where the theoretical insights from the case can be generalized to other settings. Duff (2008) emphasizes that contextualization of the research is important for what she calls "the transferability of findings" (p. 124). Contextualization can be on a theoretical,

methodological, and descriptive level, which adds to the importance of clearly describing all these in accounts of research.

The choice of research design should be informed by the researcher's epistemological stance – their view of knowledge. Purcell-Gates argues that there is a connection between ethnography and the epistemological stance of viewing literacy as a social practice (see Chapter 2.1). "This is because ethnography is grounded in theories of culture and allows researchers to view literacy development, instruction, learning, and practice as they occur naturally in sociocultural contexts" (Purcell-Gates, 2011, p. 135). Since the 1970s ethnography has been increasingly popular in language education research (Toohey, 2008). Heath and Street (2008) describe ethnography as a recursive process of collecting data, dealing with curiosity/hunches, and applying theory and concepts from the literature.

While I consider this a case study, ethnographic methodology, which usually emphasizes prolonged observation and emic (insider) perspectives, guided the collection of data (Heath & Street, 2008). Although this research draws on ethnographic methods, it differs from ethnographic studies in that ethnographic research doesn't start off with a pre-defined research question (Heath & Street, 2008). Another difference is that it does not attempt to describe the cultural characteristics of a culture-sharing group (Creswell, 2013), but rather is focused on the teachers' engagement with the stories within the larger context of their school and the wider community.

In order to contextualize a study in general, and case studies in particular, it is important to provide adequate contextual description so that the unique – and general – properties of case(s) in question can be properly understood (Yin, 2014). For this reason I include a description of the wider setting within which Arua Hill and the other sites are located, such as a

brief historical context, language issues, educational system, as well as the context of the specific project that drew my attention and eventually led to this research – the African Storybook (see Chapter 4). It is with this broader understanding in mind that lessons can be learnt from this and any other research, and case studies in particular, since the context is often decisive for what works and what doesn't – and why.

3.2 Managing exigencies

Not everything in research goes as planned. Although it is difficult to prepare for exigencies, knowing where to turn when a problem comes up is invaluable when doing research in an unfamiliar country. Practical and mundane matters like accommodation and first aid are easily manageable in one's home country, but can pose a challenge during fieldwork, particularly in developing countries. When I grazed my head on a rusty overhead shop sign during my first week of fieldwork and needed a tetanus shot, I wouldn't have known where to go had it not been for Sam Andema, whom I knew as a fellow PhD student at the University of British Columbia before he graduated in 2014 and returned to Uganda. Were all clinics equally reliable? In other ways, having close connections to people living in the area of research is not just a matter of practical benefit, such as knowing which medical clinic to go to. What might seem like a trivial matter – accommodation – can also be a great resource for research and building professional connections. Sam and his wife Doris[13] arranged for me to stay at the Arua Core Primary Teachers' College (PTC), also an ASb pilot site.

At the PTC I assisted in the computer lab and planned and carried out a workshop for the teacher candidates together with the PTC instructors. Even though the PTC was not one of my

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[13] I have used their first names throughout, as I have with the participants

research sites, the fact that several of my participants had studied there, and the students at the PTC were the future teachers of Uganda, meant that what took place at the PTC was closely connected to what took place in the classrooms of my research sites. Learning about how teacher candidates make schemes of work and lesson plans, and the central role these play, contributed to my understanding of these planning documents in the schools where I conducted my research.

The instructors and administration at the PTC were also very helpful, and together we worked on meeting Saide's expectations as stipulated in the memorandum of agreement regarding writing and translating stories for the ASb. Instructors and teacher candidates wrote stories, while the two computer lab instructors and I edited, typed, and printed them, so that the authors could revise the text one last time before we submitted it. All of this was important, but it pales in light of an incident where the principal intervened, thus showing the great value of the support of the people one is working with during fieldwork. The incident in question took place in September, and the following is part of an email I wrote to my supervisor:

> Let me start by recounting a disturbing incident that took place last week. Since I came here Doris helped me get a lady to deliver dinner and do my laundry. Last week I got a phone call from a man who was upset that the lady (his wife) who delivers my food also does my laundry. I told him she wouldn't do it anymore if that was a problem. Then he called again after midnight, and I got quite anxious. I told the lady not to come back for some time. The following day I was told that she had taken it badly and broken her husband's car window. The man continued calling, several times a day, but I didn't pick up. I spoke with Sam and Doris, and then with the principal of the PTC. As Sam and the principal advised I went to the police and made a statement. The principal spoke with the man who called me, and I think that sort of "settled" things, at least he's not calling me

anymore. I'm still cautious, but less shaken... (email to Bonny Norton, 17 September 2014)

I later learnt that the principal knew of this man from before, and had sternly made it clear to him that his behaviour was not acceptable, and that the police were now informed. This had a strong effect on him, she relayed, and I never heard from him again. It was a great relief to know that he would not call anymore, and with time I could put the whole incident behind me. But without the intervention of the principal I don't think I would have been able to sleep well at night. It is hard to imagine what this fieldwork would have been like without this support.

3.3 Research Sites and Participants

This study was conducted at three primary schools and two libraries in Arua District in north-western Uganda (see Table 3.1 for an overview). The participants represent staff at the three schools and two community libraries, and include teachers, head teachers, and librarians (henceforth "teachers"). All but one of the participants were female. Almost two in three teachers at Arua Hill are female (much higher than the national average), while in secondary schools the ratio is often the inverse. Within primary schools the lower grades are often taught by female teachers, as was the case at this school. Although the number of female teachers in Ugandan primary schools is approaching that of men, in secondary schools more than three in four teachers are male (UNESCO, n.d.).

In terms of work experience the participants varied from novices to experienced teachers. Since the ASb's target is children aged 6–9, that is, up to P3, the focus of research was on teachers in these grades, particularly teachers at the main research site. The main research site is Arua Hill Primary School, and most of the data stem from this school. Arua Hill is also one of the pilot sites of the ASb, and the only primary school pilot site in Uganda. Apart from being a

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pilot site, my supervisor Bonny Norton and I had personal connections to this site: Doris Abiria, the CCT based at Arua Hill Primary School, received her Master's degree at UBC in 2012 with Bonny Norton on her committee. I knew Doris through my previous visits to Uganda and work with a storybook project I initiated.

The other cases are two primary schools in Arua (Drari Primary School and Mvara Junior Primary School) and two school/community libraries (Mindrabe Primary School Library and Ombaderuku Primary School Library). These additional cases were chosen to include settings in which teachers and the school administration were not receiving any support, equipment, or training from the ASb, other than a set of booklets. Some schools and other institutions in Africa may have access to books, even if the quality and numbers are limited (see Chapter 2.4). However, even if they can access the ASb stories and project or print them, they are unlikely to get the technical, financial, and follow-up support that the pilot sites benefit from. In this way, including both a pilot site and non-pilot sites addresses the effect of the ASb and the use of digital technology in the delivery of stories. Nevertheless, the inclusion of the four peripheral cases cannot provide quantitative evidence, but an exploration into the use of stories with and without the presence of an NGO (in this case the ASb) with less hands-on involvement than most intervention studies (see Chapter 2.5).

The two other schools were selected on the basis of a suggestion by Doris. I asked her to pick two urban schools, and she made these recommendations partly based on location (ease of access) and partly because of need. She described Mvara Junior as a school that used to have good Primary Leaving Exam (PLE) results, but which over the last years has struggled to keep up performance and student enrolment. Drari was one of the poorest-performing public school in town, with large class sizes, so Doris thought that Drari would benefit from the support and

attention that being part of this research would entail, not least by receiving a set of printed

storybooks. A list of the schools and libraries can be found in Table 3.1.

Institution	Participants
Arua Hill Primary School	12 teachers, the head teacher, and the CCT
Drari Primary School	2 teachers, the head teacher
Mvara Junior Primary School	1 teacher, the head teacher
Mindrabe Primary School Library	2 librarians
Ombaderuku Primary School Library	1 librarian

Table 3.1 List of institutions and number of participants

3.3.1   Arua Hill Primary School

Arua Hill is a large municipal school in central Arua (see Figure 3.1 for location), and it

is bigger, better equipped, and more centrally located than most schools in West Nile, and

probably in the country as well. It was founded by Ugandans of Asian descent, but was taken

over by the government after Idi Amin expelled all people of Asian descent from Uganda in

1972. Its pupil population has increased over the years, possibly in response to good PLE scores,

which also help explain the school's good standing in the town, according to Doris. The

courtyard is kept clean by students, and a few trees, patches of grass and flowerbeds give it an

appealing and welcoming appearance (see Figure 3.1). The year before my fieldwork the head

teacher won the award for Best Head Teacher in the district, another indication of the good

standing of the school.

Figure 3.1 Arua Hill's courtyard

Doris has her office at Arua Hill and provides in-service training and other support to 70

schools. She is formally working for Arua Core Primary Teachers' College (PTC), however, and

also teaches there sometimes. At the time of research there were 1700 pupils and 34 teachers in

addition to the administrative staff. Although the school is government funded and primary

education is supposed to be free since the introduction of universal primary education in 2007,

the school charges school fees. Some of this money is used to pay for two additional teachers. I

decided to include P4 English teachers at Arua Hill in the study, since this is the grade for

official transition from mother tongue to English as the medium of instruction. (There were no

teachers of literacy or other languages in P4 at Arua Hill.) All the teachers in P1 through P3 in Arua Hill were invited to join the study. All of them joined except the mathematics teacher in P2, who was in her last year of service and did not want to start learning how to operate a computer at this stage in her career. One P3 teacher was transferred to P6 before I observed any of her lessons after the end of term two, when another teacher tragically died in a bus accident, and she is not a participant in this study. Doris, who was working out of Arua Hill and as such was involved in the ASb and its implementation, was a central participant in providing background and contextual information.

Name	Position	Additional role	Class	Subject(s)
Agnes	Teacher		3	Mathematics, Art and Crafts
Catherine	Head teacher			
Cezerita	Teacher		3	Religious Education, Library Hour, Music
Doris	CCT			
Eunice	Teacher		1	Literacy
Jane	Teacher	Senior woman teacher	4	English
Judith	Teacher	Assistant senior woman teacher	1	English, Religious Education, Physical education (PE)
Lucy	Teacher		2	English, PE
Mary		Assistant director of studies lower	1	Oral Literature, News, Mathematics
Milly	Teacher		2	English, Religious Education
Monica D.	Teacher	Head of infant section	3	Oral Literature, PE
Monica F.	Teacher		3	English
Pamela	Teacher		3	Literacy
Santurumino	Teacher		4	English; Music, Dance Drama

Table 3.2 List of participants at Arua Hill primary School

There are two "streams" (parallel classes) in most grade levels, with three streams in P3 and four streams in P4. Doris ascribes this to the high attrition rates after this grade, but it is also a reflection of a higher enrolment in previous years. Only those who pass P4 are allowed to continue, and so the number of students in the higher grades diminishes.

Figure 3.2 Two classrooms in Arua Hill

The school day starts with "morning prep"[14] at 7:30 am, for which parents pay teachers, in addition to the school fees. The regular lessons start at 8:30 am, but there is no distinction or break between the two lessons. P1 and P2 finish at lunch time, 1 pm, while P3 and above continue up to 3:30 pm with regular lessons, and three times a week up to 5 pm with "evening prep". These classes also have "prep" on Saturdays up until 1 pm. The school library is the size of a classroom and has several school benches, but its walls are covered in shelves full of books and many books are also kept in stacks on the floor. Because of this there is not enough space for a whole class, but the teachers often sit on the benches during breaks as there is no proper staff room. The head of the lower primary section ("Head of Infant") has an office where teachers sometimes go during their breaks.

The school library is relatively well-stocked, but all the textbooks are in English (except a set of P1 literacy textbooks donated and used as part of the School Health and Reading Program (SHRP) project, see below). Upper-grades textbooks (in English) dominate, but there are not enough copies of any given title for all pupils in a class to read at the same time, as the class sizes can reach up to 90 pupils. There are also a number of lower-grades readers, some in English but most in Lugbarati. Although there are a number of storybooks in English and, for the lower grades, a limited number in Lugbarati, there are not enough copies of any title for a whole class to read at the same time. Some books appear to be out of use and are dust covered, while a stack of curriculum books are termite-eaten. In addition to these books, the school was given a set of textbooks for P1 from SHRP, a literacy and health intervention that was in its first year of implementation during the year of my fieldwork (see Chapter 4.4.2).

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[14]These lessons are supposed to deepen and expand on the topics covered in the ordinary lessons, according to Doris, but in practice are no different from regular lessons.

There is a librarian working full-time sorting books and doing similar administrative work, but she does not teach or read to the pupils. Grades P3 to P7 are supposed to use the library one hour a week, but this seldom happens, and there is not enough space for a whole class in the library. Occasionally books are brought home, but not in the lower classes. Arua Hill has its own printer, computer, and photocopier in the secretary's office, which she uses for administrative work and to type exams.

As a pilot site of the ASb, Arua Hill received a subsidy to cover expenses as the school leadership saw fit. The school used this money for refurbishing a classroom, including installing sockets and inserting a metal door, windows, and metal bars in the window openings for security. Whereas some other pilot sites spent the money on teacher allowances, the Arua Hill head teacher insisted that the money be spent to the direct benefit of the pupils. In addition to this subsidy, the school received a laptop computer, a mobile Internet device, a portable, battery-driven projector, and a solar power panel to be used as backup when the electricity grid was out of service. While cell phones were common among the teachers, none of them had used a computer before, and the ASb arranged for them to receive basic computer training, including accessing the stories through the website, at the local Primary Teachers' College, also a pilot site of the ASb. In addition to this, the head teacher, the Head of Infant, and one other teacher went to Kampala for a weekend to meet participants from the other Ugandan pilot sites and attend a workshop. The workshop introduced the African Storybook and the functions of the website, including creating, translating, and adapting stories, which teachers were expected to do as part of the school's agreement with Saide.

3.3.2 Drari Primary School

Drari is located in a poor part of town, and according to Doris it is a poor-performing school. There is one stream in each grade, with fairly large classes: In P1 and P2 there were 171 and 93 pupils enrolled, respectively, but not all of them came to class every day. Like Arua Hill, it is one of the pilot sites of the SHRP program (see Chapter 4.4.2). It has a small storage room for books called the school library, with many posters, some textbooks, and some storybooks. At Drari and Mvara Junior, only the English and Literacy teachers in P3 were invited to participate due to time limitations and the fact that the overall focus was on Arua Hill, the main site. Two teachers, Nancy and Jenipher, taught English and Literacy, respectively, at Drari. Jenipher also taught Literacy in P1, and invited me to observe her teaching that class as well.

Name	Position	Class	Subject
Miriam	Head teacher		
Jenipher	Teacher	1, 3	Literacy, English
Nancy	Teacher	3	English, mathematics

Table 3.3 List participants at Drari Primary School

3.3.3 Mvara Junior Primary School

Mvara Junior is located in Mvara, a village about three kilometres outside Arua. It used to be a well-performing school, but has since dropped in performance, and with that, enrolment numbers, which are now at around 30 pupils per class. The deputy head teacher of Arua Hill was promoted to head teacher of Mvara Junior before the start of the fieldwork. It has a fairly small room serving as a school library with several shelves with books, textbooks, and storybooks. It is supported by the Aga Khan Development Network's Reading to Learn (RtL) program, an approach to literacy instruction that emphasizes the reading of whole texts before sentences and

words (Bartlett, n.d.; Lusweti, 2014). It turned out that one teacher, Jemily, taught all subjects in P3 at Mvara Junior.

Name	Position	Class	Subject
Beatrice	Head teacher		
Jemily	Teacher	3	All subjects

Table 3.4 List of participants at Mvara Junior primary School

3.3.4 Mindrabe Primary School Library and Ombaderuku Primary School Library

My background in research on community libraries in Uganda – my Master's thesis research and subsequent visits (Stranger-Johannessen, 2009, 2014a, 2014b; Stranger-Johannessen, Asselin, & Doiron, 2015) provides a strong reason for including this kind of institution in the present research. Furthermore, one of the ASb pilot sites in Uganda and one in South Africa are community libraries, which made this an important focus for better understanding the use of stories outside the school context. I selected the two community libraries based on suggestions by the Uganda Community Libraries Association (UgCLA). Both libraries are community libraries and open to the general public, and each of them is located in a primary school. Mindrabe Primary School Community Library (henceforth "Mindrabe Library"), is located four kilometres outside Koboko town, close to the border of South Sudan and the Democratic Republic of Congo, in the north-western part of Uganda (see Figure 3.3). There is public transport between Arua and Koboko (55 km), which takes about one hour, plus the time it takes for the vehicle (car or minibus) to fill up with passengers. From Koboko town to the library I had to take a motorcycle taxi for about 15 minutes. In this part of Uganda the main language is Kakwa, which belongs to the Nilotic language family. Lugbarati is part of the Central Sudanic language family, so the two languages are not related. The library is situated in a large

classroom, with a blackboard, desks, a bookshelf and a locked cabinet with perhaps a couple of hundred books in total, and a teacher's desk.

Figure 3.3 Map of Arua with research sites. Retrieved from www.openstreetmap.org/ - map=8/2.822/30.935. OpenStreetMap® is licensed under the Open Data Commons Open Database License by the OpenStreetMap Foundation.

Mindrabe Library was initiated by the head teacher Margaret, and is run by two librarians, Tom and Francis, who work full time as teachers (see Table 3.5). The library is sometimes open on weekends and evenings, particularly when they organize special events, such as a drama group for youth and a crafts group for women.

Name	Position	Library
Ernest	Librarian	Ombaderuku Library
Francis	Librarian	Mindrabe Library
Tom	Librarian	Mindrabe Library

Table 3.5 List of participants at Ombaderuku Library and Mindrabe Library

Ombaderuku Primary School Library (henceforth "Ombaderuku Library") is closer to Arua (around 20 kilometres; see Figure 3.3), but there is no public transport going directly there, so I traveled on the back of a motorcycle taxi. The librarian Ernest also teaches science in P5 and P6 full time. The library occupies one of the school's classrooms, and contains a number of textbooks, papers, and materials, some in shelves, others in boxes or stacked on desks.

3.4 Data collection

I collected the data during fieldwork carried out in Arua in north-western Uganda from June to December 2014. The research instruments include participant observation, questionnaires, interviews, participant journal writing, and focus group discussions (see table 3.6 for an overview). In the following I will discuss each of these methods before I discuss how they together strengthen the credibility of the analysis through the process of triangulation, as well as the question of the transferability of the findings.

Data collection method	Participants	Quantity
Semi-structured interviews	Teachers, librarians, principals, CCT	Once or twice per participant
Questionnaires	Teachers, librarians	Once per participant
Focus group discussions	Teachers	Once for teachers at Arua Hill
Observation	Teachers, librarians	Throughout fieldwork
Reading observation protocol	Teachers	Throughout fieldwork
Journals	Teachers, librarians	At the discretion of the participants
Schemes of work and lesson plans	Teachers	A large number examined

Table 3.6 Overview of data collection

3.4.1 Field notes and observations

Field notes are at the heart of ethnographic research and other field research: "If you are not writing field notes, then you are not conducting field research" (Bailey, 2007, p. 113). I took extensive notes, mainly from classroom observations. As Bailey (2007) remarks, my notes improved as I developed a better sense of what I was looking for, and got more experience. The focus on what is observed might change during the course of the research as questions and interests become more specific (Bailey, 2007), and this also applies to my fieldwork. The value of some field notes may not be clear until the post-fieldwork stage. Neimark (2012) provides a telling example of how an event that was seemingly insignificant to the research turned out to be key in the analysis that eventually emerged. The ritualistic sacrifice of a ram, written up in the field notes as cultural background information, gave the author insight into the importance of this socio-cultural event for economic relations in the community he studied.

Field notes should record what is observed, not what is inferred. Inferred observations and comments should be separate from the observations themselves, such as in a different column on the notepad (Purcell-Gates, 2011). Heath and Street (2008) call these comments conceptual memos and suggest that they can be kept separate from other notes, or written together with them. Street uses two columns, the first with observations in the field, the second with later reflections and comments. Conceptual memos can be a few pages, with reflections on what has happened the previous week, insights, ideas, setbacks, and patterns. I wrote my observation notes mostly separate from reflections, writing broader reflections, questions, and more general observations at the bottom of each page in my notebook, almost like a set of footnotes. At the end of the day (or sometimes the next day) I re-wrote all my notes into my computer, one section with observations, and reflections on those specific observations and

events. The other section I reserved for more general reflections, nascent analysis, and questions that arose. I also kept "to-do notes", such as questions to ask and other practical matters to take care of.

Field notes are based on observations. While observations tend to be visual and aural, Bailey (2007) stresses that aspects such as behaviours, body language, lighting, colour, sounds, objects, and even smells, can (and should) be part of what is observed. Observations may be structured or unstructured. Unstructured observations do not mean that there are no guidelines; the research design, and not least the research questions, are guiding what, when, how, and who to observe. Most of my observations were unstructured in this sense, but I also developed a reading observation protocol. This protocol was in principle structured, but it was developed in the field over several weeks (see Chapter 3.4.6). The field researcher is often described as being a participant, observer, or a combination of the two, giving four different roles (participant observer and observer participant). Purcell-Gates (2011) posits that the role of the participant observer is usually a continuum between the two roles. Classroom ethnography, she suggests, "often positions the researcher closer to the observer end of the continuum" (p. 144). This was largely the case in this study, as I did not intend to intervene, but, as I explicate in Chapter 3.6, towards the end of the fieldwork did get involved in various ways, and shifted my position from primarily observing towards a higher a higher degree of participation.

3.4.2 Interviews

There is no consensus of what constitutes an interview, or how it is different from other forms of communication (Berg & Lune, 2012). Berg and Lune (2012) offer the simple definition "a conversation with a purpose" (p. 105), which covers the essentials, but also omits the immense theoretical and methodological concerns that arise with using interviews as a method.

On a more theoretical level, interviews can be seen as an art, craft, social interaction, social performance, contest of wills, a little bit of everything, or perhaps something entirely different. Like other social discourse, interviews are increasingly seen as co-constructing meaning, rather than the interviewer simply eliciting facts and information. Talmy (2010) refers to this as a contrast between the research interview as *an instrument* to the research interview as *a social practice*.

On a more practical level interviews are often categorized as structured, semistructured, and unstructured, referring to the degree of preparation of questions and adherence to these questions during the interview. As with most other methodological choices, the type of interviews should be informed by one's research design, research questions, and other aspects of methodology (Bailey, 2007). Semistructured interviews are common, perhaps because they offer a balance between carefully worded and thought-through questions, and the ability to probe and ask follow-up questions. I chose this type of interview for this reason (see Appendices A, B, C, and D for the list of questions).

I interviewed all 22 participants – the teachers, head teachers, CCT, and librarians. I interviewed the three head teachers, CCT, and teachers and librarians at the four peripheral sites once, which I deemed sufficient to get enough data from these participants. I initially planned on interviewing the teachers as Arua Hill twice – since I wanted to get a sense of their general thoughts on teaching and learning, as well as their experience with the use of stories more specifically towards the end of my fieldwork. However, three teachers at Arua Hill had not taught any stories by the end of my fieldwork. I therefore decided to interview them only once, as the questions about experience with use of stories did not apply to them.

I focused on their thoughts on and general experiences of teaching and learning in the first round of interviews with the teachers. These interviews included general questions about their work, such as "what characterizes a good teacher?" and "what books, materials and resources do you use to teach reading?" These and other questions aimed at elucidating their practice and understanding. The second round focused on their experience with using the stories for teaching, translating, writing stories, and some other issues that had arisen since the first interview. This included questions about choices, experiences, challenges, and support.

All interviews were recorded and transcribed, except one, which was handwritten, as the participant did not tick for audio recording in the consent form. Two interviews were only partially audio recorded, so I had to rely on my handwritten notes for the second part. In both cases the battery of my computer (which I used to record) went flat, and I was not able to recharge it. This reflects a common problem in African schools: if they have power at all, outages are so frequent that one cannot rely on regular power supply. The interviews lasted about 30 to 40 minutes, some notably longer. In addition to the interviews I spoke with the teachers informally throughout the fieldwork, but not the pupils, most of whom (in the lower grades) were not conversational in English.

3.4.3 Focus group discussion

Focus group discussions, where participants get the opportunity to discuss a question or topic, might invite different perspectives, including commonly shared ones and differences of opinion, all of which can provide valuable insights for research (Kitzinger, 2008). According to Morgan (1988, p, 12), "The hallmark of focus groups is *the explicit use of the group interaction to produce data and insights that would be less accessible without the interaction found in the group*" (emphasis in original). Wilkinson (1998, p. 114) praises focus groups as a particularly

attractive method in feminist research, arguing that "in the *data collection* stage at least, the researcher's power and influence is reduced, because she has much less power and influence over a group than over an individual" (emphasis in original), but acknowledges that other issues may arise. The role of the interviewer should be that of a facilitator, some scholars argue (Bloor, Frankland, Thomas, & Robson, 2001). Letting go of control can be important, since key to focus groups is the interaction between the participants. The facilitator should allow the conversation to run freely, taking a background role. But the facilitator should also make sure that one participant does not dominate the group too much (Bloor et al., 2001).

I used focus group discussions as a complement of interviews, thus part of the triangulation of data. The ASb in-country coordinator, Juliet Tembe, also wanted to carry out a focus group discussion for monitoring and evaluation purposes, and we decided that we would merge our questions and make it into one session, rather than repeating the activity and some of the questions. Juliet led and audio recorded the discussion, while I participated as one of the participants, occasionally adding a question or asking for clarification, and taking notes. The conversation ran quite freely, with participants chiming in to support and elaborate on fellow participants' statements.

3.4.4 Participant journals

The teachers were invited to write journal entries reflecting on their teaching and use of the African Storybook stories, and I gave each of the teachers an exercise book and a pen to do this. Asking participants to keep journal entries is a way of collecting comprehensive data through participants' descriptions and reflections on their experiences (Giraud, 1999). Unlike interviews, journal entries give the participants time to reflect and formulate without pressure to immediately respond to a question.

The use of journals was not a very successful method for collection data. I didn't give the exercise books to the participants at the first meeting since Doris felt the teachers had already received enough information at that time. I thought I would hand them out and explain their purpose the next time we all gathered again, but that took several weeks, and this was at a point in time when the initial interest and frequent use of stories had waned somewhat, giving teachers fewer opportunities to report on choice and use of stories. Perhaps I could have encouraged or reminded them more, but the teachers often gave the impression of being busy, and so I was reticent to press on this matter, although I did cautiously ask a few times. In the end I only got one entry in total, which did not lend itself to further analysis. This experience may not be representative for other countries and settings, but care should be taken if journals are to be used in research on teachers in comparable circumstances in the future.

3.4.5 Questionnaire

Questionnaires are often associated with quantitative data (Dörnyei, 2010), but I used them to elicit teachers' and librarians' personal background knowledge and thoughts and experiences of being a teacher. This was partly to reduce the time spent on interviewing, and partly to obtain data on opinions and viewpoints that could be triangulated with other data, notably interviews and observations. The open-ended questions in the questionnaire contributed information similar to the interviews, but allowed the teachers to express themselves through writing in addition to speaking.

The questionnaire also contains a table with questions about "what you think about the following statements about when people learn" (based on Akyeampong et al., 2006) and one table about their level of agreement with statements on reading (see Appendix E). Data from the

tables are analyzed for how they express teachers' views of reading, and I consider these self-reports in light of observations and the interview data.

3.4.6   Reading observation protocol

After about two months of fieldwork I started thinking about how I could explore the use of ASb stories in relation to the reading and writing that took place outside lessons where ASb stories were used. In order to develop a reading observation protocol I searched the Internet and asked my committee members for advice. This yielded a number of existing protocols, but all were, apparently, designed for a Western classroom, and often focused specifically on student activity, teacher–student interaction, and other aspects that are less common in the classrooms I observed. I did note that this was in itself an interesting observation, but for the purposes of recording reading and writing taking place, these protocols were not very helpful. I decided to make my own, and adapt it as I went along, as my supervisor Bonny Norton suggested (see Appendix G). The protocol covers who read/wrote (teachers, individual pupils and groups of pupils (usually a row of desks, or boys and girls)) and the nature of the text read/written (first occurrence or copied/re-read, read aloud or in silence), and the source/destination of the text (e.g., blackboard, exercise book, projector), which I entered with a vertical line for each occurrence. Finally, I tried to capture pupils' own words, such as replies to open-ended questions, or self-initiated comments or questions, but these were very rare. Since the protocol developed over the first week or two, and I took some time to get used to it and how to categorize all events, it is not a very reliable instrument for quantitative purposes. But I did not intend to use it for quantitative analysis, but rather to illustrate the amount and nature of reading and writing (and to a lesser extent interaction) in the classroom. This helped support and triangulate data from interviews and other observations.

3.4.7 Schemes of work and lesson plans

Teachers are required to write schemes of work – plans for each term – as well as more detailed plans for each lesson called lesson plans. These typically follow a set pattern – a matrix that can spread over one or two double A4 pages. The lesson plans take a long time to write, but much of what they contain are verbatim copying of themes, objectives, and other information from the syllabus, or generic phrases that are repeated lesson after lesson (see Figure 3.4).

Figure 3.4 Sample of a lesson plan (half a page not included)

In theory the lesson plans are supposed to guide teachers in carrying out the lesson, but a more covert purpose is to serve as an indication that the teachers are in fact teaching, as these are

the main focus of monitoring from the school leadership and government inspectors. The latter usually visit once a term, and their main interest is to see teachers' lesson plans, which are taken as a proxy for lessons taught. In practice, however, teachers don't write lesson plans for all their lessons, and sometimes write them after having taught a lesson. When the in-country coordinator asked to see copies of lesson plans of ASb stories, few teachers could produce this, even though they had taught many lessons with such stories.

3.4.8   Trustworthiness

A qualitative research project like this relies heavily on its data, so confidence, or trustworthiness, in that data is crucial for confidence in the findings and analysis that are based on the data. In quantitative research there are a number of techniques for ensuring the validity and reliability of the data (Graneheim & Lundman, 2004), but because of the nature of qualitative data, this approach is not very useful in ensuring its credibility. Lincoln and Guba (1985) addressed this by asking how "the findings of an inquiry [can be] worth paying attention to, worth taking account of" (p. 290). In response to this matter, they suggested that researchers should seek *trustworthiness*, operationalized through the terms *credibility* and *transferability*.

Credibility refers to how well the data and data analysis match the focus of the research, including selection of participants and research site (Graneheim & Lundman, 2004). To ensure credibility, Lincoln and Guba (1985) emphasise prolonged engagement in the field, persistent observation, and triangulation, while Graneheim and Lundman (2004) also point to choosing the appropriate method and amount of data collection. In the years prior to my fieldwork, I had been to Uganda for a total of six months, including Arua, so I was broadly familiar with the local culture. For my fieldwork I spent six months in Uganda, which I considered adequate to ensure "prolonged engagement". Ample time to observe and engage in conversations about the research

with the participants will also strengthen the ecological validity of the research (Brock-Utne, 1996). Through my daily presence I observed and took notes regularly, and these observations also contributed towards the triangulation of the data.

The use of several kinds of data enables the process of triangulation – using multiple data sources to find out whether different kinds of data lead to similar interpretations (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2013). Holliday (2002) describes observations as "an essential part of triangulation" (p. 43), but it is precisely the juxtaposition of data from different sources that allows triangulation. Triangulation is sometimes misunderstood, however.

> [A] common misunderstanding about triangulation is that the point is to demonstrate that different data sources or inquiry approaches yield essentially the same result. But the point is really to *test for* such consistency. Different kinds of data may yield somewhat different results because different types of inquiry are sensitive to different real-world nuances. Thus, understanding inconsistencies in findings across different kinds of data can be illuminative. Finding such inconsistencies ought not be viewed as weakening the credibility of the results, but rather as offering opportunities for deeper insight into the relationship between inquiry approach and the phenomenon under study. (Patton 1990, p. 248, emphasis in original)

In my research the different types of data partly complemented each other, such as the interviews and the schemes of work and lesson plans. Although the teachers mentioned these documents in their interviews, seeing what these actually looked like gave a richer understanding of their role. Although there were no direct contradictions between any types of data, the observations and interviews sometimes gave slightly different impressions. This might in part be

because the observations were essentially my interpretation of events, while in the interviews the teachers provided their opinions and interpretation of events.

