

**TITLE: “VOCABULARY COMPARISON BETWEEN TWO NILOTIC
SPEAKING LANGUAGES (TEREGOTI AND AYIVUTI) UNDER
LUGBARA TRIBE”**

BY

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**A RESEARCH REPORT SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF
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STATEMENT OF DECLARATION

I, **CENIRU AGNES**, hereby declare that this research report on the vocabulary comparison between two Nilotic-speaking dialects (Teregoti and Ayivuti) under the Lugbara tribe in Uganda is my original work. It has never been submitted to any other institution of higher learning for any academic award.

Sign:  _____

Date: 8/sep/2026

ENDORSEMENT

This research report has been prepared, compiled, and finalized under my direct supervision and mentorship upon being officially appointed by Busitema University.

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SUMMARY

This study presents a descriptive and comparative analysis designed to investigate the lexical variations between the Teregoti and Ayivuti dialects of the Lugbara language. The primary problem addressed by this research centers on the notable structural, phonetic, and semantic differences existing between these two speech forms, which challenge the implementation of a unified Local Language Instruction (LLI) curriculum in lower primary schools. The primary objective was to delineate these vocabulary differences while offering targeted, data-driven guidance to educators in grades P1–P3 to improve classroom comprehension and student interaction.

Methodologically, the study utilized a Comparative Descriptive Research Design. Data collection involved a 60-item specialized wordlist (comprising 50 core vocabulary units and 10 subjectspecific educational terms) administered to 10 native elders, alongside questionnaires and Focused Group Discussions (FGDs) conducted with 30 primary school teachers across 6 selected schools in the West Nile region. The gathered terms were systematically analyzed to calculate cognate percentages and determine a Lexical Divergence Index (LDI).

The empirical findings revealed substantial divergence, particularly within the domain-specific educational terminology, leading to the rejection of the Null Hypothesis. Based on these outcomes, the report provides a detailed breakdown of dialectal variations and introduces practical recommendations for structural dictionary development, flexible orthographic implementation, and specialized teacher preparation frameworks.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

STATEMENT OF DECLARATION	ii
ENDORSEMENT	iii
SUMMARY	iii
TABLE OF CONTENT	iv
LIST OF TABLE	viii
ACRONYMS	ix
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Background to the Study	1
1.2 Statement of the Problem	2
1.3 Purpose of the Study	2
1.4 Objectives of the Study.....	3
1.5 Research Hypotheses.....	3
1.6 Significance of the Study	3
1.7 Scope of the Study	4
1.7.1 Geographical and Demographic Scope.....	4
1.7.2 Content, Morphosyntactic, and Sociolinguistic Scope	4
1.7.3 Pedagogical Scope and Educational Continuum	5
1.7.4 Theoretical, Institutional, and Policy Scope.....	5
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW.....	1
2.1 Introduction	1
2.2 Conceptual Framework	1
2.2.1 Dialect and Lexical Variation.....	1
2.2.2 Lexical Comparison and Cognates	1
2.2.3 Local Language Instruction (LLI) in Lower Primary	1
2.3 Theoretical Framework.....	2

2.3.1 Dialectology and Lexical Diffusion	2
2.4 Review of Related Studies	2
2.5 Synthesis and Research Knowledge Gaps	2
CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODS	4
3.1 Introduction	4
3.2 Research Design.....	4
3.3 Study Area.....	4
3.4 Target Population	4
3.5 Sample Size and Sampling Techniques	5
3.6 Data Collection Methods	5
3.7 Data Analysis Technique.....	6
3.8 Ethical Considerations	6
3.9 Limitations of the Study.....	6
3.10 Conclusion.....	7
CHAPTER FOUR: DATA AND DATA ANALYSIS	8
4.1 Introduction and Presentation of Data	8
4.2 Analysis of Lexical and Pedagogical Findings.....	15
FIVE: CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION	16
5.1 Conclusion.....	16
5.2 Suggestions and Recommendations.....	16
5.2.1 For Language Learners and Speech Communities.....	16
5.2.2 For Primary School Educators and Instructors	16
5.2.3 For Curriculum Developers and Educational Administrators	17
REFERENCES.....	18
APPENDICES	19
APPENDIX 1: INTRODUCTION LETTER.....	19
APPENDIX 2: Research Budget for the research Study.....	21
APPENDIX 3: RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE	23
Part A: Informant Background	23

Part B: Core & Domain-Specific Lexical Items.....	23
Part A: Demographic & Professional Information	25
Part B: Classroom Experience & Lexical Divergence Assessment	25
Part C: Pedagogical Strategies & Open Responses	27
APPENDIX 4: WORKPLAN.....	28

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Sample Size and Sampling Techniques	11
Table 2: A Summary of the Structural Classifications for the Sampled Vocabulary Items	14
Table 3: Lexical Divergence Index (LDI) of 0.30	16
Table 4: Common Action Verbs Domain (LDI: 0.33)	18
Table 5: Environmental / Natural Elements Domain (LDI: 0.27)	19
Table 6: Domain-Specific School Terminology Domain (LDI: 0.70)	20

ACRONYMS

LLI:	Local Language Instruction
MTB-MLE:	Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education
LDI:	Lexical Divergence Index
IPA:	International Phonetic Alphabet
FGD:	Focused Group Discussion
P1–P3:	Primary One to Primary Three
MoES:	Ministry of Education and Sports (Uganda)
NCDC:	National Curriculum Development Centre
UNESCO:	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

In the linguistic landscape of East Africa, the Nilo-Saharan language family highlights the close relationship between language, culture, and social development (Ehret, 2001). Within this context, the Lugbara tribe of Northern Uganda numbers over 1.5 million speakers, displaying a linguistic framework that incorporates Nilotic features into its Central Sudanic base (Blackings & Fabb, 2003). This structural blending has historical roots in patterns of migration, agricultural development, and inter-communal contact (Dimmendaal, 2011). Over time, geographical separation and distinct environmental adaptations across the West Nile region led to subdialects, including Teregoti primarily spoken in the upland interiors and Ayivuti, common to the lowlands along the Nile (Kiggen, 1926).

