

**Teachers' Perceptions on the Use of Local Languages as
Medium of Instruction from Grades 1-4 in selected Private
Schools of Lusaka**

By

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**A Dissertation Submitted to the University of Zambia in Partial
fulfilment of the Requirements for the award of the Degree of
Master of Education in Literacy and Learning**

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DECLARATION

I, Ndeleki Betty declare that the work in this study is solely mine. I further declare that this research has not been previously submitted at any other university and that all referencing from other works has been acknowledged.

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Signature: Date:

Supervisor's signature: Date:

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APPROVAL

This dissertation by Ndeleki Betty is approved as a fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the degree of Master of Education in Literacy and Learning of the University of Zambia.

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ABSTRACT

The study focuses on the perceptions of teachers on the use of local languages as Medium of Instruction (MoI) from grades 1 to 4 in selected private schools in Lusaka. This study was prompted by the 2013 new language policy in education in Zambia, which holds that the use of local languages for initial literacy enhances a quick and solid acquisition of literacy skills which can later be applied in learning a second language. The local languages approved as MoI in the Zambian educational curriculum are based on the 1965 language zoning when the country was divided into zones. Lusaka province, for instance was zoned as a Chinyanja speaking area.

The study comprised 62 informants. 15 of these were administrators, 1 curriculum development officer, 6 parents and 40 Grades 1 and 2 teachers. The study employed qualitative research design.

The findings of the study revealed that there was an emerging line divide between what could be termed as 'local language' private schools and 'English language' private schools. The private schools that have applied the new language policy of using the local language as the MoI are the ones referred to as 'local language private schools' and the ones that are still using English as MoI as 'English language private schools'. Fears expressed were that this may have a serious implication on enrolment later in that one of the so called English language private schools may have an influx of learners enrolling while the so called local language private schools may have fewer pupils enrolling.

The study established that the stratification was influenced by several factors such as the community in which a school is located, the status attributed to a certain language and the attitude by teachers and stakeholders. The study further revealed that schools located in urban Lusaka opted for English as MoI because it is the language commonly used in the homes of the children who are mostly foreigners and the elite Zambian. Sub urban schools were in favor of Nyanja as MoI because it is their language of play. The study noted that while English was out rightly preferred to be MoI by urban private schools, the sub urban private schools chose Nyanja but claimed that there was need to employ code switching as MoI.

The fears to let go of English as expressed by the sub urban private schools could be deriving from the notion that anything with a local tug is considered inferior in Zambia. Besides, the use of local languages is taken as indication that one is less educated while those who use English,

on the other hand, enjoy a favorable status as is it considered to be the language of the elite and the educated.

There is need for policy planners to recognize and value research as they formulate policies such as the NLP. There is also need for the curriculum development center (CDC) to spearhead efforts towards giving local languages a status. This matter must to be treated with serious urgency in Zambia as it would help change the prevailing situation where English dominance is the order of the day in private schools and indeed other sectors of society. This is worsened by the fact that English is the determining subject for any upward progression of pupils up to University.

Lastly, there may also be need for the Ministry of Education through the Permanent Secretary to reinforce the issue of policy exemptions given to some private schools whose children are mostly foreigners. A window may still be created for few children in these schools who struggle with English to use any familiar local language. There may be need to change the usual language of five “o” levels with English to five “o” levels with a language as passing subjects in promotion examinations to grades 9 and 12 and to University and colleges.

DEDICATION

May God be blessed for my brother, Sydney Ndeleki, whose unceasing hospitality created a favorable environment for my study. *Kabi kakatantamuka mudaala.* And for my sister Charity who took up the task of home keeping when I was in school.

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ECE-Early Childhood Education

ECF-Education Curriculum Framework

FOL -Focus on learning

L1- Mother Tongue/ First language

L2-Second language

MoI-Medium of instruction

MOE-Ministry of education

MEVSTEE- Ministry of Education, vocational science training and early education.

NBTL- New Breakthrough to literacy

NLP-New language policy

PRP-Primary reading program

UNDHR-United Nations Declaration of Human Rights

SACMEQ-Southern African consortium for monitoring Education Quality

UNESCO - United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization

UNICEF-United Nations children emergence fund

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND INFORMATION.

1.1. Introduction

This chapter provides the general background information that sets the context of the research. The background is followed by the statement of the problem under investigation, the purpose of the study, the significance of the study, the research objectives and questions. The chapter also presents the theoretical framework in which this study is situated followed by the definition of terms as they have been used in the study.

1.2 Background

The curriculum we have been using in our schools is what our political freedom fighters had put in place after the attainment of independence in 1964 and it was based on the 1966 Education Act. Due to the passage of time and changes in social economic political and technological life, our school curriculum had become archaic and required serious attention (Phiri, 2013, p 2).

The above quote provides the rationale for the emergence of the 2013 New Language policy (NLP) in Zambia, advocating for the use of local languages as medium of instruction (MoI) from grades 1-4. While all government schools applied the Primary Reading Program (PRP) towards enhancing the use of a familiar language for initial literacy in grade one, private schools continued using English as the medium of instruction from pre-school to tertiary education. Teachers in private schools have a record of citing the fluency of their pupils in English as a sign of good education and much of this perceived achievement has been attributed to the policy of using English as the MoI from early grades. It is with this background that the current study sought to establish the perceptions of teachers in private schools on the new language policy of using local languages as MoI from grades 1-4 with particular focus on Lusaka district.

There are four main types of schools that offer initial literacy (grades 1-4) in Zambia as illustrated in the diagram below:

The four main common types of schools that offer initial literacy in Zambia.

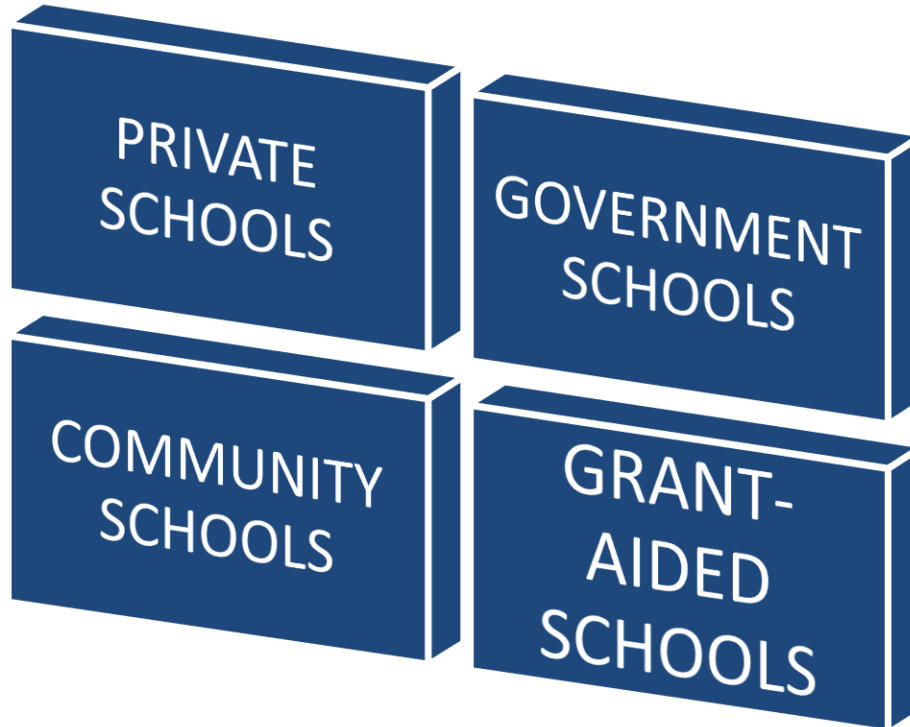


Figure 1.1: The four main common types of schools that offer initial literacy in Zambia (source: Adapted from Mwanakatwe, 1974)

Private schools (on which this study focuses) are defined as education institutions which are established by voluntary agencies or individuals in accordance with the regulations but which receive no grants from the central government (Mwanakatwe, 1974). For this reason private schools are sometimes referred to as non-grant aided schools. To meet their costs, private schools, command the highest fees but also promise the best facilities for quality education. These institutions, hence, respond to the needs of those with the ability to pay and are mostly found in urban areas. Therefore, private schools cater for a small proportion of learners given their high cost. In comparison with the other two types of education providers i.e. Government and Community, private schools seem to record higher performances in national examinations starting from grade seven to grade 12 and the command of English by pupils from this sector,

even at preschool stage, has been used as the main barometer that many people use to measure the success of these schools as opposed to the situation pertaining in government schools. Precisely, this is one reason why this study sought to establish perceptions of teachers in private schools on the new language policy which compels them to abandon one of their effective marketing tool, English language, as the MoI from grade 1 to 4.

