Chapter 12

Democratisation or symbolic violence? An analysis of teachers' language practices in selected multilingual classrooms in Chibombo District, Zambia.

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1. Sociolinguistic Contexts

Zambia is both multilingual and multi-ethnic. The country has 73 ethnic groups scattered through the ten provinces of Zambia. Wakumelo (2013) estimated that Zambia has about 73 language groups which could be collapsed into between 30–40 mutually intelligible linguistic families'. Nkosha (1999:58-59) observed that "Zambia has no national lingual franca although it uses seven (7) regional indigenous languages, which are widely understood and used in the regions. These are mainly used in the spoken form and have not been vigorously promoted in education." The status and functions of Zambian languages have always been overshadowed by English which is the official language and the language of administration. Simwinga (2006) and Wakumelo (2009) confirm that the seven Zambian regional official languages are not enshrined in the republican constitution as languages of official business apart from English which is the only officially sanctioned language.

The language policy has been a problem issue in Zambia since independence in 1964. There are several reasons that account for this with multilingualism and multi-ethnicity as the most decisive ones. Multilingualism was one of the main factors that persuaded the government to adopt English as Zambia's official language; there was a fear that the choice of one language over another might promote ethno-linguistic rivalry and be a recipe for divisions across the country. It was therefore assumed that the use of a neutral, non-indigenous language as the official language would foster national unity (Mwanakatwe, 1968). Hence English. On this score, Wakumelo (2013) observed that this thinking from the government showed how the

government viewed multilingualism as divisive and not as a resource that could be harnessed for socio-economic development of the country.

Today, Zambia follows a bilingual education policy. According to Cummins (2009:161), "the term bilingual education refers to an organised and planned program that uses two (or more) languages of instruction". He adds that the central characteristic of bilingual education is that the languages are used as medium of instruction to teach subject content and not just the languages themselves.

The history of bilingual education in Zambia is a long one and has taken different forms over time. The history can be categorised into three phases. The first one started with the missionaries who are credited with formulating formal language-in-education policy in Zambia (then Northern Rhodesia). The missionaries who had arrived before the 1800s to set up mission posts and schools and they depended on local languages for their work. Commenting on the missionaries' use of local languages, Manchishi (2004:1) notes:

> …the drive for evangelism proved extremely successful because the missionaries used local languages. The Bible and other Christian literature were translated into local languages. People chanted hymns in the language they understood best i.e. their own local languages, and even in the schools, the medium of instruction was in their own local languages at least up to the fourth grade.

Thus, even with the best of intentions, English was to be used in some form after grade four. At the very least, it can be said that missionaries instigated the beginning of a more or less formalized language policy in education involving the use of both English and local languages as media of classroom instruction. With the monoglot/monolingual ideology in place, local languages were taught using the local language concerned, while the rest of the subjects were supposed to be taught in English.

It is manifest that Africans hardly acquired any English because the first four years of education were in one of the four official local languages - Cicewa/Cinyanja, iCibemba, Silozi and Citonga. Luvale and Kikaonde were made official after Zambia's independence in 1964 (Mwanakatwe 1968). Although some English was used in limited situations as described above, English was usually introduced as a subject only from the fifth year. Moreover, missionary societies were mostly averse to teaching English or academic education.

As implied above, the second phase started in 1924 with the British colonial office taking direct control of the administration of Northern Rhodesia from the British South Africa Company (Banda 2009). Aware of the poor education offered to Africans by mission societies, the British colonial office set up the Phelps-Stokes Commission charged with coming up with recommendations for effective development of African education.

With regard to language of instruction, the commission recognised the complementary roles that English and local languages could play in personal and national development. As a result, it recommended that English should become the official language in education and government business while local languages were to be used for the preservation of African cultural values and ethnic identities. As a result of the recommendations, the government formally recognized four main local languages; iCibemba, Cinyanja, Citonga and Silozi as regional official languages to be used in the African government schools as media of

instruction for the first four years of primary education. This policy declaration was a major development in language policy formulation for Northern Rhodesia (to become Zambia in 1964) with regard to medium of classroom instruction and, by extension, to language of wider communication by zone. We would like to argue that even though the declaration gave legal status and appears to acknowledge the importance of local languages in education, it also inadvertently promoted English above indigenous languages by pronouncing it the official language of government and business, and education generally, especially after grade 4.

We wish to argue that the zoning of languages was arbitrary in the sense that it did not reflect the multilingual contexts in the different geographical locations. Thus the implementation of language policy in 1953 created the problem of a three tier language policy. It was not uncommon for a pupil to be taught in a less dominant mother tongue for the first two years of primary education. Thereafter, the pupil would be taught in the more dominant regional official language for another two years and then in English from the fifth year onwards (Chanda, 1998:63; Kashoki 1978:26). What we see here is the beginning of the situation in which African languages are being relegated to early literacies before learners are channelled to English medium giving the ideological basis that these languages cannot cope with advanced and specialist content. Thus, 'instruction through a local language was invariably seen as a transitional phase prior to instruction in English" (Ansre's 1979:12). Associating higher grades with English also added to perceptions that African languages were only good for lower level education.

The third phase coincided with Zambia's attainment of independence. Its highlight was the proclamation in 1966, of English as the sole official language at national level and as a language of classroom instruction from grade one to the highest level of education.

In essence, the legacy of marginalisation of African languages continued, but was this time perpetuated by emergent African leaders. As in colonial times, mission schools were expected to carry out government mandates and in particular the policy after 1965 of English medium of instruction in all schools from day one. The Zambian government expected the mission schools to play a critical role in the New Peak Approach, its chosen teaching approach, which was conceived around English as medium of instruction.

It could be argued as Ohannessian (1978) notes that even if there was to be commitment to have universal education in mother tongues after Zambia's independence in 1964, it would not have worked as missionary education was desperately inadequate and did not prepare Zambians for expert teaching in various content subjects using indigenous languages in primary and secondary school. A study of the teaching of Zambian languages in schools and colleges after 1964 found that teachers and lecturers had little or no linguistic knowledge of the languages they were teaching, and more alarming was the discovery of the "extreme meagreness of linguistic content in courses as regards material in and about these languages." (Ohannessian 1978: 319). This appeared to force teachers to teach Zambian languages in English.