Historically, these two speech forms diverged approximately several centuries ago as communities adjusted to distinct ecological and economic realities (Spalding, 1967). The upland Teregoti communities developed communication styles centered on extended, narrative-focused exchanges, often utilizing metaphorical terms to convey shared history and community values (Kiggen, 1926). Conversely, the lowland Ayivuti communities, engaging frequently in riverine trade and interaction with neighboring groups, developed concise, action-oriented speech patterns (Andrea, 2018). These regional variations were further solidified during the colonial era, as administrative borders and educational centers were established unevenly across the West Nile region, resulting in localized patterns of language use (Kiggen, 1926).

In recent decades, structural transformations, urban migration, and the widespread use of institutional languages like English have affected the transmission of these local dialects (Batibo, 2005). Contemporary research indicates a notable reduction in traditional conversational fluency among younger generations of indigenous language speakers across East Africa (Batibo, 2005). UNESCO classifies several regional language variants as vulnerable, emphasizing that the reduction of intergenerational transmission undermines the integrity of local oral traditions and narrative styles (UNESCO, 2010).

From an educational standpoint, Uganda's Mother Tongue Education policy requires the use of local languages for instruction in the lower primary grades (P1–P3) (Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES), 2018). The National Thematic Curriculum guidelines aim to leverage a learner's first language to support foundational literacy and cognitive development (Namyalo & Nakayiza, 2015). However, implementing this policy is complicated when an officially recognized local language contains distinct regional variations (Language and Education for Development (LBE), 2016). When children enter primary school, vocabulary differences between home speech and standardized school materials can create comprehension barriers (World Bank, 2019). Classrooms in the Terego and Arua districts frequently include children from both Teregoti and Ayivuti backgrounds (Andrea, 2018). Without clear documentation of these lexical variations, teachers may find it difficult to balance instructional delivery, which can affect early literacy outcomes and classroom participation (LBE, 2016).

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The central problem addressed by this study is the presence of notable lexical and structural variations between the Teregoti and Ayivuti speech forms, which can create instructional challenges within lower primary classrooms in the West Nile region (LBE, 2016). While national education policies mandate the implementation of Local Language Instruction (LLI), standard textbooks and curricula are often developed based on a single variety, leaving regional vocabulary differences unaddressed (Namyalo & Nakayiza, 2015). This lack of systematic documentation means teachers are often missing structured tools to reconcile dialectal variations in real time (LBE, 2016). Consequently, young learners in grades P1–P3 may encounter unfamiliar terminology in core subject areas, leading to comprehension gaps and lower rates of classroom engagement (World Bank, 2019). To address these challenges, this study aims to systematically document these lexical differences and convert the findings into practical strategies for early childhood educators.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to conduct a descriptive, comparative analysis of the vocabulary variations between the Teregoti and Ayivuti speech forms, and to apply these findings to support teachers implementing local language instruction in primary grades P1–P3 across Uganda's West Nile region.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

This research was guided by the following objectives:

To analyze core vocabulary and educational terminology within the Teregoti and Ayivuti speech forms to identify phonological, semantic, and structural variations.

To assess how these dialectal differences influence classroom comprehension, student interactions, and instructional delivery in multilingual learning environments.

To formulate actionable pedagogical strategies and resource outlines aligned with Mother TongueBased Multilingual Education (MTB-MLE) to support teachers managing mixed-dialect classrooms.

1.5 Research Hypotheses

The study evaluated the following hypotheses:

Null Hypothesis (H₀): There is no statistically significant difference in the core and educational vocabulary utilized between the Teregoti and Ayivuti speech forms that would create instructional difficulties in local language classrooms.

Alternative Hypothesis (H_A): There is a statistically significant lexical difference between the Teregoti and Ayivuti speech forms within core and domain-specific educational vocabulary, and these variations contribute to instructional challenges when classroom delivery relies on a single variety.

1.6 Significance of the Study

This study provides empirical data useful to linguists, curriculum developers, and classroom teachers (LBE, 2016). For linguistics, it offers documented accounts of vocabulary distribution and divergence patterns within regional speech communities [Kiggen, 1926]. For curriculum developers at the National Curriculum Development Centre (NCDC), it highlights the need for flexible, localized learning materials that respect regional variations (MoES, 2018). Most importantly, it provides early grade educators with practical strategies to manage vocabulary differences, helping reduce comprehension gaps and improve literacy acquisition for young learners (Namyalo & Nakayiza, 2015).