Before Zambia's independence, both pre-school and early childhood education was run by the government. It was mandatory for every child to undergo preschool before getting into standard 1 (the current grade 1) as it was called then. Substandard A and B were therefore the two levels offered at preschool where one common curriculum was running (Phiri, 2014).

However the restructuring of the education system in the 1960's saw the removal of preschool education in the primary schools as formal schooling started at Grade 1 (ECF, 2013). Thereafter, the responsibility of early childhood education was decentralized into local governments under the social welfare centers, *olofeya*, as they were commonly known. The decentralized system of education at preschool level did not bring out the intended results. Some of the shortcomings cited were the lack of coordination among councils resulting into a substandard system of education in Zambia (ECF, 2013).

The decentralization of the country's economy, which was most pronounced in the third republic, brought about major changes in Zambia's economic, social and political realms. For instance, the education policy of "Educating our Future", introduced in 1996, emphasized education development which included the liberalization and decentralization of the education system. The policy encouraged the private sector to manage schools, with the notion that liberalization of school management would bring about the expansion of education opportunities (MOE, 1996). As noted by Matafwali (2010), Zambia experienced a major political change from 27 years of one party rule under President Kenneth Kaunda to multiparty state led by President Frederick Chiluba. Notable among them was the transformation of Zambia's socio-political structure and economic developments in the direction of trade and liberalization which have had their impact on the education sector. Generally speaking, the political transition was characterized by major structural changes in economic, social and political policies. These economic changes had adverse effects on the provision and financing of education. At the level of financing, for instance, there was a departure from the concept of free education to the concept

of cost sharing which has since seen the introduction of user fees, tuition and examination fees at primary, secondary and tertiary levels of education. As a result, schools were forced to raise funds through the cost sharing measures (Matafwali, 2010). It can be stated that Zambia's decentralization of the economy greatly contributed to the rapid emerging of private schools. It is also important to note that this liberalization and privatization have created an environment in which individuals and other private agencies could participate as equal partners in various sectors of society including education.

As regards private schools, Zambia recognizes the partnership principle of the 1990 Jomtien conference which spoke of an expanded vision and a renewed commitment to educational provision. One of the factors that the principle is based on is its promotion of educational relationships among the various agents of development in particular between the people concerned and those intervening from the outside (UNDH, 2010).

The private schools in Zambia are given almost complete autonomy with power to establish management boards with full responsibilities for policies, staffing, admissions and the choice of a curriculum to implement. One prominent policy in these schools is the language policy where English has always been used as the medium of instruction. Since English is perceived as the language of education by many, private schools attract a lot of parents who take their children to these schools for better education (Sampa, 2003). But with the 2013 new language policy of using local languages as medium of instruction from grades 1-4, little is documented on the perceptions of teachers in private schools on the use of local languages as medium of instruction from grades 1 -4. It is with such a background that this study sought to establish the perceptions of private school teachers on the use of local languages as mediums of instruction from grades 1-4 in selected private schools in Lusaka.

1.3 Statement of a problem

A large body of research points to the fact that when children use a familiar language as the medium of instruction in school, both their acquisition and later transference of literacy skills to other languages is enhanced (Alidou 2001, Matafwali 2010, Tambulukani and Bus 2001). These literacy skills that children attain enable them to manipulate the familiar language (L1) as they breakthrough to an unfamiliar language (L2). Such is the anchor of the 2013 new language

policy (NLP) which advocates the use of local languages as medium of instruction (MoI) from grades 1 to 4. As the case may be with every new policy, different perceptions are elicited from those affected. It is for this reason that the study was designed to unravel private schools teachers' perceptions on the use of local languages as medium of instruction from grades 1-4.

1.4 Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study was to establish the perceptions of teachers in private schools on the use of local languages as mediums of instruction from Grades 1-4.

1.5 Main objective

The main objective for this study was to establish teachers' perceptions on the use of local languages as medium of instruction from Grades 1-4 in private schools.

1.6 Specific objectives

- (i) To find out the views of school administrators and teachers on the use of local languages as medium of instruction from grade 1 to 4 in private schools.
- (ii) To establish teachers' perceptions on the availability of appropriate teaching and learning material based on the new policy of using local languages as medium of instruction from grade 1-4.
- (iii) To ascertain teachers' perceptions on how the new language policy of using local languages as MoI is being implemented in private schools.

1.7. Main research question

What are teachers' perceptions on the use of local languages as medium of instruction from grades 1-4 in private schools?

1.8. Specific questions

- (i) What are the views of school administrators and teachers in private schools on the use of local languages as mediums of instruction from grade 1 to 4?
- (ii) What are teachers' perceptions on the teaching and learning materials on the use of local languages as mediums of instruction from grade 1-4 in private schools?
- (iii) What are teachers' perceptions on how the new policy of using local languages as medium of instruction from grades 1-4 is being implemented in private schools?

1.9. Significance of the study

The change of the Zambia educational curriculum towards the promotion of local languages as medium of instruction hopes to attain better initial literacy for early childhood education. However, there is no much research done to find out what perceptions teachers in private schools hold on the use of local languages as mediums of instruction in grades 1-4. Therefore, this study intended to highlight the situation in private schools as regards the new language policy. The study might stimulate further research on the many questions that stakeholders have pertaining to the new language policy in relation to private schools. In relation to all this, it was posited that there could be more beneficiaries to this study than just the private schools. Furthermore, the study might add new insight to the existing body of knowledge regarding the new curriculum of using local languages for initial literacy.

1.10. Delimitations of the study

The study was limited to Lusaka. Lusaka was targeted because this is where most private schools are established and officially operating.

1.11. Limitations

The findings of this study may not be generalized to all private schools due to a small sample but may provide a general clue on challenges involving the implementation of the new language policy.

1.12. Theoretical framework

In an attempt to explore the perceptions of teachers on the use of local languages as MoI in private schools, this study is guided by Verhoeven's (1994) theory of the six models of literacy instruction.

According to Verhoeven's (1994) theory of the six models of literacy instruction, there are six procedures through which the use of mother tongues (minority languages) and official languages (majority languages) can operate as MoI. By minority languages is meant the mother tongue for the ethnic children. The majority languages are the second languages such as English as the case with this study. The six models are basically for the children whose mother tongues are the

minority languages while as the majority languages such as English are learnt as second languages (Banda 2002).

The diagram below illustrates the six models of literacy instruction by Verhoeven (1994).