The 1977 education reforms recommended continued use of English as language of education while making provisions for the utilization of the seven local official languages where necessary. This was despite having acknowledged the weaknesses of using English as a sole language of classroom instruction. Simwinga (2006) observes that by 1992, it had become increasingly clear that the use of English as a language of instruction was not working well particularly at lower primary school level. In 1992, the Ministry of Education revisited and

reappraised the language in education policy. It was found out that the policy had weaknesses which included: downgrading of local languages, isolation of the school from the community, alienation of the learner from tradition and impairment of children's future learning. With these weaknesses in consideration, the 1992 policy document recommended that the Ministry of Education (MoE) should institute a review of the primary school curriculum in order to establish the main local languages as the basic languages of instruction from grades one to four. The 1992 recommendation provided the teacher with greater freedom to determine 'the main local language' to be used as language of instruction.

In another reform initiative, the 1996 policy document (Educating Our Future) also retained the use of English as official language of classroom instruction but, in addition, recommended the employment of familiar languages to teach initial literacy in grade one. The policy states:

> …all pupils will be given an opportunity to learn initial basic skills of reading and writing in a local language... officially, English will be used as a language of instruction but the language used for initial literacy learning in grade one will be one that seems best suited to promote meaningful learning by children (MoE, 1996:27).

In 1998, another turn took place. The New Break Through to Literacy programme (NBTL) started as a pilot study in Mungwi and Kasama districts of Northern Province. The study involved an experiment of using a familiar language as a medium of instruction in grade one to teach literacy. The results showed that pupils were able to read by the end of grade one and that, the level of reading for grade two pupils was equivalent to grade four pupils who had undergone the English medium. As a result, the project was scaled up to all schools in Zambia under the programme titled "Primary Reading Programme (PRP)" (Manchishi and Chishiba 2014). The notion of learning through a familiar language is interesting in that it is conceivable that such a language is not one of the seven official languages, or the one earmarked for that zone. Since familiar languages in communities are not necessarily "standardised". There is also an interesting prospect that the languages are not necessarily the formalised ones. The use of a familiar local language as a language of initial literacy went on up to 2013.

At the beginning of 2014, there was another language education policy shift. The government announced that the language of instruction from grade 1 to 4 will be one of the zoned seven official Zambian languages. From grade five onwards, English will be the language of instruction up to University. It must be mentioned without fear of contradiction that the 2014 policy framework is not a new policy. The use of a Zambian language up to the fourth grade existed during the time of the missionaries. It also existed in Government schools in the 1950s up to 1965. The current policy recommendation can be viewed as a revitalisation of the missionaries' policy. However, as stated earlier, the language zoning is not sensitive to the language practices in all the areas where a particular language is thought to be a zonal language. For example, Cinyanja is zoned for Eastern and Lusaka provinces. This is on the argument or rather assumption that it is the dominant familiar language in these two provinces. Cinyanja is the language of classroom instruction from grade 1 to grade 4 in Eastern and Lusaka provinces. Contrary to this view, studies conducted have showed that it is not familiar to all the areas or people in the two provinces. Mwanza (2012) conducted a study in Lusaka with the aim of finding out whether the exclusive use of Cinyanja was appropriate for a multilingual environment. Through interviews and classroom lesson observation, the study revealed that Cinyanja was not the familiar language to most pupils in the observed

classrooms. It was also established that most pupils could not even understand what they read from story books as the variety of Cinyanja used in those books was the standard version which most of the pupils were not familiar with. Mubanga (2012) conducted a similar study in Chongwe to find out whether the use of Cinyanja in a predominantly soli speaking community of Lwimba was appropriate. The results showed that infact, Cinyanja was not a familiar language to the pupils and it was not even their language of play. To make matters worse, even some teachers were not familiar with Cinyanja and they resorted to using English and soli in some cases. Thus, while the policy and policy makers expected them to use Cinyanja, it was not practical and in cases where it was used, some pupils could not understand the teacher.

Similar results were found in Lundazi where Zimba (2007) set to establish whether the use of Cinyanja as a medium of instruction in a predominantly Tumbuka speaking area was educationally sound. As in the other two studies above, the findings were that Cinyanja was inappropriate for Tumbuka speaking children as they could not speak and understand Cinyanja. More so, Cinyanja was found not to be mutually intelligible with Tumbuka. Thus, contrary to the overall assumption in the language policy, the pupils in Lundazi were being taught in unfamiliar language; a situation which would not be different from English since both would be unfamiliar languages. In fact, English would even be better than Cinyanja because eventually, the pupils would need to learn in English.

From the foregoing, two points are clear. Firstly, that the zoning of language is just an academic reality which is not true in as far as language use and familiarity is concerned. Secondly, that monolingual/monoglot language ideologies and practices are not progressive and productive for multilingual societies and classrooms in Zambia. Multilingual classes require multilingual and multicultural pedagogical practices which will ensure epistemic access among all pupils in the classrooms regardless of their language backgrounds or proficiency. In other words, in order to avoid symbolic violence and linguistically empower learners, classrooms should be democratised. Democratisation of the classroom will automatically call for pedagogical practices such as translanguaging. This is why in the chapter, we take a closer look at Chibombo District where Tonga is the regional official language while Lenje is ethnically said to be the dominant language. With several other languages represented in the area and schools, it is interesting to analyse teachers' classroom practice and see whether or not these multilingual classes are democratised and pupils are linguistically empowered to participate in classroom interaction.

2. Democratisation of the classroom and translanguaging

John Dewey's theory of Democracy and Education explains and offers insights into what a democratic classroom is and is not. The word Democracy is derived from two Greek words demos (people) and kratos (rule) to form demokratia. Considering the literal morphological and semantic representation of the term "demokratia", it implies people's rule. Based on the foregoing assumption, the U.S.A president Abraham Lincoln (1809-1865) defined democracy as the Government of the people, by the people and for the people. Thus in general, there is freedom of expression, equality among people, respect and protection of people's rights. In contrast to democracy is autocracy wherein there are limitations to freedom and equality, the violation of human rights and the imposition of among other things, a language.