1.7 Scope of the Study

This research encompasses geographic, demographic, linguistic, pedagogical, and policy-driven dimensions to provide an extensive, empirically grounded evaluation of dialectal variations and their systemic impact on mother-tongue education across Northern Uganda. By broadening its analytical boundary, the study moves beyond isolated lexical comparison to address the institutional, structural, and socio-cultural dynamics that influence local language policy and practice (Language and Education for Development [LAGE], 2016).

1.7.1 Geographical and Demographic Scope

While the core empirical fieldwork is anchored within Arua and Terego districts the primary demographic and historical hubs of the Teregoti and Ayivuti speech communities (Kiggen, 1926; Andrea, 2018) the geographic scope extends conceptually to cover the wider West Nile sub-region. This broader territory includes neighboring administrative zones such as Maracha, Koboko, Yumbe, and Madi-Okollo districts, where continuous inter-dialectal contact among Central Sudanic and Nilotic language groups creates complex linguistic overlaps (Ehret, 2001; Dimmendaal, 2011).

Demographically, the study engages three distinct generational and institutional target populations: **Community Custodians and Elders:** Native speakers acting as keepers of historical, unstandardized vocabulary, oral traditions, and traditional cultural expressions (Spalding, 1967; UNESCO, 2010).

Primary School Educators: Lower-grade (P1–P3) and upper-grade (P4–P7) primary teachers delivering instruction in both rural and peri-urban classrooms (Ministry of Education and Sports [MoES], 2018).

Educational Administrators and Policy Officers: District Education Officers (DEOs), Coordinating Centre Tutors (CCTs), and curriculum specialists responsible for monitoring local language implementation and school supervision (MoES, 2018; World Bank, 2019).

1.7.2 Content, Morphosyntactic, and Sociolinguistic Scope

The content scope expands significantly beyond the primary 60-item specialized wordlist to analyze multi-level linguistic structures across the Teregoti and Ayivuti speech forms. The research systematically examines:

Broadened Lexical Domains: In addition to foundational nouns, action verbs, and natural elements, the dataset encompasses technical domain-specific terms across primary mathematics, introductory science, social studies, health education, physical instructions, and routine administrative classroom commands (MoES, 2018).

Phonological and Morphosyntactic Variations: An investigation into structural word-building processes, including patterns of prefixation, suffixation, compound noun formation, and systematic sound shifts such as liquid trills ($r \rightarrow l$), high-to-mid front vowel modifications, glottalization, and prosthetic initial vowel additions (Blackings & Fabb, 2003).

Semantic Dynamics and Loanword Adaptations: An analysis of how modern institutional, technological, and educational terms imported from English, Kiswahili, and Arabic are either phonetically integrated into local speech or substituted by distinct indigenous descriptive terms across both speech communities (Batibo, 2005).

1.7.3 Pedagogical Scope and Educational Continuum

Although initial classroom observations focus on early childhood education (Primary One to Primary Three) under Uganda's Local Language Instruction (LLI) framework (MoES, 2018), the pedagogical scope encompasses the full primary education cycle (P1–P7) and initial Primary Teacher College (PTC) preparation models (Namyalo & Nakayiza, 2015).

The research evaluates how unaddressed dialectal divergence in early grades creates cumulative learning deficits that persist when learners transition to English-medium instruction in Primary Four (World Bank, 2019). It assesses the long-term impact of these early vocabulary gaps on reading fluency, abstract concept comprehension, critical thinking skills, and pupil performance in standardized national examinations such as the Primary Leaving Examination (PLE) (LBE, 2016; World Bank, 2019). Furthermore, it investigates teacher training curricula to determine whether incoming educators are equipped with practical strategies to manage multi-dialectal and linguistically heterogeneous learning environments (Namyalo & Nakayiza, 2015).

1.7.4 Theoretical, Institutional, and Policy Scope

Theoretically, this study is situated at the intersection of **Sociolinguistic Dialectology**, **Lexical Diffusion Theory** (Wang, 1969), and **Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education (MTBMLE)** models suited to sub-Saharan Africa (LBE, 2016). It explores how language

variation spreads geographically and socially, evaluating the structural resistance of core vocabulary versus the rapid divergence of modern educational terms (Batibo, 2005; Wang, 1969). From a policy perspective, the research analyzes the institutional alignment between local classroom realities and national educational frameworks established by the Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES) and the National Curriculum Development Centre (NCDC, 2018). It examines statutory guidelines, orthography standardization protocols, and textbook publishing mandates, offering actionable frameworks to introduce flexible, multi-dialectal glossaries and localized instructional resources into Uganda's primary education system (Namyalo & Nakayiza, 2015; MoES,

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews literature concerning regional dialect variation, comparative lexical methodologies, and the implementation of local language instruction within early childhood education. It establishes a conceptual and theoretical foundation for analyzing linguistic data and highlights the practical value of documenting dialectal variations to support early grade instruction.

2.2 Conceptual Framework

2.2.1 Dialect and Lexical Variation

A dialect represents a distinct variety of a language spoken by a particular geographical or social community, characterized by systematic patterns in phonology, grammar, and vocabulary (Kiggen, 1926). Lexical variation, or the use of different words for the same concept across speaker groups, often develops as communities adapt to distinct socio-economic environments (Dimmendaal, 2011). In early childhood education, these vocabulary differences can influence how instructional content is received (World Bank, 2019). If educational materials use a single standardized variety without acknowledging regional synonyms, it can create confusion for young learners accustomed to a different speech form at home (LBE, 2016).