Six models of literacy instruction

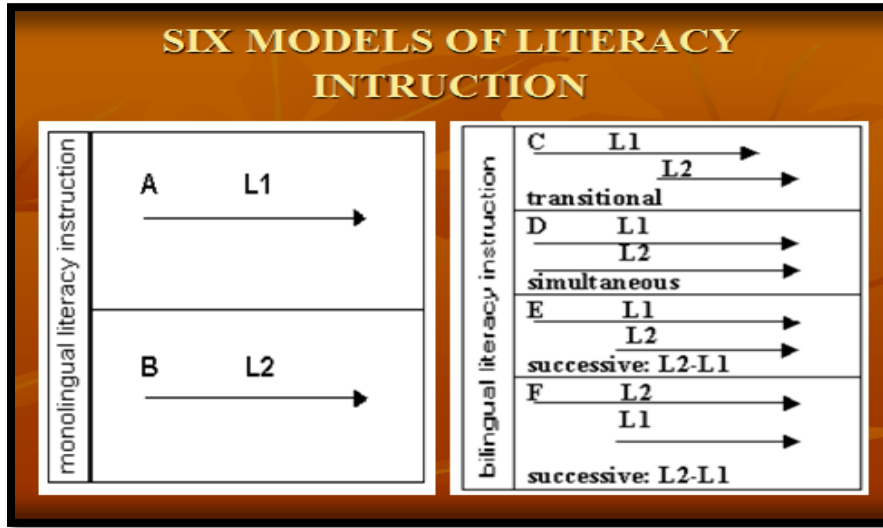


Figure1.2: The six models of literacy instruction to minority children (arrows indicate school progress). (Source: Verhoeven, 1994:203)

As noted from the diagram, Models A and B stand for a monolingual approach while models C, D, E and F stand for a bilingual approach. In model A, the minority language is used exclusively as language of instruction and as target language, while there is no literacy instruction in the majority language. In model B, the language of instruction is the second language. From this model, literacy instruction in the minority language is excluded. Model C starts with literacy in the minority language. At the same time or after a short period, literacy instruction in the majority language is given as well. In the course of the curriculum, the mother tongue (L1) is interrupted by the second language (L2). The Language of instruction in this model is only used to reach an optimum literacy level in L2. For this reason, this model has been called transitional. Models D, E and F all aim at functional biliteracy. These models differ as regards order of instruction: model D has simultaneous L1 / L2 instruction, model E has the order first L1 then L2; model F has the reverse instruction order (Verhoeven, 1994). Verhoeven (1994) argues that

the language policy followed by any country will determine whether or not the minority group will be in the position to become literate in the majority language as well as in the minority language. He distinguishes three types of language policy: language segregation, language assimilation and language maintenance. He argues that educational policies can be transferred to education objectives and literacy instructional models. For example he proposes that if the educational objective is the achievement of L1 literacy, the language policy to be followed should be segregation in which case then the instructional model will be his first model, Model A. Instructional models B and C will be followed to achieve literacy in L2 and the language policy will be assimilation. The remaining models, D, E and F will follow the language policy of maintenance if the educational objectives are functional biliteracy (Verhoeven, 1994).

Relating Verhoeven's (1994) models to this study, the new curriculum is placed under model C where the learners are expected to attain initial literacy in a local language familiar to them. As a way of managing the multi lingual scenario in Zambia, the seven regional languages are recognized as local official languages through which initial literacy can be taught in the various provinces (Phiri, 2004). In accordance with the Zambian new curriculum, model C advocates for the use of local language as medium of instruction while as English is introduced to the learners in their second grade only as a subject. As the learners reach their fifth grade, the medium of instruction now changes to English while as the local language carries on as a subject (ECF, 2013). The new language policy seems to make an attempt to promote functional biliteracy and by supporting model C and E. The New Primary Literacy Program (PLP) seems to support model C and E as appropriate for Zambia's education for initial literacy. In these models, there is an emphasis on the use of Mother Tongue for initial literacy as well as the language of instruction. Through these two models, it is hoped that the learners will eventually achieve mother tongue literacy that will in turn be transferred to the achievement of second language literacy (Banda, 2002). It must be noted that until the introduction of the new language policy under the PLP, private schools have been advocates for Verhoeven' (1994) model B of using a second language, English, as the MoI from pre-school. This is against Verhoeven (1994) who holds that the continuation of MT as the language for literacy helps learners to be proficient in both languages.

1.13 Operational definitions

This section provides definitions of terms as they are used in this study:

Perception is defined as the organization, identification and interpretation of sensory information in order to represent and understand the environment.

Private schools refer to non-state schools which run their academic affairs independently. In the light of this study, private schools will mean the primary private schools who offer initial literacy.

Language in Education policy is a policy that gives a mandate on which language to use as medium of instruction.

Mother tongue (MT) or (L1) is one's native language. It can be one's first language (L1). It is defined as the language one learns as a child growing up in the home. UNESCO defines the mother tongue as the "main language spoken in the home environment and acquired as a first language, sometimes called the home language" (UNESCO, 2013). In some African countries, such as Kenya, the mother tongue is also referred to as "ethnic", "tribal", "local", and/or "vernacular" language (ibid)

Local language is the language that is familiar to a particular community. It can be the mother tongue (L1) or simply a familiar language. It can be further stated that the local language is commonly used in various domains in the community including the school. It is the language through which a community identifies itself.

A medium of instruction (MoI)/ language of instruction is a language through which learning in a school takes place. It is a chosen official language used in teaching and learning. For instance, in 2013, Zambia adopted the use of local language as the language of education for initial literacy. This implies that the medium of instruction in schools is henceforth, local language. A Medium of instruction is the language in which the subject matter is taught in a public or private school setting (UNESCO, 2013). UNESCO defines LoI as "language(s) used to convey a specified curriculum in a formal or non-formal educational setting".

Language of play Language of the community/ Language of the community is the Language spoken by the majority of the children in a locality during or for purposes of social interaction/play.

Familiar language is a language which is well known and commonly used by an individual.

Cosmopolitan is a place that has many people from many different parts of the country or world with different language backgrounds.

Initial literacy is the official start of learning in a familiar language of how to read, write and speak.

Multi ethnic is a class consisting of pupils who belong to different ethnic groups

Language of instruction (LoI) is defined as the language in which subject matter is taught in a public or private school setting. UNESCO defines LoI as “language(s) used to convey a specified curriculum in a formal or non-formal educational setting” (UNESCO, 2013).

Second language (L2) has traditionally been used in different contexts and can mean (a) the second language learned (chronologically); (b) the weaker language; (c) a language that is not the mother tongue; or (d) the less used language.

Official language is defined as one or more languages that a country utilizes as an official form of communication in education, government, or commerce. UNESCO (2013) defines official language as “a language designated by law to be employed in the public domain.” This is distinct from a national language, which is a “language spoken by a large part of the population of a country, which may or may not be designated an official language (UNESCO, 2013)”.

Code switching refers to a situation speaker’s use two or more languages within the same speech context (Makori 2000, 23).

1.14. Summary

The chapter puts into perspective private schools as autonomous organizations and yet co-partners with the government in the provision of education in Zambia. The focal point in the chapter is that private schools in Zambia emanate from the government’s decision for the liberalization and decentralization of the educational system where individuals and other non-state organizations were viewed as a necessity towards the expansion of education provision in the country. The chapter also gives a background to the history of English as the common medium of instruction in schools. With such a background, the chapter places private schools under Model B of Verhoeven’s (1994) instructional models where the MoI is English exclusive. It is with such a background that the chapter highlights the gap in the study now that there is a new language policy advocating for the use of local languages as medium of instruction. The study therefore sought to establish the perceptions of teachers in private schools on the use of local languages as MoI from grades 1-4. The chapter has highlighted its objectives as well as the operational definitions used in the study.

The chapter that follows provides literature that is related to the study.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Introduction

This chapter provides a review of relevant literature that informs the study. Firstly, an attempt is made to discuss the historical perspective on the language in education policies in Zambia. This is followed by an analysis of a study on the Zambia Primary Reading Program. The chapter also reviews the current 2013 new language policy regulations. Thereafter, the chapter discusses attitudes and preferences towards mediums of instruction. The chapter also discusses literature based on the transference of skills from mother tongue to the second language. Finally, the chapter discusses issues that relate to learners self-esteem in relation to medium of instruction.