In this study, democracy in a bi-multilingual classroom is about the freedom of utilisation and the application of both the home and the school literacies and languages; the limitation of

which results into marginalization of the unofficial and minority languages and its resultant symbolic violence in the classroom. The democratic and the undemocratic types of classrooms (society) are implicitly stated in the following excerpt by John Dewey (1916):

> Since education is a social process, and there are many kinds of societies, a criterion for educational criticism and construction implies a particular social ideal. The two points selected by which to measure the worth of a form of social life are the extent in which the interests of a group are shared by all its members, and the fullness and freedom with which it interacts with other groups. An undesirable society, in other words, is one which internally and externally sets up barriers to free intercourse and communication of experience. A society which makes provision for participation in its good of all its members on equal terms and which secures flexible readjustment of its institutions through interaction of the different forms of associated life is in so far democratic (Dewey 1997: 99).

In the above excerpt, Dewey (1997) understood education as a social process thereby implicitly comparing a school to two forms of societies namely the undesirable society and the democratic society. Freedoms of intercourse and communication are severely curtailed in the undesirable society (undemocratic classroom) whereas in a democratic society (democratic bi-multilingual classroom) there is provision for participation for the good of all its members on equal terms. The limiting of intercourse and communication in this study is characterised by the imposition of a legitimate language on learners in a bi-multilingual classroom whereas in the democratic classroom, there is freedom by both the teacher and students to free intercourse and communication characterised through the use of both home language and school language.

In Dewey's theory of education and democracy, we have a democratic classroom in which there is freedom of intercourse and communication applied through the use of languages that learners are familiar with and the undemocratic classroom wherein there is an internally and externally setting up of barriers to free intercourse and communication of experience through the imposition of one language of instruction on learners. Therefore, the theory will help the researcher determine whether teachers' language practices in Chibombo district are linguistically democratic or not. It will also be used to classify the grades 5 upper primary classrooms of Chibombo District into democratic or undemocratic ones where applicable. In practice, democratisation of the classroom will involve translanguaging as pedagogic practice. Below, we make an attempt to explain the concept of translanguaging and later its antithesis, symbolic violence.

2.1. Translanguaging

In this study, the antithesis of symbolic violence is translanguaging as it counteracts the one language hegemony. The term translanguaging was developed by the Welsh educationalist Williams (1994) cited in Baker (2011). It was originally coined as a Welsh word (trawsieithu) in reference to a pedagogical practice which deliberately switched the language mode of input and output in bi-multilingual classrooms (Lewis et al., 2012).

There are several definitions regarding translanguaging. To begin with, Baker (2011: 39) understood translanguaging as "the process of making meaning, shaping experiences, gaining

understanding and knowledge through the use of two languages". Garcia (2009a:41) developed the term further by referring to translanguaging as "the use of children's full linguistic repertoire to make meaning without thinking of the fact that they have one language that is different from the other." In a similar way, Canagarajah (2011: 401) defined Translanguaging as "the ability of multilingual speakers to shuttle between languages, treating the diverse languages that form their repertoire as an integrated system." According to Garcia (2009) and Canagarajah (2011), in translanguaging, languages are treated as one single system and not as separate entities – a view that reflects language as a social practice. Considering its literal morphological and semantic representation, Simachenya (2017, 14) summarised translanguaging as a derivative of "two linguistic units "trans" and "languaging", which literally means moving across languages." Therefore, in a bi-multilingual classroom, translanguaging implies any practice of alternation between languages viewed not as separate entities but as a single unit.

At times, translanguaging is viewed as poly-languaging The notion of poly-languaging refers to the use of resources associated with different languages even when the speaker has very little knowledge of those languages (Jorgensen, Karrebæk, Madsen & Moller, 2011) cited in Simachenya (2017, 14). Thus, the focus is on communication rather than on linguistic competence. When comparing and contrasting translanguaging to code switching, Garcia (2009) argued that they are epistemologically different because code switching is the moving from one named language to another and it is an external view point of languages whereas Translanguaging is an internal view point of language. She also stated that in Code-switching, languages are isolated, that they can never be mixed, that mother tongue interferes with the target language, and that language is pure. In short, Code switching does not promote language interaction but tends to focus on issues of language interference, transfer and borrowing. As a broader and inclusive term however, translanguaging practices may include poly-languaging.

As a pedagogical tool and in relation to this study, classroom translanguaging involves "students listening to information in one language and explaining the gist of it orally in another or reading a text in one language and talk about it in another"(Open University, 2015: 15). For instance, a teacher may teach a maths lesson in English and then gives the exercise in Tonga or in both English and Tonga. The other example is that of a teacher asking a question, say in Tonga but gives freedom to pupils to give answers in a language of their choice, Lozi or Bemba for example. In this way, Classroom Translanguaging enables certain concepts to be reinforced through repetition in several languages and clarified in much more detail as opposed to using one language (Hassan and Ahmed, 2015: 26). In this chapter, translanguaging will therefore act as the lense through which we will analyse and present the teachers' language practices in the presumed multilingual classrooms of Chibombo District.

2.2 Symbolic Violence

Symbolic Violence is one of the concepts derived from Pierre Bourdieu's (1930-2002) theory on language, power, and the reproduction of dominant language ideologies. Bourdieu's (1986) theory presented the possibility of three distinct forms of capital namely cultural, social and economic capital. Significant to our study is the first form of capital emanating from two sources namely informal learning through home literacies and the formal learning through school official literacies. At the center of Cultural capital is linguistic capital (Bourdieu, 1977, 1991). He argued that languages do not exist for the sole purpose of communication but they function as a form of capital or power. It is for this reason that the state plays a key role in establishing and legitimizing which forms of linguistic capital will

ensure the production and reproduction of state power. It was Bourdieu and Passeron's (1990) view that education through the classroom was/is a vehicle through which the state can legitimize and control the linguistic market. The process of legitimizing a language over others is accomplished through the granting of official status to certain state languages. It was from this view of legitimizing a language over others that Bourdieu (1970) introduced the concept of symbolic violence which he defined as the gentle, invisible violence that is not recognised as such. However, significant to our study is Bourdieu's (1990) reference of symbolic violence to a situation in which the standard variety or dominant language is legitimized through institutionalised discourse of education while the rest of the varieties or languages become illegitimate and excluded from official discourses.