Transferability refers to whether and to what extent the findings and analysis are relevant to other contexts. Although all cases are unique in some way, they often share certain features. A rich description of the context of the research will allow other researchers to judge how two cases or settings are similar and different, which I have provided in Chapter 4. But as Zhang and Wildemuth (2009) point out,

> It is not the researcher's task to provide an index of transferability; rather, he or she is responsible for providing data sets and descriptions that are rich enough so that other researchers are able to make judgments about the findings' transferability to different settings or contexts. (p. 6)

3.5 Data Analysis

The data analysis was based on a thematic analysis of the individual and focus group interview data. Braun and Clarke (2006) describe this approach as "a method for identifying, analyzing and reporting patterns (themes) within data. It minimally organizes and describes your data set in (rich) detail" (p. 79). Thematic analysis thus helps reduce and make sense of large amounts of data, and helps the researcher make sense of what stands out as significant. This is not to say that thematic analysis can uncover the "truth", but rather facilitates and provides a justification for an interpretation of the data that is ultimately that of the researcher. With the support of other data sources, such as observations, the findings and analysis from the interviews may be supported or modified. The total impression of the research, both through "objective" data such as transcribed text, and more "subjective" impressions such as hunches and

assumptions based on prior experiences and literature, contribute to the process of thematic analysis.

I generated the codes used in the thematic analysis through a mix of a priori and inductive codes, so-called retroductive coding (Ragin, 1994). A priori codes, based on the themes in the literature and my own intuitions, included codes on challenges, technology, and the use of stories. Inductive codes stemmed from reading and rereading the transcripts, and in some cases included in vivo codes (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2013). I entered the codes in NVivo™ v. 11 for Mac, which also facilitated keyword search. I also imported the interview transcripts in NVivo™ in order to highlight segments of text, often the whole answer, and sometimes also the question. I then assigned one, and sometimes two or three codes to each highlighted text segment (see Figure 3.5). Through an export function in NVivo™, I then exported all the coded text, so that I got one text document per code with all the coded text segments and metadata (see Figure 3.6).
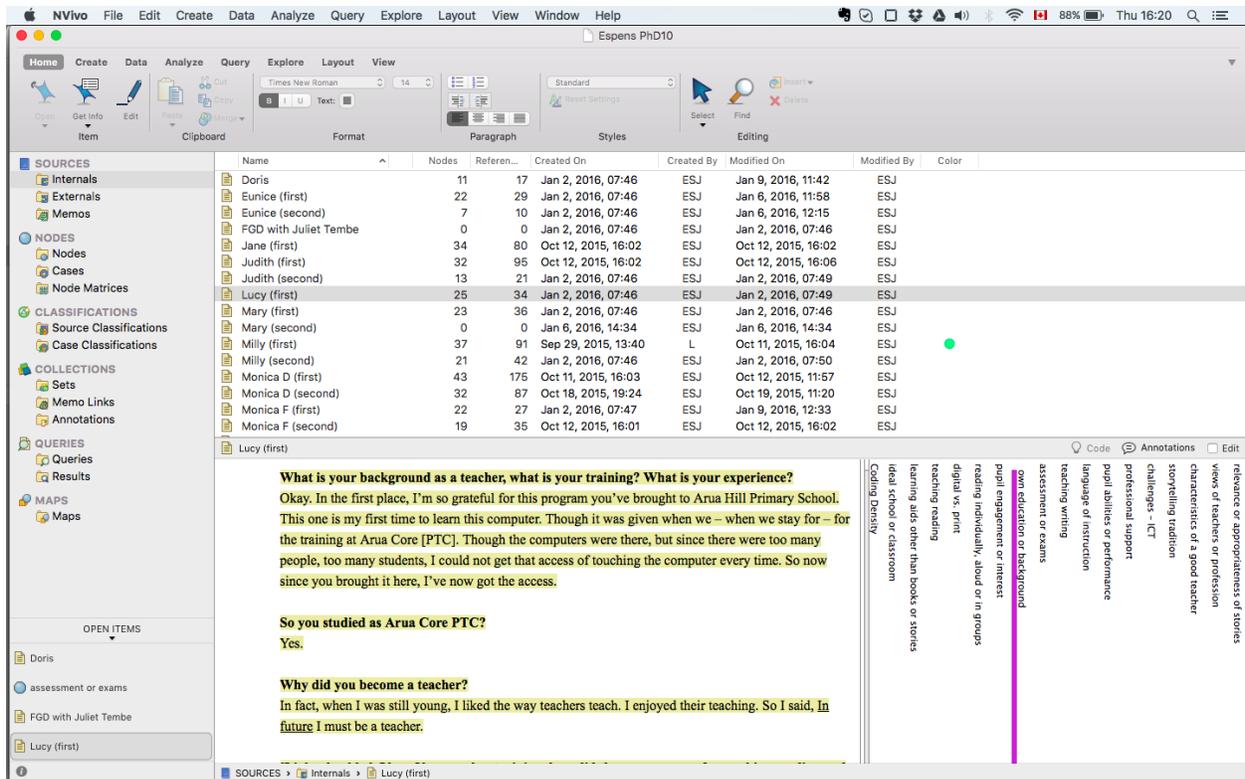
Figure 3.5 Screenshot of the coding process in NVivo™

Internals\\Milly (first) - § 2 references coded [0.84% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.21% Coverage

I admired teachers, anyway, I admired those who were teaching me.

Reference 2 - 0.64% Coverage

Working as a teacher is a good job, you even can get the little money out of it, though not much, and obviously respect is there, people respect you as a teacher and it can expose you to other things.
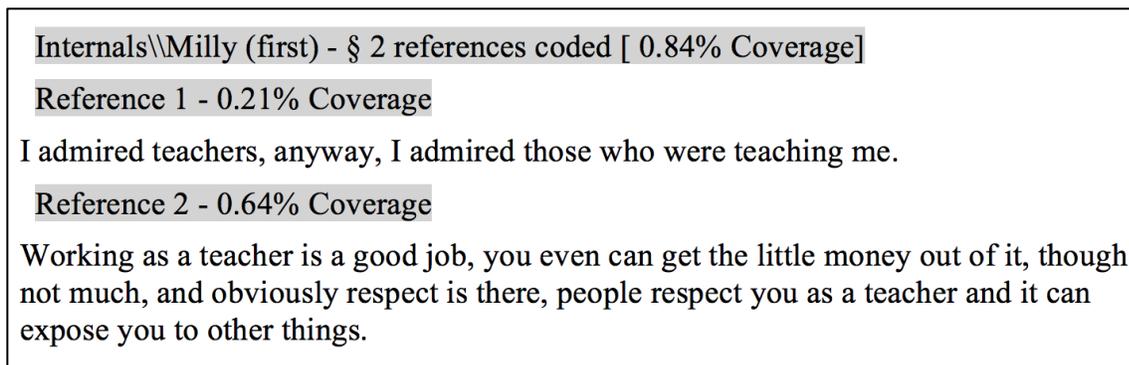
Figure 3.6 Excerpt of exported coded text segments from the code "views of teachers or profession"

During this process I developed a codebook with definitions of each code, which is useful to maintain consistency and reliability across the transcripts (Zhang and Wildemuth, 2009). The inductive codes were subject to change, and constantly refined, merged, and reformulated. The

codebook was constantly updated and useful in maintaining a focus on what each code represented, and how two related codes differed.

The next step was to develop themes by clustering the individual codes (Attride-Stirling, 2001; Grbich, 2013). This is an important step in thematic content analysis, and it helps organize what can otherwise easily be a long list of codes with no interconnections. The task for the researcher is to make connections based on theory, knowledge of the codes, and intuition (Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña, 2013). I read through the grouped coded text segments (see Figure 3.6) several times while keeping the three research questions in mind, took notes, and attempted to further condense this information into themes. This process generated five themes, which I labeled (a) personal/internal, (b) external forces, (c), mediating circumstances, (d) view of teaching, and (e) teaching practices. The coded text segments were now further organized, and based on new rounds of reading through I developed the analysis presented in Chapter 5. The themes did not always match analytical points in a one-to-one fashion, but still proved an invaluable tool for making sense of large amounts of data.

In another round of analysis of codes I focused on the teachers themselves and their identities, which were usually implicit or derived from the topic of the utterances, as the teachers seldom referred to their own identities explicitly. This approach yielded four additional themes: (a) teacher as writer and translator, (b) teacher as change agent, (c) teacher as multimodal, multiliterate educator, and (d) teacher as digital educator. These serve as the foundation for the analysis I report on in Chapter 6.

Throughout the process, insights from the questionnaires and observations guided the process of data analysis, which is cyclical rather than linear, as I revised codes and reconsidered

themes as I was making sense of the data and developing the analysis to become this completed dissertation.

3.6 Collaboration and Involvement

All social research, whether it involves an intervention or not, relies on some level of collaboration between researchers and practitioners. In non-intervention research that typically involves, at a minimum, consent to do research, but the mere fact of being physically present creates a social relationship, and with that, brings social conventions such as courtesy, trust, and reciprocity into play (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2013). However, a major difference is that in intervention research, interaction between the researcher and the practitioner is not spurious, but key to the intervention itself. This is not least the case since intervention is cyclical and involves continuous evaluation and adaptation (McNiff & Whitehead, 2006; Reinking & Bradley, 2008), which is only possible in collaboration with the practitioner. The nature of this collaboration can take many forms, and while the word itself carries positive connotations, one cannot automatically assume that the more collaboration, the better. Rather, there is a need to explore the question of what collaboration means in any particular research context, which I will do in this section.

In the following I will explore the nuances of collaborative research and degrees and forms of researcher involvement with the research site – both in general and with respect to my own research. In doing this I acknowledge that research benefits from explications of underlying assumptions and clarifications of methods and the role of the researcher in the research process.

My research involved some degree of collaboration, but it does not readily fall under commonly used labels such as "action research" or "design research". At the same time, I was researching an intervention – the African Storybook – that entailed a considerable degree of

cooperation between the school and the organization, including in-person visits from ASb staff, meeting targets and providing deliverables. As a researcher I was part of this cooperation, and I was invited (and sometimes volunteered) to help out in numerous ways.

I came to Arua Hill shortly after the school received the digital equipment, and which they started using when I arrived and showed them how to operate it. Although the teachers knew I was not working for Saide, the ASb host organization, I was associated with the ASb, and as such (presumably) positioned as a researcher involved in an intervention. In other words, although I did not consider myself an action researcher, from the participants' perspective I was involved in the kinds of activities that are associated with action research. Definitions and delineations aside, I was more than a bystander, sometimes invited, and sometimes took initiative, to share my opinion or suggest actions.

As a researcher I adhere to many of the principles espoused by the participatory research paradigm (Lincoln, Lynham, & Guba, 2011), but I also acknowledge the intricacies and potential pitfalls of good intentions not supported by extensive planning and preparation. On one hand, the ASb lends itself to collaborative research because it is a novelty at Arua Hill, and the teachers were learning the use of the technology and stories day by day. This provides a space for experimentation and collaboration. On the other hand, I didn't know the teachers before I went to the school in June 2014, so I couldn't collaboratively develop a research project *with* the teachers before my arrival.

3.6.1 Roles of the teacher and researcher and degrees of collaboration

Collaboration between a teacher and researcher can take many forms, and depending on the research methodology, the degree of participation varies. Locke, Alcorn, and O'Neill (2013) point to some of the problems of insisting on anonymity, which is commonly a requirement at

many universities with institutional ethical review board policies. The requirement for anonymity can be particularly problematic in small-scale research, as the participants might want acknowledgement, especially in collaborative research. In this research, it would have been difficult, and in some ways problematic, to anonymize the entire research, since the ASb website is a public website, and the names of the teachers who wrote and/or translated stories are online. As we will see in Chapter 6, some of the teachers in this research valued this identification.

Similarly, researchers are often not present in reported research, along with "their complex values, ideologies, and experiences [that shape] the research activity and findings" (Canagarajah, 1996, p. 324). In response to this, Norton and Early (2011) address the question of how researcher identity is negotiated in language teaching research. The authors highlight several principles of how a researcher should engage with research, including reflexivity, dialogic engagement, and responsiveness to learners. These are valuable principles researchers can adhere to, even if the conventions and format of the final written version of the research do not permit a full account of how these principles have been dealt with during the fieldwork.

Norton and Early (2011) furthermore identify multiple researcher identities, which I recognize in my research. In my identity of being a *researcher as international guest* I was treated with respect and invited to sit on the sofa of the head mistress's office during the tea breaks, where she would regularly seat other visitors to the school. The teachers often sent a student out to fetch a chair for me when I came to observe the classroom, even when there was space on a desk in the back. In these and other (often subtle) ways I was given special attention, sometimes more than I wanted. I tried to blend in and be on equal footing with the teachers, but my position as an outsider and guest – a White man in a female-dominated environment –

probably worked against that, although over time I developed a more informal relationship with good rapport, an important aspect of ethnographic research (Sluka, 2012).

As we got to know each other better I also became a *collaborative team member*, not least in the process of dealing with the requirements stipulated by the memorandum of agreement with the African Storybook, which stated that the teachers should write and translate stories. However, there was a lack of awareness and clarity about this in the beginning, but closer to the deadline and after some requests from the in-country coordinator, this process gained momentum. I facilitated the technical aspect of preparing the stories for translation by printing, typing, and preparing them for proofreading. With the teachers' effort and our collaborative work, we managed to produce a large number of translations in a short time, thus meeting the expectations of the ASb.

I made it clear to the teachers that I was a teacher myself, and showed them one of my own lesson plans in a conversation about lesson plans as way of comparison. I had many conversations about the ASb and the teaching at the school with the head teacher, who invited me to teach a lesson to demonstrate the use of stories. Taking on the identity of *researcher as teacher*, I planned a lesson for P2 where I would teach three stories and do two follow-up activities. About six teachers came to observe this lesson. It took more time than anticipated to gather all the students and get started, and I misjudged how much time the lesson would take, which didn't leave enough time for the follow-up activities. Although this did not go as well as I had hoped, it served as a starting point for discussions on lesson planning and teaching, and it also, I think, contributed to the teachers seeing me as a teacher, and not just a detached researcher.

With a shift in social science paradigms towards constructivism and post-structuralism, identifying, analyzing, and critiquing power dimensions in society as well as research has become key to much of social science research. In collaborative research, teachers and researchers work more closely together than in most conventional research, and the centrality of collaboration might lead to an increased interest in the power dimensions of the teacher–researcher relationship, which has come up in much of the literature (e.g., Norton & Early, 2011).

In addition to being responsible as a researcher in interpersonal relationships, researchers are sometimes sponsored by an organization or agency, which "may provoke new ethical considerations in how research is conducted, disseminated and used" (Asselin, Doiron, & Shapiro, 2011, pp. 80–81). Even though this research is not funded by any corporations or organizations operating in Uganda, the issues of power imbalance, intellectual dependence, and conflicts of interests that Asselin and colleagues (2011) identify are potential sources of ethical dilemmas and concerns that any researcher should be cognizant of. One way of addressing this is to work closely *with* the research participants and listen to their concerns and interests, rather than narrowly pursuing a personal or organizational research agenda.

3.6.2 Reciprocity

Reciprocity is closely related to collaboration. Many scholars stress the need to "give back" to the people who participate in research, especially when working with marginalized communities (e.g., Jones, 2005, 2008; Smith, 2005; Streelasky, 2011). But reciprocity is not always straightforward, and can conflict with the research in various ways. Glesne (2006) gives the example of how giving a teacher advice can jeopardize your credibility and make the teacher feel less capable as a teacher. Some teachers enjoy the attention and perhaps occasional helping

hand or discussion partner, and may feel that the research itself, or the presence of the researchers, benefits the students (e.g., Kamberelis & de la Luna, 1998; Norton & Early, 2011).

In this research, reciprocity was present in different ways, but perhaps most explicitly in the form of computer training and assistance. When I reached Arua Hill it turned out that none of the teachers had used a computer before this project, and only one had taught an ASb story using the computer. It immediately became clear that I would be involved, and from the beginning I helped the teachers with operating the computer and the projector. Over time some of them got better at this and started helping each other. I also carried out a computer training session over two days at the PTC at the end of the school holidays before term three, at the suggestion of one of the teachers and organized by the head mistress.

Several teachers also asked me for feedback on lessons and advice, again inviting me into their professional lives. In the beginning I did not want my predetermined understandings to dominate any such conversation, but rather based any comments on my experience with their work. I therefore decided to give more general feedback in the beginning, and assist with technical issues, and return to more substantial comments later during my stay. I planned on doing this through a workshop together with Doris, but it was cancelled since I fell sick with a respiratory infection. We had originally planned on carrying out a one-day workshop as continuous professional development, which the school organized on occasions (but not during my stay). The one-day workshop turned into a one-hour session without Doris, who was on sick leave when I returned from mine. In the presentation I highlighted some practices that I recommended the teachers to build on, and some practices I suggested they either drop or limit. I also spoke with teachers individually about teaching in general and their teaching in particular,

as and when appropriate. The teachers seemed open to my ideas, but there was not enough time to work together to develop these more fully.

3.6.3 Continua of collaboration

Collaboration between the teacher and researcher in intervention research can take many different shapes, and different authors have, to some extent, diverging views on collaboration. The reasons for these differences might in part be a matter of personal choice, but more plausible explanations include differences in epistemological and methodological stances, as well as differences that stem from the research design. Although research design can be said to be related to research methodology, the same design can yield different methodologies, which in turn affects the nature and degree of collaboration in a research project. In the following, these points are elaborated and clarified.

	Continua		
A. Starting point	practical problem ——————————————— theory		
B. Initiative	teacher ——————————————— researcher		
C. Locus of change	local, specific ——————————————— global, general		
D. Nature of change (if any)	emancipatory ——————————————— ameliorative		
E. View of power relations	recognized, redressed ——————————————— disregarded		
F. Axiology	explicit ——————————————— implicit		
G. Role of researcher in the field	participant ——————————————— observer		
H. Role of practitioner	co-researcher ——————— not involved in researcher tasks		
I. Practitioner participation	active collaboration ——————— passive involvement		
J. Recognition of practitioner	co-authorship, accreditation ——————— anonymity		

Figure 3.7 Continua of aspects that are pertinent to teacher–researcher collaboration

Over the last few decades, educational research has become more collaborative (Cole & Knowles, 1993). This can be associated with a gradual shift from a positivist to a constructivist paradigm, as researchers not only discard positivist notions of objectivity, but also acknowledge

the roles of the researcher and participants as co-constructors of knowledge (Nakabugo et al., 2007). In this perspective, collaboration makes sense not just pragmatically, but also epistemologically and methodologically. While there is a general tendency to embrace collaboration in educational research in general and action research in particular, the nature and degree of collaboration is likely to be influenced by the methodology and epistemology, and there are some very broad tendencies of how differences affect aspects of collaboration. Figure 3.7 lists continua that are pertinent to collaboration and are largely expressions of underlying methodological and epistemological stances.

Some conventional research, especially quantitative, is likely to be close to the right end of the continua. Clearly the nature of the research methodology, particularly the methods, dictates to some degree the nature and degrees of collaboration, such as differences between qualitative and quantitative methods. But there is always some room for negotiating collaboration, such as inviting teachers to suggest analysis and comment upon the design regardless of the methods. Much intervention research will veer towards the left end of the continua, but not unilaterally.

Given the nature of my research – the logistical and practical realities that enabled and circumscribed the preparation, data collection, and write-up stage, a strong collaborative approach was not feasible. I did not meet the teachers before the data collection started, and could not contact them until the institutional behavioural research ethics board approved the research, which only happened shortly before I left for Uganda. However, I did start out with a rather practice-oriented mind, since the African Storybook is concerned with the delivery and use of children's books in primary schools. Although I couldn't really plan for the teachers to take an active role in the research, it was ultimately their decisions about their use of stories that drove

the research, rather than an intervention approach where I as the researcher mandated certain practices. In most cases I would position this research somewhere along the continua in Figure 3.7, sometimes more collaborative, sometimes more conventional, but never fully one or the other.

The degree of collaboration in research is partly a methodological and epistemological (mainly scientific) question, partly an axiological (mainly personal), and partly a practical (pragmatic) question, although the three are related. In contrast to much conventional research, intervention research has explicit goals of improving practice, and this desire stems from – and feeds, a methodology, epistemology and axiology that are congruent with and supportive of this. Researchers do not choose a methodology independent of their own, personal (or professional) axiology as if they were robots. And conversely, the development and process of working with a methodology is likely to further inform the researcher's views. At the same time, practical matters often come into play, and may override other concerns and wishes.

Collaboration, then, should to some extent be seen as a function of the researcher's methodological, epistemological and axiological views, but also acknowledging that pragmatic decisions sometimes have to be made and events may be out of the researcher's control. Although collaboration and emancipation are typically seen as valuable, all research, including intervention research, should not necessarily strive for the highest degree of collaboration. Rather, I suggest, like Cole and Knowles (1993), that collaboration involve "*negotiated and mutually agreed upon* involvement" (p. 486; emphasis in original). This is in keeping with Kamberelis and de la Luna (1998) and Ivey and Broaddus's (2007) experiences of collaboration as intractable and unforeseeable.

3.7 Ethical Considerations

In the history of social science research, ethics has gone from being implicit, or even disregarded, to institutionalized through institutional review boards and part of most dissertations involving human subjects (Berg & Lune, 2012). While there are many ethical, and even some practical benefits of institutional review boards, they are rather limited in that they only deal with anticipated research *before* the data collection. However, as many scholars point out, ethics permeate the entire research process (e.g., Creswell, 2013). Research plans may subtly shift in the field, and unanticipated situations do occur in almost every extensive research project. As Pearson and Paige (2012) put it, "While ethical guidance from the researcher's institution and academic mentors may be required to conduct the project, the real ethical decision-making is often subtle yet spontaneous and immensely important" (p. 75).

The institutional review board requirements are also limited in that they focus mainly on legal and formal requirements, such as statements about ensuring anonymity and secure storage of data. However, such specific "formal" requirements are really only a small part of conducting ethical research, and it is not possible to account for every possible situation. This insight led to the establishment of the institutional review boards – a code of conduct alone was not sufficient to ensure ethical research (Berg & Lune, 2012).

These reflections and critique of the institutional review board serve to highlight that ethics is primarily about reflective actions and interactions, following principles and guidelines in situations that can be difficult to navigate. Many potential ethical conflicts and breeches occur spontaneously during research, where there is no time to stop to consult a reference book or a colleague. This is a major reason why researchers need to be cognizant of ethical perspectives

throughout the research process, and particularly during data collection. However, ethical research is not limited to the data collection process.

Ethics are part of all phases of the research process, from planning through publishing. Creswell (2013, pp. 58–59) lists six stages, and discusses different ethical considerations at each stage:

- Prior to conducting the study

- Beginning to conduct the study

- Collecting data

- Analyzing data

- Reporting data

- Publishing the study

Apart from this chronological perspective, ethics in research can also be analyzed by key issues, which include (a) consent procedures; (b) confidentiality and anonymity; (c) benefits, rewards, and risks; and (d) participant requests (adapted from Lipson, 1994). In the following I will discuss these issues as they relate to my research.

3.7.1 Consent procedures

The research literature on ethics typically distinguishes between informed and implied consent, and passive and active consent. Most qualitative research, including mine, relies on informed consent, where the researcher clearly and adequately informs the participants of the nature and potential risks (if any) of the study, and the participants sign a document outlining this.

All the research participants were adults, and all read and signed the consent form provided. They were given the option to tick a box for participating in the study and allowing

audio recording of interviews. The teacher participants were also given the option to tick a box for video recording of their lessons. One teacher opted out of audio recording of their interviews, while two teachers did so for video recording of their lessons. These requests were respected. The research participants were given the opportunity to use pseudonyms in the reported research. The participants may change their preference about real names and pseudonyms at any time until the research is published.

3.7.2 Confidentiality and anonymity

Confidentiality refers to "an active attempt to remove from the research records any elements that might indicate the subjects' identities" (Berg & Lune, 2012, p. 93), which is related to, but not interchangeable with, anonymity. It has been a common practice to give participants pseudonyms, not giving them the option of opting to be recognized as part of the research and acknowledging their work and other contributions. This defaulting to anonymity is a cautious measure with some value, but protecting participants from assumed and imagined "harms" of public exposure also deprives them of voice, recognition, and identity. Rather than assuming that participants are weak, at risk, and in need of protection and anonymity, researchers should, when and as appropriate, invite their participants to make their own decisions about anonymity or disclosure, or something in between.

In the consent form the participants were given the option of ticking for using their real name or remaining anonymous, and in the form they were informed about the option of changing their preference about real names and pseudonyms at any time until the research is published. All but one of the participants in the reported research ticked for "real name". The participant who did not want to use their name was from one of the four peripheral cases. This participant, along with their institution, has been given a pseudonym.

To ensure confidentiality it is important to store data in a secure way, including using locks and passwords. In addition, I wrote all my handwritten field notes in Norwegian, which was safer in the event that anyone would come across them and start reading. Raw notes might contain observations or reflections that are not intended to be published in their current form, and thus might contain somewhat more sensitive information than the published work. I translated the raw notes into English as I typed them on my computer to make them more accessible and searchable, which facilitated the analysis process.

3.7.3   Benefits, rewards, and risks

In any research study, the benefits should outweigh the risks for the participants as far as possible. However, in practice it is difficult and often ethically questionable to attempt to translate risks into compensatory benefits, such as monetary tokens of appreciation. Offering people money to take part in a high-risk study might be justifiable in exceptional cases, but can be highly problematic. Rather, I suggest that compensation should be used for time spent, actual or indirect expenses, or other non-obtrusive risks, presumably a common practice. That said, money and other forms of compensation can also be contentious, as it may create expectations, dependency, sense of debt, envy, or other undesirable sentiments or social relations. There are many ways in which research participants can benefit from research without receiving monetary tokens of appreciation, which I will discuss below.

Many ethnographic researchers decide to "give back" to the communities that they are studying. This can be in the form of help with errands or practical matters (Purcell-Gates, 2011), or in the case of student assistants, letters of reference and other academic and work-related support (Pearson & Paige, 2012). It appears to be a common practice in North America to offer research participants a modest token of appreciation – at least this has been my personal

experience as a student taking part in several research studies. A professor in my department attests that this is her standard modus operandi (P. Duff, comment on term paper, April 2013). In the North American context, a token of appreciation is unlikely to unduly influence the research. Paradoxically, however, the people who would benefit the most from a token amount of money – participants in resource-poor parts of the world, such as north-western Uganda, are more likely to be in a situation where a token of appreciation might not just unduly influence the research, but more seriously, social relations within the community and between researcher and participants. As a novice researcher I had not thought this through fully, admittedly, but in retrospect I see the dilemmas of offering monetary compensation to research participants in resource-poor communities.

In retrospect, my main concern would be the question of who would benefit financially from this study. That is, which teachers (and others) would be invited to participate, and which would not. The literature tends to see compensation as problematic from a reliability perspective; the concern is that participants would provide a more favourable view or otherwise modify their responses. My main concern in this research would be that some non-participants would feel left out, such as teachers in other grade levels. Participants might also feel compelled to participate if they got a financial reward, since their financial situation is often dire, with salaries sometimes missing for months at a time.

The participants in this study did not receive any monetary compensation, but that is not to say they did not benefit. They received computer and Internet training from me on several occasions, as well as the small token of an exercise book and a pen. As teachers at an ASb pilot site, they also got access to the printed booklets, digital stories, and computer training. Two of the teachers and the head teacher were sponsored to go to Kampala for a weekend-long training,

including staying at a hotel, which for one of the teachers was the cause of great excitement: "And it was – it was a tour for me. That one was yet the second time I have reached Kampala. And the first time I have enjoyed something in a hotel" (Interview with Monica D., October 27, 2014.)

None of the teacher participants at Arua Hill had used computers or accessed the Internet before, and they were excited about this opportunity. Through my research and presence at Arua Hill the teachers got further opportunity to explore the laptop computer provided by ASb, and to connect to the Internet to set up email accounts, search the worldwide web, and check postings on a university acceptance website. Through access to the stories the teachers had the opportunity to explore new ways of teaching. One teacher in particular stressed that teaching ASb stories saved her time, since she did not have to plan much. The research thus served as a form of professional development for the teachers, and benefitted them in their capacity as teachers. The teachers and librarians at the other schools got access to 450 storybooks (250 in the case of Mindrabe Library, since the books in their local language were not completed by the time the research ended). Some participants are also likely to appreciate the attention and interaction that stems from being part of a research project.

3.7.4 Participant requests

As outlined above I helped the teachers in different ways, particularly with regard to operating the digital equipment at the request of the teachers or the head mistress. One teacher expressed interest in using Facebook and another wanted pen pals online, but time for computer practice was limited by the teachers' workload, and in the end the teachers in question did not open a Facebook account or find pen pals. One teacher set up an email account, however, and another one sat with me repeatedly to search for a shortlist for university admission for a relative.

3.8 Researcher Positionality

Qualitative research is inherently *social*, and thus the researcher, and the relationship between the researcher and the participants, are integral parts of the research process. Whereas positivistic quantitative research tends to consider the researcher a source of contamination, in qualitative research the researcher is seen as a resource that can benefit the research (Holliday, 2002). Precisely because the researcher is crucial for developing social ties to the participants, and part of the co-construction of meaning through interviews (Talmy, 2010), it is important to reflect on the position in the researcher in relation to the specific research. This process of reflection is called *reflexivity*, which Holliday (2002) defines as "the way in which researchers come to terms with and indeed capitalize on the complexities of their presence within the research setting, in a methodological way" (p. 146).

Working as a White, male researcher in North-Western Uganda means entering a tradition of research that has historically – some might say up until the present – been carried out for the benefit of the curiosity and personal research agendas of people from the Global North (Smith, 1999). With this fraught context and debates about neo-colonialism in mind, Jones (2008) suggests, "From whichever vantage point one enters this debate, one must enter first and foremost as a human being" (p. 130). It is with this sense of sharedness – having many similarities in spite of our superficial differences – that I entered the research sites.

I have a background as a teacher with experience from primary and secondary school, and I shared my experience of being a teacher. Although it took time for me to get to know the participants and for them to get to know – and trust – me, my daily presence and casual interaction eventually enabled me to establish rapport. They might have been wary of me as an outsider – not sure where I stood and what I *really* wanted. The teachers were in many ways

under pressure (see Chapter 5.7), and were sometimes reprimanded, which probably led to a degree of wariness towards outsiders like me. But unlike government inspectors and the school leadership, I was not in a formal position of power over the teachers, though my outsider role as a White, male researcher most likely positioned me as a person of power in some ways. Power dynamics are inherent in all social interactions, including researcher–participant relationships, which requires the researcher to be aware of these and address any concerns that may arise from this situation (Kvale, 2006).

The role of the researcher as an outsider or insider to any research context is long established. But as Merriam and colleagues (2001) point out, these days such a binary has largely given way to a more nuanced approach. Both insider and outsider perspectives on research are valuable, but they also carry with them inherent limitations (Grbich, 2013). At the face of it, I was an outsider who didn't speak the local language, but since my the research for my Master's degree at a community library in Uganda in 2008, I have been coming back to Uganda, including Arua, several times for longer stays. In other words, I was broadly familiar with the educational setting, school culture, and Ugandan culture more broadly, so my prior research experience in Uganda might compensate for some of the shortcomings of being an outsider to Uganda and the local cultures in Arua. Furthermore, my familiarity with educational settings in other countries permitted a keen eye for differences and nuances that an insider might have missed.

As a White, male researcher in the lower section of a Ugandan primary school I am highly visible. All but one of the participants from the schools are women, a reflection of the fact that there is a gender divide along the grades: the higher the grade, the more likely that the teacher is male. All the female teachers at Arua Hill were mothers, and some had infants and toddlers whose demand for care and attention must have influenced their work in some way. I

sometimes caught myself thinking that if I had children myself, we would suddenly have a lot in common, and something to talk about and pictures to share. But I had to find other topics and ways of developing our relationship.

3.9   Limitations of the Study

All research has limitations, by scope, design, theories, characteristics of the researcher, and many other aspects. In addition to the limits that any research necessarily contains, a major limitation is the lack of previous research in this area that can guide the proposed research to address the specific research questions. The novelty of the ASb is itself an indicator of how this research is breaking new ground, which also means there is less reliance on previous research that can adequately inform the proposed research. But the use of stories in teaching is almost universal, and the role of providing literacy materials is something the ASb shares with other projects. Drawing on the rich literature in related areas of research will help in addressing this limitation.