2.2. The Historical perspective on Language in education policies in Zambia.

The Phelps- Stokes commission report of 1925 stands among the first reports to have addressed the problem on the provision of African education (Kelly, 1995). The need to promote a language that would enhance the proper education for Africa was the main concern in the report. This concern later led to the emergence of the four Zambian languages which were chosen to be the medium of instruction in Northern Rhodesia then. The four languages were: Bemba, Lozi, Nyanja and Tonga (Kashoki, 2000). It was decided that the teaching of English would begin in African schools after the mechanics of reading and writing had been taught in the mother tongue (Phiri, 2014). From this background, one realizes the long history from where the 2013 new language policy in Zambia emanates. It is in view of such background that Manchishi (2004) states that the issue of language and education in Zambia was fairly straight forward throughout the colonial and much of the federal period. The straight forwardness implied here is evident in the consistency of the language policy through the three tier system where mother tongue was used for the first two years, followed by a dominant vernacular up to Standard 5, and English thereafter (Kelly, 1995). The ceaseless debates on the appropriate medium of instruction continued even after Zambia's independence.

The 1966 educational reforms for instance, left a big impact on the country's education as it proposed that English be the MoI. It is from such a historical perspective that English was adopted as medium of instruction in all Zambian schools, including private institutions (Mwanakatwe, 1974). In this light, Sampa (2003) posited that the colonial language (English) was now viewed as a language of high status, especially that it was accorded more linguistic

powers as a unifying factor suitable for a multilingual nation such as Zambia. In the field of education, the status given to English was such that one who did not know the language was considered illiterate (Africa, 1980). However, over the years, there had been a continued visitation of the 'straight for English' approach as well as the introduction of local languages as medium of instruction in schools. For instance, the 1977 final report allowed teachers to explain concepts that might otherwise not be understood through the medium of English, in one of the seven official local languages, provided a majority of pupils in a class could understand this vernacular language. It can be stated that the 1977 policy introduced code switching as medium of instruction in schools to cater for the difficulties that learners were encountering in understanding English. Vernacular languages in education were therefore proven to be the best basic languages of education from Grades 1 to 4 (FOL, 1992).

The studies above indicate that basic education in the post-colonial Zambia was entirely in the hands of government. This confirms that both preschool and early grade learning were run by councils under the welfare (*olofare*) department (Mwanakatwe, 1974). One can therefore postulate the reason why so far, there had been no mention of any private school in the lower grades.

The year 1990 onwards witnessed the growing number of private schools in Zambia. This seems to have been necessitated by the high failure rates in government schools which prompted a few rich Zambians by then to opt for private education for their children (Sampa, 2003). Thus, private schools attracted the elite and educated who could afford the high fees associated with this type of education. Furthermore, the elite were able to appreciate the good performance that was exhibited by the learners in these schools. This aspect of good performance in private schools can still be witnessed even to this day. For instance, a review on the performance of various schools conducted by MESVTEE in 2014 indicates a higher pass rate in private schools compared to other schools.

The table below is an illustration of the pass rates in the four school types that offer early childhood education.

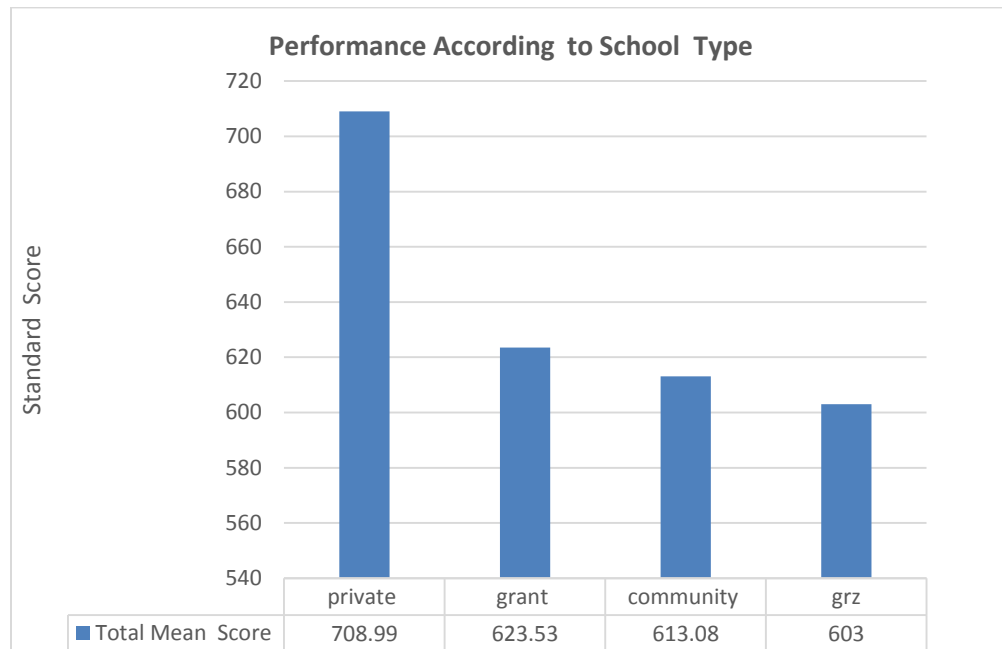


Figure 2.1: Performance according to school type. (Source: 2014 examinations performance review).

As observed from the above ratings, private schools had the highest standard score during the 2014 national examinations. The reader should note that these results are not affected by the new language policy of local language as medium of instruction and yet they are impressive. With such a background, it would be important to get the views of teachers in private schools on the new language policy of using local language as MOI from grades 1-4.

Further research shows that only 2.6 percent of the government primary school children in Grade 6 were able to achieve acceptable reading competencies (FOL, 1992). The reading competencies of Zambian children were one of the lowest in Sub Sahara Africa (SACMEQ, 1998). There was also a general scarcity of educational materials in schools especially those in rural areas. Matafwali (2010) posited that the reality of primary education in Zambia throughout the 1990s was that enrolments and school attendance had declined remarkably. There was generally no quantitative expansion of the school infrastructure to correspond with the ever growing school age population. As a result, at least 37 percent of the children in the school-going age were not enrolled in school by 1999.

The deplorable situation in government schools as well as the decentralization of the economy perpetuated the growth of private schools which were purely business ventures. This implied that only a few able Zambians would enroll their children into such schools that attracted high fees. With Zambia's colonial background of upholding English as the language of the elite and educated, Private schools maintained English as the medium of instruction in their schools, thereby attracting the rich and the educated to uphold these schools which promised a better education for the learners (Sampa, 2003). Note, however, that this does not imply that private schools are exclusively and entirely for the rich and elite in society. There are children of parents from middle or even lower income classes who could strive to send their children to these private schools with a hope that they do better and later lift the profiles of their families. Even in such cases, the fluency in English by such children is the envy of their parents and a sign of good and high education

2.3. The Zambia Primary Reading Program (PRP).

As private schools grew in number and carried on with English as MoI, the government also continued seeking interventions to revamp low reading levels especially at primary school. The Primary Reading Program (PRP), for instance, was a response to the 1996 "Educating our future" quest for "all pupils to be given an opportunity to learn the initial basic skills of reading and writing in a local language," (MoE, 1996:39). PRP aimed at achieving initial literacy in the mother tongue or in a Zambian language familiar to the learners. The learners would thereafter be introduced to reading skills in English in the second year of school (Grade 2).

The lessons for PRP were given a one hour slot on the time table per week. It was in this hour that pupils were allowed to communicate in their local language. In his study, Banda (2002) sought to find out if the one hour of literacy was enough to improve the reading skills in English by grade 2. The findings revealed that there was need for more time in which pupils could develop cognitive skills in a local familiar language. In supporting this position Banda (2002:34) concludes:

This study proves that a short transitional period (one year) of using MT for initial literacy may not automatically translate into such a transfer of skills. the dependency of developing countries on their former colonial masters has made them impotent to develop their own indigenous languages to a level where they can be used as

vehicles for their education systems. Rushing to switch the language for initial literacy from pupils' MT, for whatever reasons, to a foreign language, like English, will only increase illiteracy levels.