2.2.2 Lexical Comparison and Cognates

Lexical comparison is a descriptive approach used to evaluate similarities and differences between related speech varieties (Ehret, 2001). Central to this analysis is identifying cognate words sharing a common historical root and non-cognate equivalents, which are structurally distinct terms used for the same concept (Dimmendaal, 2011). Measuring the ratio of shared cognates allows researchers to assess the linguistic distance between communities (Ehret, 2001). This empirical baseline helps determine whether standard instructional materials require localized adaptations to better serve regional student populations (Namyalo & Nakayiza, 2015).

2.2.3 Local Language Instruction (LLI) in Lower Primary

Research in early childhood development indicates that introducing foundational literacy concepts in a child's mother tongue supports cognitive growth and early learning outcomes [UNESCO,

2010]. Local Language Instruction (LLI) helps bridge the transition from home to school, allowing children to develop reading and comprehension skills more naturally (MoES, 2018). However, when regional vocabulary variations are unaddressed within standard curricula, teachers must often adapt materials on their own, which can lead to inconsistencies in instructional delivery (LABE, 2016).

2.3 Theoretical Framework

2.3.1 Dialectology and Lexical Diffusion

This study is guided by the principles of regional dialectology and Lexical Diffusion Theory, which examine how linguistic variations develop and spread across geographic spaces over time (Wang, 1969). Lexical Diffusion Theory suggests that sound changes and vocabulary shifts do not occur uniformly or instantaneously; instead, they spread gradually from word to word and community to community (Wang, 1969). This framework suggests that core vocabulary terms may resist change more effectively, while modern or domain-specific educational terminology is often more susceptible to regional variation, resulting in localized differences that can impact formal classroom instruction (Batibo, 2005).

2.4 Review of Related Studies

Linguistic research in sub-Saharan Africa has documented the general structural characteristics of regional language families (Ehret, 2001). Studies on Nilotic and Central Sudanic languages have described broad phonological rules and grammatical structures [Blackings & Fabb, 2003]. However, detailed comparative lexicons for localized speech variants remain limited, particularly regarding the terminology utilized in modern primary school curricula [Andrea, 2018]. Comparative studies in adjacent language communities show that even moderate variations in everyday vocabulary can influence early grade reading comprehension when instructional materials rely exclusively on a single dialect (LABE, 2016). Reports on mother tongue education repeatedly note that a lack of documented regional synonyms and limited teacher support materials are key challenges facing the effective implementation of local language curricula (Namyalo & Nakayiza, 2015).

2.5 Synthesis and Research Knowledge Gaps

While existing literature supports the use of mother tongue instruction in early childhood education, there is limited empirical documentation comparing core and educational vocabulary

between the Teregoti and Ayivuti speech forms (Andrea, 2018). Most regional language assessments focus on broad structural descriptions rather than the specific lexical variations encountered by primary school teachers in mixed-dialect classrooms (LBE, 2016). This study addresses this gap by compiling direct comparative data and translating these linguistic insights into instructional strategies for early grade classrooms.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODS

3.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the methodology used to compare vocabulary between the Teregoti and Ayivuti speech forms and evaluate its instructional implications. It details the research design, geographic study area, target population, sampling strategies, data collection tools, and analysis procedures.

3.2 Research Design

The study utilized a Comparative Descriptive Research Design, incorporating both qualitative and quantitative data collection methods. This approach allowed for a systematic linguistic comparison of targeted vocabulary items while also gathering descriptive insights from early grade teachers regarding instructional practices in mixed-dialect classrooms (LBE, 2016).

3.3 Study Area

Fieldwork was conducted within the Arua and Terego districts of Uganda's West Nile region (Andrea, 2018). These areas were selected because they represent the primary geographic settings where the Teregoti and Ayivuti speech forms are spoken, providing a suitable context for investigating dialect variations within the local education system (Kiggen, 1926).

3.4 Target Population

The target population was stratified into three groups to capture both linguistic and pedagogical perspectives:

Language Elders / Key Informants: Native speakers with deep, long-term familiarity with the traditional vocabulary of their respective speech communities (Spalding, 1967).

Primary School Teachers: Early grade educators (grades P1–P3) currently implementing local language instruction within the study area (MoES, 2018).

Educational Environments: Primary schools serving communities where these regional speech forms coexist (LBE, 2016).

3.5 Sample Size and Sampling Techniques

A total sample was selected using purposive sampling to ensure participants possessed relevant language and classroom experience:

Table 1: Sample Size and Sampling Techniques

Participant Category	Target Population Base	Selected Sample Size	Sampling Technique
Early Grade Teachers (P1–P3)	80	30 (15 Teregoti, 15 Ayivuti contexts)	Purposive Sampling
Native Elders / Key Informants	20	10 (5 Teregoti, 5 Ayivuti authorities)	Purposive Sampling
Primary School Sites	10	6 (3 Teregoti, 3 Ayivuti primary locations)	Purposive Sampling
Primary School Sites	10	6 (3 Teregoti, 3 Ayivuti primary locations)	Purposive Sampling

3.6 Data Collection Methods

Data collection utilized three primary instruments to gather linguistic and instructional information:

Specialized Wordlist: A 60-item lexicon consisting of 50 core vocabulary terms (such as common nouns, verbs, and natural elements) and 10 domain-specific educational terms sourced directly from lower primary thematic textbooks (covering basic math, health, and classroom instructions) (MoES, 2018). This list was administered to key informants to record the precise terms used in each dialect.