3.10 Chapter Summary

In this chapter I gave an account of the research design behind this case study, including considerations of the methodology involved in developing and carrying out the research design. I also made the point that fieldwork is inherently unpredictable, but with help of colleagues and contacts in the field, I did my best to deal well with exigent circumstances that arose. The five research sites, including Arua Hill, the main site, were presented in this chapter – setting the stage for a closer investigation of the participants from these sites in the following three chapters. I described and elucidated the data collection instruments used in this study, particularly field notes, interviews, and focus group discussions. I also considered the trustworthiness of these forms of data, which along with the questionnaire (and to a lesser extent the reading observation

protocol), were triangulated, and together provided the foundation on which the analysis was developed. The data were analyzed using a combination of inductive and deductive coding, and the codes developed through this process served to identify salient themes, which greatly facilitated the analysis of the data in relation to the theoretical framework.

Collaboration, research involvement, and ethical considerations were other central topics I discussed in this chapter. I argued that collaboration and researcher involvement are relevant to any social science research, and I discussed what form these aspects of research took in the case of my preparations and fieldwork. Ethics, particularly considerations of participant anonymity and benefits in a developing country context, and my fieldwork in particular, was another topic I addressed in this chapter. I concluded the chapter with a reflection of my own role as a researcher – an outsider in many ways. I also recognize some limitations of this research, particularly how the novelty of the ASb means there is little other research on this particular kind of initiative that can serve as a point of reference for this research. At the same time, this novelty and scarcity of research makes this present research all the more pertinent.

In the next chapter I turn to the ASb itself and the context in which the research took place – the first of three chapters that address each of the three research questions.

Chapter 4: The African Storybook and the Research Context

To make sense of an initiative like the ASb and its operations in a school in northern Uganda, it is pertinent to situate this initiative in its context. While the context is sometimes considered a peripheral part of research, that is not the case in this study. The context in which this research and the African Storybook at a school in Arua are situated, are intricately tied to the broader question of teacher identity and investment. I have therefore dedicated one chapter, and one research question, to the research context, as it provides a necessary foundation for the other two research questions addressed in Chapters 5 and 6. With this rationale in mind, Chapter 4 addresses the question of the wider context in which the African Storybook is situated, by addressing the first research question, which provides a foundation on which the subsequent research questions build: *In what ways is engagement with the ASb linked to wider educational practices in a small town in Uganda?*

In addressing the educational practices in Uganda and the related social, cultural, and pedagogical environment, this chapter starts with an account of the African Storybook itself and its digital publishing model. A core aspect of the ASb implementation is the choice to use projectors to display stories, rather than more conventional printed booklets. In doing this, and making all its stories available under open licences, the ASb is part of a relatively young, but rapidly growing trend to make open educational resources and focus on technology in meeting educational goals. ASb is now one of several initiatives that make children's stories available online under open licences. The ASb initiative, its openly licenced publishing model, and similar initiatives that together with the ASb constitute a growing movement for access to multilingual stories, are explored in the first three sections of this chapter.

Section 4.4 of this chapter presents the local context. There is a certain tendency to group African countries together as a single entity, thus failing to acknowledge the diverse regional, national, and local differences. Although there are many similarities between Ugandan schools across the country, it is important to keep in mind the local differences of language and culture that are always present, and may be relevant to outside initiatives, such as the ASb. This section homes in on the local context, exploring history, culture, language, and literacy programs specific to West Nile, where the fieldwork for this research took place.

The fifth section of this chapter, Section 4.5, narrows the focus further, and describes the process of doing fieldwork at Arua Hill and the other research sites. The process of collecting data through fieldwork cannot be entirely separated from the findings and analysis. This section shares experiences of data collection at the different research sites and completes the overview of the research context – setting the stage for the main analysis of the findings, which are presented in Chapters 5 and 6.

4.1   The African Storybook

The African Storybook (ASb) is an initiative that provides openly licenced stories through their website, and invites users to write, translate, and adapt stories. The ASb also operates pilot sites in several countries, including Arua Hill in Uganda, and collaborates with government agencies and NGOs to widen the reach of their stories and expand their project. The idea behind the ASb came from the need to provide supplementary readers to underserved children in Africa, particularly in African languages, since there is a dearth of such reading materials (Results for Development Institute, 2016).

In order to get feedback from teachers and other practitioners on the website and use of the stories, the ASb established 14 pilot sites in three countries: South Africa (including

Lesotho), Kenya, and Uganda (African Storybook, n.d., Welch & Glennie, 2016b). These include primary schools, libraries, early childhood development centres, and a primary teachers' college. The pilot sites were given the electronic equipment required to access and teach the stories, such as a laptop, a battery-driven projector, and when required, a portable solar panel to run and charge the devices. They also received a discretionary fund to make further preparations (such as buying another laptop or refurbishing a classroom) and some initial computer training and information about the project. The Memorandum of Understanding that the pilot sites signed with Saide also stipulated that they contribute to the ASb by submitting their own stories and translations of existing stories. In each of the countries a fulltime coordinator liaises with the pilot sites and establishes contact with other (potential) partners, such as NGOs and government agencies working in the area of early literacy.

Since the start of the pilot site projects in 2014, ASb has expanded to Ethiopia, Ghana, Zambia, and Rwanda, where it has commissioned translations and followed up with story development work and use of stories together with local partners. Reports on the use of stories are promising:

> Active engagement with the stories is mentioned in all reports, as is children's excitement with having the stories digitally available. An unexpected outcome of pilot site engagement was an increase in planning and collaboration among the African Storybook educators at a particular site. (Welch & Glennie, 2016a, p. 5)

However, as noted by Welch, Tembe, Wepukhulu, Baker, and Norton (2014), one of the central challenges that the ASb faces is: "How do we support teachers, parents and communities to use stories effectively for multilingual literacy development?" (p. 93). Previous research

indicates that in the three pilot countries, teacher education programs give very little attention to teaching early grade reading, particularly in African languages (Abiria et al., 2013; Kyeyune et al., 2011). If reading instruction is covered at all in teacher education programs, it is usually assumed that teachers can apply what they have learned about teaching reading in English, to teaching reading in any other language. As Norton and Welch (2015) note, however, this is a problematic assumption, as this ability to turn theory into practice may not always be present.

4.2   The African Storybook's Publishing Model

Digital publishing is a core feature of the open educational resources (OER) movement,[15] which promotes and creates openly licenced educational documents, media, software, and other resources. OER Africa[16] is one of the major players in the OER movement in Africa, and is hosted by the same organization as ASb – Saide.[17] The open licences ASb uses (Creative Commons Attribution[18] and Creative Commons Attribution Non-Commercial[19]) are key in enabling use and development of the stories that conventional publishers normally do not allow or facilitate. Open licences permit and enable printing and re-publishing as well as translating and adapting – two of the three pillars of the African Storybook.

Figure 4.1 The ASb website's main buttons at the time of research

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[15] https://www.oercommons.org
[16] http://www.oerafrica.org
[17] http://www.saide.org.za
[18] https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0
[19] https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0

In addition to printing and displaying, translating and adapting stories, users can also create their own stories and submit them to the ASb website. These three pillars are reflected in the user interface (see Figure 4.1).[20] It is possible to sort the stories by level, from "First words" through "longer paragraphs" to "read-aloud", which roughly correspond to length of the stories. There are also five categories:

- Child-created story

- Folktale

- Poem, Rhyme, Song or Game

- Story

- Wordless story

The categories "Story" and "Folktale" are by far the largest. Language is another search option. The list of available languages has been growing since the website was launched in May 2014 to about 300 different titles and 45 languages in April 2015 – the beginning of Arua Hill as a pilot site. At the time of writing, the website contains more than 700 titles in 100 languages. Lastly, users can search for the writer of a story. In addition, an advanced search allows users to find stories by keyword, ASb approval (vetted and approved by the in-house editor), and licence, but not by illustrator or artwork style (such as sketch drawings or photographs).

The interface on the ASb website is in English, but many of the stories are written in African languages. The website only partly supports Unicode, which allows characters from languages with different kinds of scripts (e.g., the Ethiopian Ge'ez script) to be printed. This incomplete font support has made the rendition the official Lugbarati orthography (using

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[20] The user interface changed considerably in January 2016, so the description here does not match the current interface.

extended Roman script) inaccurate or faulty during my fieldwork, particularly in PDFs. At the

time of writing, however, the Lugbarati orthography and other scripts are rendered correctly,

which demonstrates the adaptability of digital media. Since ASb is an online platform, there is no

localization applicable on the users' end. In other words, the language and nature of users'

computers and software are independent of the website.

Figure 4.2 A tag cloud presenting Web 2.0 themes. Original by Markus Angermeier.

Vectorised and linked version by Luca Cremonini. Licensed under CC-BY-SA 2.5 via

Wikimedia Commons. Retrieved from https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/

File:Web_2.0_Map.svg

Advances in digital technology, such as software and Web 2.0 technology (see Figure

4.2), but also digital printing, have facilitated a change in publishing modes. Before the digital

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revolution was well established, publishing was limited by costly, large print-runs of stories that were only available in print form and thus could not be easily edited, transferred, or translated. The combination of openly licenced stories and images and inexpensive printing allowed me to design booklets with ASb stories in English and Lugbarati, which I printed in large numbers during a trip to Kampala and brought back to Arua (see Chapter 4.5.2).

4.3   Openly Licenced Digital Publishers

With the advent of the Internet, and particularly the more advanced features associated with Web 2.0, websites and platforms that allow self-publishing and other forms of user-generated and user-editable content have mushroomed. Companies such as Lulu[21] and Amazon[22] invite users to self-publish for or without profit, and apart from the ASb, projects like Pratham Books' Storyweaver,[23] Bloom Library,[24] ScribJab,[25] and Free Kids Books,[26] offer digital children's books for free.

Pratham Books from India is a professional publisher that pioneered the releasing of its books under a Creative Commons licence, and currently offers more than 3600 titles in 69 languages. Some of the stories from Pratham Books, such as *Listen to My Body* (see Chapter 6.1.3), are also available on the ASb, and vice versa. Bloom Library was developed by SIL International and the website offers stories in 83 languages, and 1135 titles in English, including many from the ASb. Unlike the ASb and other online-oriented services, Bloom Library provides an application (Bloom) that must be downloaded (Windows only) and installed to create books.

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[21] https://www.lulu.com
[22] http://www.amazon.com
[23] https://storyweaver.org.in
[24] http://bloomlibrary.org
[25] http://www.scribjab.com
[26] http://freekidsbooks.org

This software also serves as a library for reading downloaded books. Bloom allows for the creation of multilingual books, and it offers support for the creation of leveled readers (creating stories based on a limited set of letters and letter combinations to facilitate initial reading). Other websites, like Free Kids Books and Canadian ScribJab, allow users to submit or create their stories online, respectively (see Dagenais, Toohey, Fox, & Singh [2017] for a study on the use of ScribJab in Canada).

In South Africa there are several organizations that publish and promote openly licenced children's books, including Fundza,[27] Nal'ibali,[28] and Book Dash,[29] and Molteno's *VulaBula*.[30] Fundza is oriented towards mobile phone users, and offers fiction and non-fiction for teenagers. Nal'ibali is a South African reading for enjoyment campaign with stories in all 11 official languages, as well as audio recordings in 10 languages. Book Dash provides children's stories in English, and translations of some of their stories provided by the ASb and Nal'ibali. VulaBula offers graded readers, which require special attention to the orthography and phonology of each language. The ASb collaborates with several of these organizations, and hosts stories from Book Dash, as well as stories from the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal[31] and Little Zebra Books.[32]

The Global Book Alliance[33] (formerly Global Book Fund) is an attempt to build on and bring these and other initiatives together by strengthening the development, procurement, distribution, and use of books in developing countries. Results for Development Institute (2016)

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[27] https://live.fundza.mobi
[28] http://nalibali.org
[29] http://bookdash.org
[30] http://vulabula.molteno.co.za/vulabula
[31] http://cae.ukzn.ac.za/Resources/SeedBooks.aspx
[32] https://www.littlezebrabooks.com
[33] http://globalbookalliance.org

produced a feasibility study to prepare for this initiative, which is still in progress. A new website[34] appears to be under preparation to offer openly licenced books, but at the time of writing it is still under development.

4.4   The Local Context

Understanding the local context in which this research is situated is important to acknowledge how local circumstances always influence research. Getting a better understanding of the local context, including history, languages, culture, and contemporary literacy programs, contributes to ecological validity of the research (see Chapter 3.4.8), and helps ensure the generalizability of the study to make the findings more relevant for other contexts (see Chapter 3.1). Knowledge about the context – people, culture, languages, literacy programs, and other aspects, are also what the ASb works with and builds on, as successful use of their stories presupposes that they resonate with existing cultural practices. The ASb is one of several literacy interventions in West Nile, which the ASb has to relate to, such as through the choice of the orthography.

4.4.1   The West Nile and the Lugbara people

The West Nile is a sub-region in north-western Uganda, where the fieldwork for this research took place. It consists of seven districts, including Arua and Koboko, where the research sites are located. The languages spoken in the region include the Central Sudanic languages Lugbarati, Ma'di, Southern Ma'di, and Aringa, and the Nilotic languages Alur and Kakwa. West Nile borders South Sudan and the Democratic Republic of Congo, and all of these languages (except Southern Ma'di) are spoken across one of these borders. In addition, two languages, Bari

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[34] http://digitallibrary.io

and Lendu, are mainly spoken in South Sudan and the Democratic Republic of Congo, respectively, but also by a small number of people across the border in Uganda (Glottolog, n.d.).

The Lugbarati language and the Lugbara ethnic group are the biggest in West Nile, and the main focus of this dissertation since Lugbarati is the dominant language in Arua. The Lugbara and related groups started migrating south from what is now South Sudan around year 1600 (Ssekamwa, 1994). In the previous centuries other groups started settling in the Lugbara's place of origin, and they were forced to settle in what is now Uganda between 1600 and 1650. Other migrating groups split, and isolation over time led to several dialects of Lugbarati as well as the related but different languages Ma'di and South Ma'di. The Lugbara also assimilated some local groups, notably the Kebu, which were important as they could make iron tools. This led to improved agriculture, weapons, and other tools (Ssekamwa, 1994).

Unlike the more numerous Baganda and Banyoro to the south, the Lugbara did not have a unified political entity, but each clan was ruled by a chief, *opi*, who settled disputes, entered alliances, and declared war. By the time the Lugbara came into contact with the British, some clans had started a centralization process by recognizing one *opi* among them (Ssekamwa, 1994).

The Lugbara culture is characterized by its focus on community and sharing. Selfishness is highly frowned upon, and eating alone used to be viewed with suspicion. Communal practices such as collective ploughing and sharing of tools and utensils were common (Andema, 2014). Elders are highly respected and regarded as a source of wisdom (Obetia, 2008). Oral literature was central in conveying values and teachings, and came in three forms: the story method, the ritual formulae method, and the didactic method, each of which had different modes and purposes. Storytelling among the Lugbara is described as follows:

The Lugbara/Madi people take pride in the art of storytelling and listening. Each teller

has a way to cause listeners to attend to the story, which we have noted as the 'mode of

reception and relaxation'. This allows listeners to take the story in with a view to retelling

it. The more people there are telling a particular story, the richer the narrative becomes,

because each teller stamps the story with his/her character. (Obetia, 2008, p. 110)

With the coming of Anglican and Roman Catholic missionaries in 1877 and 1879,

respectively, began an era of changing religious practices and Western education. Obetia (2008)

argues that the Lugbara adopted Christianity and fused it with traditional culture, notably through

the translation of Christian texts and concepts. The so-called Verona Fathers (now called the

Comboni Missionaries) came to Uganda in 1910 and were among the first to bring Western

education to the West Nile, as they built schools there as well as in the neighbouring region to

the east. However, these schools were built for the benefit of Catholic converts, as education

mostly followed religious lines at the time. Education for Muslim children at first took the form

of Koran schools, while after 1925 the Protectorate government started setting up schools also

for Muslim children (Ssekamwa, 2000).

4.4.2 Literacy programs in West Nile

As one of the poorest regions of Uganda, a number of literacy programs have focused on

West Nile. Ngaka and Masaazi (2015), who studied the experiences of volunteer teacher research

assistants, found that although pupils and parents engaged in informal literacy practices, cultural

resources, and written texts, these were not adequately used to promote literacy. They

recommend developing teaching materials, including ICT, for improving literacy instruction in

the area. The ASb can be seen as a response to this call for developing relevant literacy materials

and the use of ICT in education.

Arua Hill, Bibia, and Ombaderuku Library are three of about 100 pilot sites of the School Health and Reading Program (SHRP) in West Nile, which was introduced in the year of my fieldwork (2014). As pilot sites of the SHRP program, the teachers at Arua Hill and the other two schools received training, textbooks, teacher guides, and follow-up support for implementing SHRP. With the introduction of SHRP, Lugbarati, the main local language used in this region, was reintroduced as the language of instruction at Arua Hill in P1. This was also the only grade at which SHRP was implemented at the time of fieldwork. Although instruction in the mother tongue has been official policy for many years, in practice the language of instruction has changed back and forth between English and Lugbarati (see Chapter 5.7).

SHRP is implemented by RTI International and is developed with technical support from SIL International, the leading organization in field linguistics and orthography development worldwide. The methodology uses one textbook for English and one for Literacy, and is a mix of a bottom-up and a top-down approach to literacy instruction, but perhaps less top-down than other SIL materials I have seen in Uganda. The SHRP program in Arua Hill and other schools in the country will expand to P2 and P3 the following two years, respectively. Since the program was operating in P1 during my fieldwork, only the three P1 teachers received a one-week training workshop in the methodology as well as the revised orthography that came with the program.

Another development organization operating in the field of education in West Nile is Aga Khan, which is implementing *Reading to Learn* (RtL). According to Doris, the CCT, the two organizations had coordinated their efforts to introduce their interventions at different schools. RtL was being implemented in a large number of schools in West Nile, including Mvara Junior. The RtL methodology is described as moving from the meaning of stories and paragraphs to the

building blocks of language – sentences, words, and sounds (Bartlett, n.d.; Lusweti, 2014). In her comparison of SHRP and RtL, Doris identifies this top-down approach in RtL, which contrasts to the more bottom-up approach of SHRP. I recognized that in my observations, although I observed SHRP in P1 at Arua Hill and Bibia, and RtL in P3 at Mvara Junior.

> RTI is – compared to RtL of Aga Khan, RTI is like a bottom-top approach … [RTI] train the teachers to begin to teach reading by making the child learn the letter and the letter sound, then they develop syllables, and then they go into words, and sentence and paragraphs. So the children are like learning from the small bits into the bigger picture. While for RtL, there is Reading to Learn. For them, they begin with a big text, like a story. The children read a story, whether P1, P2, P3. The teacher takes the children through the story. Like, P1, the teacher begins to read the story alone, and as the teacher reads, the children listen, and teacher repeatedly reads, and children enjoy. … They read the story, and then they begin to break it down. The sentence level, the word level, the syllable level, and the letter sound level. Top-bottom. (Interview with Doris, November 28, 2014)

SHRP was introduced in 2012 and is scheduled to continue until 2019 (RTI International, n.d.), but its website is no longer available. It is not clear what will happen to these schools and their teachers when these programs leave, or one of them expands and takes over schools previously supported by the other organization.

4.4.3 Lugbarati language and orthography

Development and revision of the Lugbarati orthography has a long tradition that dates back to when it was developed by the first missionaries who came to the area. This early work,

most notably the translation of the Bible, was written without tone markers but with the additional character ⟨ʊ⟩ to represent /u/ with advanced tongue root – [ʉ] (Lʉgbara tɨ Board, 2013). However, later work dropped this additional character, and Lugbarati was written using only the letters of the English alphabet and the apostrophe. This five-vowel system was used in the first stories submitted to the African Storybook.

Some linguistic work suggests that there are 9 or 10 vowels in Lugbarati (Barr, 1965; Crazzolara, 1960), that is, the five vowels ⟨a⟩, ⟨e⟩, ⟨i⟩, ⟨o⟩, ⟨u⟩ with both advanced and retracted tongue root. However, only two of the advanced tongue root forms are represented in the current orthography (⟨ɨ⟩ and ⟨ʉ⟩), as the others are deemed to be allophones, and thus not needed to make distinctions between words. This gives 7 vowels × 5 tones (e.g., i, í, ì, ǐ, î, ɨ, ɨ́, ɨ̀, ɨ̌, ɨ̂) – a total of 35 vowels (see Coulmas, 2003). The new orthography was introduced through the SHRP program, which required a recognized orthography, and supported the Lʉgbara tɨ Board in developing one. ASb started commissioning stories written in the new orthography during my fieldwork (see Figure 4.3). At the end of my fieldwork, stories in the official orthography numbered 50 stories, compared to 85 in the pre-official orthography. All the stories the teachers wrote or translated for the ASb were written in the pre-official orthography.

The Okporua eyo nzepi ri (page 3)	Òkpóróá e'yó nzépɨ ɨndɨ̀ rɨ̀ (page 3)
E'yo 'da ku suru 'da ma alia 'da wakaka. Agupi dri ekopi emupi oko ri ni ndra 'ba amvu 'ya 'ba 'diyi ma drile ru ri 'i. Ndri ndra saaru, eri afa be dria azini eri mvaaru. 'Ba ai eri ra dika 'ba fe eri ni pati e 'da nya. Ri saa were ra 'da ma vutia 'du pati e 'da nya ra. 'Ba pe tini te.	E'yó 'dà ku súrú 'dà mà alɨ́á 'dă wàkàkà. Ágúpí drì ekópɨ emúpɨ òkòrɨ nɨ ndrâ ágú 'bá ámvú 'ya'bá súrú 'dà mà alɨá 'dă 'dɨyɨ mà drɨlé rŭ rɨ 'i. Ndrɨ ndrâ sărŭ èrɨ àfa be dríá àzíni èrɨ mvárŭ. 'Bá a'ɨ́ èrɨ rá díká 'bá fè èrɨ nɨ patí éfé 'dà nyǎ. Rɨ sâ were cotí 'du patí éfɨ́ nyǎ. 'Ba dro èrɨ rá.

Figure 4.3 Sample text of the pre-official and official Lugbarati orthographies, respectively.
Reprinted from "Okporua eyo nzepi ri" and "Òkpóróá e'yó nzépɨ ɨndɨ̀ rɨ̀" [The Talking Bag], by Caroline Lentupuru, 2014, translated by Alice Ojobiru and Drateru Alice Maureen, respectively. Creative Commons Attribution 3.0. Retrieved from http://www.africanstorybook.org/index.php?id=2531 and http://www.africanstorybook.org/index.php?id=8764.

The textbooks used in the SHRP program followed the revised orthography. In my field notes I describe a conversation with Doris about this topic.

I asked about the orthography (these books use a revised version), and Doris seemed a bit resigned. She said RTI has insisted on following a printed, established orthography, and had gone to the Lugbara Language Board and developed a new one, without consulting the community. I know SIL is very cautious with developing new orthographies (personal communication and impression), but then again – who is the community? Anyway, Doris said the new orthography looked complicated (I agree), and the teachers didn't fully

understand it – know when to use the diacritics. I asked, and she said she/people normally have no problem reading in context.

At the beginning of my fieldwork the ASb stories did not have diacritics,[35] so the booklets I printed did not have them either. Jenipher pointed out this discrepancy, as the orthographies in the textbooks and the booklets did not match: "But now as they come in with this tonal – whatever. So, that means they should now put in the tonal marks from these books" (interview with Jenipher, November 11, 2014). Issues regarding orthography, and orthography revision, are clearly complicated. Many languages also have to make decisions regarding dialects, but the Lugbarati dialect that the Bible was translated into is now accepted as the standard.

4.5 Doing Fieldwork in West Nile

Qualitative research does not strive towards what might be considered core values in quantitative research: random selection of participants and impersonal, bias-free researcher–participant relationship. Not only are such aspects of research unrealistic in qualitative research; they go against the epistemological views that underpin qualitative research, which typically sees knowledge as socially constructed. Furthermore, personal relationships between researcher and participants, including gatekeepers, can enhance and enable research. Personal connections before the research starts helps plan and prepare for the fieldwork, while developing rapport with participants over time is often crucial for ensuring progress of the research and the validity of the data.

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[35] Currently stories with and without diacritics are available.

In the case of this research, my supervisor Bonny Norton and I both had personal connections to Arua town and to some extent Arua Hill. Bonny Norton had been to Arua Hill and Arua, where two of Norton's former students, Sam Andema and Doris Abiria, are from. Doris is the CCT in Arua and has an office in Arua Hill. I knew Sam as a fellow PhD student, and I knew Doris from previous visits to Uganda. I had also been to Arua and the surrounding areas, but not Arua Hill or any of the other research sites. In this way the choice of Arua Hill, one of the ASb pilot sites, was a choice guided by personal connections, which helped ensure the appropriateness of the research site and the quality of the research, apart from facilitating the research in practical terms (see Chapter 3.2 for the importance of personal connections in dealing with exigencies).

4.5.1   Printing booklets

Before going to West Nile I was curious about what teachers thought about using booklets, as opposed to the projector, to teach stories. To address this question I needed booklets that they could use, and Tessa Welch, the ASb project leader, generously agreed to fund the printing of 5000 booklets for a little over 200 USD. The first week of July I went to Kampala to print the booklets. I had asked several teachers which stories they would like me to print. Santurumino mentioned *One Hot Saturday Afternoon* and *Akatope*, both of which he had already taught. Monica D. suggested *Arakiliko* [The Hornbill], which she had taught. I picked the rest myself, choosing stories from different levels (*first words*, *first sentences*, etc.) I printed the following titles, 500 copies each:

English

- *This is Me* (first words), A6, no cover
- *Weather Book* (first words), A6, no cover

- *One Hot Saturday Afternoon* (first sentences), A6, manila cover

- *Akatope* (first paragraphs), A5, manila cover

- *Refiloe and the Washed Chickens* (read aloud), A6, no cover

Lugbarati

- *Arakiliko* [The Hornbill] (first sentences), A6, no cover

- *Anji afa Akazavile ri* [Children of Wax] (first paragraphs), A6, manila cover

- *Okporua eyo nzepi ri* [The Talking Bag] (longer paragraphs), A6, manila cover

- *Ojata ayiko ru ri* [The Happy Revival] (longer paragraphs), A5, no cover

I planned on printing one more title, *Buku angumile niri* [Weather Book], but the person doing the printing left it out. After returning to Arua from Kampala I eventually distributed 50 copies of each title to the schools and libraries.

4.5.2   Doing fieldwork at Arua Hill

On my first day at Arua Hill Sam introduced me to the head teacher Catherine. She expressed a strong interest in supporting the students' learning, and had great expectations for the ASb. She had recently received an award as the best head teacher in Arua. Throughout my fieldwork we often spoke in her office; she had a couch facing her desk for visitors, who came almost daily. Visitors, including me, were typically given tea and a snack, and would often stay for up to an hour. Her office and the entrance hall to her office were decorated with educational posters and "slogans", often in the form of admonishments (see Figure 4.4). There was also a poster against violence in schools in the entrance hall. USAID posters on public health issues and education (like the one in Figure 4.4) were common in schools and elsewhere.

Figure 4.4 A USAID poster on what makes a school good

In the head teacher's office, there was also a poster with photos of all the teachers, and a chart that showed the hierarchical structure in the school (Figure 4.5). Interestingly, the teachers appear close to the bottom of the hierarchy, suggesting that the teachers have little control over their jobs and that they answer to several levels above them (see Chapter 5.7 for a discussion on teachers' sense of control over their own work). In practice, as far as I could tell, the hierarchy was not quite that complex. For instance, the "senior woman/man teacher" (SWT/SMT) did not have any power or influence over the other teachers, but were experienced teachers with some extra responsibility towards supporting the female and male students, respectively. Prefects were responsible for maintaining order in the classroom when the teacher was absent (such as when

she left to get something). This leadership role was sometimes misused, as the prefects at times whipped fellow students with a thin stick for talking or other minor infringements, which the teachers never did to my knowledge.

ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE

SMC — PTA — HEADTEACHER — DEPUTY — SEA — SWT/SMT / HOD — TEACHERS — SUPPORT STAFF — PREFECTS — PUPILS
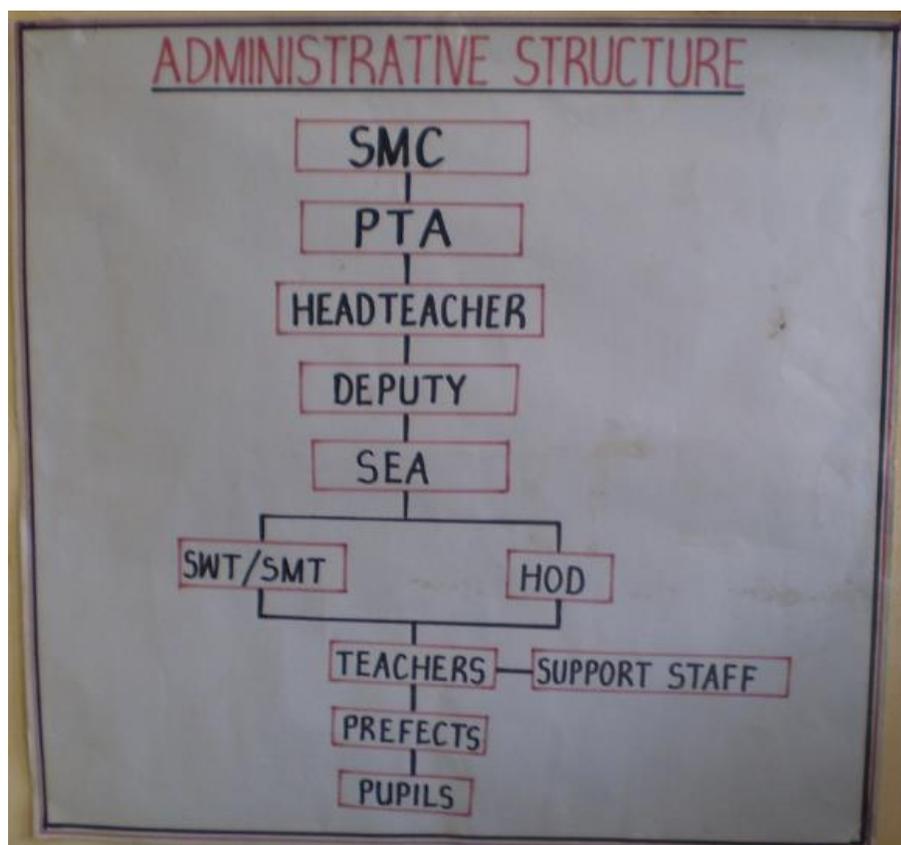
Figure 4.5 The hierarchy in Arua Hill

For my first meeting with the teachers at Arua Hill, Sam, Catherine, and I walked over to a room used for meetings where the teachers were waiting for us. Catherine and Sam spoke about the school and the ASb, and we talked about the teachers' prior experience with computers. It turned out they had not used computers before this project, and several said they "feared" them. Their responses in the questionnaire later confirmed this lack of familiarity with computers.

The following two days we decided to do some basic computer training in the computer room – a converted classroom that was being refurbished at the time with funding from the ASb. They installed a door, metal bars in the windows, electricity outlets, window panes, and painted the room, making it by far the best-looking classroom in the school. This work finished a week or so after I came, but the room was operational when I arrived, and Monica D. had already taught there once. The other teachers had not, however, as they were not sure how to operate the computer and projector. They had received some training on using computers at the PTC at a workshop some time earlier, but were not confident enough to operate the equipment on their own.

For the afternoon training Monica D. set up the computer and projector on a small table, and she brought four other teachers the first day, and two more the second day. We used both my and the school's computer to go online and read stories, and most of the teachers got to move the mouse and touch the keyboard, which was new to them. In my field notes I describe this, and the subsequent continuous professional development (CPD) meeting, in the following way:

> After lunch Monica D. set up the computer in the computer lab while it was still under construction (window panes were being inserted), and I asked her to bring some more teachers. I think five in total were there, a few were there for an hour or so, others a shorter while. On one computer they read offline, while Monica D surfed the website. After this there was CPD – continuous professional development. Basically the whole staff spent two hours (more?) talking about the "challenges" of the school. Mainly behaviour of students – and teachers – and such matters. Towards the end they brought up the poor end-of-term results, and Doris stressed how reading was important.