The key finding of the study is that the transitional model of using the child's mother tongue for a short period (one year in the case of Zambia) is not enough for the child to develop cognitive skills in the mother tongue that can be used to learn a second language and foreign language.

Banda's (2002) findings prove relevant to this current study as it cites effects that could surface if the learners are not given enough time to interact with their familiar language. Banda's study particularly points to the fact that little time of interaction in a learner's mother tongue would not bring to fulfilment the intended goals. His study shows that a quick transition from pupils' MT to a foreign language, does not just affect the pupil's acquisition of skills in the mother tongue but the second language as well. Banda (2002) posits that the one hour for literacy in primary schools neither succeeded in improving and sustaining the reading skills of primary school pupils in their mother tongues nor in English as pupils' levels of proficiency and competence in both MT and English remains poor at the time of such transition. Banda (ibid) seems to suggest that if no measures were to be taken to improve the situation, the educational system could have negative effects on both the learners and the teachers.

However, Banda's (2002) findings do not extend to private schools as regards mother tongue education. The conclusion of his study is exclusive of early childhood education in private schools. The question on the effectiveness of local languages as mediums of instruction in private schools therefore remains unanswered in his study. More so, the current study takes another angle from Banda's study in that while his is based on reading levels, the current study looks at teacher's perceptions on the use of local languages as mediums of instruction from grades 1-4 in private schools. The current study is in line with the 2013 new curriculum which advocates for the use of local languages as mediums of instruction from grades 1-4 in all primary schools. Be that as it may, Banda's findings and recommendations on the Primary Reading Program could be commended as a significant contribution to the emergence of the 2013 new language policy.

2.4. The 2013 new language policy

The new language policy argues that the new curriculum is inclusive of both government and private schools (Phiri, 2014). In his inauguration speech, the Minister of Education gave his position concerning the new language policy as MoI even in private schools as follows:

I am aware that some indigenous Zambians, especially elite members of society, have taught their children English language right from birth. In Education and according to curriculum development principles, such children's familiar language is obviously English. For this reason, some schools, especially international ones, may be allowed to use English as a medium of instruction from pre-school to Grade 4 but will teach one of the local languages as a compulsory subject beginning at Grade 2. However, such schools will be required to apply for exemption through the established channel of communication; the community through the Parent Teachers Association (PTA) makes a proposition in a general meeting after which a school applies to the District Education Board Secretary (DEBS) – DEBS forwards the application with a recommendation to the Provincial Education Officer (PEO) – PEO submits the application with a recommendation to the Permanent Secretary.

The Minister's speech indicates that even though private schools are an autonomous body, they operate within the regulations laid down by government. The speech exhibits alertness by government that English could also be a familiar language to children who are not native speakers of the language, as the case with Zambia. In this aspect, the government gives a right to private schools with such children as well as those of foreign races, to be exempted from using local language as MoI. But the government also puts an emphasis that there is need for these children to be exposed to a local language as a subject from grade 2. This concern displayed by the government creates a favorable environment for the private schools to operate with some degree of autonomy. Consequently, some private schools run both the Zambian as well international curricular in their schools.

However, the Minister's speech and indeed the Educational curriculum framework (2013) contain several contradictions that need attention. In the first place, the curriculum states that a 'local familiar language shall be used as medium of instruction from grades 1-4' (ECF, 2013: 30). Phrased differently, the new curriculum advocates for the use of any familiar languages as long as it is local to be used as MoI. Nevertheless, this statement is justified by the fact that the ministry still uses zonal languages as a way of defining which language is regionally accepted and therefore given a co-official mandate to operate as the MoI. The explanation in the ministerial speech on the word familiar could obviously be in tandem with what is obtaining in private schools but the terminology *local familiar* in the framework may mean a familiar language that is local. One other issue worth noting is that the ministerial speech is not a document for the public as it were. In this case, what is enshrined in the educational curriculum framework is what is available to the public. So therefore, the explanation of familiar language that is available to the public may not have detailed explanations on the logistics of local language in private schools. It was hoped that the findings of the current study would provide tangible reference between theory and practice.

Another issue of great concern is on the policy of exemptions in private schools. The ministerial speech is somewhat silent about the Zambian children who are in international schools and yet come from homes where the language of play is not English. The speech seems to put a general rule that such learners shall be treated like foreign children and therefore shall continue with English as their MoI. Such a scenario may cause problems in the educational system where the elite Zambian parents who are capable of taking their children to these schools may transfer their children to schools where English will remain as MoI. Nevertheless, since it is not every private school that is eligible for exemptions, the current study was necessary as it sought to establish the perceptions of teachers in private schools on the use of local languages as MoI from grades 1-4. Since the policy had just been introduced in schools, a research on the perceptions of teachers in private schools was deemed necessary.

2.5. Studies on the Medium of instruction in African countries.

Brock-Utne (2001) in his study present classroom observation studies conducted in several countries in Africa (Benin, Burkina Faso, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Mozambique, Niger, South

Africa, Togo, Tanzania, Ethiopia, Ghana, and Botswana). His study reveals that the use of unfamiliar languages forces teachers to use traditional and teacher-centered teaching methods which undermine teachers' effort to teach and students' effort to learn. Teachers do most of the talking while children remain silent or passive participants during most of the classroom interactions. Because children do not speak the languages of instruction (LoI), teachers are also forced to use traditional teaching techniques such as chorus teaching, repetition, and memorization, and recall, code-switching and safe talk. In this regard, Luangala (2010) also posits that such traditional techniques would hinder learners from developing thinking skills that enable them to solve problems independently.

The traditional teaching techniques cited above do not promote authentic teaching and learning. Such situations account largely for the school ineffectiveness and low academic achievement experienced by students in Africa. Brock- Utne (2001) argues that in countries and schools where languages familiar to children are used as languages of instruction, students communicate better. Such communication leads to better teaching on the part of the teachers and better learning for students.

Generally, it has been noted that performance levels in private schools are better than those in government schools where the familiar language is normally used. However Brock Utne's (2001) studies does not provide the reason why pupil performance, for instance, in private schools seems good even though the language used is not familiar to most learners. It is obvious, however, that the findings are from lower grades but they do not indicate whether they include the situation in private schools. The researcher hoped to fill this gap by exploring views from private school teachers on the use of local languages as MoI.

2.6. The concept of Bilingual Education in African countries

Studies by Alidou (1997) on bi/multilingual education in Africa (Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Ghana, Mali, Malawi, Tanzania, Zambia to name a few) indicate that the use of mother tongues in basic education produces positive outcomes if carefully implemented. The primary beneficial aspects are the improvement of communication and interactions in the classroom and the integration of African cultures and indigenous knowledge systems into formal school curricula. Effective communication leads to more successful learning opportunities in classrooms where languages familiar to both children and teachers are used as medium of instruction at least in the first three

years of education (Alidou 1997; Bamgbose 2005; Brock-Utne 2001). Moreover, when teachers teach effectively reading, writing and literacy in the mother tongues, students can develop adequate literacy skills that they can use in learning the official languages.

The challenge with Alidou's (1997) study is that it initially sets off with a bilingual/multilingual concept which is in no doubt essential to literacy attainment. But the end result seem to be pointing at a monolingual kind of education where it suggests that the optimal purpose of learning the mother tongue is to transfer skills towards "learning the official languages". Alidou's (1997) study displays ways of how to enrich the second language by using the mother tongue as a stepping stone. But if not carefully interpreted, this sentiment could endanger the whole idea of bilingualism because learners will tend to eventually focus on the second language and shun their mother tongue. To some extent, Alidou's finding is similar to the current situation in Zambia where English is given a much higher preference compared to local languages that are optional MoI in most domains of society. It can be viewed that transitional bilingualism common in African countries, allows for the development and strengthening of the home language only so that it can serve as a vehicle for learning the second language. In this case, the home language is de-emphasized and eventually abandoned as English skills are mastered. This current study, therefore, sought to establish whether such views would be shared by teachers in private schools.