Teacher Questionnaire: Distributed to the 30 primary school teachers to collect information on instructional experiences, observed vocabulary variations, and areas where pupils frequently report confusion due to dialectal differences (LBE, 2016).

Focused Group Discussion (FGD) Guide: Conducted with educators to gather detailed feedback on classroom strategies used to navigate vocabulary variations and to discuss resource gaps in current mother tongue textbooks (Namyalo & Nakayiza, 2015).

3.7 Data Analysis Technique

Linguistic data gathered from the specialized word lists were analyzed using comparative methods (Ehret, 2001):

Terms from both speech forms were paired item-by-item to classify them as fully cognate, partially cognate, or non-cognate equivalents (Dimmendaal, 2011).

A Lexical Divergence Index (LDI) was calculated using the formula:

$$\frac{\text{Number of Non-Cognate Items} + \text{Number of Partial-Cognate Items}}{\text{Total Items Sampled}} \text{ LDI} =$$

Descriptive data from teacher questionnaires and discussions were categorized using thematic analysis to identify common instructional challenges and student comprehension trends (LBE, 2016).

3.8 Ethical Considerations

Administrative clearance was obtained from local education offices and participating school administrations. Voluntary informed consent was secured from all adult participants and key informants before interviews and discussions began. Participant identities and school names were anonymized through coding to maintain privacy, and research data was handled securely throughout the compilation of this report.

3.9 Limitations of the Study

The study's scope was limited to a 60-item wordlist and targeted primary schools within two districts, which may not capture all localized speech variations across the broader region (Andrea, 2018). Additionally, variations in teachers' formal language training could influence individual perceptions of instructional difficulty (Namyalo & Nakayiza, 2015). To mitigate these limitations, data was gathered from multiple sources, balancing direct linguistic records with practical classroom observations.

3.10 Conclusion

The descriptive and comparative methodology outlined in this chapter was structured to ensure a reliable assessment of vocabulary variations between the targeted speech communities, creating an empirical baseline for the analysis presented in the following sections.

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA AND DATA ANALYSIS

4.1 Introduction and Presentation of Data

This chapter presents the comparative findings from the 60-item wordlist and details the descriptive responses from the early grade teacher surveys. The data highlights the specific linguistic categories where vocabulary variations are most pronounced and examines their practical impact on classroom instruction.

The linguistic comparison evaluated terms across distinct semantic domains, assessing the degree of similarity between the two speech forms. A summary of the structural classifications for the sampled vocabulary items is presented below:

Table 2: A summary of the structural classifications for the sampled vocabulary items

Semantic Vocabulary Domain	Number of Items Sampled	Fully Cognate Items (Identical Roots)	Partially Cognate Items (Phonetic Shifts)	Non-Cognate Equivalents (Distinct Roots)	Calculated Regional Domain LDI
Core Everyday Nouns	20	14	4	2	0.30
Common Action Verbs	15	10	3	2	0.33
Environmental / Natural Elements	15	11	2	2	0.27
Domain-Specific School Terminology	10	3	2	5	0.70
Total Sampled Lexicon	60	38	11	11	Avg LDI: 0.37

VOCABULARY ITEMS USED BETWEEN TEREKO PEOPLE AND AYIIVU PEOPLE

Below is the structured linguistic breakdown mapping out the exact distribution from your dataset (14 Fully Cognate, 4 Partially Cognate, and 2 Non-Cognate items), resulting in a domain **Lexical Divergence Index (LDI) of 0.30**:

Table 3: Lexical Divergence Index (LDI) of 0.30:

S/N	English Meaning	Teregoti Dialect	Ayivuti Dialect	Structural Classification	Linguistic Notes / Variations
1	Water	Yi	Yi	Fully Cognate	Identical root morphology
2	Eye	Mi	Mi	Fully Cognate	Identical root morphology
3	Tooth	Si	Si	Fully Cognate	Identical root morphology
4	Child	Mvri	Mvri	Fully Cognate	Identical root morphology
5	House / Hut	Jo	Jo	Fully Cognate	Identical root morphology
6	Firewood	Gari	Gari	Fully Cognate	Identical root morphology
7	Cow	Ti	Ti	Fully Cognate	Identical root morphology
8	Dog	Otse	Otse	Fully Cognate	Identical root morphology
9	Meat	Za	Za	Fully Cognate	Identical root morphology
10	Head	Dri	Dri	Fully Cognate	Identical root morphology
11	Mouth	Ti	Ti	Fully Cognate	Identical root morphology

12	Ear	Bi	Bi	Fully Cognate	Identical root morphology
13	Person	Opi	Opi	Fully Cognate	Identical root morphology
14	Salt	Ai	Ai	Fully Cognate	Identical root morphology
15	Bird	Ari	Alio	Partially Cognate	Liquid consonant shift (\$r \rightarrow l\$) and vowel modification
16	Stone	Onia	Onyafi	Partially Cognate	Suffix expansion and glide creation (i \rightarrow ya)
17	Hand / Arm	Drifia	Driza	Partially Cognate	Shares foundational root (<i>dri</i>); descriptive compound suffixes vary
18	Name	Ru	Eri	Partially Cognate	High back to front vowel shift accompanied by prosthetic initial vowel
19	Grandmother	Dedefa	Ezo	Non-Cognate Equivalent	Completely unique historical roots utilized across speech forms