Such meetings tended to take a long time (by my standards). They often started late, and would continue until everyone had said what they wanted to say. At the parent–teacher association meeting later in the year, the meeting was supposed to finish by lunch time, but continued up to 4pm. Time was often "stretchable" in this sense, but at the same time teachers were also very punctual when required. Teachers were mostly on time in the morning (they had to sign in before 8:30 a.m. and indicate the time of arrival).

As a pilot site of the ASb, Arua Hill had agreed to write and translate stories, and report on the use of stories provided through the initiative. Juliet Tembe, the in-country coordinator, followed up on this work by talking to the head teacher on the phone and visiting in person on three occasions. Tessa Welch, the ASb project leader, joined Juliet on her second visit, and we all observed the teaching of a lesson in the computer room. During her last visit, Juliet also carried out a focus group discussion as part of her monitoring work on the teachers' use of the stories.

Observations of teachers' work was not limited to the ASb, as this was not the only intervention taking place at Arua Hill. This school was also one of 100 sites of RTI's SHRP program in West Nile, a much larger intervention that was based on a one-week intensive training of the P1 teachers, textbooks for each pupil, and a teacher's guide. A representative of SHRP came to observe one lesson, but apart from that the teachers relied on the teacher's guide, and support from Doris. In addition to these organizations, the district educational office was present through the visit of two inspectors who were present a whole day – one for lower primary and one for upper primary section. But rather than observing lessons to report on what the teachers were actually doing, like the other visitors did, the inspector for lower primary sat down next to the teachers to look at their lesson plans and schemes of work. In this way, the

planned lessons were taken as a proxy for teaching, which also meant that these planning documents were very important, as I shall return to below (see Chapter 6.3).

After I had brought the booklets printed in Kampala to Arua Hill, the head teacher thought it would be a good idea to also print some of the stories that the teachers had translated into Lugbarati. In my field notes I have written:

> I spoke with the head teacher, and she asked if I could print the stories that the teachers had translated. I did the layout and printed two in A5 format, *Goat, Dog and Cow* and *School Clothes*. I showed them to Monica D. and Mary, perhaps some other teachers also saw them. Monica D. and Mary both asked if we could print them. I think the head teacher independently suggested that we could print some of these. The school's photocopier is broken, I think, but the head teacher said she could pay for doing it in town. I told her that depending on the size it should cost between 100 and 300 shillings for those short stories. The head teacher asked for all five stories that the teachers had versioned, but I only had time for doing the layout of two stories. (Field notes, October 28, 2014)

4.5.3 Doing fieldwork in schools and libraries

When I planned this research I wanted to keep the main focus on the ASb pilot site – Arua Hill – but I also wanted to know how the ASb stories would be taken up in sites without the support and follow-up that the ASb provided, including my daily presence. With this in mind I asked Doris to suggest two schools that I could provide with a set of printed booklets, and she suggested Drari and Mvara Junior. When I expressed a concern that they were both urban and might be unrepresentative of the schools in the district, she assured me that Drari was

comparable to rural schools in its performance, and Mvara Junior was also not a high-performing school. As the CCT in the area, Doris knew the head teachers of these schools and introduced me to them, and both expressed great interest in receiving the booklets.

I visited these four sites throughout my stay, observing lessons with the teachers in the schools and in the libraries observing users and talking to the librarians. The teachers mostly used the ASb booklets (and in one case another story) when I came, but, apparently, not much at other times. The two libraries were attached to schools, and although they were open to the public, most users were the schools' own students, who sometimes used the library during the school hours. The librarians were teachers at the school and did not receive any additional salary for their work as librarians, even though they sometimes kept the library open during evenings and weekends.

Mindrabe Library was created in 2010 by Margaret, the head teacher of the school, while she was working at another school. When she was transferred to Mindrabe Primary School to become the head teacher, she decided to take the library with her. The two teacher-librarians, Francis and Tom, also were also transferred to Mindrabe Primary School. When I went to Mindrabe Library I met Margaret and Francis, the main librarian, and Tom, the assistant librarian. The library had a solar power system that powered one light bulb, but had capacity for another one, and they wanted to install a new light bulb in an adjacent room so that more people could read at night.

When I first came to Ombaderuku Library, the library was used to store wheelbarrows, and the library was not in use. I met with the librarian Ernest, another teacher, and the head teacher in the head teacher's office, who told me about the library. On my subsequent visits, the

wheelbarrows were gone from the library. The room was a bit dark as several shutters were closed. Ernest told me that some of them were broken, so they could not be opened.

4.6 Chapter Summary

This chapter addressed the first research question about the relationship between engagement with the ASb stories and the educational practices in West Nile. It opened with a description of the ASb itself, including its licences and digital publishing model, both of which are core features that enable wide use and translation of their stories. Even though the ASb is a novelty in many ways, there are similar initiatives in Africa and elsewhere that the ASb draws from and works with, enriching the ASb's repository of stories and user experience. I have similarly presented literacy programs in West Nile that operated alongside the ASb during my fieldwork, notably SHRP. The local language, including developments in its orthography, are important aspects of the context in which the ASb operated, as recent changes in the orthography had implications for writing stories and teaching literacy in lower primary. The chapter ends with an account of my experiences of doing fieldwork, including a description of the five research sites where the fieldwork took place. As a whole, this chapter gave a rich description of the language, history, culture, and education in the West Nile where the fieldwork took place. This description of the research context has thus laid the foundation for a closer look at the use of stories in teaching to promote early language and literacy learning, which is the topic of the next chapter.

Chapter 5: Using Stories to Promote Early Language and Literacy Learning

This chapter presents the key findings and discussion with regards to the second research question: *To what extent are teachers invested in stories from the ASb?* This includes a comprehensive account of both teachers' views of teaching as well as a description of their teaching practices, which are crucial for understanding the conditions under which teachers invest in the ASb stories, as well as the circumstances in which such investment takes place.

The first section of this chapter describes the teachers' views of teaching and learning, providing a foundation for analysing their investment, or lack thereof, in the stories. This includes the key discourse on child-centred learning, which reflects the national curriculum as well as international views on education (see Chapter 2.5). Teachers' notions of reading and learning as reported in the questionnaire are also presented and discussed in this section, with particular reference to their investment in the ASb.

The everyday routine of teaching, both ASb stories and other, "regular" lessons, are the focus of the next section. Here I describe the procedures that typically made up lessons with and without stories, and discuss their differences. Although there were differences between lessons, both "regular" and ASb lessons tended to follow a set pattern, albeit with some variation, and some lessons that stood out. Some of these latter lessons will be discussed more comprehensively in Chapter 6. The availability of what the teachers considered relevant and appropriate materials benefitted student engagement and facilitated teachers' work, which in turn supported teachers' investment.

The next two sections address factors that contribute to facilitating or circumscribing the use of stories and teachers' investment in their use. The first of these two deals with the support and skills development that the teachers received. In this section I also describe a workshop for

the teachers that the head teacher invited me to lead. Economic factors of working as a teacher in Arua were also very much present in the teachers' lives, and impinged on their work with and investment in the ASb in several ways, as we will see in the fifth section of this chapter.

While financial conditions and constraints were of concern, ideological tensions had perhaps a stronger influence on the teachers' daily professional work, as I argue in the following section. As the sub-heading suggests, the teachers were facing "Pressure from outside and pressure from here!" Demands, disagreements, and lack of clarity regarding exams, language of instruction, and student performance often placed the teachers in a catch-22 situation, with divergent demands and expectations from different stakeholders.

The last two sections discuss these matters, and they are organized around the two aspects of teaching with respect to the ASb: the teachers' practices and the forces that structure these practices. The first of these sections considers the teachers' practices that were observed with the introduction of the ASb stories. The second part deals with how these practices were structured around the concepts of identity, capital, and ideology from the theoretical framework, and how the teachers' identities were supported and circumscribed by these elements. A fuller and more detailed analysis with reference to the theoretical framework is provided in Chapter 6, which also gives an account of specific instances of teacher agency, ideological practices, and teacher investment.

5.1 Teachers' Views of Teaching and Learning

In order to describe and comprehend how teachers view the stories from the African storybook, and to address the question of the extent to which the teachers were invested in the stories, we must begin with the more fundamental question of their views of teaching and learning. Whereas the previous chapter focused on the wider research context as a way of

framing and contextualizing the research, this section frames the teachers' practices and investment in terms of their views of teaching and learning. As I argue in this dissertation, teachers' views are not just important for our understanding, but also for addressing how teachers' practices can be enhanced and increased use of stories can take place, as building on teachers' practices and understanding is key to achieving change.

The teachers were proud of their profession and work. As teachers they enjoyed a good standing in their community, despite low and irregular pay, and "when a teacher does something wrong, it will be the first thing to be announced in the radio" (interview with Monica D., October 27, 2014). The respect they enjoy as role models also obliges them to dress and behave appropriately, creating a virtuous circle that benefits teachers and their profession. Some of them cite their own teachers as role models and inspirations for becoming teachers, others point out that they "love the profession" (Interview with Judith, August 5, 2014). The teachers see their key characteristics of being a good teacher in procedural and relational terms; they value punctuality, content knowledge, planning, and handwriting, as well as being kind to their pupils. Nancy, a teacher at Drari, describes a good teacher in the following words: "A good teacher should know his or her pupils their names. A good teacher should always have lesson plans and schemes of work, and should always come early to the class" (interview with Nancy, November 11, 2014).

Concern for pupils, not least individual pupils, is central to teachers' discourse on teaching and learning. The notion of reaching every pupil is present in most interviews, and hailed as a core tenet, but also a challenging task. Large class sizes are widely cited as a major obstacle to achieving the goal of reaching individual pupils, and by the same token, a smaller

class size would make it possible to reach individual pupils, they point out, but it would not affect their teaching otherwise.

In their interviews, teachers reported that they view reading – learning to read and practicing reading – as a core feature of schooling. They stress the importance of extensive reading, and point to how reading is fundamental for all other subjects. They generally appreciate the stories from the ASb, and find them to be relevant and suitable: "They are suitable, the stories are good. When you are using them the learners will always pay attention. I think it is interesting also for them" (interview with Milly, August 11, 2014). Reading in class is largely a collective undertaking where the teacher leads the pupils in the whole class reading, sometimes with the teacher herself reading first to model for the pupils. Individual reading, or group reading (usually a set of desk rows) typically follows the whole class reading, that is, when the passage has already been read, often several times. The teachers emphasise pronunciation, correcting miscues and other mistakes, and point to difficult words. The two are often related, as pupils typically struggle to pronounce new words in English.

5.1.1   Pupil engagement and child-centred pedagogy

Like many other teachers in Uganda, the teachers at Arua Hill mostly conducted their lessons by writing on the blackboard, lecturing, and asking closed questions (Parry, 2009). Student engagement often happened at the whole class level – the teacher would ask a question, and the whole class would respond in chorus with the correct answer. If the teacher simply wanted the students' attention, she would ask a question such as, "Are we together?" to which the students responded, "Yes, teacher". Individual students were also called upon to write or spell a word on the blackboard or answer closed questions (usually one word), and were often very eager to do this, even though they sometimes made mistakes. When the students gave a

right answer they were generally praised with the other students clapping rhythmically and gesturing at the teacher's suggestion. They had a repertoire of such as gestures, such as mimicking to offer the student with the right answer a bottle of soda or throwing flowers at the student.

The teachers considered this student-centred teaching and spoke of the importance of placing the student at the centre of the lesson and avoiding teacher-centred teaching. When I asked about engaging their students, several teachers brought up these issues, such as Eunice in the follow interview excerpt:

Espen: How can you present it in such a way that it is interesting? How can you present the lesson so that it's not boring?

Eunice: You make the lesson learner-centred in a way of asking questions, they are the ones to tell what things are there. Actually, you make it learner-centred. Don't do everything yourself.

Espen: What does learner-centred mean?

Eunice: Learner-centred? Like. [short pause] When you are reading, like, the chart you are – or the textbook you are, those pictures in the textbook, don't tell them "this one is this, this one is this". Let them be the ones telling you. You just guide them. (Interview with Eunice, August 6, 2014)

Similarly, Santurumino emphasises the need for child-centred learning, and like Eunice he sees this as letting the students speak and act, rather than the teacher.

Espen: What do you do to make learning interesting and engaging for your students?

Santurumino: My mode of teaching children is the interactive. And I don't make children to sleep because I ask lot of questions about what we are teaching. That method of

questioning and answer I use it so great so that the children are not sleepy in the lesson. And I make sure after my lessons children are evaluated by giving them a lot of exercise. Actually I make the learning child centred. I talk less; I feel the children should talk more. My feeling about the way I have to teach the children.

Espen: What does child-centred teaching mean? Can you tell me more about what you mean by child-centred teaching?

Santurumino: Child centred?

Espen: Yes, what does that mean? What – tell me more about that.

Santurumino: A child-centred method of teaching is where the child is actually placed at the centre of teaching. The child learns, reads, participates more than you as the teacher. Yours is only to guide the child. Say if you are, you have written the heading on the chalkboard – instead of you reading the heading, first make the child to try. And if the child tries correctly, you tell other children to read after the child. Then you have to model how these children read. That is a child-centred method of teaching. That means the children do more of the activities, then yours is only to propose the activity, you write the activity, but they are the ones to do it to make them learn more.

Espen: What are the benefits of that?

Santurumino: The child centred, the child learns more and the child picks more easier and he is not able to forget what he has done himself. Say, if you are teaching mathematics there and say "one plus one is equal to two", and then you write another, "two plus two is equal to four". That means you are the one doing the activity yourself. But giving this activity "one plus two plus five is equal to" the children are the

one doing. That means they would not forget what they have got. They will not forget. That is one way, that's what we found to be the child-centred method of teaching children. You propose more activities for the children to do. Like in English, if you are teaching using storytelling, you can tell a related story to introduce a lesson. Then you ask the children to tell their stories that they know. That means there are participating in telling the stories. The lesson is then child centred. The child is placed at the centre of that teaching. That is what we do. (Interview with Santurumino, August 6, 2014)

This view of child-centred teaching focuses on the students speaking and being active, often by letting them take on the role of the teacher. Students typically do this by writing on the blackboard or responding to the teacher's elicitations. Santurumino also mentioned that students could tell stories. I did not observe that, but I did observe students telling riddles in Lugbarati and retelling stories in English that had just been taught. These were the only times I observed students speaking in sentences in English (in P1 some students told personal stories in Lugbarati as directed by the SHRP program). While these views of learner-centred teaching may differ from student–student interaction and student-driven activities which are often associated with learner-centred pedagogy (see Chapter 2.5), the teachers recognize the need for students to be engaged in the lesson, and that active learning improves retention of subject content. The ASb stories contributed to this by providing more text and more variation to the classroom. With the use of stories in a lesson it was also possible to ask textual comprehension questions and invite students to retell stories, both of which the students (at least those who answered) managed well, as far as I could tell. In this way the ASb stories contributed towards facilitating pedagogically richer teaching, which the teachers also demonstrated to some extent. The use of ASb stories

allowed the teachers to carry out "student-centred" activities such as retelling a story and inviting students to talk about personal opinions as described below (see the story "One Hot Saturday Afternoon" in Chapter 5.2). In this way, the teachers could connect the new practice of teaching using ASb stories with their conventional teaching methods and views of teaching, which favoured their investment in the stories. Although these new practices were not very prevalent, their presence suggests that these are practices that the teachers developed themselves, and as such can be further developed and enhanced with time and support.

5.1.2 Views of learning and reading reported in the questionnaire

The teachers' responses in the questionnaire indicate that they have a nuanced view of learning, recognizing its complexity. To some extent, their answers to what people do when they learn (see Table 5.1) reflect their practices, such as high agreement with associating learning with asking and finding answers to questions. Similarly, memorizing and repeating facts when asked were aspects of learning they generally agreed with, something I also observed in their teaching. Overall they tended to agree with the statements about learning. Out of the 20 statements, the majority only disagreed with two: "They do things more quickly" and "They know more". Questions that reflected a constructivist view of learning also appealed to the teachers, such as discussing, giving their opinion, making decisions, and "They get help to do things that they would not be able to do by themselves."

When people learn…	disagree	somewhat agree	agree	strongly agree	I don't know	Total
They agree or disagree with other people	1	2	6	2	1	12
They ask questions			4	10		14
They discuss things with other people			4	9		13
They do things more quickly	5	6	1	2		14
They find answers to questions			10	4		14
They get help to do things that they would not be able to do by themselves		2	3	7	1	13
They give their own opinion	2	1	6	4		13
They know more	6	3		3	1	13
They make decisions about what is important and what is not		3	6	4	1	14
They make sense of the things they do	2	4	4	3		13
They memorize facts	2	2	5	4		13
They make sense of the things they know		1	8	3		12
They practice until perfect		2	4	8		14
They repeat the facts when asked	1	1	6	6		14
They try out new ideas		1	11	2		14

Table 5.1 Teacher's views of learning

As Table 5.2 shows, the teachers' views of reading also reflected their practices: the first

two statements about combining letters to make sounds and reading aloud were common, while

silent reading was not. The teachers acknowledged that children of the same age learn at a

different pace and in different ways, which are important insights for differentiated teaching.

There was little of such differentiation observed in their practice, however, perhaps because of

very large class sizes and limited time and other resources. Nevertheless, there were instances

where teachers recognized that some students were not reading, such as when Milly noticed that

two pupils didn't move their lips, and asked them to sit on the floor in front of the blackboard.

The teachers valued telling – and even more so reading stories aloud to their pupils. They often

did this, but always reading the text the pupils would also read as a sort of preparation, as

opposed to a longer and more complex story that they could enjoy and talk about, or use for

other follow-up activities.

Statements about reading	strongly disagree	disagree	agree	strongly agree	I don't know	Total
Learning to read is mainly about learning how to combine letters and sounds		1	5	8		14
Reading aloud is important in order to learn how to read		1	6	7		14
Reading in silence is important in order to learn how to read	4	6	2	1		13
Most children of a similar age learn to read roughly at the same pace	3	6	3	2		14
Most children of a similar age learn to read in the same way	4	6	3	1		14
Being read stories is helpful to learn how to read			8	3	1	12
Being told stories is helpful to learn how to read		2	8	2		12
Most first grade pupils know what reading means, but struggle to remember combine letters and sounds	1	3	8	2		14
Teaching how to read in English gives pupils an advantage; then they also learn English			10	4		14

Table 5.2 Teacher's views of reading

Although teachers' beliefs and actions do not always correspond (Borg, 2006), this

questionnaire and their stress on child-centred pedagogy do suggest that the teachers are

supportive of practices that emphasise constructivist principles of teaching and learning. While these beliefs may not always translate into the best possible practices, they are an important part of any effort to improve teaching and learning, and a good starting point for enhancing practices rooted in teachers' beliefs about reading and learning.

5.2 Teaching, Learning, and Investment at the Three Schools

Most lessons I observed that did not include reading a story (henceforth "regular lessons") followed a certain pattern, with some variations, typically along these lines: The teacher wrote the date, subject, curricular theme, and a piece of text on the blackboard, such as an example sentences or vocabulary. These words, and sometimes short sentences, were typically all the reading that took place in regular lessons. All the pupils read aloud from the blackboard, often after the teacher had demonstrated first (in which case they might repeat from memory rather than actually read). The teacher would then explain and ask questions with set answers, which individual pupils answered. They were usually eager to do this, and when a pupil made a mistake, others were quick to correct or offer another answer. Sometimes all the pupils repeated the correct answer in chorus. Most lessons were in English (with little code-switching), and focus was typically on correct spelling or the correct word, rather than subject matter.

Following this the teacher often invited pupils to name drawings or images of objects or people, or write a word on the blackboard. This would produce several written words on the blackboard, which the other pupils were invited to correct, and finally asked to copy down into their exercise books. This might take about an hour. At this point the teacher marked the exercise books with check marks and crosses (but typically not comments or corrections), usually by collecting them and marking them at her desk, and if she didn't finish, she completed the marking later in the day. While the teacher was marking, the pupils were sitting at their desk

with no assignment, and usually chitchatted or just waited until the lesson was over. At that point they would sing a song to mark the end of the lesson.

An example of such a "regular" lesson is the following excerpt from my field notes from an English lesson Milly taught in P2 that took almost two hours, including considerable waiting time at the end, which was very common:

11:10 a.m. Teacher writes day, date, subject, theme, "New words".

11:14 a.m. Pupils copy the words: "give, share, obey"

11:15 a.m. [The mathematics teacher] enters.

11:16 a.m. Song with clapping and jumping ("I like it" theme).

11:17 a.m. Teacher points to the blackboard, pupils read everything. Then single words, about 30 times. Several say "obey" before the teacher points to it, in anticipation.

11:23 a.m. Teacher shows flash cards with "obey". Teacher has not yet explained the words.

11:24 a.m. Teacher asks the pupils to spell the words without looking.

11:25 a.m. Teacher shows the flashcard "share" (two men sharing bread). "How many letters?" teacher asks. Teacher tells them to spell the word.

11:26 a.m. Teacher writes [the word] "sentences" on the blackboard. Teacher invites a pupil to the blackboard, gives her a pen. The teacher asks the pupils what she did. Some pupils attempt to answer. Teacher explains – "I am giving. That's giving".

11:27 a.m. Teacher shows a picture of two people sharing bread, explains that they are sharing it.

11:28 a.m. Teacher invites a pupil to the blackboard, asks him to go out the door. She explains that the pupil is "obeying teacher's orders". Teacher asks the pupils for some example sentences. Some attempts that are not completed. Teacher says: "Look at mine".

11:30 a.m. Teacher writes:

1. I am giving a pencil to my friend.

2. They are sharing […]

3. […]

11:32 a.m.	Teacher asks them to read. They are struggling with "should". [This word was used in one of the sentences above, but my field notes do not include the complete text written on the blackboard for this lesson]
11:33 a.m.	Teacher asks how many words there are in the first sentence. Pupils say: "There are eight words in the sentence".
11:36 a.m.	Teacher asks them to write the sentences. Teacher erases the three sentences. Then writes:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

11:40 a.m.	Teacher dictates, pupils write.
11:44 a.m.	I don't see any pupils who have written the first sentence. However, they have meticulously copied ["I am giving a pencil to my friend." etc.] from the blackboard.
11:45 a.m.	Teacher hands out some exercise books.
11:45 a.m.	Teacher says the third sentence. Then repeats the second one. Throughout there are questions for her to repeat each of the three sentences.
11:48 a.m.	Some pupils, perhaps 50%, have written 1–3 sentences. Several write "give" instead of "giving". Do they know the difference?
11:49 a.m.	Most pupils have at least started first sentence. Teacher walks around marking.
12:00 p.m.	Teacher says she shall collect the rest of the exercise books and mark them later.
12:03 p.m.	Teacher says they'll get three more minutes.
12:03 p.m.	Teacher reprimands students in Lugbarati for general noise and disturbance.
12:04 p.m.	Teacher leaves. Teacher returns [after a few minutes].
12:56 p.m.	The bell rings. Teacher says they shall finish drawing before they leave.

(Field notes, September 18, 2014)

In contrast, when teachers used stories displayed on a screen the pattern was quite different. The whole lesson was dedicated to the story, even when it was a short story of only

eight sentences. The teacher placed a fair amount of emphasis on the pictures, starting with the cover, asking what they saw. Pupils responded by identifying people and objects, and often the teacher invited pupils up to the screen to point to what they saw. Typically, teachers in Grades 1 and 2 read the story themselves first, and the pupils repeated, while the teachers in Grades 3 and 4 normally let the pupils read in chorus, one page at a time. When the pupils read they often stumbled at difficult words, which the teacher explained and sometimes demonstrated by miming. The pupils typically reread the story, occasionally up to six times. Sometimes the pupils were invited to retell the story, which they did fairly well, and they corrected each other if a pupil missed a part. Then the pupils were asked to draw or write based on the story, depending on their Grade. In P3 they were typically given the option to do both, but they didn't get any individual guidelines or help to do this, and most pupils drew a picture, and sometimes wrote an accompanying word. Like in regular lessons, the teacher marked their work with check marks, and the lesson ended with a song in grades 1–3. One example of lesson where a story was used was Santurumino's teaching of *One Hot Saturday Afternoon*, which I describe in my field notes as follows:

> Saturumino talks about the first page, what the pupils see. It's the same story [as another teacher taught earlier that day], One hot Saturday afternoon. All the pupils read in chorus, but all stumble at the word "grumpy". Saturumino reads it, but doesn't explain the meaning (after the lesson he confesses that he didn't read the story beforehand, and didn't know the word). When most pupils read "cooler" as colder, Saturumino points out how to read the word, breaking it down: /co/, /coo/, /cool/, /cooler/. He explains that it means "cold". He asks a pupil to point to the "shade" in the image, but the pupil points to a hand, clearly at a loss. Several others raise their hand to point to the right place.

Saturumino explains "shiver", "shivering", demonstrates. Curiously I don't think the word was there, but the image sort of depicted children shivering. I think the word came later in the story. Maybe I missed it. "Chilly" is another difficult word to read, and he explains it, it means "cold". Some children read this as "cold" the first time. At the end of the story he asks some children to retell the story, roughly one sentence per page. (Field notes, June 19, 2014)

While regular lessons almost always included some reading, it was restricted to separate sentences, words, and questions, and rather limited in terms of the amount of text. Although the pupils generally wrote something in these lessons, it was typically no more than copying words and sentences from the blackboard, or sometimes filling in missing words or otherwise writing single words. The use of stories increased the kind and amount of reading that took place, and for Grades 3 and 4, at least when they read stories with ten or more sentences in total. The shortest stories ("First Words", about eight sentences in total) were comparable to the average regular lesson in terms of amount of text, while longer stories could be ten times as long, as well as more meaningful and engaging. Teachers said they chose stories that were suitable for the pupils, and in Grades 1 to 3 mostly picked stories from the lowest levels ("First words" and "First sentences"), but in a few cases also longer stories, including a very long story they did not finish. The stories expanded the availability of reading materials, and importantly materials that were relevant and suitable for the students. This supported student engagement, arguably more than in regular lessons, and facilitated the work of the teachers as they didn't have to write as many words and sentences on the blackboard (see Chapter 6.1.4 for a fuller discussion of how the stories reduce teachers' workload). These factors combine to support the teachers' investment in

the stories, in my view. Table 5.3 provides an overview of the ASb stories and other stories

taught as well as other use of the projector.

Date	Teacher	Subject	Story, book, or image	Mode	Teacher assisting
Jun. 15	Cezerita	Library Hour	Multiple titles in English and Lugbarati	Book	
Jun. 19	Judith	English	*One Hot Saturday Afternoon*	Projector	Monica D.
Jun. 19	Monica D.	Physical Education	*Andiswa Soccer Star*	Projector	Judith
Jun. 23	Jane	English	*One Hot Saturday Afternoon*	Projector	Monica D.
Jun. 23	Monica F.	English	*Look at the Animals*	Projector	Monica D.
Jun. 23	Santurumino	English	*One Hot Saturday Afternoon*	Projector	
Jun. 24	Lucy	Literacy	*A Very Tall Man*	Projector	Monica D.
Jun. 25	Eunice	Literacy	Projected photo; cover of *One Hot Saturday Afternoon*	Projector	
Jun. 25	Mary	News	Pictures of lions from a Google search	Projector	Monica D.; Eunice
Jun. 25	Pamela	Literacy	Projection of edible plants	Projector	
Jun. 26	Eunice	Literacy	*One Hot Saturday Afternoon*	Projector	Monica D.; Mary
Jun. 26	Monica D.	Local language	*Arakiliko*	Projector	
Jul. 02	Eunice	Literacy	Projection of a family	Projector	Monica; Judith
Jul. 02	Santurumino	English	*Akatope*	Projector	Monica D.
Jul. 04	Monica D.	Local language	*Eiyo ma si azo ri* (one page)	Book	
Jul. 30	Monica D.	Local language	*Mr Fly and Mr Big Head*	Projector	
			School holidays		
Sep. 11	Monica D.	Oral Literature	*Adventures of a Supercow*	Projector	
Sep. 17	Monica D.	Oral Literature	*Feelings*	Projector	
Sep. 18	Mary	News	Projection of a school bus	Projector	
Oct. 27	Jenipher	Oral Literature	*Okporua eyo nzepi ri* (first page)	ASb booklet	
Oct. 28	Monica D.	Oral Literature	*Asisile Inzikuru ni Sukulu Eceuri, buku 5* (two pages)	Book	

Date	Teacher	Subject	Story, book, or image	Mode	Teacher assisting
Oct. 28	Santurumino	English	*Why Hippos Have no Hair*	Projector	
Nov. 05	Monica D.	Oral Literature	*Asisile Inzikuru ni Sukulu Eceuri, buku 5* (two pages)	Book	
Nov. 06	Jenipher	Oral Literature	*Okporua eyo nzepi ri* (first page)	ASb booklet	
Nov. 07	Jemily	Library Hour	*Akatope* (4 pages)	ASb booklet	
Nov. 10	Lucy	Literacy	*Weather Book*	ASb booklet	
Nov. 11	Nancy	English	*The New Ball*	Book	
Nov. 12	Monica D.	Oral Literature	*The Moon and the Cap*	Blackboard	
Nov. 13	Milly	English	*Cooking*; *Dancing*	Projector	Monica D.
Nov. 13	Milly	English	*Fun at School and Home*	Book	
Nov. 13	Monica D.	Oral Literature	*The Moon and the Cap*	Projector	
Nov. 13	Monica D.	Prep	*The Moon and the Cap*	Blackboard	
Nov. 14	Eunice	Literacy	*Drileonzi*	Projector	Monica D.
Nov. 14	Mary	Oral Literature	*'Di ma i*	Projector	Monica D.
Nov. 17	[No teacher]		*Akatope*	ASb booklet	
Nov. 17	Santurumino	English	*How Night Came to Opio's Village*	Projector	
Nov. 19	[No teacher]		Various books in Lugbarati	Book	
Nov. 19	Judith	English	*Weather Book*	ASb booklet	
Nov. 20	Agnes	Mathematics	*The Minutes and Hours in Ismail's Day*	Projector	

Table 5.3 Stories and books taught and images projected

Note: I observed seven of these stories being taught in two different classes. "Book" refers to a

non-ASb book; all other stories came from the ASb. Three teachers and one librarian reported

teaching 13 titles between them that I did not observe.

In a few instances stories were used as a starting point for a lesson that went beyond the

story itself and made references to the pupils' lives outside the classroom. Judith used an

illustration (and story) about children bathing in a river to talk about the risks of bathing in rivers

from the story *One Hot Saturday Afternoon*,[36] one of very few instances of open-ended questions that led to a productive conversation between the teacher and the pupils − something I did not observe in regular lessons (see Appendix H). In my notes I describe the lesson as follows:

> Like Monica D. she [Judith] walks the pupils through the images, asking them what they see. There isn't much prediction ahead or connection to pupils' own experiences, come to think of it, more focused on what is in the image on display. However, regarding the image of kids bathing, she asks if they are swimming, and "Should we go and swim?" To my surprise most pupils respond "no" (but one frail voice says "I would go"). She talked to me about it later, how they can be taken by the current and drown. She repeated the word *drowning* quite a few times. The bell rang, but the pupils didn't flinch, and the lesson went on for another 15 minutes or so. The pupils giggle when they see the image of the three children in underpants. They think the splashes are flowers, but Judith explains. (Field notes, June 19, 2014)

Another example of opening a conversation and bridging the content of a lesson and the outside world was Monica D.'s use of the story *Andiswa Soccer Star*[37] to address gender roles. On another occasion, she taught *Listen to My Body*, where the protagonist listens to her heartbeat, breathing, hands clapping, and other sounds the body can make, which the students imitated. Monica's teaching of these two stories as well as her reflection around them will be discussed at length in Chapters 6.1.2 and 6.1.3.