2.7. The success of education policies

A study conducted by Mchazime (1994) on the education policy in Malawi states that in the early 80s Chichewa was made the only medium of instruction in all schools in Malawi from grade 1 through to 4. English took over as a medium of instruction from grade 5 onwards. In addition, both Chichewa and English were the only languages that were studied as school subjects from grade 1 through to university. This school language policy made some impact on the education system in Malawi. For example, programs for training teachers in the use of Chichewa as a medium of instruction were developed and implemented in all teacher training colleges. Some attempts were also made to standardize the orthography of Chichewa. In addition, in 1989 government approved that all pupils books for grades 1 to 4, except those of English, should be written in Chichewa (Mchazime: 1994). What this meant was that pupils' books for subjects such as Mathematics and General Studies had to be written in Chichewa. The accompanying teachers' guides were, however, written in English. This was done to give further

information in English as a back-up to those teachers whose knowledge of Chichewa was not as strong. One scenario that was created by this school language policy was that it was not being implemented by some teachers who could not speak Chichewa fluently because it was not their native language. The result was that many of such teachers tended to give instruction in a local language other than Chichewa which they were familiar with and only switched to Chichewa when officials entered their classrooms (MOE: 1996). From the point of view of this current study, Mchazime's (1994) study is essential because it indicates the need to train teachers in line with the new curriculum. More so the study highlights the need for the provision of material which is in line with the policy. What is worth noting in Mchazime's study is the fact teachers encountered difficulties in teaching the language because they could not speak it. This kind of situation forces teachers to give instructions to children in a language that is not commonly spoken in the area of the school, thus contravening the policy. Nevertheless, Mchazime's study discusses an important issue that if a policy does not meet all the essential logistics, it may fail to bring out the targeted results. It is for this fact that the current study chose to consider a sector of society that significantly contributes to the education of initial literacy, private schools. The research attempted to bring to light views of private school teachers towards local language for initial literacy in Zambia.

2.8. Attitudes and Preferences towards the mediums of instruction

In his study, Sampa (2003) cites that the Breakthrough to Literacy Project in Zambia was very illustrative of what should be done and how to improve the quality of learning and achieve better results. Its main goal was to facilitate the development of reading abilities and literacy skills in both mother tongue and English among school children. Sampa (2003) argues that there is a correlation between students' literacy skills and their academic achievements. He concludes that teaching in mother tongues is still viewed by many Africans, as a second class occupation compared to teaching in international foreign language. This attitude affects both teachers and students' morale. Moreover, this attitude forces teachers to focus more on teaching second languages than mother tongues. An accompaniment has been the growth of private-sector English medium schooling, very often favored by elites for their own children's education, for example, in Tanzania, India, South Africa and Zambia (Sampa, 2003). These private sector schools are a potential obstacle to a shift toward local languages of instruction in that

implementation of such a policy might induce wealthier sectors of society to migrate to private schooling, which, in turn, might produce the kind of English–vernacular divide taking root in most developing countries.

Similarly, Kanga (2000) points out that the early introduction of English in primary schools is often ineffective and leads to lower educational performance. Furthermore, Kanga (2000) argues that hopes as to what English will deliver for individuals socio-economically are rarely fulfilled. Relatively few will actually go on to enjoy the benefits English promises, or enter the mainly white-collar careers for which English is useful. There is need to promote effective teaching practice in bilingual schools. Policy-makers should make a serious effort to promote the use of African languages in all spheres including private schools. It is in line with such sentiments that the current study sought to investigate the perceptions of teachers in private schools on the use of local languages as medium of instruction from grades 1-4.

Kanga's study is similar with Plonski's (2013) who posits that the pro English vies in some sectors of society show that there exists a pervasive lack of awareness or even deep-seated misunderstanding of the cognitive benefits in first language literacy. Plonski further expounded that there exists an information gap in African schools that advocate for English as MoI. He states the need to provide language teachers and other advocates of language learning with accessible, concise information about the benefits of first language learning and the inadequacy of the notion that *English is enough*.

But that said, the demand for English may not be regarded as irrational. Some studies show that English functions as a gatekeeper in many avenues. It is for reasons such as these that UNESCO report of 2010 recommends language complementarities and not competition. It states:

Policy and practice in Africa nurture multilingualism and primarily a mother-tongue-based one with an appropriate and required space for international languages of wider communication. It is important to ensure that colonial Monolingualism is not replaced with African Monolingualism. The bugbear of the number of languages is not impossible to overcome. It is not true that the time spent learning African languages or learning in them is time lost from learning and mastering supposedly more productive and useful languages that enjoy *de facto* greater status. It is not true that learning these languages or learning in them is delaying access and mastery of science, technology and other global and

universal knowledge. In fact, the greater status enjoyed by these international languages is reinforced by unjust *de jure* power arrangements. It is not proper to compare local languages to international ones in absolute terms. They complement each other on different scales of value, and are indispensable for the harmonious and full development of individuals and society.

The studies by Sampa (2003) and UNESCO (2001) bring out important aspects pertaining to language in education. They indicate that there is a need to strike a balance between English and local languages. UNESCO's stance suggests a bilingual kind of education for it enhances holistic development of the learners. The current study hoped to add to the holistic development of the learners by taking time to learn about the deliberations in private schools pertaining to use of local languages as medium of instruction. By investigating on the perceptions of private school teachers on the use of local languages, this study tried to put into perspective the instructional models formulated by Verhoeven (1994).

While Sampa's study hinges on a matter that is of great concern in the education sector in Zambia and many other African countries, his claim that teachers are forced to use the second language as medium of instruction is a generalized statement whose credibility raises a lot of suspicion as in the case with private schools. Plonski (2013) writes that teachers in private schools in Uganda felt that an English medium was more beneficial to pupils in the primary school. This attitude is echoed in the remarks of the teacher who says:

I feel that pupils need to use English right from the lower levels. This is the stage at which the Children learn English more effectively and establish a foundation for a good command of the English language for the future (p74).

While the above sentiments refer to English, this study attempted to explore the perceptions of private school teachers on local language as medium of instruction in Zambia.

Studies on language completion and complementarity draw one to Banda's (2002) study on the minority and majority languages. In his study, Banda explains that the languages termed minority are the languages spoken by the majority group while as the majority languages are those spoken by the minority group. This attributes to the status given to these languages. Banda (2002) cites Holmarsdottir (2001:34) that a "minority group" is not necessarily a minority at all.

He explains that a “minority group” is in fact a dominated majority that is controlled by the dominant minority. Banda (2002) explains that the learning of initial literacy in Zambian languages (the real majority languages) should make the transferability of literacy skills to learning of initial literacy in the second language, English (the real minority language) even much easier. It was hoped that the current study on the perceptions of teachers in private schools on the use of local languages as medium of instruction would highlight aspects of language complementarity and/or competition in private schools.

Regarding learners’ reading levels in local language and English, William’s (1994) comparative study in reading abilities on English and Chewa in primary schools in Zambia and Malawi respectively revealed that the Malawian pupils who used Chewa, a local language proved better than the Zambian pupils who used English. William’s study (ibid) concluded that English as medium of instruction in Zambia has detrimental effects to a pupils academic performance. William (1994) however, does not provide any comment given by private school teachers on how detrimental English is as MoI. It is therefore possible that his findings may be focusing on government and not on private schools. This literature is nevertheless essential to this current study because the views that may arise from the private school teachers on the medium of instruction may have information on the reading abilities of the learners. It was therefore important to further this study by finding out the perceptions of teachers in private schools concerning the new language policy of using Local languages as medium of instruction. Instead of focusing on reading abilities of the learners, the current study would broadly dwell on perceptions of teachers in private schools on the use of local languages as medium of instruction from grades 1-4.