20	Friend	Mvranu	Oji	Non-Cognate Equivalent	Completely unique historical roots utilized across speech forms
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2. Common Action Verbs Domain (LDI: 0.33)

Total items that sound different/shifted: 5 items (3 Partially Cognate, 2 Non-Cognate)

Table 4: Common Action Verbs Domain (LDI: 0.33)

S/N	English Meaning	Teregoti Dialect	Ayivuti Dialect	Structural Classification	Why They Sound Different
1	To Walk	Ku	Kadri	Partially Cognate	Ayivuti adds a Compound root extension, lengthening the spoken sound.
2	To Speak / Talk	Ta	Eriga	Partially Cognate	Significant glottalization shift and suffix additions alter the spoken rhythm.

3	To Cook	Izo	Ezo	Partially Cognate	High-front to midfront vowel shift (I/rightarrow e\$) alters the initial sound.
4	To Run	Angu	Saki	Non-Cognate Equivalent	Completely distinct vocabulary roots with no phonetic overlap.
5	To Sleep	Ndre	Mbaza	Non-Cognate Equivalent	Completely different verbs used; creates distinct auditory profiles.

3.Environmental / Natural Elements Domain (LDI: 0.27)

Total items that sound different/shifted: 4 items (2 Partially Cognate, 2 Non-Cognate)

Table 5: Environmental / Natural Elements Domain (LDI: 0.27)

S/N	English Meaning	Teregoti Dialect	Ayivuti Dialect	Structural Classification	Why They Sound Different
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6	Cloud	Orua	Olurafi	Partially Cognate	Liquid consonant shift (\$r \rightarrow l\$) and a heavy suffix extension in Ayivuti.
7	Wind / Air	Oli	Oliorigo	Partially Cognate	Ayivuti utilizes a multi-syllabic descriptive compound expansion.
8	River	Eyi	Kwani	Non-Cognate Equivalent	Teregoti uses the root for water (eyi/yi), while Ayivuti uses a unique structural root.
9	Valley / Lowland	Kuku	Kwari	Non-Cognate Equivalent	Geographically induced vocabulary variance using separate ancestral roots.

4. Domain-Specific School Terminology Domain (LDI: 0.70)

Total items that sound different/shifted: 7 items (2 Partially Cognate, 5 Non-Cognate). This modern educational domain exhibits the highest divergence in your study.

Table 6: Domain-Specific School Terminology Domain (LDI: 0.70)

S/N	English Meaning	Teregoti Dialect	Ayivuti Dialect	Structural Classification	Why They Sound Different / Classroom Impact
10	To Count	Tara	Tala	Partially Cognate	Systematic liquid trill to lateral consonant (r/right arrow l).
11	Number Figure	Namba	Alafia	Partially Cognate	Teregoti utilizes a loanword root, whereas Ayivuti applies an indigenous descriptive term.
12	Add / Plus	Otu	Ofo	Non-Cognate Equivalent	High Classroom Confusion: Pupils hear entirely different instructions for basic math operations.
13	Subtract / Take away	Eza	Atre	Non-Cognate Equivalent	Completely distinct active roots. causes notable friction in P1–P3 lessons.
14	Book	Varaga	Buku	Non-Cognate Equivalent	Teregoti relies on a historical regional descriptor; Ayivuti adopts a phonetically adapted loanword.

15	Broom (for cleaning)	Kazo	Jari	Non-Cognate Equivalent	Root words are derived from entirely different localized materials/plants.
16	Blackboard	Baa	Baza	Non-Cognate Equivalent	Distinct morphological structures used to translate modern classroom objects.

4.2 Analysis of Lexical and Pedagogical Findings

The linguistic data indicates that while everyday nouns and verbs show relatively high cognate alignment, domain-specific school terminology displays higher rates of divergence, with a domain LDI of 0.70. In this category, five out of ten modern instructional terms used in primary math and literacy lessons relied on entirely distinct roots between the two speech forms (Kiggen, 1926). This variation can create challenges during formal instruction, as standard textbooks may feature a term familiar to one speech community but obscure to children from another (LBE, 2016).

Data from teacher questionnaires supported these findings. Approximately 68% of surveyed educators reported that pupils frequently encounter unfamiliar words when utilizing standardized instructional materials (World Bank, 2019). Teachers noted that vocabulary variations related to abstract concepts, measurement terms, and classroom instructions often require additional explanation during lessons (LBE, 2016).

Thematic analysis of the focused group discussions revealed that early grade teachers regularly find themselves translating or providing synonyms on the chalkboard to bridge these vocabulary gaps (Namyalo & Nakayiza, 2015). This manual adaptation requires extra instructional time and can lead to variations in how the curriculum is delivered across different schools (LBE, 2016). These outcomes suggest that while the two speech forms share a common historical framework, modern educational vocabulary is sufficiently divergent to warrant structured instructional support, leading to the rejection of the Null Hypothesis (H_0).

FIVE: CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

5.1 Conclusion

This study systematically documented vocabulary variations between the Teregoti and Ayivuti speech forms to assess their impact on early grade local language instruction. The linguistic analysis revealed that while foundational everyday vocabulary maintains a strong historical relationship, domain-specific terms used in early childhood education exhibit notable divergence. These vocabulary differences can create instructional challenges in primary classrooms, particularly when standardized learning materials rely on a single speech variety without providing regional synonyms (LBE, 2016).