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[36] http://www.africanstorybook.org/index.php?id=988
[37] http://www.africanstorybook.org/index.php?id=5283

5.3 The Use of Stories at the Two Libraries

After the initial meeting with Margaret, Francis, and Tom at Mindrabe Library, I returned with a set of booklets in English and Lugbarati. However, it turned out they speak and teach in Kakwa in this school and region, which is unrelated to Lugbarati. Lugbarati is spoken further south, including in Arua. I apologized for not inquiring about this before, and suggested I could print the stories in Kakwa if they could translate them. Francis seemed eager to do so (Tom doesn't speak Kakwa). I said I would print the booklets in Kakwa as soon as they were translated. But before the translations were completed, someone broke into the library and stole the notebook with the handwritten translations, which delayed the process. It also became clear that they would have to go to an Internet café to type and email me the stories, which would cost some money. I offered UGX 10,000 ($4) to cover these expenses, but I was later informed that this was not sufficient. By the time I left we had not printed any booklets in Kakwa, but they had received 50 copies of each of the five titles in English. Francis describes how they used those books:

> What we do is we take these books, we give to the children to read a certain period to find out whether they are able to read the material. So when they are able to read it, then we now call upon them to come and now borrow them. They can borrow per week if they need if they want for two weeks, there's no problem. So, I've really seen that the booklets I think they are so good for the children, especially for the beginners, the lower classes, because they like that small material, because it is for them still something which they feel they can afford to read. (Interview with Francis, November 6, 2014)

Francis reported that he had taught *This is Me*, which he translated into Kakwa, the language of instruction in lower primary. In addition, Tom said that another teacher used a book with her class, but they looked at the pictures, not the text, which was in English. Tom, who speaks Lugbarati, but not Kakwa, is clear about the importance of the use of the students' first language in teaching literacy:

> So when we just begin English, English, English, English, you find, the child forgets. The child's knowledge about the book should not be so concrete. So the idea of translating these books – most especially the books you brought – first into local language, to me, is most important aspect of it. Such that the child will first of all begin with the local language. And the teacher explains, there will be some speculations as to what the books are going to be used as both as pupil's book and also learning aid. So that – such that the child uses it. So the child from P1 to P3 – after coming to transition class P4, we call it transition class, that is a class where each and every subject is taught in now English, and only a few things are elaborated or explained to the pupil in local language. But the medium of instructions becomes English speaking. And they and text books would help very, very much. So I appreciate those books. (Interview with Tom, November 25, 2014)

Like Mindrabe Library, Ombaderuku Library had received books and other support from Book Aid International. The library was filled with books, boxes, and papers. Some pupils came and went during my visits; many of them were leafing through books. Ernest tells me that P3 teachers have used *Akatope*,[38] *Okporua eyo nzepi ri* [The Talking Bag][39] and *Anji afa Akazavile*

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[38] http://www.africanstorybook.org/index.php?id=2821
[39] http://www.africanstorybook.org/index.php?id=2531

ri [Children of Wax].[40] The booklets were kept in a box, since he was worried that if they were put on the shelves, they would be mixed with the other books. The exercise book that was used to record borrowing of books started on September 19, 2014, and on that day 23 pupils borrowed one or two ASb books each: *Ojata ayiko ru ri* [The Happy Revival],[41] *Anji afa Akazavile ri* [Children of Wax],[42] and *Weather book.[43]* They were returned 3 to 33 days later. After that day no one had borrowed any other books, it appeared. Compared to Arua Hill it is clear that the use of stories at the two libraries was less extensive. The different nature of schools and libraries might be part of the reason, but the translation difficulties, lack of institutional support, training, and larger group of peers (there were just one or two librarians at each library) are presumably also central to understanding the limited uptake – and investment – at the two libraries.

5.4 Investment Through Support and Skills Development

For the first couple of months of research – before I printed the booklets – the only way teachers could use the ASb stories was by using the computer and project the stories in the computer room. This also means that for the teachers to become invested in the stories, they had to first learn how to operate the equipment needed to display stories. And as I will argue, learning to operate the computer and going online to find stories, while necessary for the implementation of the ASb, also had a positive effect on the teachers' investment in the project, as they viewed these skills as valuable beyond the ASb stories. Before the introduction of this project, however, the teachers had no experience with computers or the Internet, so without training, no use of stories could take place. The ASb team therefore offered professional support

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[40] http://www.africanstorybook.org/index.php?id=2511
[41] http://www.africanstorybook.org/index.php?id=3912
[42] http://www.africanstorybook.org/index.php?id=3912
[43] http://www.africanstorybook.org/index.php?id=1861

at Arua Hill in the form of computer training – one workshop before I came and two that I organized. Apart from this training, in May 2014 two teachers went together with the head mistress to Kampala for a workshop over a weekend. In Kampala, a retired American teacher facilitated a workshop focussing on reading aloud. The in-country coordinator visited a few times to follow up on administrative aspects of their work. Apart from this support from the ASb, the teachers found help in each other and Doris, the CCT.

There was a fairly strong sense of collegiality among the teachers, who shared advice, covered for one another when one of them was sick, and sometimes made outlines for the coming term together. The two teachers who went to Kampala for training were early adopters of the computer, and played a central role in training their peers in how to use the computer and navigate the website. This took place in the form of their helping fellow teachers to operate the computer and projector when they were teaching, but also informal training sessions where they looked for stories, or searched for pictures online that they could also use in lessons. Monica D. was the most technically adept, and other teachers came to her for help.

The school organized professional development workshops from time to time, but the main source of support the teachers mentioned was help Doris provided. Even though her responsibility covered 70 schools, the fact that she was based at Arua Hill seems to have given the teachers at this school more opportunity to learn from her. This school was also considered a model school – an inspiration for other schools to follow. In previous years Arua Hill was a well-performing school that may have lived up to these expectations, but in recent years, performance in the primary leaving exam had fallen, possibly related to the influx of parents wanting to send their children to the "model school", Doris suggested.

The head teacher invited me to do a continuous professional development session alone, since Doris was on sick leave. Such sessions were routinely organized, including during the first week of fieldwork, and as such represent the kind of support the teachers get from the school, and – through the discussions and community-building that these events bring about – from each other. My presentation started a little before 4 pm, since classes ended at 3:30 pm. It was attended by the teachers, head teacher Catherine, deputy head teacher, and the chair of the school management committee. I opened by praising the teachers, and I tried to point out that what I had to say were general comments that would be valid for any school or any teacher in Uganda, in my experience. As I spoke, Catherine, the deputy head teacher, and the chair of the school management committee chimed in to support and elaborate. The session took close to two hours, including the comments from the administration. The teachers also made some comments and had a few questions, but not many. Monica D. wanted to know what I meant by teaching several stories in one lesson, which was one of my suggestions. Milly wanted more help with using the computer, and said that lack of knowledge and not wanting to tie up Monica D. was the reason for not using the stories. With the additional comments and questions after the talk itself the meeting ended at around 6:30 pm, and heavy rains came a few minutes later, so everyone got wet. I tried to apologize to a few teachers for the meeting taking so long.

The use of stories made the introduction of technology necessary. The ability to operate the digital equipment, or seek help from peers who could, was also a requirement, and teachers' investment was therefore also tied to technology. Yet the technology was more than a prerequisite; it had a positive effect on the teachers' investment, as they valued these skills in their own right, beyond their use for the projecting of ASb stories (see Chapter 6.1.4 for an elaboration of the teachers' relationship to the technology). Not all teachers mastered the

technology on their own, but relied on other teachers to help them, which might have limited their use, along with a more substantial investment. Similarly, economic factors also had bearings on the teachers and their use of the stories.

5.5 Economic Constraints

Ugandan teacher salaries are lower than average in Africa (Altinyelken, 2010a) and a source of low teacher morale (Altinyelken, 2010b). Teachers' low salaries also contribute to the problem of absenteeism, since some teachers need to take on extra work (Tao, 2013). Women's added burden of housework and childcare add to this constraint. The teachers mentioned low, and more seriously, missing salary payments as a challenge, and one teacher wanted to take a degree to get better pay. Another teacher repeatedly left early to take care of her infant, a reflection of the added responsibility of women to take care of children and sick family members. In the words of Monica D.:

> The salary is too – it is now the government – but for us, teachers, especially me, in person, I have loans. When the salary comes, it is not really salary. Maybe where it is, is what I don't know. I've already consumed most of my salary. Now the one that comes is very little. It does not help me much. It is my own problem. Because I have children to be paid in secondary. I have four of my brothers. One has just recently this year completed PTC [primary teachers' college]. In this year. And my child also has reached secondary and I'm paying with [*sic*] him myself. Like the whole of last week he was admitted. He was admitted. This one is now my own problems. (Interview with Monica D., October 27, 2014)

Despite this and other challenges, the teacher absenteeism rate at Arua Hill appeared to be lower than the national average of 27 per cent (UNESCO, 2014). One reason for this might be that teachers at Arua Hill benefitted from earning an extra income by teaching remedial classes. Paid for by the parents through the parent–teacher association, extra lessons before and after regular lessons, as well as Saturdays, provided a small but steady additional income for the teachers. While this small increase was welcome, it also added to their workload and stress.

The students were also affected by low incomes, since their parents had to pay school fees every term. These fees contributed towards their education: more teachers meant lower class sizes, and more money for other expenses such as materials. However, many parents could not afford to pay the fees, and one Monday in October a large number of students were sent home because they hadn't paid. The smaller class sizes seemed more manageable that afternoon, but there was a chilling sense of apprehension in the air, and everyone was reminded of the precariousness of the situation the pupils as well as the teachers were in.

5.6 Assessment Practices

Students' performance is measured in exam grades, as there are no continuous or other forms of assessment that are written down and that can be used for evaluation purposes (except what SHRP introduced in P1). This places a great deal of emphasis on exams, notably the Primary Leaving Exam in P7, but also the end-of-term exams (three in a year) that take place in each grade. When the results of one of the end-of-term exams turned out to be low (see Table 5.4), the chair of the School Management Committee called for several teachers to come to the head teacher's office and explain the poor results.

Subject	P1	P2	P3
English	48	90	44
Literacy I [reading]	52	70	89
Literacy II [writing]	41	62	98
Lugbarati	No exam	No exam	44
Religious Education	74	97	39
Oral Reading	16	44	62
Mathematics	55	55	35

Table 5.4 Percentage passes for end-of-term 2 exam results, for P1–P3 (pass is >39%)

Note: *Oral reading* is not a subject in the curriculum, but the assessment of the ability to read a text in English aloud. The subjects *Physical Education*, *Creative Performing Arts* (consisting of *Music* and *Art and Crafts*), and *News* were not assessed.

The results of the end-of-term exams (Table 5.4) do not look uplifting at first glance, but the numbers mean little when there is no reference point for evaluation. The fluctuations between the grades in all subjects are an indication of lack of consistency across grades. Rather than reusing past exams, the teachers make new ones every year, so there is little or no validity in the results compared to previous years. In any event these results were not compared to previous years' results, but were taken at face value. Furthermore, the teachers did not make the exams based on national or other benchmarks for expected performance in a given year, adding to the poor validity of the exam scores. However, the exams – tangible expressions of students' performance – were a core part of teachers' work, and one of the many activities the teachers were expected to carry out by different stakeholders.

Even though the teachers prepared the end-of-term assessments themselves, these were deemed a very important part of teaching, and the school administration was involved in the process of administering these assessments, such as through setting the dates for when these

were to be organized. On one occasion there was a change of the date for a set of end-of-term assessments, which clearly affected the teachers.

> This morning there was some fuss about an end-of-term assessment. The teachers thought it was today, but it turned out not to be the case; it will be on Tuesday instead. The teachers at the head of infant office were upset. … When Monica D. got to know that there would be no exam she said she had not prepared, and would have to give them storybooks. (Field notes, November 21, 2014)

This event speaks both to the question of what control teachers have over their schedule, but it is also worth mentioning how Monica D. seizes this opportunity to use stories to address this unexpected turn of events. It is worth nothing that this took place towards the end of the fieldwork, when Monica D. had had about six months of experience with the stories, and the confidence that comes with such experience. This confidence and experience from sustained use of stories opened a space for addressing this challenging situation, and can be seen as one of the most salient examples of investment in the stories.

After the results of an end-of-term assessment came out, the chair of the school management committee called in several teachers to the head teacher's office, and asked them about the end-of-term exam results. He asked why they were performing so poorly; how could many pupils get 4 per cent. They didn't have an answer, and seemed shy, but were open to suggestions. Through events like these, the student assessments become instruments to keep the teachers in line and to monitor their performance.

5.7   "Pressure from Outside and Pressure from Here!"

Exams and end-of-term assessments are among the many demands and expectations placed on the teachers in this study, perhaps similar to teachers – or any employees – elsewhere (Ruohotie-Lyhty, 2011). Some of these expectations are fairly explicit, others more subtle, while others are open to interpretation. Jane candidly expresses how she and her colleagues are held accountable for their students' performance:

> It's known by the government that children should know how to read and write, and they also blame us when children don't know how to read and write. We are blamed for it. It means when a child does not know how to read and write, you are not a good teacher. (Interview with Jane, August 12, 2014)

Although teachers clearly have some responsibility for their students and their performance, teachers are but a small part of the picture. Jane's statement can be interpreted on both the individual and collective level – she as a teacher is judged for the performance of her own students, and teachers as a group are held responsible for the overall poor performance of students school-wide and nationwide. It is clear that teachers are held responsible for more than they have control over.

For the purposes of this study it is possible to distinguish between expectations and demands from outside and within the school—curriculum and inspectors, and school administration and parents, respectively, roughly corresponding to one of the teachers' candid elaboration on the pressures she feels.

Monica D.:   So, they are the owners of the school, we have nothing to do. We are just
            implementing government policy. So the school has its own policy, so we have

nothing to do, we are to follow. Now when the RTI [the NGO that implements

SHRP, see Chapter 4.4.2] also came this year, also there is friction in that class.

The RTI does not allow these teachers to give written exercises in first term for

these children. So the parents became hot! They don't like that one. So these

teachers have to give these children – what – exercises to be written in the book.

So in fear of that—of the supervision of RTI, so they were hiding those books.

They were not giving stories but they have given written exercises. So here we

are! [laughs]

Espen:　　　　It seems you have pressure from the=

Monica D.:　　=Pressure from outside and pressure from here! [with animation]

　　　　　　…

　　　　　　The pressure from outside is when we don't follow the outside, the government

　　　　　　policy. And from the school is from the parents. "We want you to do this, and this

　　　　　　time you are teaching our children vernacular and you do this." It's just there.

　　　　　　(Interview with Monica D., October 27, 2014)

While these were the kinds of expectations I identified in the data, there may have been

others as well. For instance, Tabulawa (2004) makes a compelling case for how secondary

school students in Botswana exert considerable pressure on their teachers through their

expectations and subtle behavioural patterns. Furthermore, there are more indirect influences

such as policies, cultural norms and internalized expectations. Their role is hard to identify, but

can be approached from analysis of policy and the wider political and cultural context (Pryor,

1998). A key policy instrument in education is the curriculum.

For any teacher the curriculum is (or should be) central to his or her notion of what is expected of him or her. The Ugandan curriculum for lower primary school has reduced the number of subjects with the purpose of integrating subjects around themes, so for instance the former subjects Social Studies and Science are now taught as part of the subject Literacy, and each year is divided into 12 themes. The teachers placed a great deal of emphasis on the curriculum, particularly its themes, which often seemed to be treated as the curriculum itself. Even though the curriculum clearly emphasises reading and the use of stories (see Chapter 2.1), teachers often expressed a view that the curriculum mandated a considerable amount of content, but did not have space for teaching stories. Monica F. articulated this tension, as she saw it, between following the curriculum and using the ASb stories:

> It's a good project. But now the problem comes in – the African Storybooks they have to – for me I would feel, if they are cooperating, or they are collaborating with the national curriculum, there will be no much problem. But now the problem comes in now, here, the African Storybook they are saying, use this way to teach stories in the curriculum. They say this and this now, that's where I find confusion. (Interview with Monica F., September 16, 2014)

Mary is more explicit in her view of the curriculum as not giving much space for reading, and contrasts this with the emphasis that the ASb places on reading.

Espen: What does the Ugandan curriculum say about teaching reading?

Mary: The Ugandan curriculum, the teaching reading is not effective like the one for African Storybook.

Espen: Why do you say that?

Mary: Because when you see the curriculum, sometimes in some lesson, reading is not

             so much involved. You teach children just to understand what you are teaching,

             answering questions, doing other things, but reading each second is not strongly

             emphasized.

Espen: So, you are saying that is something the African Storybook Project is bringing in

             more.

Mary: More reading.

             (Interview with Mary, August 6, 2014)

While this can be read as a conflict between the curriculum and the ASb, I think a better

interpretation is that Mary acknowledges that the ASb is highlighting the place of reading in

schools. Rather than construing the curriculum as expressing a particular view of reading, Mary

seems to reinterpret the curriculum itself – or perhaps rather the *realized* curriculum – what the

teachers should teach – as having more space for reading. This view is more explicitly present in

Milly's account of her shifting views of reading and the curriculum, as the following excerpt

shows:

> In the curriculum, actually, the reading part is supposed to be done by the literacy
>
> teachers. That is according to the curriculum. If you were to follow only the curriculum.
>
> It's only the literacy teacher – take much interest in reading. For this time – African
>
> Storybook Project here, has at least cleared – let me say – that work. Because we used to
>
> think that was only the literacy teachers doing more reading. This time all the subjects
>
> have to have reading. (Interview with Milly, November 26)

It was not rereading the curriculum that has changed Milly's or her colleagues' views. (I never saw the current curriculum in Arua Hill during my six months of observations, but they routinely referred to the themes and dutifully copied them down in their lesson plans.) Rather, it is through the practice of teaching stories that they came to realize the central and legitimate role of reading. In other words, their changing views do not (primarily) stem from any documents or discourse on reading or stories, but their own teaching practices. In the process they experienced a slight shift away from an identity as curriculum implementers, as Monica D. put it above, towards being teachers comfortable and experienced with teaching stories in addition to subject content (see Chapter 6).

This curriculum was introduced in 2007, and along with other policies and interventions, contributes to the sense of frequent changes teachers experienced. Miriam, the head teacher at Drari, describes one of the implications of these frequent changes: "We have the challenges of irrelevant textbooks because the curriculum has been reviewed to the new thing so the relevant textbooks are not there in the school" (interview with Miriam, November 6, 2014).

The language of instruction policy is also subject to curriculum changes. Policies on which language should be used in school, and how, has changed several times since independence, and currently favours the use of the dominant local language as the medium of instruction in P1 through P3, followed by transition to English in P4 (Altinyelken, 2010a). This policy is strongly supported by the large number of NGOs in the country – reflected in numerous programs and interventions. However, the policy is debated by parents and other stakeholders, such as teachers (Tembe & Norton, 2008, 2011). Arua Hill introduced Lugbarati as the language of instruction with the advent of the new curriculum, but later reverted to English after pressure from parents. In 2014 (the year of fieldwork) Lugbarati was reintroduced through SHRP, a large

pilot intervention in the country with scripted lessons, starting in P1 (see Chapter 4.4.2). Because of this, the P1 teachers taught all subjects (except English) in Lugbarati. Jenipher at Drari taught one story, *Okporua eyo nzepi ri* [*The Talking Bag*], in Lugbarati in P1. Apart from this story and the P1 teachers following the SHRP program at Arua Hill, Monica D. was the only other teacher I observed teaching (stories or otherwise) in Lugbarati. She did this as a consequence of ASb, pointing to the availability, but also hints at the exploratory nature of teaching in the mother tongue again.

Both Catherine and Beatrice, the head teachers at Arua Hill and Mvara Junior, respectively, spoke of pressure from parents regarding the use of English as the medium of instruction. At Mvara Junior, the language of instruction in lower Primary was Lugbarati, but that was due to change next year. As the head teacher Beatrice explains:

> Yes it was comments from the parents, they felt that by teaching – by using Lugbarati as medium of communication in P1 to P3, it has an impact in reading in Primary 4 above. So you find that the children will fail to read with understanding in English. So they said they embrace the government program of the thematic curriculum, but they want to embrace its use in English. Which means from the April of next year, the medium of communication in the schools will be English from P1 up to P7. Yeah. And we feel that way it will improve performance a great deal. (Interview with Beatrice, October 22, 2014)

It is clear from this quote that not only teachers, but also head teachers, face pressure on how teaching at their school should be done. However, the teachers themselves had a very favourable view of English as a medium of instruction (see Table 5.2). Jemily, a teacher at

Mvara Junior, explains the problems of switching between English and Lugbarati, as the new language policy stipulates:

> But after some time they still discovered that by the time these children finished P3, and when they are to go for transition in P4, they get a lot of challenges. As they read English, they don't want to read in Lugbara. And when they are asked to tell words, they get confused. They mix Lugbara and English together. And writing, even English words, you find them writing in Lugbara. (Interview with Jemily, November 24, 2014)

In practice some of the teachers code-switched between the two languages. In the questionnaire most teachers stated that they explained difficult words in Lugbarati, or in English in the case of Eunice, who taught in Lugbarati in P1, since not all students spoke Lugbarati. Agnes even went further, as this written response to the question about using English or Lugbarati as the language of instruction shows:

> Both or I add other languages by the help of other pupils. I use Lugbara or other languages to express what I want my learner to understand. And I use other pupils to explain to others where I can't speak the language. (Agnes, questionnaire)

The multilingual makeup of the student body meant that the teachers had to be inventive to make themselves and the content of the lessons comprehensible to the students. One language minority group at the school was the South Sudanese students, many of whom had been sent by their parents to Arua, where they could get a better education than in South Sudan. But since they spoke another language, this group of students also had to be accommodated, particularly in

Lugbarati-medium lessons. In the following excerpt from a focus group discussion, the teachers discuss this group of students:

Eunice: They ask in Lugbarati, that is when I am teaching literacy for them in local language. It's supposed to be local language.

Juliet: Okay. Yes.

Milly: For me, I mix mine. In teaching English, if the children are not able to make sentences, maybe ask questions in English, you can allow them to ask questions in Lugbara, then translate in English. Others can not pick Lugbara well.

             …

Monica D.:   Madame, we use both.

             …

Monica D.:   Yes, because when I always teach a story in Lugbarati, my [South] Sudanese children, when they don't understand, they disturb a lot. And it will force me to teach also that same story in English.

Juliet: So when you are using the story for reading, what do you start with – do you start with?

Monica D.:   Lugbarati.

Juliet: Then the [South] Sudanese?

Monica D.:   The [South] Sudanese, they don't read. They wait. They will just understand the picture, but the words they won't know what exact thing I'm talking about. And they keep asking: "teacher we don't understand". Now, they will force me now to translate in English.

             (Focus group discussion at Arua Hill, September 11, 2014)

5.8 Teaching Practices

The use of ASb stories contributed to learning and pupil engagement in several ways. It increased the amount of reading, mostly, and gave pupils more exposure to text, especially to engaging and meaningful text, including narratives they could identify with, laugh at, and dream about. The teaching of *Andiswa Soccer Star* exemplifies how Monica D. used a story to teach important aspects of gender roles, while *One Hot Saturday Afternoon* and other stories served as a starting point for other messages that Judith wanted to impart. In this way, the story conveyed a moral message not just through the story itself, as African stories often do (Eisemon, Hallett, and Maundu, 1986), but also as a space for negotiation of appropriate behaviour. These events were not common, but represent some of the few instances where the teacher and pupils interacted meaningfully. Supporting and encouraging such dialogue will enhance such practices and increase student reflection, engagement, and speaking skills.

Innovative follow-up activities included retelling stories, an indication of pupil comprehension and a good starting point for writing, as well as dramatizing a story (see Chapter 6.1.3). These activities were rare instances of pupils formulating and speaking their own sentences out loud – exceptions to lessons dominated by teacher talk and pupils' short responses to questions with one correct answer. Similarly, with *Listen to my body* the pupils used their whole body in a playful manner, hinting at practices that might be considered pupil-centred learning, although this is a complex and contested goal (e.g., Schweisfurth, 2011; Thomson, 2013). The changes in practices reported here (apart from the use of stories and the increase in reading it entailed) were not very frequent. They are, however, indications of the scope to develop and enhance teachers' methods of teaching in promising ways, made possible by the

introduction of the ASb stories, but ultimately realized by the teachers themselves in ways that were meaningful for them.

Despite some promising uptake and activities, there was still space for engaging pupils in reading skills, scaffolding writing, and other ways of promoting engagement and learning. On the one hand, the ASb stories brought the potential – content and vocabulary – for the pupils to write their own words and sentences, but stories alone were not enough to foster budding writers, at least not in the timespan of my fieldwork. The oral retelling of the story, which the pupils managed relatively well, could serve as a starting point for writing exercises, perhaps the most challenging task for the pupils, and hence for the teachers. Although the teachers often had a written activity at the end of the lesson, they usually provided little or no scaffolding in doing this (see Chapter 6.1.3 for a lesson Jemily taught using some scaffolding). The stories, often with simple (and sometimes repeated) sentences and illustrations, could contribute to the principle of scaffolding, such as by borrowing phrases or words from the story as a starting point for a written exercise. In a sense the teachers already did this by asking the pupils to write or draw based on the story, but this practice could be enhanced if teachers were helped with developing strategies for writing based on stories.

Some teachers embraced the ASb stories and acknowledged their importance through the course of the fieldwork, read stories with their pupils, and carried out some of the activities described. However, not all teachers were equally receptive. A few teachers hardly taught any stories at all, citing the requirement to adhere to the themes and content of the curriculum. The interpretation of the curriculum, along with the pressure to teach to the exam (even in lower primary), were among the factors that limited teachers' use of, and investment in, stories from the ASb. Teachers' use of stories happens at an intersection between material resources and

pedagogical conceptions, but language policies, exams, financial constraints, peer support, and notions of self and desires for the future also structure their use, as I will discuss in the following sections.

5.9 Structuring Forces

The use of ASb stories and teachers' investment is informed by a number of factors, including the personal characteristics of the teachers themselves. However, teachers are working in an environment of constraints and guidelines, some explicit and with little room for interpretation, others less clearly defined. This leeway gives some opportunity for individual interpretation, which helps to explain how the same policies or other structuring forces result in differing teaching practices. Teachers' practices are both informed by and constitutive of their investment in the use of stories, but this investment is also located at the intersection of identity, capital, and ideology, as will be discussed in this section.

5.9.1 Investment

All teachers who used the ASb stories reported pupil engagement with and interest in the stories. The act of reading stories invited pupils to enjoy, point at pictures, retell stories, draw, and generally engage in activities that likely captured their interest to a larger extent than other lessons, which were, in part, characterized by drill exercises and reading of individual words. But some activities helped reposition the children and challenge conventional norms. The story about the football player invited the teacher to address questions of gender roles, and made the children think and talk about what is possible and appropriate to do. Teachers' innovative use of stories, from dramatizing and acting out, to enabling new conceptions of gender roles, all promote investment on part of their pupils. This investment is related to teacher identity, since teachers'

sense of what it means to be a legitimate teacher informs their ability and willingness to bring about pupil investment.

The teachers' investment in using stories varied, from the more reluctant teachers who taught few or no stories, to the teacher who reinvented herself as a reading teacher and wholeheartedly embraced the stories. Most teachers, however, were ambivalent, committed to including stories in their lessons, but also compelled by the expectations of the curriculum and negotiating expectations from parents and the school leadership. At the same time, the extra workload from additional lessons and piles of exercise books for marking circumscribed their time and energy that they could have used to strengthen their computer skills. While the computer and the projector were a major challenge for some teachers, these resources served as an opportunity to learn and to connect with their peers, increasing their investment in the ASb stories.

5.9.2   Identity

All the teachers were excited to learn about and use the computer and access the Internet, but not all reached the point where they could use the laptop independently. Whereas they described themselves as inexperienced before ASb was introduced, some developed relative confidence and could use it for teaching purposes, and one even became a teacher of her peers.

The ASb stories opened up possibilities for Monica D., who taught *Andiswa Soccer Star* and *Listen to my Body*, to engage with her pupils in new ways. Before ASb she felt confused about the curriculum and how to teach. While for some teachers the curriculum with its requirements acted as a constraining factor, for Monica D. the same curriculum failed to offer the intended support, and the stories, as well as a recently assigned position as head of the lower primary section, afforded her a new identity position from which to teach. The stories became

tangible tools for exercising her profession and enabled her to rise to the challenge of teaching a lesson she had not prepared for on a day that had been set aside for an exam, which got cancelled.

Several teachers were clearly upset with this sudden change in plans, and complained. Whereas Monica D., by this time experienced and comfortable with the stories and the computer, was calm, and took the opportunity to teach a story ad hoc. The most eager in using stories in her teaching, Monica D. had developed an identity of a capable improviser, at ease with the challenging task of teaching a class unprepared. The positive shifts in identity as a capable teacher who skilfully manages the computer and stories as teaching aids are indicative of her investment in the stories.

5.9.3   Capital

The material reality of teaching becomes evident when one enters an average Ugandan classroom. Oversized classes, chipped blackboards, and the absence of bookshelves and books speak of challenging conditions that the teachers are dealing with on a daily basis. But books and other materials alone will not change teaching and learning (Stranger-Johannessen, 2014a) ‒ they are enabling factors that are part of the complex system that education is. One part of this system is the financial constraints the teachers are working under.

Given the precarious financial circumstances, often including teachers' responsibility for extended family members and missing pay cheques, an opportunity to supplement their income made a difference. For teachers, the remedial classes are a cherished opportunity, but they also extend the school day, sapping energy and focus from teachers and pupils alike. It is an open question whether remedial classes really add much educational value in the long run, or overburden teachers and diminish the pupils' attention. The pay for remedial classes also anchors

the teachers to the school, making them more vulnerable and compliant with school and policy mandates, since teachers can be transferred to other schools without this offer of an extra income. In this way, financial capital as a potential, more than a resource in the conventional sense, exerts a relatively strong influence on the teachers.

Stories do not teach themselves. The availability of stories alone does not mean teachers will use them in their classrooms, as prior research has shown (e.g., Nassimbeni & Desmond, 2011). Technology adds another layer to this issue, bringing about more potential obstacles, but also more potential investment in new teaching and learning opportunities. In case of the teachers at Arua Hill, support in the form of training and day-to-day assistance was needed for them to master the basics, a prerequisite for actually teaching the stories using the computer and projector. Much of this support, however, took the form of a few more skilled teachers helping their peers, which built on and bolstered those teachers' own skills and social cohesion in the group, benefitting all the teachers and the school as a whole.

Strong connections to the school have the benefit of strengthening social and professional ties between the teachers. In a hierarchical organization like the Ugandan school system, teachers benefitted from closely collaborating with their peers, and did not seem comfortable making requests to the school leadership. Peer socialization into computer use was particularly important, since the delivery of stories depended on that and the teachers had little prior experience. This social capital (see Chapter 2.8) developed and gained through the use of stories and other practices, along with material factors, are further mediated by policy directives and ideological practices. This takes place most explicitly through the national curriculum.

5.9.4 Ideology

The curriculum may exert a certain degree of pressure, but it is ultimately the perceived and operational, and not the formal curriculum, that matters (Goodlad et al., 1979). When teachers ascribe certain meanings to the curriculum, these meanings will be real in their consequences. In other words, teachers may interpret the curriculum differently, emphasise different aspects, and thus how they teach is ultimately informed by their interpretation or uptake of the curriculum (and means to implement it). In this case study, teachers' interpretation of the curriculum had a major impact on their teaching. Teachers generally and broadly interpreted the curriculum to mean two things: structuring their teaching around the themes and teaching in the local language (even though most taught in English). These were two of the major changes introduced in 2007, and the themes became a structuring point for many of the lessons (the teachers often referred to the curriculum as "the thematic").

The findings suggest that this use of themes as a structuring point didn't serve the intention of the curriculum of integrating subjects across themes, but was rather a way of organizing lesson plans and occasionally making a reference to the theme in the lessons. Since the themes are very broad (e.g., "Things we make"), many topics and exercises can be subsumed under any given theme. Some tried to match stories to the themes, although this attempt could produce rather random associations, such as teaching a story on cooking during the theme "Holidays" (which is not a theme in the curriculum).

The need to match stories to the current theme was a major concern to many of the teachers. Several cited the need to match stories to the themes as an obstacle, and one Literacy teacher didn't use any stories to teach during my fieldwork. Another reason for this might also be that this teacher interpreted the thematic curriculum in favour of the subject matter (social studies

and science) currently integrated into the subject *Literacy*—at the expense of the more diffuse

goal of reading and writing. Other teachers suggested that the Literacy teachers didn't know how

to teach literacy, so they defaulted to teaching social and natural science instead – more tangible

subjects that they were also familiar with from the previous curriculum.