Another study relating to preferences and attitudes on MoI is a study done by Nkosha (1992) who conducted a survey on the views of parents and teachers towards the use of English as the medium of instruction at lower primary level. He conducted a study on parents’ views on English as medium of instruction. Findings revealed that some parents preferred English to local language with the reason that transferring children from English to local language would disturb their learning. However, the psychologist Spolsky (1985: 68) argues that “A mother tongue is the expression of the primary identity of a human being. It is the language through which a person perceives the surrounding world and through which initial concept information takes place.

The current study sought to take another angle from Nkosha by establishing the perceptions of teachers in private schools on the use of local languages as MoI for grades 1-4.

Similar to Nkosha's (1992) study is Kavwaya's (2009) research which focused on the attitudes of teachers and parents towards English as medium of instruction in Zambian schools. The study revealed a mixture of inclinations towards English and local language. Kavwaya observed that people in Namwala and Monze districts of Zambia opted for both languages because they thought that while English would help their children get better jobs, Tonga would enhance the continuity of culture in the lives of their children. The gap that the researcher hoped to fill was that Kavwaya's research was done in southern province while the researchers study was based in Lusaka. More so, Kavwaya did not specify whether his findings included private schools in the two districts he targeted. The other gap is that while Kavwaya's language in question was English, the current study was based on the perceptions of teachers in private schools on the use of local languages as MoI from grades 1-4. Kavwaya's findings could, however, be relevant to the current study for it is possible that some of his findings may be common in all types of schools.

2.9. Teacher and Pupil performance as regards mediums of instruction.

Brock-Utne (2001), Prah (2000) and Phillipson (2000) argue that children learn better when the language used for instruction in the teaching and learning process is a familiar language which later facilitates the acquisition of other languages easily. They argue that local languages are the best basis for literacy, since they are already understood by local populations and young children in particular can more easily learn academic content in languages they already understand. In their further analysis, scholars state that such learners who attain initial literacy in their familiar language will find it easier to grasp concepts in the second language. In this vein, Bunyi (1999) and Prah (2000) are of the view that foreign language for initial literacy provides for imperfect education in Africa. Bunyi (1999) concludes that far from serving as a great unifying force, Western languages can serve as a great divider in Africa – dividing people along class lines with upper classes speaking Western languages and lower classes speaking indigenous languages. Prah (2000) further suggests that the use of European languages in Africa cuts off the elite from the population and that not understanding the official language, the ordinary people can neither

be identified by the state nor acquire even the most rudimentary information about public affairs. Prah (2000) asserted that the common people almost never fully learn English as a rule, and that as a result its use as an official language only benefits the elites. In his view, dismisses the argument that European languages increase the global opportunities for the people of Africa, reporting that only a small percentage of the population will ever utilize this competence.

While the studies cited above discuss the preferences of mother tongue over European languages such as English, the current study focuses on perceptions of teachers in private schools on the use of local language as MoI from grades 1 to 4. The studies above do not state whether the analysis done on language takes the point of view of it being a medium of instruction. Prah's point of view seems to have taken a much broader political perspective by looking at how language can act as a tool towards positive or negative social stratification of a society. The point of focus in the current study was to establish the perceptions of teachers in private schools on the use of local languages as mediums instruction from grades 1-4 in private schools.

2.10. The transference of skills from mother tongue to second language.

In this section, the focus is on research that has been done purporting an easy transference of skills from LI to L2 by early grade learners. A large body of knowledge supports that the benefits of local language for initial literacy enhances transference of skills into a second language. Some studies have therefore attempted to explain how this transference of skills from LI to L2 is enhanced (Nkoshu (1984), Matafwali (2010)).

Matafwali (2010) argues that children whose oral language is well developed at an early age excel in literacy. She explains that the early language learners use the technique of repetition to increase their vocabulary. They learn the sounds of the spoken words and later as they learn to read, make associations of the sounds which they have heard and spoken repeatedly with the written words. Matafwali further posits that the learners become familiar with words and when they come across them again, the words are not strange. This enhances literacy acquisition and development. Similarly, Vygotsky (1978) argues that children attain concept formation by associating objects to graphic symbols and this can best be attained through the use of a language in which these objects are already mentally shaped in the learners. In these studies, there seems

to be a conviction that children learn better by using what they know in order to introduce that which they are yet to know.

These studies are relevant to this current study in that they highlight the benefits of introducing learners to new concepts by using a language that they know already. The studies above seem to suggest that before children are exposed to graphic symbols, they need to interact orally with the medium of instruction. However, we realize that these studies could be well placed for emergency literacy unlike the current study that looks at Grades 1-4 learners. It is, however, assumed that by grade 1, the learners would have come with concepts that are already forming using a language that they are most familiar. The studies by Matafwali (2010) and Vygotsky (1978) do not provide a clear picture of the perceptions of teachers in private schools as regards local languages as MoI. The current study hoped to bring out the perceptions of teachers in private schools concerning the new language policy of using local languages as medium of instruction from grades 1-4.

In his study on the medium of instruction in Zambian primary schools, Sekeleti (1983) points out the psychological and social effects that a medium of instruction can have on the learners as well as the teachers. Sekeleti (2000) looks at the effects of language on a person's self-esteem. He points out that demand for an early start in language learning of a second language is based on a psychological consideration that the second language is easiest when one is young. Sekeleti (1983) further discusses that in domains where the second language is given precedence, bilingualism is not supported. He states: 'one of the common fears of bilingualism is that second language learning in an educational system such as Zambia has a detrimental effect on a pupil's vernacular language.'(p74). Sekeleti posits that it is better to have an integrated approach to learning a language where the whole purpose is to know more about the culture associated with a language than taking an instrumental approach. Sekeleti states that if an instrumental approach is taken as regards language, the purpose is only for social and economic gain. It indicates therefore that vernacular languages will be detrimentally affected by the position of English since the vernacular language possesses little instrumental value.

Sekeleti's fears of vernacular extinction ought to be taken into consideration especially if vernacular languages are put to compete with English. This is similar to Banda's (2002) argument that the majority language often dominates on the minority language due to the linguistic value already attached to the majority language. Be that as it may, Sekeleti does not provide an explanation of the integrated approach that he refers to. The reader is left to guess whether or not integrated would mean simultaneous approach where English and vernacular language are MoI. From the point of view of the instrumental aspect of language, it would be important to realize that English and vernacular languages could still be instrumental but in different domains of society. Such a perspective where the two languages could be seen to be appropriate in not the same but diverse domains would help promote language complementarities and not competition (UNESCO, 2010). Sekeleti's study discusses English as a medium of instruction in government primary schools in Zambia while the current study endeavored to establish the perceptions of teachers in private schools on the use of local languages as mediums of instruction from grades 1-4. It was not known therefore if some or all of Sekeleti's findings would be similar to the findings of this current study.

2.11. Self-esteem and the Medium of instruction.

Studies in psychology posit that the feeling of personal worth plays a crucial role in human happiness. Coppersmith (1980) attempted to show that people with a high degree of self-esteem are active expressive individuals who tend to be successful both academically and socially. In his study, Coppersmith examined learners' styles of expression through drawing and other creative products. He found out that the drawings of pupils with high esteem were characterized by activity, creativity and so forth. The other drawings by pupils with a low self-esteem revealed lack of confidence as their drawings were smaller, constrained and distorted. Coppersmith further concluded that higher abilities in a language are related to a person's self-esteem and vice versa. A similar study was done by Higgins (1976) who observed that a deficit in communication skills results in negative consequences on people's self-esteem. Relating the foregoing to the current study, one is led to investigate whether such sentiments would be similar to the perceptions of teachers in private schools.

It must be noted that some scholars strongly argue against the use of English as MoI. One such scholar is (Kapwepwe, 1970) who claims that the instruction in the medium of English leads to an inferiority complex in African children. In this study, Kapwepwe (1970) argues that learning English leads Africans into a trap, since the better they know it, the less value they attach to their indigenous culture. Such can be referred to as a negative self-esteem based on the premise that as a second language English speaker, one is less valuable than the first language English person even if the former's behavior aspires to emulate the latter. As to whether or not private schools in Zambia would support Kapwepwe's views now that local language has become the MoI is an issue this study may shed more light on and hence its importance.