Symbolic violence manifestations abound. According to students' perspective it manifests itself through unequal chances depending on ethnic and linguistic background, and through the authoritarian style of imparting knowledge emphasised by the pedagogical attitudes encountered in some teachers (Bujorean, 2016). This happens through the imposition of teaching ideologies, through failure to challenge the text books authority by lack of critical debates, through sanctioning students' expressing themselves in terms other than those of the teacher and through reduced interactive strategies. As for the teacher's point of view, symbolic violence manifests itself in the way power is imposed through curricular policies and managerial decisions and through reduced acknowledgement of linguistic diversity (Bujorean, 2016).

Its consequential implications are manifold as illustrated in the excerpt below by Meier (2002: 15)

> . . .what the most successful students had going for them was that even in kindergarten, with their hands eagerly raised, they were ready to show off their school smarts. Starting on day one, certain forms of knowledge and skill – the stuff they've eagerly brought with them from home – was confirmed and honored, thus increasing their self-confidence to take still more risks. But many other students never found a replacement for a school and teacher who didn't recognize their genius, who responded with a shrug or a look of incomprehension as they offered their equally eager home truths. They too soon learned that in school all they could show off was their ignorance. Better to be bad, or uninterested, or to just silently withdraw.

Based on the above excerpt, the implication of symbolic violence is that it reduces learners' self-confidence leading them to be uninterested and to silent-withdrawal behaviours. Thus, learners' participation in class activities is severely curtailed. In this study, the concept of symbolic violence will help analyse teachers' language practices and the learners' involvement in classroom activities.

3. Methods of data collection and analysis

Methodologically, this study employed a mixed methods design. This means that both qualitative and quantitative methods were used. The quantitative design was used mainly through a questionnaire. The questionnaire was used to collect data on the sociolinguistic contexts of the schools where the study was conducted. The statistics show not only the languages represented in the classroom but also how many pupils spoke respective languages. Qualitatively, the study used classroom lesson observation to observe how teachers delivered the content in different subject areas in grade 5 to teach multilingual learners. This was

followed by interviews with selected grade five teachers. The idea here was to focus discussion on classroom languages practices and see to what extent the observed practices were linguistically democratic. Quantitative data provides data which is useful to decide or analyse the most appropriate language/s to adopt in the classroom for maximum epistemic access. A total of 10 schools were sampled. Out the 10 schools, 60 teachers and 200 pupils were sampled bringing the total number of respondents to 260. Both teachers and pupils were randomly sampled. Out of the selected sample, 6 teachers were purposively selected for lesson observation. Quantitative data was analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) while lesson observation data was analysed thematically. The lessons were recorded and transcribed. Deliberately chosen portions of the lessons were picked for presentation in this paper and for analysis.

4. Presentation of Findings

The study mainly focused on two sets of findings. Firstly, the sociolinguistic context of selected grade 5 classrooms in Chibombo District. The sociolinguistic contexts include the languages of both the pupils and the teachers, and whether or not teachers were familiar with the dominant language of the community or the pupils. The second set of data is on the language classroom practices of the teachers and pupils and some narratives of what some teachers said concerning choice/s of language/s in those classrooms. Focus is particularly placed on the teacher because as Wodak (2003) argues, they are the people with more power and often times, exercise, circulate and violate it. Thus, the language practices of the teachers are central to this study. Below, we present the two sets of data.

4.1 Sociolinguistic contexts of the sampled classrooms

Firstly, teachers were asked to state their familiar local language. This was done in order to find out if teachers' linguistic abilities and repertoires correlated with the languages widely spoken by the learners. The following are the first languages of the teachers:

Table 1: The first language or the mother tongue of teachers

My first language		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	C. Percent
Valid	Tonga	14	23.3	23.3	23.3
	English	6	10.0	10.0	33.3
	Lenje	4	6.7	6.7	40.0
	Bemba	24	40.0	40.0	80.0
	Nyanja	9	15.0	15.0	95.0
	Others	3	5.0	5.0	100.0
	Total	60	100.0	100.0	

The information given in the above table reveals that majority of the teachers at 40%, have Bemba as their first language followed by Tonga at 23%. The rest, in descending order, are Nyanja at 15%, English at 10%, Lenje at 7% and others at 5%. The "other languages" mentioned in the interviews with teachers were Namwanga, Lozi and Kaonde.

Teachers were also asked to state what the familiar language for most of the learners was. This was done to see if teachers had thorough knowledge of the linguistic situation in their classrooms; the knowledge which they use to decide which language/s were best suited for classroom interaction. The following were their responses:

Table 2: The language of play for the learners according to the teachers

		Language of play for my pupils			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	C. Percent
Valid	Tonga	3	5.0	5.0	5.0
	Lenje	24	40.0	40.0	45.0
	Bemba	8	13.3	13.3	58.3
	Nyanja	25	41.7	41.7	100.0
	Total	60	100.0	100.0	

The data from table 2 shows that 41.7 % of the teachers thought that Cinyanja was the language of play seconded by Lenje at 40%. Other teachers thought that Bemba at 13% and Tonga at 5% were languages of play respectively

For triangulation purposes, pupils were also asked to state their familiar language. While teachers gave their view, it was important that pupils indicate on their own about their familiar language. The table below shows that pupils said were their familiar languages:

Table 3: The mother tongue of the learners or the languages learners use at home

		The language I use at home			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	C. Percent
Valid	Tonga	32	16.0	16.0	16.0
	English	5	2.5	2.5	18.5
	Lenje	58	29.0	29.0	47.5
	Bemba	46	23.0	23.0	70.5
	Nyanja	45	22.5	22.5	93.0
	Others	14	7.0	7.0	100.0
	Total	200	100.0	100.0	

The data in table 3 reveals that 29% of the learners used Lenje at home, 23% used Bemba, 22.5% used Nyanja, 16% used Tonga, 7% used other languages and 2.5% used English. In other words, the home languages spoken by most of the pupils were Lenje, Bemba, Nyanja and Tonga while the least spoken home language was English.