The teachers were trying hard to meet different expectations and do what they were told,

but were sometimes caught in conflicting demands, or left to interpret the curriculum and

translate it into practice in an attempt to fulfill the expectations of the educational authorities

rather diffuse expectations in the form of a national curriculum. The language of instruction is

another example of this. Policies have shifted, with teachers in tow, but recently pressure from

parents has swung the pendulum back to English. Parents (and some teachers) often conflate

learning a language (English) with learning in a language, and teachers and school administration

feel pressured into using English as the language of instruction (Tembe & Norton, 2008). In

2014 the pendulum was pushed back to local languages, this time by RTI's SHRP program,

which provided books and training in the local language, Lugbarati. Monica D. took up teaching

in Lugbarati with the introduction of ASb, but was also teaching some lessons in English.

The assessment practices at Arua Hill was yet another example of how the teachers' work

was affected by ideological forces predominantly outside their control. The high importance

assigned to assessment results made the end-of-term assessments key to how teachers were

evaluated and reprimanded. In spite of the significance attributed to these assessments, the

teachers received little support in developing valid and consistent instruments for assessing

students, which led to great variation in the results.

When the time for end-of-term assessments was changed with no prior notice, teachers

were also left to their own devices. It is worth noting that when this happened, the availability of

ASb stories and familiarity with using them allowed Monica D. to spontaneously come up with an activity for her students. Lucy, Milly, and other teachers who handed out books or booklets to their students on other occasions also showed how storybooks could be used when a regular lesson had not been planned. In this way, the stories helped address the problems arising from sudden changes, whether through administrative decisions or other factors that were beyond the teachers' control.

5.10 Chapter Summary

This chapter addressed the second research question about teachers' investment in the stories from the ASb. In order to do that, I opened with a presentation of the foundation on which teachers' use of and investment with the stories was based: teachers' views of teaching and learning, particularly child-centred pedagogy, which was a prominent discourse among the teachers and also central in the academic literature. Following this I described the teaching practices, with a focus on the differences between lessons with and without a story, including a closer look at the teaching of one story and how the teacher used the story to make connections to the children's lives outside the classroom. The use of stories at the two libraries was less frequent than at Arua Hill, in part because of problems with getting stories translated into the local language Kakwa.

The next four sections described how stories helped to engage pupils, and how certain circumstances supported and constrained teaching, and particularly the use of stories, in different ways. These circumstances included CPD and peer support, which helped teachers manage the new technology and brought them closer together, as well as economic constraints, particularly irregular and lack of salaries. Assessment practices also affected the teachers, adding to the pressure they felt from parents, the school administration, and the curriculum and language

policy more broadly. Conflicting expectations and pressures were particularly challenging to the teachers.

In the last two sections of this chapter I discussed how the ASb stories helped engender new teaching practices, in some cases with clear benefits to the pupils, and by the same token to the teachers. The availability of the stories and teachers' innovative ways of teaching them contributed to teachers' investment. At the same time, capital and ideology, such as in the form of financial constraints, assessment, and curricular pressure, circumscribed the teaching of stories and impacted teachers' investment. As these forces had different influence on different teachers, teacher use of and investment in the stories also varied.

In the next chapter I continue the presentation and analysis of the findings by focussing on the teachers' identities as they navigated the ASb and the digital technology it introduced.

Chapter 6: Teacher Identity in Digital Times

In this Chapter I turn to the third research question: *How does investment in these stories provide insight into teachers' identities in this context?* Given my conceptual framework of Darvin and Norton's (2015) model of investment, and also drawing on the Douglas Fir Group (2016) framework, I present my analysis and discussion of data with reference to the constructs of identity, capital, ideology, and investment.

I start out with a discussion on identity and teacher agency, and how they relate to four key teacher identities I identified in my data. With the introduction of the ASb, some of the teachers started identifying as writers and translators as their own stories, poems, and translations were published on the ASb website. With access to the ASb stories, some teachers also expressed that they saw teaching in a new light, and took the opportunity that the stories afforded to address important issues, such as gender roles and personal safety. The teachers were already experienced with multimodal ways of teaching, and built on these practices with the introduction of the stories and the digital tools.

In the second section I discuss how social and cultural capital served as a resource for the teachers and facilitated the use of stories, but also argue that the teachers' capital increased through their interactions and learning through the use of the computer and stories from the ASb. In the third section I address ideology – the third aspect of the Darvin and Norton (2015) model of investment – and argue that ideological practices regarding language, assessment, and supervision affect teachers' investment in the ASb and its stories, which in turn affect the understanding of their uptake of the stories and teaching practices in general. This is the focus of the last section of this chapter, where I discuss the question of teacher investment in detail.

6.1 Identity and Teacher Agency

With reference to the relationship between investment and identity, Darvin and Norton (2015) note, "Recognizing that they have the agency to assert their own identities, learners are able to negotiate symbolic capital, reframe relations of power, and challenge normative ways of thinking, in order to claim the right to speak" (p. 47). To investigate such agency with respect to my participants in particular, I need to better understand the teachers' investments in the ASb and how their identities and practices as teachers shifted as they negotiated this innovative digital resource. As outlined in Chapter 3.5, I have identified four salient teacher identities through which their investment in the ASb comes to light. These include (a) teacher as writer and translator, (b) teacher as change agent, (c) teacher as multimodal, multiliterate educator, and (d) teacher as digital educator. Each of these will be described and discussed in turn in the following sections.

6.1.1 Teacher as writer and translator

> When I see my name in there [online], ah! [excited] I'll be very happy. I wanted my name to appear such that people, people come, I mean, people begin to look for me. Who is this woman who writes this story? But when they reach here they will want to know who Monica is. (Interview with Monica D., November 27, 2014)

It is clear from this vignette that the ASb initiative expands the range of identities available to Monica in her community; "people begin to look for me," she says. Her participation in this initiative generates curiosity in her community, not only about the multilingual stories on the website, but the creators of the stories. Similar comments came from other teachers, such as this reflection from Lucy's response to a question about her experience with writing and

translating stories: "They can make one popular. They would know that this story was written by so and so from this school" (interview with Lucy, November 26, 2014). Monica F., the only Alur-speaker among the teachers in lower primary at Arua Hill, translated stories into her mother tongue, and recognized the value of having stories in minority languages at the school:

Espen: You translated some stories to Alur – what did you think about that – translating

            stories?

            [Short pause.]

Monica F.: I think it is good. But I also have stories – where children can read in my

            language. So even here, I think in Arua Hill there are children who speak Alur,

            they have stories, eh, they don't have any, any book for reading in their local

            language. So if the few are there, they can also read.

            (Interview with Monica F., November 26, 2014)

Mary also has positive views on translating stories, and sees her stories as part of a virtuous cycle, where translating stories increases her interest in using stories: "I'll be happy when my stories are coming. I will also pick more interest in bringing more stories on the Internet" (interview with Mary, November 19, 2014). Monica D. has similar perspectives on translating and writing stories:

Espen: What did you think about translating stories?

Monica D.: Writing and translating stories makes someone like me creative.

Espen: Creative?

Monica D.: Yes. So for example there are, there are some stories written there in, in English.

            And we have few dialects in our local language. So when you are not creative

            enough, you – when you want to translate directly you can translate it wrongly.

And when you are writing stories, when you are not creative enough, you may not

bring up a proper and, and interesting story. But when you are creative, when you

are bringing some books, characters in your stories, the stories will become

interesting.

Espen: Is that more when you are writing, or when you are translating? What's the=

Monica D.:   =When you are writing.

(Interview with Monica D., November 27, 2014)

As Mary and Monica point out, writing (and translating) stories has a positive effect on

their interest in using stories. This effect is even stronger when the stories are published online,

as Mary points out in the above quote, and as Monica D. and Lucy point out above. Story

creation, including publishing, is then part of the process of teaching literacy, and increases

teachers' investment in the ASb stories. Teachers writing and translating stories might also

facilitate student story creation and writing.

6.1.2 Teacher as change agent

Teachers are often ascribed a key role in improving literacy rates and educational success

in general, as described elsewhere in this dissertation, including Jane's statement in Chapter 5.7.

Although there was a tendency for teachers to feel that many aspects of their jobs were out of

their hands, when it came to classroom activities, they had a certain amount of control. In some

cases the teachers seized an opportunity not only to engage their students, but to serve as a

change agent of larger issues in their community.

The stories provided by the ASb resulted in new ways of teaching, and as such opened up

new possibilities for teachers to act as change agents. For instance, as Monica D. interacted with

the ASb texts, she exercised agency in their interpretation, taking on the identity of an active and creative student-centred "guide", rather than a teacher-centred instructor.

> This time I just guide them on what to do. It has made me become now very active. I used to not be active, because at times I – when I don't find learning aids to my, to my what – to my lesson, I squeeze it out. But this time I don't need. When I have a problem I search from the computer. It has really improved me a lot. Eh! [laughs] … Even it has made me as a teacher to teach less. The whole thing is – the students see and talk. And this time I'm a guide, not a teacher. (Interview with Monica D., October 27, 2014)

Milly expressed a similar point when she said that she previously thought only literacy teachers should teach reading, while she now thinks that teachers of all subjects are responsible for reading instruction (see Chapter 5.6). Her identity as a teacher is not limited to teaching her own subjects, but also that of using stories and teaching reading more generally.

In a physical education (PE) lesson, Monica D. taught a story about a girl who wants to play football with the boys, *Andiswa Soccer Star*.[44] The coach doesn't let her practice, but when one of the boys is sick before a match, he lets her play. Andiswa scores, and her team wins the match (see Appendix I). In my field notes on this lesson I wrote:

> This was the first day when the teachers used the ASb stories in their teaching. Monica D. and I spent about 20 minutes setting up the equipment. We used two chairs and a plastic box to prop up the projector. It worked, but it wasn't ideal. I was worried someone would knock the projector down; the cord is really short; it wouldn't take a lot for that to

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[44] http://www.africanstorybook.org/index.php?id=5283

happen. The lesson was physical education, P3, and the story was Andiswa Soccer Star. Monica started with the last page, a picture of a football, and asked the pupils what they saw. Then: "What lesson is this"? The pupils guessed pretty much every subject but PE. Then the projector died – flat battery. I told Monica to get the charger, and we were soon back to the story. Monica, switching between English and Lugbara, asked what the pupils saw in every picture, spending one to two minutes per page/picture. Judith was sitting by the computer changing the pages. Monica said she skipped a page, and I helped her find her way to the right page. After 30 minutes Doris, who is observing next to me, tells me the lesson is over. She tells me that boys always play football and girls always netball, and recount the story to me. Boys at this school used to say girls can't play football, she says. After the story the boys said – yes, girls can play football. The boys were happy to see girls being able to play football and score. After the lesson Doris, the head mistress, Monica, the deputy head mistress and I stayed to talk about the lesson. Doris told me that before going through the story Monica had asked the children in Lugbara whether they thought girls could play football. They said "no". After the lesson she asked again, and they said, "yes". (Field notes, June 19, 2014)

When I asked about this story in the interview, Monica D. commented:

Yes, it really helped me. It changed the attitudes of boys. Where they could think that a girl is not supposed to play football. But this time when I go for my physical education lesson, when I prepare a lesson about football, they don't now complain, they don't kick the ball away from the girls. They just play together like that. This time they have started

attitude change instead. It helped me a lot. (Interview with Monica D., November 27, 2014)

Through teaching this story, Monica D. not only shifted the attitudes of the boys, but, since teacher and learner identity are mutually constitutive (Norton, 2017; Reeves, 2009), she re-negotiated her own identity as change agent in the process. At the same time, this particular identity position must also be seen in light of ideological practices in Ugandan society, where children's sports are highly gendered. Monica D. could, however, exercise agency as a teacher, to challenge and transform existing gendered practices. Santurumino, the only male teacher participant, also used a story to address gender and female empowerment (see Chapter 6.1.3 below).

Of particular significance with respect to Monica D.'s investment in the ASb is that she observed children becoming more active in class. As she noted, "My experience in using the stories has made children active in class" (interview with Monica D., October 27, 2014). This in turn translated to improved reading on the part of the children, which was highly affirming for Monica D. as a teacher.

[The African Storybook] improves children's reading. Because when you project a story on the board like this, after you talk about the pictures, after you talk about everything, when they tell you what is going to happen, they read. They read! Every day, every day they learn new words, which they did not come across, and it improves reading. (Interview with Monica D., October 27, 2014)

Central to the notion of making students active was the use of teaching aids, and the full-colour projections contributed to that. A prominent discourse among the teachers was the

excitement the students showed when reading a story was on the agenda, and their cheers and joy were evident as they entered the computer room, where most projected stories were taught. The colourful illustrations that captured the students' attention, engaged the children in speaking about the illustrations and the story itself. Milly formulates the attractiveness of the stories this way:

> When you have these learning aids when you are teaching, learners will become attentive. Like when we started using the computers, if you flash the stories on the wall, everybody will just pay attention and will just be watching whatever is there and they can talk about what they see. (Interview with Milly, August 11, 2014)

The illustrations played a central role in the teaching of stories. While other lessons (where no story was taught) had little student engagement and seldom any open-ended questions, the projection of images gave at least some space for interpretation and participation on part of the students. The teachers seized this opportunity to ask questions about the displayed pictures, but also, in the case of Judith's teaching of *One Hot Saturday Afternoon* (see Chapter 5.2) and Monica's teaching of *Andiswa Soccer Star*, engage in a conversation that did not merely elicit fixed-answer questions. Although student involvement was usually limited to single word responses, individual students re-telling of the story at the end to the whole class gave some students the opportunity to speak in complete sentences in English using their own words. Such opportunities to talk using their own words I only observed in lessons where stories were used. Together this shows the resourcefulness of the teachers, which developed over the course of the six months they used the computer and the ASb stories.

Another example of inventiveness was the teachers' initiative to display pictures, either from the Internet or from a textbook. I never mentioned this possibility to the teachers, so this idea came from their own creativity. In one case Monica D. and Eunice showed a picture of a lion from the Internet, which, according to the teachers, the children had never seen before, even though there are lions in nearby national parks and game reserves. In another lesson, Eunice got help from Monica D. and Judith to display a picture of a family. In this case the purpose seemed to illustrate and possibly refer to the family members, but since the students were not used to projected images in their lessons, it helped capture their attention and interest. Pamela asked me to scan and help her display a page with vegetables from a textbook. In this way she used images and the digital equipment for more subject-specific purposes. All in all, the fact that multiple teachers – all of whom described themselves as unfamiliar with computers before this project – went beyond the basic use of the computer to retrieve and display stories, is noteworthy. While the pedagogical value of displaying images may not be highly significant, the teachers' agency in developing their use of teaching aids to include digital modes point to their dedication and agency in significant ways. It also demonstrates that multimodal pedagogical practices can enhance teacher identities.

6.1.3   Teacher as multimodal, multiliterate educator

One of the ten "fundamental themes" of the DFG framework is that language learning is multimodal, embodied, and mediated, making the case that "nonlinguistic, multimodal semiotic resources are used to make the coupling of a form and a meaning socially available" (DFG, 2016, p. 29). The teachers found such multimodal strategies particularly effective with their young learners, and it was evident to them that a multilingual literacy teacher is one who explores literacy as a social practice, connected to daily life in multiple and sometimes

unexpected ways (cf. Coffey & Street, 2008). For instance, Monica D. integrated literacy and subject content in innovative ways, as she did with the story *Listen to my body*[45] in the context of the physical education curriculum. *Listen to my body* tells the story of a girl who listens to the sounds her body can make, such as breathing and heartbeats, and jumps up and down to hear her heart beat faster (see Appendix J).

Espen: You said you connected it to physical education, "Listen to my body". How did you do that?

Monica D.:   I made, I made sure that every child does the action in the picture. So it appeared fun to them. Laughing and enjoying – the what – the lesson. And, and the classroom was not enough for them. They became excited when they see and when I tell them: "Let's try what this girl is doing in the picture." They become excited, they were laughing. When the story ended they wanted me to begin the story over and over and teach the story – the lesson would not end very quickly.

Espen: Did you repeat it?

Monica D.:   I repeated it twice. When they wanted it to be the third time, I just stopped them. And when – the what – the teacher for mathematics came, the children said: "I'm listening to my body." They were now talking, they were now practicing, so it disorganizes the mathematics teacher a lot [short laughter] – until when she came up and told me: "Go and stop your children."

(Interview with Monica D., November 27, 2014)

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[45] http://www.africanstorybook.org/index.php?id=13202

This story about body sounds engaged the pupils not just to act out a story, jumping to make their hearts go faster, but also to challenge a teacher's authority, as these activities "disorganize[d] the mathematics teacher" who had to ask her colleague to "go and stop your children". This is probably a rare event in the hierarchical Ugandan school system with its emphasis on teachers' authority over pupils. These events might be isolated, and perhaps girls continue to play netball and boys football, but a seed had been planted, and what was once an aberration is now at least conceivable.

While the teachers strove to include multiple modes and texts in their classrooms, most primary schools in Uganda lack a proper school library and an adequate selection of readers, textbooks, or any print materials, for that matter (Altinyelken, 2010b; Magara and Batambuze, 2009). Although Arua Hill had a school library, a librarian, and a collection of books in the thousands, most of the textbooks were dated, following the old curriculum, and in many cases too few copies of each title were available to be of much use. For instance, the collection included 25 Swahili dictionaries, but Swahili was not taught at the school. Almost all the readers targeting upper primary were stories about HIV/AIDS. The selection of storybooks for lower primary was more promising, with a notable collection of class sets of early readers in Lugbarati. But the English storybooks for lower primary were only available in a few copies each.

Since most Ugandan teachers are used to a lack of appropriate reading materials, many teachers, including the teachers of this study, make their own print materials, often using Manila paper. They use this firm paper to make flash cards as well as charts and lists that are put on the wall, or used for individual lessons, which they see as a core element of good teaching practice. In a context where textbooks and readers are usually few, out-dated, or otherwise wanting,

teacher-made materials play an important role in both conveying information and engaging learners. The teachers stressed the display of print resources, as Judith explains:

> A classroom should be with [*sic*] full of materials placed on the wall. Maybe on charts. So that children can take their own time to go and discover some of the things for themselves when the teacher is not there. (Interview with Judith, August 5, 2014)

Making and using teaching aids was promoted and taught at the local primary teachers' college, and most of the teachers highlighted the value of teaching aids to their work. This demonstrates the central place that teaching aids have in the local discourse on teaching and learning. They also use tangibles, such as plants, toys, paper cuttings, and clay objects, to make their lessons more stimulating. For instance, Pamela brought in a whole maize plant when she taught a lesson on flowering plants, pointing to parts of the plant such as leaves, stem, flower, and root. Although finding and making such materials can be time-consuming, it is a central part of the teachers' notions of good teaching, a notion clearly reflected in their practices. An example of such use of tangibles is Jemily's teaching of the story *Akatope*[46] in booklet form. In this story, a woman makes a girl called Akatope out of clay. One day when it rains, Akatope starts dissolving, and she doesn't come home. The villagers bring the woman an orphan girl, but soon after Akatope returns home, and she is dressed up to become the most beautiful girl in the village (see Appendix K).

The lesson starts with Jemily writing the day and date, "Library hour", and "Sawa buku lazuri" on the blackboard. The students read from the blackboard and the teacher hands out the

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[46] http://www.africanstorybook.org/index.php?id=2821

Akatope booklets and asks the students to tell her what they see at the cover page. The students say they see a girl who is dancing. Jemily talks about what makes a person happy (as an explanation to why a person dances) and asks a lot of questions. She points to the ASb logo and asks a student to read the words "African Storybook" in the logo. She says the girl is Black, and that since Africans are Black, this is a book for Africans. Jemily reads the first page, then all students read and read again. They read the first pages one page at a time multiple times, either the whole class or in rows, then they read pages 1–4 consecutively. She asks if the woman in the story has children. "No", students reply in chorus. She asks if they know "clay soil", and other types of soil. Jemily shows a model of a head in burnt clay that is laying in the classroom, apparently one made earlier by the students. The teacher points to it and asks about eyes, ears, etcetera, and explains that one can make a doll out of clay soil. Then she shows a clay pot, and asks more questions such as if the clay figure can eat, see, etcetera. She uses a student to demonstrate "a real human being", a phrase from the story. Jemily asks everyone to read, then invites two students to demonstrate how people walk, and demonstrates "elderly woman" herself by walking with a bent back and imitating holding a stick. The students laugh. She asks a student to write "child", then another student to write "clay soil". She then asks the students to spell "clay soil", then "girl". Students spell and continue reading, one page at a time. She demonstrates "love" by hugging a student. Then she shows the opposite – she pretends to hit him. She asks the students what the opposite of "love" is. They first give two unrelated answers, then someone says "hate". Eventually they turn to writing – five exercises with drawing and word-level questions, and marks as they write. After the lesson Jemily comes to me and says the story matches the theme, "Things we make".

This lesson was in many ways quite typical, with rereading, focus on what students saw, and questions and answers. But it was also a good lesson – humorous and rich in questions. The teacher used acting and antonyms to explain words, invited students to demonstrate, and connected the story to previous activities and the current topic. Some of the activities following the reading were based on written questions requiring single-word responses (see Figure 6.1). This provided some scaffolding, and such writing activities were among the more productive ones, but not very common. More often the students were left to either copy phrases verbatim from the blackboard, or write on their own without any further support.
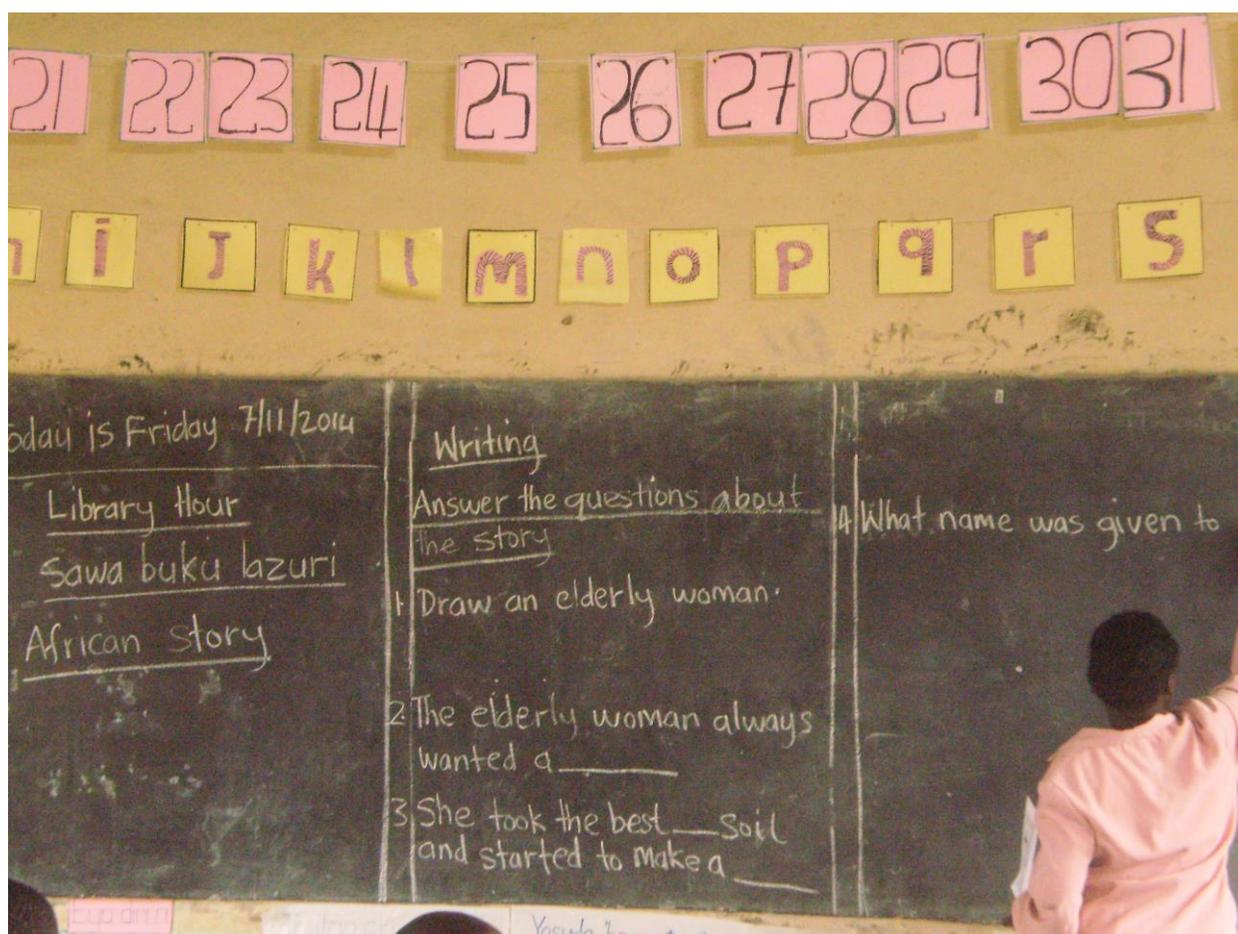
Figure 6.1 Jemily writes exercises for the story Akatope on the blackboard

Another example of a lesson that included a considerable degree of multimodality was when Santurumino, who worked at Arua Hill, turned the same story, *Akatope*, into a play. He had taught the story using the projector previously, and the students really liked it, as he recounts: "They keep talking more about Akatope because they like the story" (interview with Santurumino, August 6, 2014). He asked me for a printout of the story he had previously taught using the projector, so that he could refer to the text in turning this story into a play, which he describes as follows:

Santurumino: We started with them from the beginning of the story. Actually we had the characters, the characters were the old woman, then the Akatope, then the villagers, and then we had Akatope's friends. These were the actors and the story was a bit long. [Santurumino retells the whole story.] I wish these children were there and they would narrate to you a lot. [laughs] It was long play indeed.

Espen: It's okay. I was more curious about why did you decide to make drama out of this?

Santurumino: I just felt these children could understand better by acting, so I felt also to have confidence in these children. These children, I wanted to see how they can express themselves. Because one of them took the position of the old woman. And the warning of the old woman that "Akatope, I don't want you to go and play with other children there." I wanted to see how this girl could exercise that authority. A kind of role play. So I very much got convinced that these children understood the drama, I mean the story, yeah.

(Interview with Santurumino, August 6, 2014)

Like Monica D. (see Chapter 6.1.2), Santurumino addressed the issue of gender, and specifically girls' empowerment, through the use of a story, by giving the lead role of the play to a girl. In the process of making this play, the students not only reinterpreted the story through acting, they also made the dialogue for each of the characters. The original story is narrated in the third person with no direct speech, so the students had to first create this dialogue, and then perform it. As Santurumino explains:

> I didn't write the dialogue. And I just made them to use the right words, the exact words of Akatope. The right words, not of Akatope, but the right words in the story. They had to use their creativity, and they used their imagination, that the Akatope used with their own words. "I am Akatope, these are the words of Akatope in the story". "I am the mother; this is the word of the mother of Akatope in the story". So they have to use those words. Use those words only to act the drama. The original words from myself reading it. (Interview with Santurumino, November 26, 2014)

In this case, the students got an opportunity to create an engaging and meaningful text in English, the sole medium of instruction at this grade. The story must have made an impression on the students, as "up to today even one of our children is called Akatope [laughs]. They have named themselves like that, yes" (Interview with Santurumino, August 6, 2014).

The implementation of ASb at Arua Hill gave a rare opportunity to investigate teachers' use of both digital and print stories, since they had access to both. However, the five printed stories in English and four in Lugbarati gave a very limited number of stories, and these booklets were not ready for use until the third term, halfway through my fieldwork. When these booklets did come, teachers used both, and rather than stating a clear preference, they pointed to their

different affordances and benefits. The booklets gave the pupils an opportunity to physically engage with their reading materials, and learn how to handle books. The booklets also did not rely on electricity and were not at risk of other technical failures.

Another promising potential of printed booklets was their ability to occupy the pupils when there was no teacher in the classroom, which was a common occurrence. I suggested the teachers try to hand out books or booklets to classes without a teacher, such as during oral exams (which could take more than a day). Although the teachers were at first reluctant and worried that the pupils would not behave, a few teachers did hand out books or booklets. "When the teacher is not there, you can bring those books for the children to read in the absence of the teacher. But for this one, when it is projected, you needed the teacher to be there also" (Interview with Monica D., November 27, 2014).

Reading of individual books requires ample access to readers, but also shifts the locus of control from the teacher to the students. When students read different books the teacher can no longer explain words or pronunciation, or talk about the book with the whole class. Yet this kind of reading took place a few times. One time Cezerita brought a stack of books from the library and handed them out to the students, asking who wanted Lugbara. Many said yes, while a few answered in the affirmative when she asked about English. This was the only time I observed a teacher handing out books during the first half of my fieldwork. In the second half, when I was more familiar with the teachers and the head teacher also expressed that she wanted me to be more involved, such as by teaching a lesson and organizing a continuous professional development session, I started talking to the teachers about what they could do when a class was without a teacher – a fairly frequent occurrence.

One day, one of the teachers had to leave a quarter past noon, and was about to leave her class without a teacher until lunchtime at 1 pm. In my field notes I have written:

> I ask her to bring a stack of library books to her classroom since they don't have a teacher. The pupils are overeager, and come up to her to tear the books out of her hands and the hands of the pupils who are helping her hand out the books. Teacher tells the pupils that they should read whichever book they are given, and not complain. (Field notes, November 10, 2014)

I then advised her to ask another teacher to keep an eye on the students and collect the books. Monica D. was teaching another class in an adjacent classroom, and kept an eye on the other teacher's class. When it was time for lunch she collected the books and returned them to the library.

During the end-of-term assessments towards the end of the year, Lucy and Milly also started handing out books to the students who were left without a teacher. During the assessment period it was particularly common for the students to be left without a teacher, since assessment of reading abilities was done individually. That assessment alone could take more than a day since class sizes were up to around 90 students. Mary gave her P1 students black-and-white booklets and colouring pencils to keep them occupied while she was assessing individual students.

Letting students read on their own – without close supervision, was met with scepticism at first. Lucy was at first worried they would make a noise, but later gave her students a stack of books. Monica D. also mentioned that it was tiresome to manage two classes at the same time, but she managed well, and in my opinion the students benefitted greatly. In a context where it is

not uncommon for a class to have no teacher during a lesson, there is clearly a need to find a solution that is manageable for the teachers and provides some learning, or at least stimulation, for the pupils. A few times teachers taught a projected story to two classes at the same time. Having 150 or more pupils in a classroom is not ideal, but it worked, and the teachers did this not because they had to, but because they wanted to.

6.1.4   Teacher as digital educator

While the use of booklets had several advantages, most of the teachers stressed their complementarity to the digital mode of delivery, and did not state a clear preference. Using the booklets did not necessitate any special requirements other than being carried to and from the library (which had a lockable door) every time they were used. The digital mode of delivery, on the other hand, provided full color illustrations, and – the teachers argued – appealed to the pupils even more than the booklets. The projected stories and images were no longer just stories, but "the real thing":

> They like the booklets alright, but when you project something it becomes the real thing. It becomes real. They see what is happening as something that has happened. But when they see the booklets, it does not impress them much. (Interview with Monica D., November 27, 2014)

Similarly, according to Eunice, "the lesson becomes real. Some things are clear, the pictures are there. They are able to talk about what is taking place." (Interview with Eunice, November 26, 2014). This point also speaks to the pedagogical side, apart from the motivational factor. Using the stories as a starting point for conversation was valuable. As Milly put it:

That one of projectors is much better as the learners will be seeing whatever you are talking about. They will be seeing it. That one to me is better than using the booklets. The booklets are also important but the projector is much better as you can talk to the pupils about the story. (Interview with Milly, August 11, 2014)

Milly's point is that the students can read together, and the teacher can talk about and explain aspects of the story. This approach is in keeping with the conventional way of reading – collectively from the blackboard. In this way, the teachers are in control of the situation, and they can point to and explain difficult words, for instance.

Although the students did not get any hands-on experience with the laptop or other equipment, the project still caught the attention of two parents who had heard about it, and subsequently decided to send their respective children to this school in the middle of the school year. Technology and computer use are popular offerings in local private schools, and a huge billboard right outside the school shows the picture of a bespectacled boy advertising Internet services. The ad text reads, "Oh, the things you'll learn", followed by a looking-glass search icon. Clearly Internet and computer skills are associated with learning and education.