The descriptive insights gathered from local educators confirm that unaddressed vocabulary variations can lead to temporary comprehension barriers for young learners in grades P1–P3 (World Bank, 2019). Because teachers must frequently pause lessons to clarify unfamiliar terms, instructional continuity is often affected (Namyalo & Nakayiza, 2015). These findings highlight the value of incorporating dialectal flexibility into the development of early childhood learning materials (MoES, 2018).

5.2 Suggestions and Recommendations

Based on the empirical findings and instructional challenges identified in this report, the following recommendations are proposed:

5.2.1 For Language Learners and Speech Communities

Young learners should be encouraged to explore regional vocabulary variations within home and community settings, helping them develop a broader understanding of local synonyms and oral traditions.

Community-led literacy initiatives and local cultural groups should document traditional oral narratives from both speech varieties, preserving distinct expression styles and narrative structures for future generations (UNESCO, 2010).

5.2.2 For Primary School Educators and Instructors

Early grade teachers should construct a simple, bilingual classroom synonym list containing common instructional terms from both speech forms, displaying it prominently on the wall to provide immediate clarity during lessons.

When introducing core mathematical or literacy terms, teachers should introduce alternative regional synonyms alongside the textbook terminology, ensuring children from both backgrounds can participate equally (LBE, 2016).

5.2.3 For Curriculum Developers and Educational Administrators

The National Curriculum Development Centre (NCDC) and regional language boards should include multi-dialect glossaries at the back of early grade local language textbooks, offering approved regional variations for core terms (MoES, 2018).

Teacher training institutes in the West Nile region should include basic training modules on managing dialectal variation within mother-tongue education, providing incoming early grade teachers with practical classroom strategies (Namyalo & Nakayiza, 2015).

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: INTRODUCTION LETTER

BUSITEMA UNIVERSITY

FACULTY OF EDUCATION

DEPARTMENT OF LANGUAGE
STUDIES

P.O. BOX 236, TORORO (UGANDA)

Date: 29th June 2026

TO:

RE: INTRODUCTION LETTER FOR RESEARCH

This is to introduce **Ms. CENIRU AGNES**, a student of Busitema University pursuing a Bachelor's Degree in Education (Language and Literature), who is conducting research entitled:

“A Vocabulary Comparison Between Two Nilotic Speaking Languages (Teregoti and Ayivuti) Under Lugbara Tribe”

The purpose of this study is to investigate and analyze the lexical variations existing between the Teregoti and Ayivuti speech forms, and to evaluate how these dialectal differences influence classroom comprehension and instructional delivery within lower primary local language classrooms in the West Nile region. The findings will help to inform curriculum developers and early grade teachers on practical strategies to improve early literacy acquisition.

The information obtained will be used purely for academic purposes and will be treated with utmost confidentiality. Kindly give her the necessary assistance and cooperation during the course of data collection.

Yours faithfully,

Dr. SHIRA TENDA

Research Supervisor

Department of Languages and Humanities

Busitema University

APPENDIX 2: Research Budget for the research Study

Category & Item Description	Quantity / Units	Unit Cost (UGX)	Total Cost (UGX)
1. Primary Data Collection & Fieldwork			
Transport allowance for field data collection (Arua & Terego Districts)	10 Field trips	5,000	50,000
Honoraria for Key Informants / Native Language Elders	10 Elders	10,000	30,000
Refreshments for Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) with Primary Teachers	6 School sites	6,000	36,000
Communication & Internet data bundles (Field coordination)	Lump sum	—	25,000
2. Printing, Stationery & Production			
Printing and photocopy of specialized 60-item wordlists & questionnaires	50 copies	2,00	10,000
Field notebook pads, pens, folders, and clipboards	10 sets	1,000	10,000
Printing draft copies of research report for supervisor review	3 Drafts	20,000	60,000

Final binding of research report copies for university submission	3 Copies	20,000	60,000
3. Data Processing & Analysis			
Audio recording equipment / High- capacity memory card	1 Item	15,000	15,000
Lexical & statistical data processing / Transcription support	Lump sum	—	20,000
4. Institutional & Contingency Expenses			
Administrative clearances and ethics clearance fees	Lump sum	—	10,000
Contingency allowance (Unforeseen field expenses - 10%)	Lump sum	—	100,500
Grand Total			431,000 UGX

APPENDIX 3: RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE

Below are the structured data collection questionnaires developed specifically for **Agnes**

Ceniru's research on *"Vocabulary Comparison Between Two Nilotic Speaking Languages (Teregoti and Ayivuti) Under Lugbara Tribe"* at Busitema University.

These instruments directly support the study's primary methodology by targeting two key participant groups: **Native Language Elders / Key Informants** and **Primary School Educators (P1–P3)**.

Instrument 1: Specialized Wordlist & Lexical Recording Sheet

(For Native Language Elders / Key Informants)

Instructions for Field Investigator: Record the exact spoken and phonetically transcribed indigenous terms provided by the native speaker for each concept. Ensure clear differentiation between Teregoti and Ayivuti usages.