Further, pupils were asked about the language they spoke when playing outside the school. This was particularly important because the home language and the language of play are not necessarily synonymous. Thus, regarding the language of play of the sampled learners, the following were their responses:

Table 4: The language of play for the learners

	The language I speak with friends				
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	C. Percent
Valid	Tonga	14	7.0	7.0	7.0
	English	3	1.5	1.5	8.5
	Lenje	76	38.0	38.0	46.5
	Bemba	47	23.5	23.5	70.0
	Nyanja	58	29.0	29.0	99.0
	Others	2	1.0	1.0	100.0
	Total	200	100.0	100.0	

The data in the table above shows that 38% of the learners spoke Lenje when at play followed by Nyanja at 29%. The rest in descending order were Bemba at 23.5%, Tonga at 7% and English at 1.5%.

4.2 Language Practices of Teachers in selected classrooms

This section presents both qualitative and quantitative data on the classroom language practices of the teachers and pupils. Firstly, we start with what teachers and pupils quantitatively stated as being the language practices. Later, the actual verbatim will be presented showing their classroom practices.

To start with, pupils were asked to indicate the language which teachers used for classroom interaction. In other words, the question was regarding the medium of instruction in the respective schools. The following were the responses:

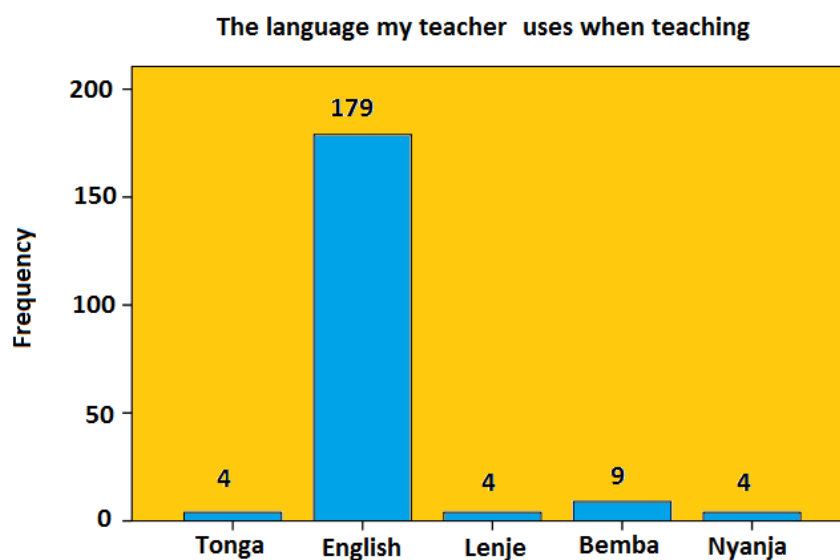***Pupils' opinion on what language their teachers do use when teaching.***

Figure 1: *Pupils Opinions on what language their teachers do use when teaching*

From figure 1, an overwhelming number of pupils at 179 representing 89.5% indicated that their teachers used English when teaching. The rest, 21 representing 10.5%, indicated that their teachers used Bemba, Nyanja, Lenje and Tonga respectively.

Further , pupils were asked to indicate which language/s teachers used when emphasising a point. The idea here was to see whether teachers translanguaged in the course of classroom instruction. The following were the responses:
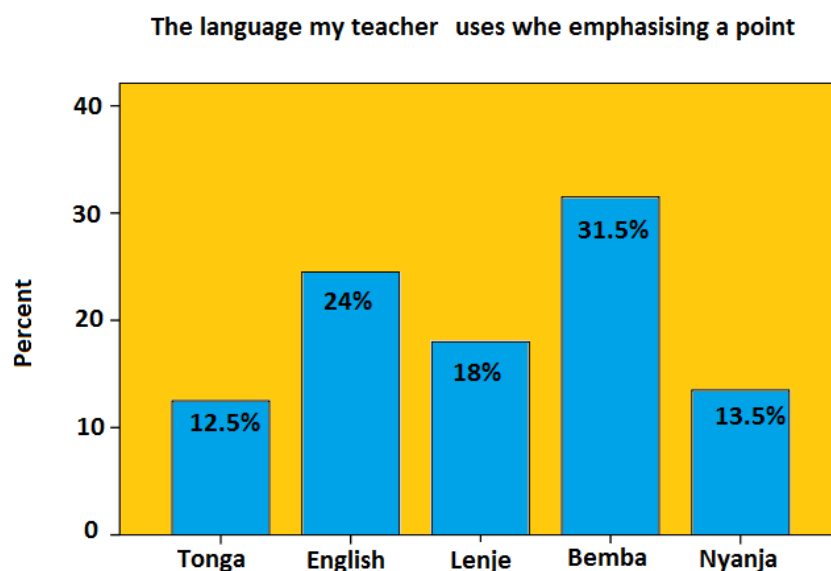

Figure 2: *Pupils' opinion on what language do their teachers use when emphasizing a point.*

The results show that Bemba, and English were the most dominant languages when emphasising a point followed by Lenje, Nyanja and Tonga.

Teachers were also asked if they used more than one language when teaching. Again, the question was whether or not teachers translanguaged during classroom teaching. The following were their responses:

Table 5: Teachers' opinion on if they used more than one language when teaching

I use more than one language when teaching					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	C. Percent
Valid	Strongly agree	20	33.3	33.3	33.3
	Agree	36	60.0	60.0	93.3
	Disagree	3	5.0	5.0	98.3
	Strongly disagree	1	1.7	1.7	100.0
	Total	60	100.0	100.0	

The data shows that 33.3 % of the respondents strongly agreed that they used more than one language while 60% agreed. Further, while 5% disagreed, 1.7% strongly disagreed. However, when the question was asked in a different way, responses also changed. The other question was whether teachers allowed the use of other languages in the classroom other than the official medium of instruction (English). The following were the responses:

Table 6: Teachers' opinion on whether they encourage the use of local languages in the classroom or not.

I encourage pupils to use local languages in the class					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	C. Percent
	Strongly agree	8	13.3	13.3	13.3
	Agree	20	33.3	33.3	46.7
Valid	Disagree	30	50.0	50.0	96.7
	Strongly disagree	2	3.3	3.3	100.0
	Total	60	100.0	100.0	

The data from the table above shows that while 13.3% of the respondents strongly agreed that they allowed translanguaging in the classroom, 33.3% agreed to doing so. On the other hand, while 50% disagreed; meaning that they did not allow translanguaging in the classroom, 3.3% of the respondents strongly disallowed translanguaging in the classroom.