It can seem like no account of the use of digital tools in classrooms is complete without a list of technical and other problems, which sometimes take a dominating role in accounts of the use of digital technology in Africa. Although there were some technical and other challenges, these obstacles were not major factors keeping teachers from projecting stories in their lessons. Part of the reason why the technical aspects of this initiative did not cause more problems than they did was in part because the teachers were good at working together and helping one another out, and in part because I was there to help them get past barriers that might otherwise have turned out to be substantial setbacks.

Technical challenges, including limited skills with digital technology, were present in my findings, and frequently mentioned in the interviews, but more often as potential problems than as actual instances of such. Darkening the computer room, and especially the classrooms, as well as propping up the projector to get the right height, were slight hurdles, but not beyond the initial stage. A bigger obstacle was the lack of computer skills, as none of the teachers had any prior experience with using a computer. The teachers had to learn even basic skills like moving a mouse, typing, and clicking on links. Before the start of the fieldwork, they attended a workshop on computer and Internet use, but when I arrived, they were still struggling to navigate the website and use the computer, so I spent two afternoons the first week teaching them the very basics. Several teachers still depended on help from their peers, as Santurumino explains:

The challenges have been the modern ways in operating the computer. That was the major challenge. As such, if we had to come and conduct a reading lesson, we need to get an expert to come and help us. That has been our biggest challenge. (Interview with Santurumino, November 26, 2014)

The teachers still needed practice to master the computer. It also helped them save time, as Jane notes:

Like, when it is now projected like this, it shortens for me work. When we go there, everything is there: the words, the sentences, and the pictures are now there. I don't draw now on my manila to be put for the children. It has lessened for us work. We don't have some writing, we just read direct from there, we look at the pictures, we just read. It has shortened for us some work. (Interview with Jane, August 12, 2014)

While the technology did represent some challenges, a more salient finding was that it was a source of opportunities and learning, and a means of opening new avenues for teaching.

6.2   Social and Cultural Capital of Teachers

While the teachers' identities went through important shifts as they navigated their investments in the ASb, some of them also experienced significant changes in their social and cultural capital. The construct of "capital", drawn from Bourdieu (1986), references economic, social, and cultural capital, which are indexical of resources valued in a given field or market. These include material or economic resources (what you own) and symbolic resources (who you know through social networks and what you know through cultural capital). With reference to the 2015 model of investment, I was interested in the shifting forms of capital that the teachers associated with investment in the ASb, and what impact this had on their teacher identities.

At Arua Hill, the material and symbolic resources the teachers had at hand, in the form of digital stories, multilingual competence, teaching skills, and local knowledge clearly shaped their investment in the ASb. The abundance of ASb stories, made available for different reading levels, offered new opportunities for multilingual learning and teaching. As Monica D. said:

People had already phased Lugbarati out of Arua Hill. Now since this project came, I now had materials to be used. So the materials was [*sic*] in the computer, so that, that thing made me now to think of teaching Lugbarati for the children. So I began now from there. And this time they can read now in Lugbarati. (Interview with Monica D., October 27, 2014)

The pictures in the texts were particularly appealing to the teachers. Theme 2 in the DFG recognizes that "language learning is semiotic learning" (DFG, 2016, p. 27), and includes visual,

graphic, and auditory modes of meaning making. As Monica D. noted, a picture "raises children's interest in reading" (interview with Monica D., November 27, 2014), and elaborates as follows:

> The stories – the language in general – it is simple. It depends, according to the level of the class you are taking. So, for us, we pick those ones which can, which have few, few, few content. Like for P3, when the, when – the what – when the passage is very long, we don't pick. When you pick them it takes long. When you pick lengthy they don't understand it. The pictures are not congested; they are easily understood by the students. When you tell them just to analyze the pictures they tell you the whole story before they read. It's just simple. I wish it could continue such that you also learnt a lot from it. (Interview with Monica D., October 27, 2014)

In addition, with the introduction of the ASb at the school, all the teachers had the chance to explore and learn the world of computers and the World Wide Web. As the DFG (2016) notes, "New mobile technologies … have reached even seemingly remote corners of the globe and are changing L2 users' worlds" (p. 22). When asked about using the computer, with which she had no prior experience, Jane proudly stated: "But I know. In near future I'll be a champion" (interview with Jane, August 12, 2014). Although using the computer was still a major challenge for most teachers, and associated with problems such as power cuts, the skills and knowledge the teachers had acquired, and the potential they had for learning more, was very appealing, not only for the increased cultural capital provided by technology, but also for the enhanced social networks that technology made possible. As Monica D. said:

African Storybook Project has given a lot to me. At first I was computer illiterate. I've learned how to use computer through that project. I've now got friends; I have friends to whom I can talk through the project. I can now read something, I can now download stories, I can now do – try to do something to search in computer is the – the what – the importance of African Storybook Project. (Interview with Monica D., October 27, 2014)

The most widely held view of the benefits of being a pilot school and getting to teach stories using a computer and projector was that the teachers learnt new skills. Computers and access to the Internet opened a new world, and the teachers were excited about exploring it: searching, sending emails, and even using Facebook. Although the few months the teachers had to develop these skills were not enough to make them well versed, they contributed towards developing cultural capital that was of value in their workplace and in other spheres of life. Even though they were still slow at typing, some of the teachers felt confident about the basics, such as finding and downloading ASb stories, and projecting them for their students. Others still relied on their peers for help as some were more accomplished than others.

Even though there were examples of innovation and initiative, such as the display of images as described above (see Chapter 6.1.2), the teachers did not get a great deal of time to practice using the computer, and the teachers at Arua Hill had only one laptop to share among them. Besides, developing proficiency in computer use "needs daily practice" (interview with Lucy, August 6, 2014). After the one-month break between the trimesters, the teachers generally appeared less confident about using the computer than they had previously. Apparently their skills were not sufficiently established, and a mere one-month hiatus was enough to compromise their ability to operate the computer and navigate the website. The teachers rarely used the computer for other purposes, such as planning lessons or personal use, although some expressed

interest in these options, and one teacher asked me to look for updates on a shortlist for university enrollment.

Another benefit some teachers claimed was the reduced workload associated with teaching stories, as Jane mentioned in the quote above (see Chapter 6.1.4). Using stories also met the expectation of using teaching aids, as Monica D. pointed out (see Chapter 6.1.2). The most distinct personal benefit of learning how to use a computer was Monica D.'s use of the computers at the PTC, where her husband worked:

Espen: What about the computer, Internet, have you used it for any personal, any

             personal use?

Monica D.:   Yes! This girl of mine in P5, I usually get her, her questions from the Internet. I

             got questions from the Internet. When there are some good, good educative

             programs in the Internet, I search for them. Especially these, these children

             programs where the, they educate children on how to do mathematics. There is

             that program there. I usually show her. When I have time, usually on Saturdays,

             they are with her there. It has improved her greatly.

             (Interview with Monica D., October 27, 2014)

Given the shortage of material resources prior to the introduction of the ASb, teachers often made charts and other learning aids, and sometimes wrote stories on the blackboard or a sheet of paper for display. However, prior to the ASb, these stories had little readership outside the school. With the opportunity to publish online, the teachers' cultural capital was valued beyond the classroom, enhancing their investment in the project, and increasing the range of identities available to them. The Arua teachers found the idea of seeing their own name in a public online setting particularly exciting. As Judith noted, "I feel very happy. Because other

people can go and read it somewhere" (interview with Judith, November 19, 2014). Milly was equally enthusiastic: "Very interesting! [laughs] It's interesting to see your stories with your names appearing in the web. It's interesting, I like it" (interview with Milly, November 26, 2014). Writing and publishing stories online was not just about public exposure, exciting as that may be. To Monica D. in particular, writing and publishing online gave her a new voice, and as her cultural capital increased, she claimed the identity "poet".

Monica D.:   It has made me to become a poet now. Because I have given for you two poems, I still have there three poems, and I have some stories which has made me to think more and more, such that I also be remembered in future by other people. [laughs]

Espen: That's great. And now you are writing.

Monica D.:   I want to struggle all the time to, to do something. I used to not have time for those stories, but since I have known – the what – the importance of using the stories, it has now made me to become creative, which I was not.

               (Interview with Monica D., October 27, 2014)

Monica D.'s enthusiasm for the ASb is partly explained by the responsibilities she was given in the project, and the social capital she accrued as a result. At the beginning of the year of research (before the ASb was introduced) Monica D. had been made head of the "infant" (lower primary) section, which gave her some more responsibility, including that of the ASb. In this capacity she was also the teacher chosen to go to Kampala for the initial workshop on the project, where she met colleagues from the other ASb pilot sites in Uganda, whom she referred to as "friends".

Espen: Can you tell me about the training you received – the – you said you went to the PTC, have you also been to Kampala, or any other training=

Monica D.: =Yes [excitedly], my first time to sleep in a complicated house! [laughs]

Espen: A hotel?

Monica D.: [inaudible] Hotel. I have not and ever. It was the project who took me there.

Espen: Tell me about that=

Monica D.: =And it was – it was a tour for me. That one was yet the second time I have

reached Kampala. And the first time I have enjoyed something in a hotel.

(Interview with Monica D., October 27, 2014)

Significantly, then, Monica D. navigates new identities not only in relationship to her students, but also in relationship to her peers, where her identity as a mentor of other teachers becomes enhanced and enriched. An early adapter of the ASb technology, Monica D. helped her colleagues set up the equipment, search for stories, and project them on classroom walls. While this responsibility did not come with a reduced teaching load, Monica D. embraced it, and when other teachers shied away from handling the computer, she considered this an opportunity for her to take on a mentoring role and hone her skills. As she said:

Now, it makes me learn more. When you help someone, you don't forget what you have already learnt. It helps me learn more. And I'm even very happy when a teacher comes to me, "I want to learn [inaudible] computer", such that I will also learn more than her – or him. (Interview with Monica D., November 27, 2014)

Further, Monica D.'s newly acquired skills and experience with the ASb earned her an invitation to a workshop for teacher candidates at the nearby Arua PTC. The opportunity to teach adults, including those who once trained her to become a teacher, was both daunting and exciting:

It went on well. We trained them for two days. The first day was for year twos [teacher candidates in their second year], and the second day was for year one. It has now exposed us! [cheerfully] I can now talk on, in front of these people, which I used to not to do. I wish it could continue. But I also learned a lot. It has made me learn a lot! (Interview with Monica D., October 27, 2014)

Such data provides convincing evidence that technology is indeed "changing L2 users' worlds" (DFG, 2016, p. 22), and that the social and cultural capital associated with investment in the ASb is enhancing the identities of the teachers, increasing the range of identities available to them.

6.3 Ideological Practices and Teacher Identity

Having analyzed the data with reference to identity and capital, I turn to the third construct in the 2015 model: ideology. This construct is also of much interest to the DFG framework, which locates ideology at the macro level of the framework, noting in Theme 9 that "Ideologies permeate all levels" at the micro, meso, and macro level. While Darvin and Norton (2015) define ideology in broad terms as "dominant ways of thinking that organize and stabilize societies while simultaneously determining modes of inclusion and exclusion" (p. 44), the DFG focuses more directly on linguistic ideology, drawing on Kroskrity (2010) to define ideology as the beliefs, feelings, and conceptions about language structure and use that are indexical of the political and economic interests of speakers, groups, and nation states. In seeking to make visible ideological practices in the Arua context, the questions that need to be asked include an investigation of the systemic patterns of control, such as policies, codes, and institutional practices, which enabled or constrained teachers' investment in the ASb. How, then, did prevailing ideologies structure the teachers' investment, and how did these impact teacher

identity? As the DFG (2016) notes, "ideologies influence the access, investment, and agency into a new language that learners may or may not (be able or willing to) exert" (p. 33). In this study, I found that Arua teachers' increased social and cultural capital, and their investment in the project, was not necessarily associated with regular use of the ASb stories. Apart from practical challenges of electric power, bandwidth, and time pressures, teachers had to navigate complex ideologies associated with mother tongue usage, learner assessment, and teacher evaluation, respectively, to which I now turn.

With respect to a first ideological practice, mother tongue usage, the teachers recognized the students' mother tongue as a valuable symbolic resource, which supported the development of literacy in both Lugbarati and the official language, English. As Monica D. said, "We were talking about Lugbarati. It introduces children to reading easily. When they first learn how to use the Lugbarati, reading English becomes simple for them" (Interview with Monica D., October 27, 2014). This latter emphasis is well established in the literature (see Chapter 3.4), and consistent with Theme 1 of the DFG framework, which notes, "Multilingual speakers will deploy their semiotic resources by choosing across their languages and/or varieties and registers in response to local demands for action" (DFG, 2016, p. 26). In Arua, mother tongue usage was a regular part of the discourse on language and literacy in education, promoted by the government and supported by powerful non-government organizations. But the discourse of English, specifically the need to study in English, dominated at the grassroots level, notably among parents, and to some extent among teachers.

> At first when they introduced thematic, we were teaching in Lugbarati. Every learning
> area was handled in Lugbarati, except English. So they found there were lot of challenges
> – the what – the parents didn't like us to teach their children in Lugbarati. At home they

speak Lugbarati, so they have sent their children here in order to learn English. So they decided in their PTA [Parent–Teacher Association] meeting no teaching of Lugbarati in Arua Hill. It is now this RTI which has brought teaching in Lugbarati only this year. It used not to be there. (Interview with Monica D., October 27, 2014)

While Lugbarati was a valued resource for the majority of students, who spoke it as a mother tongue, English was the medium of instruction from P4 onwards, and thus seen to be paramount for the students to learn and develop in the earlier grades. English was also, according to the teachers, easier for the South Sudanese students in the school (and those of other ethnicities), thus teaching in English also helped that group of learners. The teachers response to this dilemma was to teach in both languages or to translate (see Chapter 5.6), thus supporting the students' early literacy development in their mother tongue as well as accommodating linguistic minorities in the classroom.

Second, with regard to learner assessment, another practice with ideological implications, the teachers expressed concern about the SHRP program implemented by RTI, which promoted the use of Lugbarati and had re-introduced it, starting in P1 (P2 and P3 were to be included the following two years). One of the ideological principles of the RTI program (as understood by the teachers) is that there was to be no written work in the first term of the program. A compelling finding with respect to ideological practices, then, was the struggle teachers faced in navigating the requirements of the RTI program, which avoided assessment of writing in the early stages, as well as the desires of parents, who were "hot" for feedback on and evidence for their children's progress in writing (see Chapter 5.6).

The issue of assessment remains a huge challenge in the Ugandan and other African contexts, where high-stakes tests are in the medium of English, despite support for mother

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tongue instruction (Rea-Dickens, Yu, & Afitska, 2009; Early & Norton, 2014; Tembe & Norton, 2008). Because the stories in the ASb are not designed for assessment purposes, but as supplementary readers, issues of formal assessment did not arise. However, it is possible that because the stories were not incorporated in formal assessment procedures, which were conducted in English, some teachers may have been reluctant to use the ASb stories on a regular basis, notwithstanding the availability of stories in English as well as African languages. This speaks to what the DFG (2016) refers to as the "contested and ambivalent role of English as a global lingua franca" (p. 26). On the other hand, the digital education afforded by the initiative appealed to many parents. Monica D. noted that a father had transferred his son to Arua Hill precisely because he thought the child would learn how to use a computer, "the father is a teacher, the father also brought him here in order to learn how to use computer" (Interview with Monica D., October 27, 2014). She also noted that the parents found the stories appealing, and one parent had transferred his daughter to the school "because of how we are teaching here using the stories" (Interview with Monica D., October 27, 2014).

A third ideological practice concerned the process of what was called "supervision" of teachers. Government appointed inspectors, as well as the school leadership, are required to approve the teachers' lesson plans and schemes of work. These documents were frequently handwritten notes, consisting largely of themes and phrases reproduced from the curriculum, with formulaic expressions about learning aids and activities. Teachers took a great deal of time to write these schemes, and Milly in particular was concerned with all the tedious writing required: "You have to write everything you are teaching down. So how can we write more than five things? You may take your time just writing. But doing it – doing the real, maybe the practical work – may not be there" (Interview with Milly, November 26, 2014). The teachers

were nevertheless anxious about the outcomes of these inspections, and the extent to which their lesson plans were consistent with school and government policy. This led to mixed investments with regard to the ASb. As Monica D. explained:

> It is those ones who are teaching the real subjects, the real learning areas, who are getting problems in using the stories. Because when they will be, when in terms of supervision, at times they get the curriculum, at times they get the books. Maybe they fear that area which they are – they are fearing – the what – the supervisions. So they don't pick – the what – the stories which appear. (Interview with Monica D., October 27, 2014)

This interpretation is supported by data from Santurumino, who was concerned that a focus on the African Storybook would compromise the need to "cover the syllabus":

> And it is our weakness that we have not taken the books for the children. Because we mostly dwell on the coverage of the syllabus. And those ones – they may not give us time to – no – reading separately is not there on the curriculum. So, once you include reading lesson, you have already gone out of curriculum. … Mostly when we teach, we teach what the curriculum specifies for us. But we add reading on top of that. … The scheme [plan for the term] is fully filled with what is on the syllabus. Because of this one, it causes us only to teach the syllabus continuously because we want to finish its coverage. So that is the greatest challenge. (Interview with Santurumino, November 26, 2014)

Partly because of concern with government inspections and expectations, teachers sought to creatively navigate the "pressures from outside" with their desires as teachers. As Milly shared:

Milly: The curriculum actually is a guide. If it is not there – it is just there to guide us. But – but we – it's only this time that we have realized it – as being a guide, anyway. Most of the time we used to follow what is in the curriculum. But this time at least we are trying to take it as a guide.

Espen: Why, why this time, why not before?

Milly: This time – because – because we wanted to use it – the stories. And we have found that the use of the stories also is very good. So for me, particularly, I've decided I will use the curriculum even co-currently with the stories. (Interview with Milly, November 26, 2014)

In the beginning of the project at Arua Hill, almost all the teachers were eager to teach stories and learn how to use a computer. However, over time, not all the teachers sustained this interest, and remained invested in the use of stories in their teaching. Whereas many teachers felt constrained by the demands of the curriculum, and struggled to find connections between the themes in the curriculum and the ASb stories, others developed a more nuanced view of the curriculum and their relationship to it. This was particularly evident in Monica D.'s data, which provide insight into her conception of "literacy" and "reading", and what it means to be a reading teacher:

So the teaching of the reading in that curriculum, we as teachers we don't understand it. They use the curriculum in order to teach reading, as if they're teaching it as a subject like SST [Social Studies] or Science … So it is not even – it does not emphasise on how to teach the real reading as reading. The real reading I've seen can help us is when we use these stories. (Interview with Monica D., October 27, 2014)

Monica D.'s point, which Doris also referred to, is that some teachers tend to focus on subject content, such as the life cycle of houseflies, instead of viewing literacy more broadly and integrating children's stories into social science themes. Monica D. noted that broad themes like "Our environment" and "Things we make" could be associated with almost any story. For example, Monica D. taught the story *Goat, Dog and Cow*[47] – a story about animals taking the bus – during the theme "Culture and Gender". She said the story needed to be understood in terms of the animals' culture.

6.4 Teacher Investment

In the beginning of the ASb at Arua Hill, almost all the teachers were motivated to teach stories and learn how to use a computer. But over time only some teachers sustained this interest, and became *invested* in the use of stories in their teaching. Whereas most teachers still felt constrained by the notion of following the curriculum (and their interpretation of it), some teachers, most notably Monica D., but also others, developed a more nuanced view of the role of the curriculum as a guide, and allowed themselves to move away from the confinements of themes and detailed specifications of the curriculum, as they had interpreted it up until then. It's important to point out that it is not really the curriculum itself that is constraining the teachers, as much as their understanding of the curriculum, and by extension exams and other forms of summative assessment. In addition, the curriculum indirectly impinges upon the teachers' teaching through inspections. The inspectors, as well as the school leadership, which approves the lesson plans, have certain expectations about teachers' lesson plans. These are idiosyncratic manifestations of what the teachers think the inspectors want from them. In other words, the

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[47] http://www.africanstorybook.org/index.php?id=6380

curriculum as a policy instrument strongly affects teachers' investment in the teaching of ASb stories, but in different ways for different teachers.

The teachers, and Monica D. in particular, recognized the students' mother tongue as "affordances to their learning" (Darvin and Norton, p. 46). The ASb enabled her practically by providing stories – but also by recognizing her importance and – in a material sense of the word – invested in her as a leader, a *primus inter pares*. To Monica D., however, going to Kampala, staying in a hotel, and receiving training, was not primarily about carrying out her job as a teacher, but a chance to expand personally and professionally by making new friends, learning about computer use, and further applying theoretical concepts from her teacher training to practical use with students. In addition to this, ASb enabled her *discursively* by emphasizing mother tongue literacy in the early years as a foundation for later transition to English.

This latter emphasis is no novelty – quite the contrary. But ideologies are always competing, and for individual actors it is often a matter of a tipping point, facilitated and enabled by other factors, which make people take up and translate ideas into practice. In the case of Monica D., the idea of teaching in the mother tongue was not new; it was a strong part of the discourse on language and literacy in education promoted by the government and supported by powerful NGOs. But the discourse of English, specifically the need to study in English, dominated at the grassroots level, notably among parents, but also a view held by many teachers. This tension is hard to navigate, not least given teachers' perceived (and partly real) lack of autonomy in their teaching – as just "implementing government policy". It is in this context one must recognize the teachers' decision – and opportunity – to code-switch, and, in the case of Monica D., teach in both English and Lugbarati. Lugbarati was officially the language of instruction and important for the majority of students who spoke it as a mother tongue, often

with very limited command of English. But English is the sine qua non for education in the following years (P4 and up), and the only language (of the two used) that was comprehensible to the students who didn't speak Lugbarati.

6.5   Chapter Summary

This chapter addressed the third research question about teachers' identities in light of their investment in the stories. I discussed the four teacher identities that were identified in the data: (a) teacher as writer and translator, (b) teacher as change agent, (c) teacher as multimodal, multiliterate educator, and (d) teacher as digital educator. Each of these I discussed in turn, showing how the theoretical framework helped make sense of the data. I demonstrated how the ASb stories opened new avenues for teachers to teach, and in the process of using stories also negotiated their own teacher identities in the process.

With reference to Darvin and Norton's (2015) model of investment, I discussed how the ASb and the teaching of its stories intersected with the teachers' social and cultural capital, and how ideological practices of mother tongue usage, assessment, and supervision, had bearings on the teachers' use of stories and their investment in them. Some of the teachers, most notably Monica D., bridged what was sometimes seen as a gap between the curriculum and the teaching of stories, and embraced the ASb stories and their own creativity and identities in the process.

In the next and final chapter I conclude this dissertation with a summary and discussion of the findings in relation to the research questions, and recommendations for policy, practice, and research.

Chapter 7: Conclusion and Recommendations

This chapter concludes this dissertation with a summary of the key findings in Chapters 4, 5, and 6 and a discussion of how these findings address the three research questions. The research questions were designed to address different aspects of teacher investment and identity at different levels. This included the broader context to set the stage for the research and frame of reference for the teachers' investment, their investment in the stories from the ASb, and finally how this investment provided insight into their identities in this given context. Following this I provide a list of recommendations for policy, practice, and research regarding use and delivery of stories, technology and open licences, and consideration for teachers' existing practices in designing educational interventions.

7.1 Conclusion

The African Storybook is a promising project that harnesses digital innovations to provide richly illustrated children's stories in multiple languages for African students and their communities. A comprehensive analysis of this project, and the teachers' use of and investment in the stories, requires a multilayered analysis that takes into account the macro, meso and micro levels (DFG, 2016). With my three research questions I have attempted to carry out such an analysis, starting with the wider educational practices and culture in which this project is situated before proceeding with the teachers' investment in the stories, followed by how this investment provides insight into their identities.

With regards to the first research question, *In what ways is engagement with the ASb linked to wider educational practices in a small town in Uganda? –* I have pointed to language, culture, technology, education, and educational interventions, all of which have bearings on the teachers' investment and engagement with the stories. Language issues framed and posed

challenges to the teachers' work in different ways. Lugbarati, the dominant language in Arua, had recently undergone a revision to its orthography, which not all the teachers were fully familiar with, and had virtually no experience in teaching. At Arua Hill, Lugbarati was re-introduced through SHRP, along with assessment practices that differed from previous practices, and which were at odds with parents' expectations. At the same time, between the support of SHRP, ASb stories in Lugbarati (in addition to English), and a policy favourable to instruction in local languages, some teachers embraced teaching in Lugbarati. At Mindrabe Library, the local language was not Lugbarati, but a completely unrelated one, which caused problems with the provision of stories in the local language. Language is clearly key to making sense of teachers' engagement with the ASb. The local culture of storytelling and other oral traditions, such as telling riddles, served an important function by constituting a familiar element of the ASb intervention. Whereas the technology was new to the teachers, they had a long experience with stories, and readily shared their own stories which were uploaded to the website to share with other teachers. The stories as a genre, as well as their African style and imagery, helped scaffold the teachers as they engaged with the stories and learned how to operate the digital equipment.

While there are somewhat similar projects elsewhere, ASb is the only one to cover all of Africa, and with more than 100 languages and several thousand translations, making it an important provider of literacy materials in African languages. The ASb's use of open licences and digital mode of delivery are innovative aspects that enable creation, translation, and distribution in ways that were previously not possible. As this research has demonstrated, the ASb successfully builds on and extends the oral tradition of storytelling. Creation and translation are also important for the teachers who use the stories in their teaching, as they become known online and in their communities. The digital interface between global distribution of stories

(receiving and submitting) and local practices of telling and using stories for teaching was central

to the relative success of the ASb, providing a space for a range of identities at the interface of

the familiar and the new.

Teachers, like students, draw on their capital – the repertoire of linguistic, cultural, and

other resources that they are familiar with and are available to them – when encountering

demands, expectations, and challenges of new technology and pedagogical changes. It is with

this in mind that it is important to shed light on teachers' understanding of literacy, language,

teaching, and learning, including discourses such as that of child-centred learning, since

teachers' capital is linked to their investment (see Darvin and Norton's model of investment,

Figure 2.1). Ideological forces, in this context most notably the curriculum and discourses of

language and assessment, similarly had bearings on teachers' use of the stories, and by the same

token their investment. With this in mind I turn to the second research question: *To what extent*

are teachers invested in stories from the ASb?

The teaching of stories was not a major departure from other ways of teaching, but

typically involved individual students reading and pointing to words, which the teachers

considered child-centred learning. The use of stories did expand the amount of reading that took

place, however, and in some cases helped the teachers reconsider the place of reading in school –

to something that rightfully belonged to all subjects, not just English and literacy. Because the

stories are all in English (as well as multiple other languages), the ASb website extended the

English competence of multilingual teachers as they engaged with a story and reflected on how

to mediate and/or translate stories from English into local African languages. This was a

meaningful exercise that enhanced language learning as well as professional development. Also,

at the level of ideology, Welch notes, "the presence of many languages on one platform gives a powerful message about multilingualism" (Welch, 2015).

Teachers everywhere face a number of demands (Ruohotie-Lyhty, 2011), or "pressure from outside and pressure from here!" as Monica D. noted. In addition to the ideological challenges around mother tongue instruction, learner assessment, and government inspections are the materially challenging working conditions of large classes, long hours, and paucity of materials. It is with this in mind that we must recognize the teachers' agency, such as that of Monica D., who innovatively used stories to promote gender equality in and beyond her school, and engaging students in (literally) hands-on learning about the sounds that the body makes. Santurumino similarly used stories to address gender and engage students in innovative ways through his dramatization of *Akatope*, while Judith engaged her students in one of the few instances of a classroom dialogue about the dangers of swimming. While some teachers were arguably well invested in the ASb stories, others may have been invested only as much as they felt they were able, given the numerous constraints of unfamiliar technology, curriculum demands, mixed messages and expectations from parents, school leadership, and policies.

When it comes to the third research question, *How does investment in these stories provide insight into teachers' identities in this context?* – I found that Darvin and Norton's 2015 model, incorporating constructs of identity, capital, and ideology, served as a useful lens through which to interrogate teacher investment in the African Storybook. I found that teachers were able to explore a wider range of identities as language teachers, whether as writer and translator; change agent; multimodal, multiliterate educator; or digital educator. These shifts of identity arose from the teachers' enhanced social and cultural capital, notwithstanding ideological constraints associated with mother tongue usage, assessment practices, and teacher supervision.

Also helpful in the analysis was the DFG framework. As noted in Theme 7, "Language learning is identity work", and this applies equally to teachers and students. As teachers incorporated the ASb into their classrooms, they began reframing what it means to be a good teacher, more broadly, and an effective reader teacher, more specifically. Indeed, the very inter-relationship between teacher identity and learner identity was a common theme in the data: As teachers became more active and creative in the classroom, students became more active and engaged readers.

The African Storybook initiative and its stories invite teachers, not only in Uganda, but throughout Africa, to imagine themselves as writers and teachers of stories, and as teachers of reading. The implications for language teacher identity are compelling, as is the potential to improve the learning experience of millions of young children in African communities. Unlike most other early literacy interventions, the ASb did not present a set way of teaching or scripted lesson plans for the teachers at Arua Hill. This encouraged an exploration of how teachers teach using children's stories, their challenges, resistance, innovations, and investments. By exploring teachers' views of their profession, pressures they are facing, peer support, and resources available to them, this study has provided insights into the conditions they are working under and the potential they have for improving early literacy teaching and learning.

The dissertation also shows how teacher agency and innovation can take place in the absence of explicit guidelines and pedagogical training. Innovative use of stories and the electronic equipment provide a window on teacher agency and how teachers take up and make use of new technology. Rather than implementing top-down directives, the teachers taught the stories in ways that made sense to them, which led to increased amount of reading and in some instances of pupil engagement not observed in other lessons. While there was considerable

variation among the teachers in terms of their use of stories, use of the stories did not rely on adoption of top-down pedagogies, which has been notoriously difficult (Chisholm & Leyendecker, 2008).

These findings may serve as a starting point for building on teachers' knowledge, understanding, and practices to meaningfully, respectfully, and effectively achieve change for young readers in poorly resourced African communities. My findings suggest that educational policy needs to recognize the realities that teachers and schools are facing and the limitations of large-scale, top-down interventions, and instead support teachers through building on their current knowledge and practices to improve literacy rates and stimulating classroom practices. Such a shift from perceived "best practices" to "enhanced practices" (cf. Guthrie, 2011; see also Dubeck et al., 2015) requires an understanding of what teachers do, and how they do it, and what structures their teaching practices, which this dissertation has addressed.

7.2 Recommendations for Policy, Practice, and Research

Cummins (1988) states that research results by themselves cannot inform policy, but theory based on research can. Cummins's argument is made in the context of bilingual education programs in the United States and French immersion programs in Canada, where there is no consensus among researchers about a theory that can explain the research results. Regarding the question of transition to English (or French) as the language of instruction in Africa, there is strong support for late exit or additive language models among researchers (Heugh, 2011), but research on how teachers can best be supported in preparing students for this transition is conspicuously missing. There is also broad support among researchers for what has been called "the social turn" in second language acquisition studies, even among cognitively oriented researchers (e.g., Atkinson, 2011; Block, 2003), but the implications of this broader theoretical

understanding for policy and classroom practices are largely missing. Studies on the use of stories in African classrooms are just barely beginning to appear (e.g., Sailors et al., 2014), but the potential for large-scale distribution through an online platform, and the use of projectors to display stories in the classroom, are potentially revolutionary innovations that have not yet been described or theorized.

This research addresses these gaps in the literature by investigating how an online platform can effectively provide stories to remote classrooms, and how teachers respond to stories and develop a sense of ownership and pedagogical practice through using stories to teach the local language Lugbarati and English. Lessons learnt from this will inform other teachers and educators working with stories to teach and develop literacy in Africa and beyond as well as policy makers on how an online repository can serve as a hub for children's stories.

7.2.1 Expanding teachers' use of technology

My findings indicate that while the teachers embraced the new technology, limited computer use hindered further skills development for many of the teachers. As with all learning, developing computer literacy is best when it is meaningful to the learner, such as fulfilling a purpose beyond just learning. If teachers only engage with the computer (and other equipment) when they are teaching a lesson occasionally, they barely get the chance to develop their skills, and typically only practice a routine set of steps. A school holiday or other interruptions typically cause a setback, or even a disruption of use altogether. On the other hand, if teachers use the computer and Internet for purposes beyond instruction, such as personal interests, planning, or other work, they not only get more opportunities to develop skills at the crucial initial stage, but they also engage with technology meaningfully, which is valuable for learning. This experience will also serve as a foundation for digital literacy, which could ultimately benefit the pupils. By

limiting computer use (and training) to basic skills and routine instructional steps, teacher educators and trainers commit the fallacy of reducing digital literacy to a set of technical skills devoid of their social context (Lankshear & Knobel, 2006).

