

LITES Study Overview

Language of Instruction Transition in Education Systems

February 2024

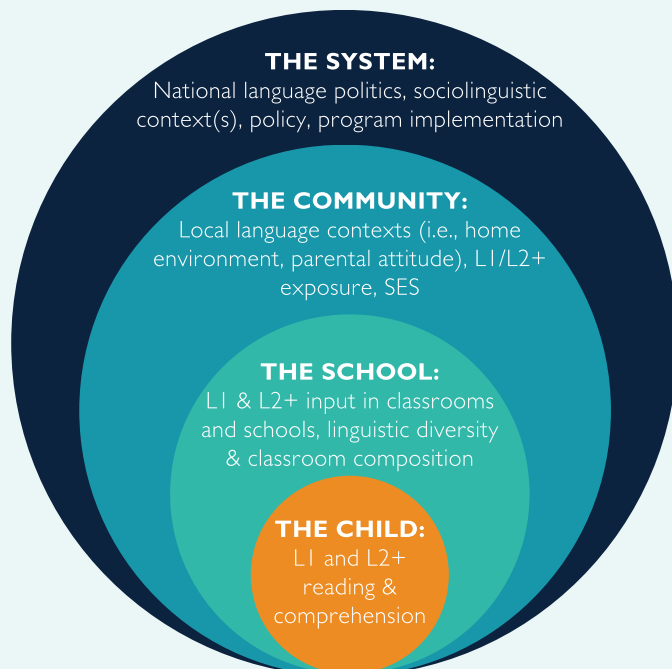
ABOUT LITES

Large numbers of learners in low and middle income countries (LMICs) are failing to acquire foundational skills

largely due to a mismatch between the languages spoken at home and at school. While there is significant evidence that development of **first language (L1) promotes consistent learning gains**, much less is understood about **how education systems should effectively transition instruction** from a first language to second languages (L2) and beyond.

LITES is a cross-country study (occurring in **Kenya, Mali, Mozambique**, the **Philippines, Senegal**, and **Rwanda**) seeking to fill this knowledge gap by **generating empirical evidence regarding factors that contribute to the success of language of instruction transitions for learners' second language literacy skills**. Evidence generated from this study will provide useful insights to bilingual and multilingual education in low-resource settings.

Figure 1: LITES Socio-ecological Model



QUICK STATS

FUNDER: USAID

YEARS ACTIVE: 2021-2024

PROJECT LEAD:

University of Notre Dame

PARTNERS:

- Resilient Africa Network (RAN)
- University of Nairobi, Kenya
- Eduardo Mondlane University, Mozambique
- Philippine Institute for Development Studies (PIDS), the Philippines
- Associates in Research and Education For Development (ARED), Senegal
- University of Rwanda, Rwanda
- Universite des Lettres et Sciences Humaines de Bamako (ULSHB), Mali

RESEARCH QUESTION(S)



How do different LITES policy approaches, system factors, and local-level conditions and practices explain variations in key language and reading outcomes in target languages in primary grades?

Figure 1 is a socio-ecological model of the influences on the development of L1 & L2 for each student.

METHODS & ANALYSIS

The LITES study employs both qualitative and quantitative methods. Phase I involves literature reviews, data mapping, and stakeholder ecosystem workshops. Phase 2 includes student literacy assessments (collected at one time for two different grades in students' first and second languages), teacher literacy assessments, and classroom observations. Local research partners will also interview parents, teachers, and system-leaders. **The analysis will focus on two levels:** 1) how **system-level** policy and implementation creates school and classroom conditions and 2) how these **classroom-level** conditions relate to student language and literacy outcomes in students' first language, and additional languages.

RESEARCH GOALS

LITES aims to provide evidence-informed guidance on language of instruction transition policy design and practice in linguistically diverse countries. These results will be shared through both academic and policy platforms. Ultimately, **SHARE expects that the evidence derived from LITES will increase bilingualism and bi-literacy for students in low and middle income countries** and allow them to develop foundational skills that empower them to meaningfully contribute as well-informed citizens.

STUDY TIMELINE

Phase 1: Ecosystem Diagnostics

Key Informant Interviews (KIIs), desk review, online surveys.

Phase 2: Research Design Logistics

Systems workshops with key stakeholders; translation & contextualization of research protocols, consent forms, and in-country IRB applications.

Quantitative Data Collection

Identify samples for schools, children, parents, and teachers; refine tools and collect, clean, and analyze data.

Qualitative Data Collection

Conduct system-level, school-level, and focus group interviews. Code and analyze qualitative data.

Convergence, Interpretation, & Report-writing

Compare, contrast, and interpret quantitative and qualitative findings. Prepare country level and cross-country reports and presentations.

Contact SHARE Program Manager **Aimee Lyons** at alyons6@nd.edu to learn more about LITES.

ABOUT SHARE

The University of Notre Dame's Pulte Institute for Global Development is implementing the SHARE activity in partnership with local higher education and research institutions between 2020 and 2025. Through SHARE and its partners, UND will advance USAID's Learning Priorities as a global good to improve education and learning outcomes as part of cooperative agreement No. 7200AA20CA00025.