4.2.1 Classroom language practices: Selected Verbatim Data

A total of six lessons were observed. Below, are selected verbatim from the six lessons that were observed.

Excerpt 1: Lesson observation verbatim 1; Grade 5 Science lesson on "The heart and Blood circulation."

> **Teacher**: ….*magazi yakayamba kuchoka ufunika kuziba kuti ukukulima* veins *yameneyachosa magazi*. (Nyanja - when blood starts flowing, you need to know that there are veins that allow the flow of blood). Then *kuli*(there) maybe *nikutali naku*(far from) hospital, the first thing you are going to do *uzamangakochinyula uku* so that *magazi yasiye kufika kuti?* (so what you have to do is tie your finger with a cloth so that blood does not continue coming out)

Excerpt 2: Lesson observation verbatim 2; Grade 5 English lesson on "Table of content, Index and Dictionary."

> **Teacher**: ….And then Index ….. an index is also a list of what is found in the book….but the dif….there is a difference between an index and a table of content….a table of content is at the beginning **ofu**(localized English for "of")a book *aini* (not so)….*kuntanshi ye book ekwaba* table of content (at the beginning of…that I where there is a ….and then index …it is…it points out specific things found on *ama* (the) pages *aini* (not so)….for example, maybe….*kwati yalya ama* words *twacibelenga aini* (like the words we read)…*twalayasanga kwisa*? (where can we find them)…maybe

ku (at the) last *eko balatweba ati* (they will tell us that)……if you want to find this word in this book you find it on this page *aini*(isn't it)

Excerpt 3: Lesson observation verbatim 3; Grade 5 Mathematics lesson on Division and Multiplication.

Teacher: (He repeats the same problem worked out by a pupil) …. 7 divided by 3? or we can say 3 into 7?….how many times can 3 go into 7? *Bushe 3 kuti yangila imiku inga muli* 7? (how many imes will 3 enter into 7? Bemba translation) …..*Ino 3 inga twanijila zyiindi zyongaye mu 7* (how many times will 3 enter into ? -Tonga translation)…..*Ino 3 nga shanjila makanda ongaye muli 7 a shobile?* (how many times will 3 enter into 7?- Lenje translation)… Yes Deni! **Pupil**: 2. **Teacher**: So when writing…..*pakulemba   aini*(when   writing,   right?-Bemba translation)………..when writing…..you write on top of 7……. this one……not *iyi apa* (Bemba - not this one) but the first 7.

In excerpt 1, the teacher used two languages namely Nyanja and English implying that some pupils were able to follow him in the two languages used whereas in excerpt 2, the teachers used Bemba and English. More interestingly, the teacher in excerpt 3 used four languages namely Bemba, Lenje, Tonga and English. What the foregoing data reveals is that the classrooms in the upper primary schools of Chibombo District are inherently bi-multilingual - an affirmation of the quantitative results obtained in the questionnaire. It also confirms the three commonly used languages namely Lenje, Nyanja and Bemba.

Excerpt 4: Lesson observation verbatim; Grade 5 English lesson on "Table of content, Index and Dictionary."

Teacher: And the same can be found *muma* (on the pages) pages *ayengi*
                (many) *aini*
(not so). **Pupils**:   Yes. **Teacher**:   But for the table of content *yena taba* (for it they don't…)…hnmnmnm….what is found generally *muliyo* (at that) page *twaumfwana aini* (we have agreed not so). **Pupils**: Yes. **Teacher**: And the dictionary….*na* dictionary *tamwaishiba*? (even the dictionary you don't know). **Pupils**: *Ahweee twaliishiba* (no, we know it). **Teacher**: *Uwalanjebako* dictionary *nani* (who will tell me what a dictionary is….. what is a dictionary …….*munjebele ati mwalishiba* dictionary….*mwacilafwaya ukuimona*? (you told me that you know what a dictionary is….do you want to see it?

In excerpt 4, the teacher moved across two languages easily. She was free to mix Bemba and English. In other words, she code switched and translanguaged.

Excerpt 5: Lesson observation verbatim; Grade 5 Mathematics lesson on Division and Multiplication.

Teacher: Which part is labelled 3...Pupil: Anther...... So this anther *twamene tumaona tumachosa*(the ones we have seen) what we call *tuma* (the) pollen *twa* (the) yellow....*kanzimu kasobela paja patwa* yellow (the bee is hovering

around the yellow parts)...so the function *inchito* ya aka (the function of the..) anther *akachita* (*it does*) produce pollen, *na aka ka* (and this) filament *tonse utu nitu* (all these are...) male parts...*twanverana ai* (are we together)...*tuzakamba ati tu* (we are saying that) male part *tuma* (the) filament *natuma* (and the) pollen. Then *twabwerakuli chi* (then we come to..)*stalk ichi chilli apa chichita bwani* (the one that is here, what does it do*)....olo kamba mu Cinyanja*(you can also say in Nyanja)....*ungaeseko* (who can try).... yes! **Pupil**: *Chi stalk chima gwilila* (the stoke holds the...) flower. **Teacher**: This stalk *chamene tiona ndichi chamene* (the stoke we are seeing is the same stalk) it holds the flower *kuchimutengo* (on the tree)..... twanverana (*are we together*).

In excerpt 5, the teacher did a lot of translation to make sure learners got the English question or concept in their local languages. He used Nyanja and English.

Excerpt 6: Lesson observation verbatim; Grade 5 computer lesson

Teacher: ...and a mouse....we are going to demonstrate it ...(she draws a mouse..)...so this is a mouse...imagine that now we are on the computer...we are going to format a text using what?..a mouse...you write a text...that text is a normal one aini?....now we want to.....which one are we going to do?.. are we going to underline or what....imagine we are on the computer...now you have written a text........the text you have written is a normal one....where all these three are based on...... we want to use a mouse to format or rather to highlight them into bold, italic or underline...so what to do first is......You are going to place the ka cursor before or after the highlighted....(she draws a box)..just pretend that this is the highlighted text called my class.....now we want to use the mouse..........so you are going to go...........in fact this is the ka cursor....that ka thing which...(uses the fingers to demonstrate what the cursor look like and what it does)....so now you hold...this is the mouse.....you do what...you attach the cursor before or after the text which to highlight aini..