7.2.2   Mode of delivery

The use of ICT in African classrooms has taken many forms, including cell phones, tablets, laptops, e-readers, often by putting devices in the hands of children (e.g., Jere-Folotiya et al., 2014; Piper et al., 2015). Although this hands-on experience may be desirable from a pedagogical perspective, there are financial and technical challenges that raise the question of whether technology can better serve teaching and learning in the hands of teachers rather than pupils (Piper et al., 2015).

Like some other interventions, the ASb opted for giving the digital tools to the teachers. But unlike other initiatives that used devices like tablets and cell phones for intervention support staff to communicate with teachers, the use of a projector brought the technology directly to the pupils. This mode of delivery has many advantages: It fits well with the whole-class teaching style common in Africa, including reading aloud, and it makes hundreds of stories available and easy to update, giving teachers a wide range of stories to choose from. This study does not have any data to compare different modes of digital delivery or to assess cost-benefits, but it does show that the use of ICT to promote teaching and learning can take many forms. Future research could shed important light on the differences between various modes of delivery, including devices only for teachers, versus those for pupils to use. One aspect of this issue is the question whether technology can best serve education through devices in the classroom, or by serving as infrastructure for governments, NGOs, publishers, and other stakeholders who in turn can provide support for teaching and learning.

7.2.3 Technology as an intermediary

The ASb's online platform revolutionizes the spread of African children's stories, especially in smaller languages, but also in English. This role as an intermediary is the initiative's greatest achievement, as well as main purpose. The online stories are published under Creative Commons licenses, which means they can be printed, adapted, and in some cases even published by commercial publishers. The ASb is currently working with several governments and NGOs to use and re-publish previously published stories, potentially reaching millions of children, many more than it could through its own pilot sites. The pilot sites have provided valuable insights into how teachers use, write, and translate stories, as well as how a projector can serve to display stories in the classroom. My research has also demonstrated that it is feasible to print paper copies of booklets locally at a very low cost, down to a few cents per eight-page, A6 booklet. Such a "do-it-yourself" initiative is only possible because the stories are available online and under open licenses, which has also spurred translations into non-African languages (see http://storybookscanada.ca). In this way, technology can play a key role in providing educational materials, even when pupils do not use the electronic devices.

Digital solutions have a huge potential in supporting the provision of literacy materials in Africa, and not just through devices like e-readers, cell phones, and projectors. Arguably the most valuable contribution of digital technology to literacy education in Africa is providing crucial content infrastructure and connecting stakeholders, which in turn can provide literacy materials in print or digital format and improve teaching and learning.

7.2.4 Supporting teachers in using storybooks

The use of stories among the teachers varied, but few teachers taught using stories frequently, and by and large there was room for more effective use of the stories in teaching,

particularly follow-up activities. Teachers' use of storybooks should not be taken for granted, as their use is closely tied to pedagogical practices, which in many cases could be enhanced. A focus on the use of literacy materials in pre-service and in-service teacher education programs is one possible area for research. Getting teachers to increase the use of storybooks and in ways that are more conducive to learning seems to require some form of support. However, building on existing practices, such as shared, choral, reading, and retelling stories, and the dramatization and class conversation that I identified in this research, are starting points that research should explore further. Graduate students conducting research might focus on one such practice, such as the use stories as a starting point for dramatization, while larger research projects might explore an integrated approach that first documents existing practices and how these can be further developed.

Scheduling regular story reading might also be a way to increase the amount of reading that children do. The teachers sometimes handed out books to their pupils. They never did this when one of their colleagues was absent, but rather when they had planned on doing this together. The fact that they were willing and able to teach two classes at the same time means this is a possibility, for instance when a teacher is absent. It would perhaps require some foresight and planning, but the teachers already demonstrated that they can use stories to manage large class sizes. In other words, stories can be used to accommodate teacher-less classes, either by handing out storybooks or bringing two classes together and projecting a story for reading. I observed both these practices, which can be can be built upon in future efforts to enhance teaching and learning by increasing the amount of time students spend reading.

7.2.5 Development and use of openly licenced books and other resources

OERs hold a great potential for education in Africa. But packaging OERs – presenting them in a format and context that is useful for users, is a challenge with OERs in general. Just like giving a teacher access to all the resources on the Internet can be overwhelming, giving teachers access to a database of OERs does not mean they know how to use it or make the resources fit with the curriculum. Children's stories are more straight-forward in this respect, as they are usually not tied to a curricular content. Although openly licenced children's stories are increasingly available online, there is little knowledge about how these stories can best be made accessible to students. Digital display of stories using a projector, which the African Storybook used, is one possibility. Printing booklets is another option, but how this can be organized and implemented needs further research. It is important to keep in mind that this is not just a question of cost or impact on learning, but also the long-term viability and interest and capacity of the teachers and other stakeholders, which research should take into consideration.

7.2.6 Taking existing teaching practices into consideration

Learner-centred education is widely embraced in the West, but what does it mean in the African context? Learner-centred teaching is one of the most pervasive pedagogical ideas and promoted in many African curricula, but it is also hotly contested. Problems of defining or identifying learner-centred teaching contribute to the confusion and debate around this concept (Benson, 2012). More important than the exact definition, however, is the question of how valued principles, such as pupil interaction and self-assessment, can and should be implemented in an African context. There is a need to explore this issue both theoretically and empirically through research in order to give guidance to policy makers and program implementers. The literature offers more questions than answers (see Schweisfurth, 2011, for a thorough review),

making definitive recommendations difficult. Research can help clarify how principles of learner-centred education can contribute to higher levels of student engagement and learning within African school settings.

Care should be taken when introducing learner-centred teaching, and the focus should be on working with improving existing practices, rather than ushering in foreign approaches that may have limited success, particularly long-term. Focusing on enhancing principles and practices that are already in use, and one that takes local contexts into consideration, is recommended. This can include improved structure of teaching to avoid lost time, increase amount of time for reading, encourage pupils to summarize and retell, and improve use of individual students to demonstrate and share knowledge. There is need for more research and practice with an approach that works *with* teachers' existing practices in order to build on and enhance them. Such an approach would also align well with a recognition of teachers' identities as multiple, shifting, and the complex conditions and challenges they face. Working *with* teachers is also more likely to ensure a higher level of investment, which would benefit both teachers and pupils.

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Appendices

Appendix A Interview Guide for Teachers (First Interview)

1. Why did you become a teacher?
2. How did your teacher training prepare you for teaching reading?
3. Is there anything from your training that is particularly useful for you now?
4. Are there any particular messages, principles, or advice, which you remember from when you studied to become a teacher?
5. What do you think about the African Storybook Project in general?
   a. Suitability of stories.
   b. Use of projectors.
   c. Potential.
   d. Challenges.
   e. Conditions for success.
6. What do you think the stories from the African Storybook Project mean for <name of school>?
   a. Potential.
   b. Challenges.
   c. Conditions for success.
7. What do you think being able to use the stories from African Storybook Project means for you personally?
   a. As a teacher.
   b. Technology.
8. How can the stories from the African Storybook Project help children develop reading in their local language?
9. How can the stories from the African Storybook Project help children develop reading in English?
10. What does the tradition of storytelling look like in and around Arua?
11. What do you think about the policy of teaching in the mother tongue from P1 to P3, and transition to English in P4?
    a. In general.
    b. For your school.
12. What challenges do you experience as a teacher?
13. What would an ideal school and classroom look like?
    a. Class size
    b. Salary
    c. Teaching resources (such as books)
    d. In-service teacher training
    e. Workload
14. In an ideal school, would you teach differently?
    a. How?
15. What do you find rewarding by working as a teacher?
16. What characterizes a good pupil?
17. What characterizes a good teacher?
18. If a pupil wants to read better, what advice would you give him or her?

19. Why is teaching reading important?
20. What does the Ugandan curriculum say about teaching reading?
21. What books, materials and resources do you use to teach reading?
    a. How do you use these?
22. Can you tell me about scheming and lesson planning?
23. Do you work together with other teachers at this school?
    a. How?
24. How do you teach reading?
25. There are different ways pupils can read, such as individually, whole class, aloud, or in silence. What do you think about these different ways of reading? What are their advantages or disadvantages?
26. Do you have any principles for teaching reading?
27. What do you do to make learning interesting and engaging for your pupils?
28. Do you give your students any tests to know how well they are reading?
29. How well would you say your students read in [Lugbarati/English]? Say, the average student and the best student?
30. Do you know how well your students are reading in other ways than through tests?
31. What advice on teaching reading would you give to a new teacher?

Appendix B Interview Guide for Teachers (Second Interview)

1. What stories have you used in your lessons in term two and term three?
    *   Digital
    *   Print
    *   African Storybook Project booklets
    *   Library books
2. Did you read any other stories yourself?
3. Why did you choose these ones?
4. Did you read any stories that you did not want to use? Why?
5. Tell me about your experience of using these.
    *   What did pupils say, how did they react?
    *   Any specific challenges?
    *   Help from another teacher?
    *   What did you think about these stories?
    *   Did you make any connections to the themes in the curriculum? Is that important?
6. Have you learned anything from using the stories, computer, or otherwise through the African Storybook Project?
7. Have you faced any challenges in teaching stories?
8. Have you read or downloaded stories from the website?
    *   Alone?
    *   With me or with another teacher?
9. Would you use more stories in your teaching if the conditions were better or more favourable?
10. What reading do your pupils do apart from through stories?
11. What do you think is the right balance between reading stories and doing other schoolwork, such as chalk and talk and exercises?
    *   How much time should be set aside for reading in a week?
12. What do you think about the school's library books? How does the African Storybook Project stories complement this collection?
13. Have you written any stories for African Storybook Project?
    *   Tell me about it.
    *   Traditional or your own?
    *   What do you think about your stories being put on the Internet?
    *   Other comments?
14. Have you translated any stories for the African Storybook Project?
    *   Tell me about it.
    *   What do you think about your stories being put on the Internet?
    *   Other comments?
15. Has anyone asked you to write or translate stories?
    *   [The chair of] the School Management Committee?
    *   Monica D.?
16. Has the African Storybook Project brought any differences to Arua Hill? Tell me about it?
17. Some of the teachers have mentioned child-centred teaching. What does this mean, and what do you think about it?

18. What support do you get from the CCT, head of infant, head teacher, or other teachers?
19. Tell me about inspections (HT, deputy, municipal inspector).

Appendix C Interview Guide for Head Teachers

1. What is the total number of pupils in your school (all classes)? _____
2. What is the total number of teachers in your school (all classes)? _____
3. What is the total number of streams and pupils in your school?

Class	Streams	Number of boys	Number of girls	Total number of boys and girls
P1				
P2				
P3				
P4				
P5				
P6				
P7				

4. What is the total number of textbooks and other non-fiction books (e.g., reference books) <u>available for the pupils</u> in your school?

Class	Textbooks in English	Textbooks in an African language	Other (please write)
P1			
P2			
P3			
P4			

5. What is the number of storybooks or other fiction available in the school (not counting any from the African Storybook Project):

Storybooks/ fiction in English	Storybooks/ fiction in an African language

6. What challenges are there in the Ugandan school system, and in this school in particular?
7. What challenges do you experience as a principal?
8. What do the stories from the ASP mean for this school?
9. How can the stories from the African Storybook Project help children develop reading in their English and Lugbarati?
10. What are the main languages spoken as mother tongue by the pupils in this school?
11. What is the language of instruction in this school? (Why)
12. How many pupils would you <u>estimate</u> speak the following languages (in percent):

Language	Mother tongue (speak at home)	Speak and understand very well (but not mother tongue)	Speak and understand somewhat
English			
Lugbarati			
Swahili			
Other			

13. Tell me about Aga Khan/RTI or any other programs or interventions at this school.
14. Tell me about inspections and how teachers are supervised.
15. Please give a general comment on the catchment area of your school (i.e. socio-economic status of parents, common occupations).

Appendix D Interview Guide for Librarians

1. How and when was the library started?
    a. Who?
    b. Why?
2. What does your work as a librarian consist of? Can you describe a "normal" day?
3. Does the library organize or offer any activities, programmes, or event? Can you describe them?
    a. How often, how regular?
    b. Importance
    c. Attendance.
4. What kind of books and materials does the library have?
    a. Content and quality.
    b. Origin, relevance.
5. Who are the users? Tell me about the different groups of users and what they do at the library.
    a. How often do they come?
    b. What do they do?
    c. Differences between groups of users?
6. What does the tradition of storytelling look like in and around Arua?
7. What do you think about the policy of teaching in the mother tongue from P1 to P3, and transition to English in P4?
    a. In general.
    b. In this community.
8. How is the policy relevant to <name of library>?
9. What challenges do you experience as a librarian?
10. What do you find rewarding by working as a librarian?
11. Why is reading important?
12. What do you think about the stories from the African Storybook Project?
    a. Suitability of stories.
    b. Potential.
    c. Challenges.
    d. Conditions for success.
13. What difference can the books from the African Storybook Project make for <name of library>?
    a. Potential.
    b. Challenges.
    c. Conditions for success.
14. What do the books from the African Storybook Project means for you as a librarian?
15. How can the books from the African Storybook Project help children develop reading in their local language?
16. How can the books from the African Storybook Project help children develop reading in English?
17. How have you as a librarian used the books from the African Storybook Project?
    a. At the library.
    b. At schools or elsewhere.

18. How have library users, such as students and teachers, used the books from the African Storybook Project?
    a. At the library.
    b. At home, schools, or elsewhere.
19. What has the African Storybook Project meant for <name of library>?
    a. Notable episodes.
    b. Results, effect.
    c. Challenges.
    d. Lessons learnt.
20. What have the books from the African Storybook Project meant for you as a librarian?
21. How can the books from the African Storybook Project help children develop reading in their local language?
22. How can the books from the African Storybook Project help children develop reading in English?
23. What would you tell other librarians who are about to use the books from the African Storybook Project?

Appendix E Questionnaire for Teachers

This questionnaire is designed to provide some background information about the school and community. This is strictly for research purposes. Your confidentiality is guaranteed.

Section 1: Personal and background information

1. How many years have you taught at <name of school>? _____
2. Have you taught at any other schools than <name of school>? _____
    _____
3. Which grades and subjects have you taught before, but are not teaching now?_____
    _____
4. What is your highest education qualification or degree? _____
    _____
5. Have you done a teacher training or teacher diploma course? _____
    _____
6. Which grades and subjects do you teach now?_____
    _____
7. What was your experience with electronics (computers, smartphones, Internet, digital cameras, etc.) before the African Storybook started?_____
    _____
    _____
8. Had you used any electronic equipment in the classroom before the African Storybook Project? _____
    _____
9. What is your mother tongue? _____
10. Do you speak any other languages? _____
    _____

Section 2: Thoughts and experiences of being a teacher

11. What challenges are there in the Ugandan school system, or in teaching in general? _____
    _____
    _____
12. What challenges do you experience as a teacher? _____
    _____
    _____
13. What do you find rewarding by working as a teacher? _____
    _____
    _____
14. What language do you teach in – English or Lugbara? (If you mix or vary, please explain briefly.) _____
    _____
    _____
    _____

15. What books and other materials do you use for teaching reading? _____
_____
_____
16. Do you give your students assignments or tests? _____
17. How often? _____
18. What kind of assignments or tests? What do you do with these assignments or tests? _____
_____
_____
_____
19. Do you have any principles or philosophy for teaching reading? Describe briefly._____
_____
_____
_____
_____
20. What do you do to make reading and/or learning fun and engaging for your pupils? Describe
briefly. _____
_____
_____
_____
_____

21. Please indicate what you think about the following statements about when people learn:

When people learn...	disagree	somewhat agree	agree	strongly agree	I don't know
They agree or disagree with other people					
They ask questions					
They discuss things with other people					
They do things more quickly					
They find answers to questions					
They get help to do things that they would not be able to do by themselves					
They give their own opinion					
They know more					
They make decisions about what is important and what is not					
They make sense of the things they do					
They memorize facts					
They make sense of the things they know					
They practice until perfect					
They repeat the facts when asked					
They try out new ideas					

22. Please indicate what you think about the following statements about reading:

Statements about reading	strongly disagree	disagree	agree	strongly agree	I don't know
Learning to read is mainly about learning how to combine letters and sounds					
Reading aloud is important in order to learn how to read					
Reading in silence is important in order to learn how to read					
Most children of a similar age learn to read roughly at the same pace					
Most children of a similar age learn to read in the same way					
Being read stories is helpful to learn how to read					
Being told stories is helpful to learn how to read					
Most first grade pupils know what reading means, but struggle to remember combined letters and sounds					
Teaching how to read in English gives pupils an advantage; then they also learn English					

Appendix F Interview Guide for Focus Group Discussions

1. What do you think about the stories and projector from the African Storybook Project?
2. How have you used the African Storybook Project stories recently?
    a. What have you and the students done with the stories, specifically?
3. What has your experience with the African Storybook Project stories and projector been recently?
    a. Technical issues.
    b. Content-related issues.
    c. Language issues.
    d. Pedagogical issues.
    e. Other.
4. How have the students responded to the use of the African Storybook Project stories and projector?
    a. The content of the stories.
    b. The novelty of using stories.
    c. Language issues.
    d. The technology.
    e. Other.
5. What challenges have you experienced recently?
    a. Technical challenges.
    b. Content-related challenges.
    c. Language issues.
    d. Pedagogical challenges.
6. What did you do to meet these challenges? (if applicable)
    a. Talk to people.
    b. Try different solutions.
    c. Other.
7. Are there any events that have stood out recently? Describe.
    a. People's reactions or questions.
    b. Something the students have done.

Date: Class: Subject: Teacher: Lesson start: Lesson end:

	BB (teacher)		BB (pupil)		Book/exercise book		Projector		Poster, flashcard, etc.		Original utterances (pupil)	
	Words	*Sentences*	*Words*	*Sentences*	*Words*	*Sentences*	*Words*	*Sentences*	*Words*	*Sentences*	*Replies*	*Initiates*
W												
C												
T												
PN												
PR												
IN												
IR												
GR												
GR												
S												
	Other		*Other*		*Other*		*Other*		*Other*		*Other*	

W – Write something new

C – Copy something already written

T – Teacher reads

P – All pupils read

I – Individual pupils read

G – A group of pupils (e.g., girls) read

N – New text (first occurrence)

R – Reread text (subsequent occurrences)

S – Pupils read in silence

Appendix H One Hot Saturday Afternoon
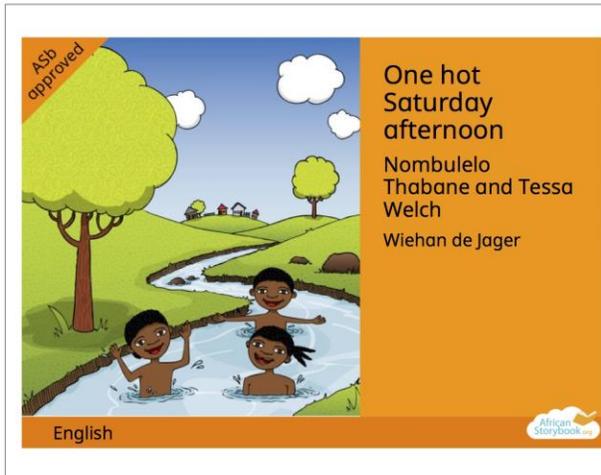
It was a very hot Saturday afternoon in December.

1
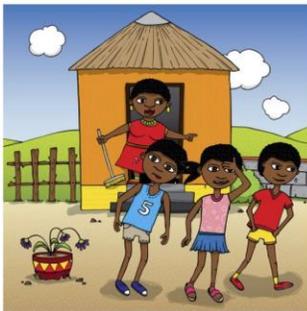
"Bontle and Mpho and Lerato, go out and play!" Mme said to us. "I don't want you under my feet."

We ran out of the house.

2
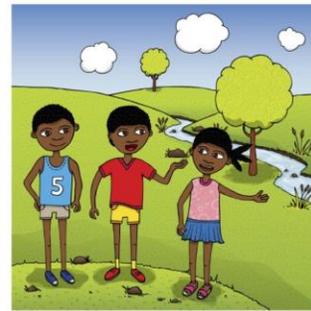
"Let's go to the river," Lerato said. "It's cooler there."

"But Mme told us not to swim in the river," said Bontle.

"We won't swim," answered Lerato. "We'll just play in the shade next to the water."

3
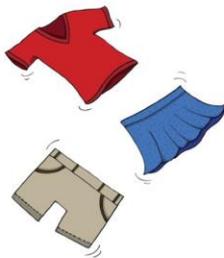
But playing libeke is hot work, even when you're under the trees next to the river.

First we took off our shoes. But we were still hot.

Then we took off our shirts and skirts. But we were still hot.

4

We put our feet in the river to cool off. Then we splashed each other. Soon we were soaked with water.

5

273
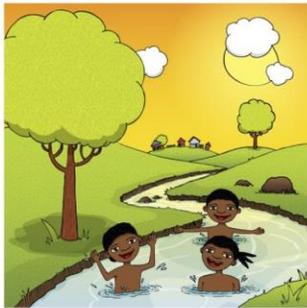
"Oh come on! Let's swim," said Mpho. "Mme will never know."

We swam and swam and forgot about the time.

6

The sun started to go down, and the day began to cool.

Where were our clothes?

7
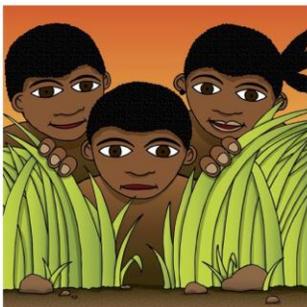
We looked under the trees.

We looked on the bushes.

We looked everywhere.

8
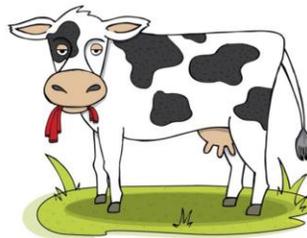
There were some cows near the river, enjoying the sweet grass. Bontle looked up, "Look at that cow! What's in her mouth?"

"She's eating a red flower," said Lerato.

"It's not a red flower," shouted Mpho. "It's your shirt!"

9
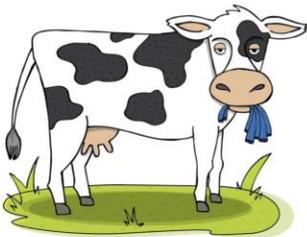
We looked at another cow who was chewing something blue.

"That's my skirt!" shouted Bontle.

10

We went home in our panties, shivering. But not only because it was cool.

"It was the cows," we cried. "The cows ate our clothes."

11

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But did Mme believe us?

Soon our bottoms were very warm. And it wasn't from the sun.

12

Source: http://www.africanstorybook.org/index.php?id=988

Appendix I Andiswa Soccer Star

Andiswa Soccer Star

Eden Daniels

Eden Daniels

English

Andiswa watched the boys play soccer. She wished that she could join them. She asked the coach if she can practise with them.

1

The coach put his hands on his hips. "At this school, only boys are allowed to play soccer," he said.

2

The boys told her to go play netball. They said that netball is for girls and soccer is for boys. Andiswa was upset.

3

The next day, the school had a big soccer match. The coach was worried because his best player was sick and could not play.

4

Andiswa ran to the coach and begged him to let her to play. The coach was not sure what to do. Then he decided that Andiswa could join the team.

5

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The game was tough. Nobody had scored a goal by half time.

6

During the second half of the match one of the boys passed the ball to Andiswa. She moved very fast towards the goal post. She kicked the ball hard and scored a goal.

7

The crowd went wild with joy. Since that day, girls were also allowed to play soccer at the school.

8

Source: http://www.africanstorybook.org/index.php?id=5283

Appendix J Listen to My Body

Listen to my body

Noni

Angie & Upesh

English
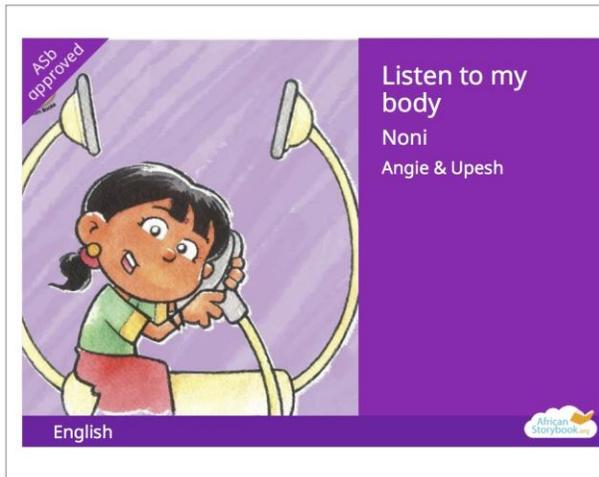
Today I am not going to school.

It is a holiday!

1

Today I am not going to watch TV.

There is no electricity anyway.

2

What am I going to do?

Today I am going to listen to my body!

3

First, I have to be very quiet.

So that I can listen to my own body.

4
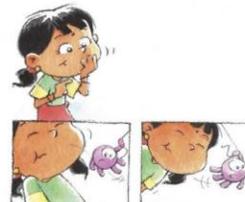
Yes, now I can hear my breath.

I breathe in and out, in and out.

5

And I can make my breath noisier.

Sssssssssssss!

And softer.

Mmmmmmm.

6

Now I can hear my heart beating!

Doodom, doodoom, dooom.

7

Can I make my heart go faster or louder?

Yes, by jumping up and down twenty times.

8

Now see, my heart is beating faster.

9

If I put my fingers on my wrist, then I can feel my pulse!

10

I can hear myself laughing.

Haha, haha, haaah,

11
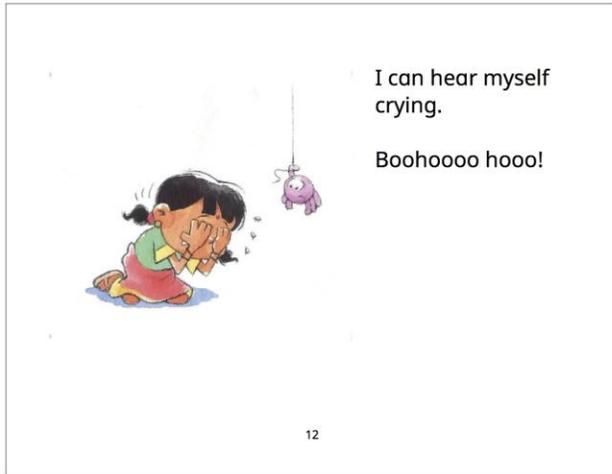
I can hear myself crying.

Boohoooo hooo!

12
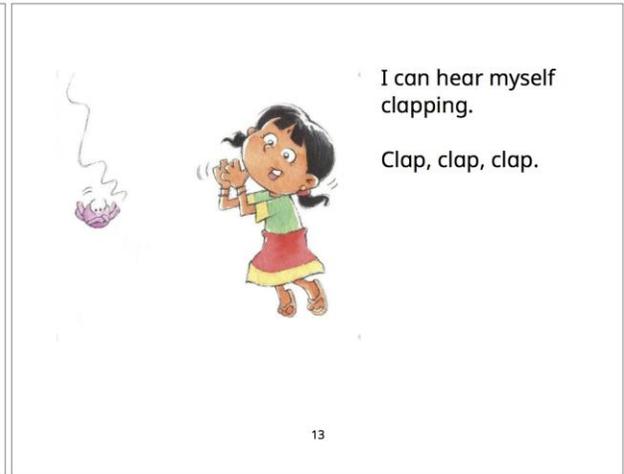
I can hear myself clapping.

Clap, clap, clap.

13
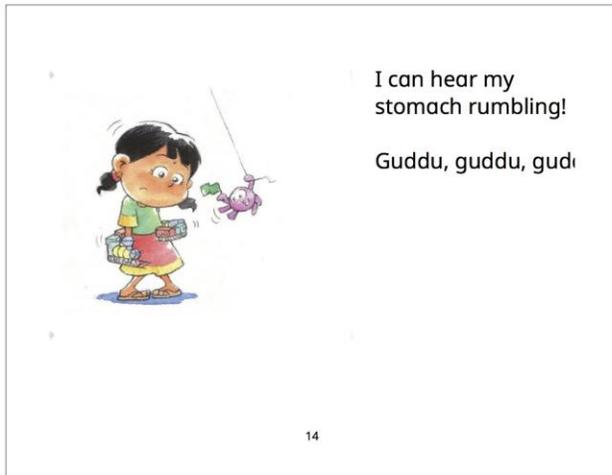
I can hear my stomach rumbling!

Guddu, guddu, gud‹

14
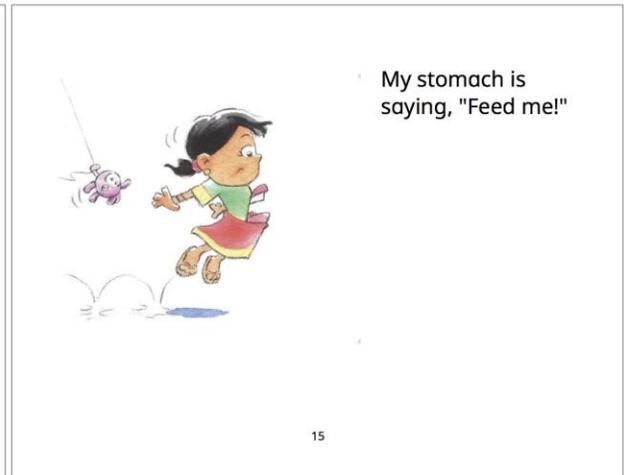
My stomach is saying, "Feed me!"

15
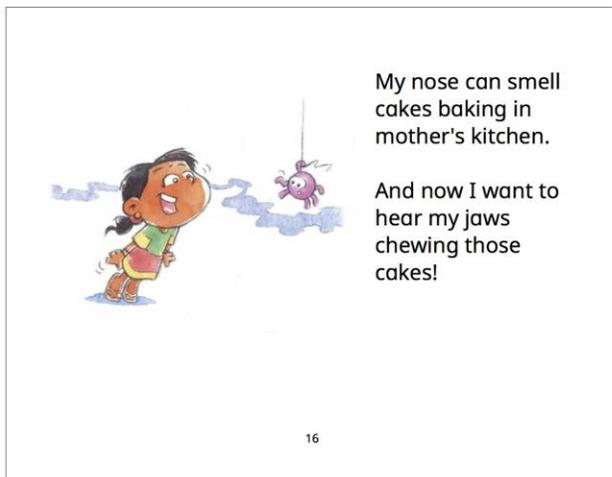
My nose can smell cakes baking in mother's kitchen.

And now I want to hear my jaws chewing those cakes!

16

Source: http://www.africanstorybook.org/index.php?id=13202

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Appendix K Akatope

Akatope
Alice Kariuki
Catherine Groenewald,
Wiehan de Jager and
Microsoft Clip Art

English

Once upon a time, there lived a woman.

She always wanted a child.

1

The woman took the best clay soil she could find.

She started to make a girl.

2

The girl who was made of mud became a real human girl. The woman named the girl Akatope.

3

The woman was very happy. She loved Akatope very much.

4

Akatope was warned by her mother not to go out of the hut.

She did not listen. Whenever her mother was not home, Akatope ran out to play with other children.

5

One day Akatope was out playing with the other children.

It began to rain hard.

6

The other children ran to their huts.

As Akatope ran, her legs started to dissolve. She hunched over and sat down between bushes.

7

The other children told their parents what had happened to Akatope.

They were very sad and shocked.

8

When the woman heard what had happened to Akatope, she cried for many days.

The villagers took an orphan girl to take the place of Akatope.

9

But that was not necessary.
A big surprise awaited the woman!

10

One night, there was a gentle knock on the door.

11
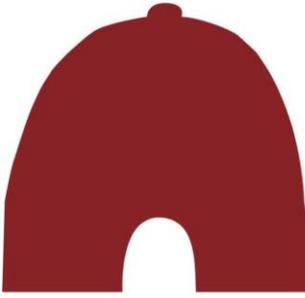
"Who could that be," the woman wondered.

12

Akatope had come home. She was tired and sick.

13

Akatope's mother sold everything she owned. She used the money to treat Akatope.

Akatope grew up to be the most beautiful girl in the village.

14

Source: http://www.africanstorybook.org/index.php?id=2821