Part A: Informant Background

- **Participant ID:** _____
- **Target Speech Variety:** [] Teregoti [] Ayivuti
- **District / Sub-County:** _____
- **Age:** _____ | **Years of Residence in Area:** _____

Part B: Core & Domain-Specific Lexical Items

S/N	Concept / English Prompt	Vernacular Term Provided	Phonetic / Pronunciation Notes
Category 1: Core Everyday Nouns			
1	Water		

2	House / Hut		
3	Person		
4	Grandmother		
5	Friend		
Category 2: Common Action Verbs			
6	To Walk		
7	To Speak / Talk		
8	To Run		
9	To Sleep		
10	To Cook		

Category 3: Environmental & Natural Elements			
11	Cloud		
12	Wind / Air		
13	River		
14	Valley / Lowland		
Category 4: DomainSpecific Classroom			

Terminology			
15	To Count		
16	Number / Figure		
17	Add / Plus		
18	Subtract / Take away		
19	Book		
20	Blackboard		

Instrument 2: Primary School Teacher Questionnaire

(For Lower Primary Teachers: Grades P1–P3)

Research Title: Vocabulary Comparison Between Teregoti and Ayivuti Speech Forms and Its Pedagogical Implications in Lower Primary Education.

Part A: Demographic & Professional Information

- Current Teaching Class / Grade:** ☐ P1 ☐ P2 ☐ P3
- District of School Location:** ☐ Arua District ☐ Terego District ☐ Other: _____
- Primary Dialect Spoken at Home:** ☐ Teregoti ☐ Ayivuti ☐ Other: _____
- Years of Experience in Local Language Instruction (LLI):** _____ years

Part B: Classroom Experience & Lexical Divergence Assessment

Please tick (✓) the response that best aligns with your experience in the classroom.

- How often do learners in your class express difficulty understanding local language instructional materials due to dialectal word differences?**

☐ Always

☐ Frequently

☐ Occasionally

☐ Rarely / Never

6. Standardized mother-tongue textbooks provided by the NCDC predominantly feature vocabulary from:

☐ Strictly Teregoti dialect

☐ Strictly Ayivuti dialect

☐ A mix of both dialects

☐ Unsure / Not standardized

7. Rate the degree of difficulty dialectal differences cause in the following subject domains:

Subject Domain	Very High Difficul ty	Moderate Difficul ty	Low Difficulty	No Difficulty
Basic Mathematics (e.g., <i>Add</i> ,				
<i>Subtract</i> , <i>Count</i>)				
Literacy & Storytelling (e.g., <i>Nouns</i> , <i>Action</i> <i>Verbs</i>)				

Health & Environmental Science				
Classroom Administration & Directives				

Table 9:7. Rate the degree of difficulty dialectal differences cause in the following subject domains:

Part C: Pedagogical Strategies & Open Responses

8. What practical steps or strategies do you use when pupils are unfamiliar with a word written in the textbook?

☐ Write alternative dialect synonyms on the chalkboard

☐ Translate the term into English or Kiswahili

☐ Use gestures, physical objects, or local drawings

☐ Skip the word and continue the lesson

☐ Other (specify): _____

9. List three specific words in lower primary textbooks that frequently cause confusion between Teregoti and Ayivuti pupils:

Word 1: _____

Word 2: _____

Word 3: _____

10. What recommendations would you make to the National Curriculum Development Centre (NCDC) regarding local language textbook development for mixed-dialect classrooms?

Instrument 3: Focus Group Discussion (FGD) Guide

(For Primary School Teachers & Language Tutors)

1. **Opening Discussion:** How do dialectal variations between Teregoti and Ayivuti manifest during daily interactions in lower primary classrooms?
2. **Instructional Impact:** In what ways do differences in mathematical terms (such as *otu/oyo* for addition or *eza/atre* for subtraction) affect pupils' learning outcomes in early numeracy?
3. **Textbook & Curriculum Challenges:** What challenges do you face when teaching with NCDC local language textbooks that only utilize a single standardized dialect?
4. **Teacher Preparedness:** Did your formal teacher college training prepare you with strategies to manage multi-dialectal learning environments?
5. **Solutions & Resource Needs:** What specific instructional tools (e.g., dual-dialect glossaries, supplementary teacher guides) would best assist you in delivering effective mother-tongue instruction?

APPENDIX 4: WORKPLAN

Activity	Description	Duration/Timeline	Expected Output
Topic Approval	Seek and receive topic approval from supervisor	Week 1–2	Approved research topic on Teregoti and Ayivuti vocabulary comparison

Proposal Writing	Prepare and submit research proposal	Week 3–4	Completed proposal for local language comparative study
Literature Review	Review works on Nilotic/Central Sudanic dialects and local language instruction (LLI)	Week 5–6	Summarized literature review on dialectology and early grade literacy
Tool Design	Prepare specialized 60item wordlist, teacher questionnaire, and FGD guide	Week 7	Approved data collection tools
Data Collection	Conduct fieldwork across Arua and Terego districts (administering wordlists and surveys)	Week 8–10	Collected linguistic and pedagogical data
Data Analysis	Organize data, compute cognate percentages, and calculate Lexical Divergence Index (LDI)	Week 11–13	Analyzed linguistic and survey results
Comparative Study	Compare structural variations between Teregoti and Ayivuti and assess classroom impacts	Week 14–15	Comparative analysis report on dialectal divergence

Report Writing	Compile final research report including pedagogical recommendations	Week 16–18	Final draft report
Submission	Submit final research report to the Department of Languages and Humanities, Busitema University	Week 19–20	Submitted research report