During interviews, teachers were asked whether the use of local familiar languages in the classroom as medium of instruction was a good idea even when the policy designated English in grade 5. While some respondents stated that it was a good practice, others stated that it was not progressive to use local languages as it would interfere with English. Those who were positive about the use of local languages in English mediated classrooms stated the following:

Teacher 1:	*I use often Nyanja-I often translate difficult English words and questions into Nyanja.*
Teacher 10:	*I use Bemba and Tonga – the main language is English, but to stress a point or to simplify a concept, I use Bemba and Tonga.*
Teacher 13:	*I use Bemba – I use it to simplify difficult words – I teach in English but I explain and translate in Bemba when they seem not to understand.*
Teacher 16:	*Nyanja – I introduce the lesson in English and teach in English but I also translate difficult words in Nyanja for them to understand.*

> **Teacher 19:** *I use Tonga and Lenje – it is through mixing and translating.*

As stated earlier, there teachers who strongly believed that the use of local languages should be allowed as it interfered with the learning of and through English. They argued that since the policy gave legal status to English, pupils needed to use English all the time since it was the language of the school. The following is what they said:

> **Teacher1**: *No…they just have to learn in English due to exams at grade 7*
>
> **Teacher 4**: *It is not necessary(to uses local languages). Using English helps learners learn English because at home no one helps them in English.*
>
> **Teacher 6**: *Its not good (to allow local languages in class). We are preparing them for higher education – they have to use English.*
>
> **Teacher 7**: *It (local languages) encourages laziness in learning English. It also interferes with learning English.*
>
> **Teacher 10:** *It is good but the problem is lack of resources in the local languages.*
>
> **Teacher 20:** *Yes and no. They (pupils) are able to understand but at the same time they have to learn in English to prepare themselves for grade seven exams.*

4.3 Summary of Findings

This chapter has presented findings on the sociolinguistic context of the classrooms or schools which were sampled. It has been observed that all the classrooms were multilingual. However, most of the teachers were not familiar with the dominant familiar language of the pupils and the community where the school was situated. In terms of classroom practice, findings showed that while teachers translanguaged, there were other teachers who viewed translanguaging a counterproductive practice which should not be allowed in the school and the classroom. In the next section, we provide a discussion of the findings.

5. Discussion

The results above have presented both areas of conventionality and contradictions. Firstly, in terms of the language composition in the classroom as represented by speakers of the languages, eight languages were represented in the classroom. These were Tonga, Bemba, Nyanja, Lenje, English, Namwanga, Lozi and Kaonde. This confirms the argument that almost all classrooms in Zambian schools and particularly in this case, are multilingual and multiethnic. The statistics above have shown that while Lenje was dominant at 29%, it was striking to find Nyanja and Bemba at 23% and 22.5% respectively accounting for a cumulative percentage of 45.5% of the pupils. The interesting issue is that in terms of relatedness of languages, Bemba and Nyanja do not have strong mutual intelligibility with Tonga which is the official regional language. Further, apart from Lenje and Tonga which are mutually intelligible which account for a total of 45% of the pupils represented in the sampled schools, 55% of the respondents spoke or were familiar with other languages other than the ones designated for the area in which the schools were situated. The point here is that firstly, language zoning is problematic as it does not really reflect the language/s spoken in an area. In addition, the zoning of language turns to assume that languages are static and that the

linguistic situation of an area is static. These results show that languages are in constant mobility and their use and existence cannot be restricted to any particular area. Languages are resources which humans use to communicate and as people move, languages equally move. In this case, Cinyanja which is officially designated to Eastern and Lusaka provinces accounts accounts for a higher percentage of speaker number in Chibombo where Tonga is the regionally designated language. This is te same with Bemba which is officially zoned for Northern, Luapula and Copperbelt Provinces is second ranked in this area at 22.5% which like Cinyanja is higher than Tonga; the officially designated language for this part of Central province where Chibombo District is situated. Thus, to assume that the language familiar to the majority of the people in Chibombo district is Tonga is a fallacy as the said language only accounts for 16% of the 200 pupils who were sampled from 10 primary schools in Chibombo.

The table showing the language of play presents more interesting results. According to the policy, the dominant language and the language of play in Chibombo District is Tonga yet the results show that infact, the dominant language of play in Chibombo is Lenje at 38% followed by Cinyanja at 29% and Bemba at 23.5 %. The official regional language and the alleged language of play in Chibombo only accounted for 7%. These statistics show that the language zoning on which government continues to base current policy formulation and education language practices is not only weak but outdated. Even if one combines Lenje and Tonga, the cumulative percentage is only 45% while the remaining 55% of the children in the schools spoke or were familiar to other languages other the ones thought to be the dominant languages. This partly explains why the literacy agenda in Zambia is a problem issue. This is so because literacy policy recommendations especially on language of instruction is based on speculation and the eventual victims are the learners. This is the reason why Banda and Mwanza (2017) argued that even learning to read and write in the designated regional official language is not easy because pupils have to learn how to speak the language before they can learn how to read and write. They further argue that this is the same problem government artificially tries to prevent by delaying instruction in English when infact, some of the so called familiar Zambian local languages are not familiar at all.

This scenario where the dominant language of play or the familiar language/s of most pupils is one which is not the designated official language is not peculiar to Chibombo district. Kamalata (2016) revealed that while the official language of classroom instruction in Solwezi is Kikaonde, the dominant language of play among pupils is Bemba. This is due to migration of mostly people from the Copperbelt provinces to Solwezi to work in the mines. This has affected the language situation to an extent that it is Bemba and not Kikaonde which should be used for classroom instruction in Solwezi Urban. In Lundazi, Zimba (2007) also argued that while government sanctioned Cinyanja as the official medium of classroom instruction, the familiar language and the language of play in Lundazi was Tumbuka which does not have a high mutual intelligibility to Cinyanja. Similar results were found in Chongwe where Mubanga (2012) established that children in Lwimba area had remarkable problems breaking through to literacy because while Cinyanja was viewed as the familiar language and therefore medium of instruction, children were familiar with Soli which like Tumbuka in Lundazi, does not have high mutual intelligibility with Cinyanja. In Lusaka, the capital city of Zambia, Mwanza (2012) argued that although generally most pupils could speak and understand Nyanja, the variety of Cinyanja spoken in Lusaka was remarkably different from the Cinyanja officially recognised in schools which is also the language of the text books. As a result, pupils in Lusaka could not function in Cinyanja according to expectation as the Cinyanja used was foreign to them. This is the reason why as argued earlier, there is need to relook at language zoning, and avoid the arbitrary association of one language to a wider

locality without being sensitive to the language reality and practices of the people of the same area.

Another important observation from the findings is the statistics of English either as a first language or a language of play. While English is first language to 5% of the respondents, it is a language of play to 1.5%. Interestingly, this is the official medium of instruction from grade 5 onwards yet statistics show that only 1.5 to 5% could speak English. This is not surprising considering the 2010 census showed that only 1.7% or 2% of the Zambian population could speak English. What this suggests is that there are a lot of pupils who, even at grade 5, cannot speak and understand English at a desirable level. It equally means that children even at grade 5 do not use English during play even when government assumes that by grade five, pupils would have acquired adequate proficiency in English in order to use it as a medium of instruction. Here, the problem of medium of instruction starts with the first phase (grade 1-4) where a Zambian language is used (albeit) one which is not familiar to most learners). This affects learners acquisition of English which they are expected to use in grade 5 but due to language barrier as most of the pupils may not have broken through to literacy in English by the time they reach grade 5. As Munakampe (2005) found, most pupils by grade 5 could not speak English by grade 5. That is the reason why as hinted above, the Zambian language in education policy needs to be revisited, amended and recommend classroom language practices which resonate with the language situation in schools.

In terms of classroom practice, teachers translanguaged in five out of the six lessons which were observed. In the first lesson, the teacher used English and Nyanja. In the second lesson, the teacher used Bemba and English. Lesson three had the most 'number' of languages with Bemba, Tonga, Lenje and English. The teacher used Bemba and English in lesson 4 while Nyanja and English were used in lesson five. As mentioned earlier, the teacher in lesson six only used one language-English- which is the official medium of instruction thereby adhering to monolingual/monoglot language ideologies inherent in the Zambian official language policy.

In essence, the teachers recognise the importance of translanguaging in engendering multilingualism and multilingual language practices. In this case, languages are used as resources which enable learners to access knowledge regardless of their linguistic differences. These practices mean that the five classrooms are democratised through the language choices and practices of the teachers. In lesson 3 for example, the teachers used four languages and did so with ease. She was teaching mathematics. The topic was on multiplication and division. At some point in the lesson, she asked the same question four times in different languages. In so doing, she communicated the question to learners who were familiar to Bemba, Lenje, Bemba and English. In an event that a particular student understood more than one of the four languages, the use of those languages would enhance comprehension and present various ways of understanding reality. While this practice is favourable for multilingual learners and classrooms, teachers make these decisions outside policy provisions. Thus, while policy recommends monolingual language practices, teachers resort to multilingual language practices which resonate with the linguistic reality inherent in these classrooms. Aronin (2015) supports such a practice when she noted that when in the classroom, teachers have the power to do what even what is outside official policy as long as it is done to enhance learning by the pupils. That is the reason why Wodak (2003) believes that teachers have the power to resist, negotiate or accept policy. In this case, teachers negotiate policy by including language practices which are not officially approved but are helpful in the learning process of the learner.

Although the lessons show the presence of translanguaging, there was one where the teacher insisted on the use of English even when clearly; there were learners who were not familiar with the language. As it can be seen from the interview data, some teachers who were interviewed argued that it was not necessary to use Zambian languages in grade five classrooms because doing so promoted laziness among pupils. The other reason given for not allowing the use of Zambian languages was that the examination at grade 7 would be in English. Thus, teachers felt that classroom instruction needed to follow the examination format because ultimately, learners will still require English in order to pass the exam. What we see here is the focus on the product and not the process. Teachers focus on examination performance and not whether or not pupils enjoyed the lessons and how much knowledge they acquired in so doing. In this scenario, it would not be surprising that pupils would even resort to memorisation of facts in English without having proper knowledge of the content because they do not understand fully the medium of instruction to elaborately express the thoughts. In the words of Bourdier (1999), the monolingual practices adopted by some teachers such as teacher 6 as well as the views of teachers 1, 4, 7 and 10 amount to symbolic violence in the classroom and exclusion from classroom participation by learners. In this practice therefore, democratisation of the classroom is thwarted thereby perpetuating marginalisation of unofficial languages as well as the speakers of those languages.

Finally, the other observation which was made in schools was that grade 5 text books were predominantly in English. Both pupils and teachers books were written in English. This is not surprising considering the monolingual/monoglot language policy in Zambia which is premised on purist ideology of one language in the classroom. In the context of translanguaging, this means that translanguaging in schools only took the oral form excluding the written form. This practice is at variance with Hornberger and Link (2012:262) who defined translanguaging as "the purposeful pedagogical alternation of languages in spoken and written, receptive and productive modes" (see also Baker 2001, 2003; Williams 1994). Clearly, the written mode is eluded in in primary schools in Chibombo. There is need for policy makers to change their language ideologies which we hope can also change policy formulation in Zambia and policy implementation in these multilingual environments and classrooms.

6. Conclusion

It has been confirmed that multilingualism and linguistic diversity in Chibombo district is a reality. However, while the officially recognised regional officially language is Tonga and the language of medium of instruction at grade 5 is English, the majority of the pupils in the sampled schools spoke Lenje, Bemba and Nyanja. This has shown that language zoning in Zambia is problematic as it does not reflect the actual sociolinguistic situation in some parts of the country such as Chibombo. Further, while some teachers democratised their classrooms through the adoption of translanguaing as pedagogic practice, others insisted on monolingual language practices which resulted in symbolic violence with pupils having access to the classroom but not learning. It is therefore recommended that firstly, language zoning in Zambia should be revisited because so much has changed linguistically from the time government made arbitrary associations between languages and regions. Secondly, the official language-in –education policy should be revised and acknowledge multilingualism. I this case, just like the 1996 policy document, the current policy should allow teachers to adopt language practices which are reflective of the language situation of the classrooms they teach.

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