2.12. Summary

The literature discussed in this chapter has indicated that there are diverse views that scholars have posited pertaining to mediums of instruction. The reviewed literature seems to be drawing two main parallel lines between English as MoI on one end and Local languages on the other. It should be noted however, that a large body of research bases its findings and arguments on the benefits of using local languages for initial literacy in government schools. It cannot be refuted that these findings are based on genuine research. However, most of these studies cannot be generalized to private schools. This is an indication that little research has been done on private schools as regards perceptions of teachers on local languages to be used as medium of instruction. It is for this reason that the current study was a necessary endeavor.

The next chapter gives a detailed discussion of the methodology that was employed during the research process.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

3.1. Introduction

This chapter presents an overview of the research methodology and design that were employed in establishing the perceptions of teachers in private schools on the use of local languages as medium of instruction from grades 1-4. The chapter further gives a detailed explanation of the research methods used to collect the desired data. Among others, issues of validity and reliability as well as the ethical concerns that were encountered during data collection are also addressed. The first chapter provides the rationale for choosing qualitative research.

3.2. Qualitative Research Methodology

The qualitative research methodology was employed for this study. This methodology places emphasis on exploring the richness, depth and complexity of phenomena. Broadly defined, it means, “A research strategy that usually emphasizes words rather than quantification in the collection and analysis of data” (Bryman, 2008, p.366). Qualitative methodology helps to bring out the meaning of informants’ experiences without subjecting them to rigid pre-set categories.

In this study, the qualitative methodology was deemed appropriate for collecting the desired data on the grounds that it seeks to understand human and social behavior from the perspective of those living in the environment, that is, “As it is lived by participants in a particular setting, for example a culture, school, community, group or institution” (Aryl 1996, p.476).

In order to have a better understanding of the perceptions of teachers in private schools on the use of local languages as medium of instruction from grades 1-4, the researcher took the initiative to listen to the participants’ experiences pertaining to the subject matter.

Conversations, in the form of interviews as well as focus group discussions were used to gather as much information as possible on the perceptions of teachers in privates on the use of local languages as medium of instruction from grades 1-4. The researcher also explored the use of document analysis as an instrument during data collection.

The next section explains the research design that was used in this study.

3.3. Research Design

Kombo (2006:70) defines a research design as the ‘glue’ that holds all of the elements in a research project together’. Similarly, Gosh(2011:7 states that ‘Research design is not a highly specific plan to be followed without deviation , but rather a series of guide posts to keep one

headed in the right direction. Within the qualitative research paradigm, an experience survey design was used in the collection of data. According to Gosh (ibid) an experience survey entails conducting of informal interviews with the experienced people. People who have been doing some work on the type of problem or who have empirical or theoretical knowledge may be consulted.

Backed by the above assertions, an experience survey was viewed to be a viable option in conducting this study that aimed at establishing the perceptions of teachers in private schools on the use of local languages as medium of instruction from grades 1-4. The participants in the study were strategically chosen so that correct and appropriate data could be collected. In line with this, the researcher selected 15 private schools in which 55 informants were chosen, with an inclusive of 7 other participants through snowball sampling.

Accompanied with the experience survey was the survey of literature (document analysis). The researcher had to survey the existing literature to see what had been done concerning the subject. Gosh (2011:210) further argues that, 'the researcher's view of literature may give him an insight into the problem so that he may be more familiar with the subject. The documents that were analyzed, therefore, were the 2013 Education curriculum framework as well as the 2014 ministerial speech on the new curriculum.

The next section discusses the research site for the study.

3.4. Research Site

This study was conducted in 15 primary private schools in Lusaka district. Lusaka was selected as a study area because it could give a good representation of the established and registered private schools that are in operation. The locations of these schools can be classified into two parts. There are those schools in the central part of Lusaka and those schools situated on the outskirts. The researcher undertook such a deliberation of sampling out private schools from the two different settings in existence so that the findings would be a representation of all private schools in Lusaka District.

The actual names of the schools could not be displayed due to ethical considerations. For this reason, the researcher used the terms urban and sub urban privates schools when referring to the

two settings. Similarly, the real names of the informants were concealed in the study. The letters of the alphabet were therefore used to refer to various informants.

The urban private schools chosen were those mostly situated in the central part of Lusaka. The learners in these schools are mostly foreigners. There are, however, few rich Zambian families who afford to take their children to such schools. The sub urban private schools on the other hand are found in the periphery of town. They are mostly located right in the middle of the compounds. These are not as established as the urban private schools.

3.5. Population

A population is a group of individual objects or items from which samples are taken for measurement (Kombo, 2006:76). The targeted population was all school administrators and teachers in the private schools in Lusaka.

3.6. Sampling

A sample is a representation of elements of the target population. It consists of the list or set of directions for identifying the target population (Naresh, 2010). In this study, purposive sampling was used in the selection of research participants. Maykut and Morehouse (1995) argue that purposive sampling helps qualitative researchers to gain a deep understanding of phenomena experienced by a carefully selected group of people. Purposive sampling therefore implies that participants that are selected to take part in the study ought to be relevant in relation to the subject matter under inquiry. The careful and deliberate choice of informants and the research site were therefore aimed at drawing into the study; a sample of informants who were relevant to the research objectives. The study size was 62 respondents. Forty of the respondents were the actual teachers of grades 1 and 2 learners while 15 comprised school administrators and 1 was a representative from curriculum development centre, plus 6 other respondents who were parents.

For easy checking, the tables below interpret the figures.

Number of informants selected according to category

Informants	Male	Female	Total
Curriculum specialists	1	0	1
Administrators	7	8	15
Grade 1 Teachers	09	10	19
Grade 2 Teachers	11	10	21
Parents	3	3	6
Grand total	31	31	62

Table 3.1. Informants according to categories. (Source: field visit report).

Number of Focus Group Discussions held with the Teachers.

Informants	Total number per grade	Number of informants per FGD	Total number of FGD conducted
Grade 1 teachers	20	4	5
Grade 2 Teachers	20	2	10
			Grand total 15 FGD

Table 3.2: Number of FGD (Source: field visit report).

3.7. Criteria used on the choice of participants

a) The grades 1 and 2 Teachers

The 40 teachers who took part in the study had been selected on grounds that they were involved in the handling of grades 1 and 2 pupils on whom the new language policy had first been implemented. Being in the group of the main implementers of the new language policy through their delivery of the approved curriculum in the classrooms, the teachers' views on the subject under study were very important. These teachers also had personal interaction not only with the pupils but with the parents as well.

b) **School administrators**

The 15 administrators were selected for the study because of the key positions they held in their places of work. School administrators were in constant touch with all the pupils in the school, the teachers, the policy formulators at the ministry of education, parents and indeed the larger community. They had the first hand information about the New Language policy where they were expected to use local language(Nyanja) as medium of instruction for the pupils in grades 1-4. These were deemed the appropriate informants for the study because they had the experience of being administrators and would thus be able to give insight on the subject under study.

The positions of the above named officials therefore availed them to a wealth of information on issues pertaining to the new language policy.

c) Representative from Curriculum Development Centre (CDC)

One representative from CDC was incorporated in the study through snowball sampling. The school administrators pointed out the necessity to enquire more on the study from CDC since it was in charge of disseminating information based on the new language policy in schools. The semi-structured interview was thus used gather important information from the CDC representative.

d) Parents

Snowball sampling was used to select the six parents interviewed. The administrators cited some parents who reacted strongly towards the new policy hence the need to follow them up as to assess whether or not their views may have influenced the perceptions of teachers and school administrators on the issue of the new language policy of using a local language as language of instruction in education.

3.8 Data collection Methods

In order to gather as much information as possible on the perceptions of teachers in private schools on the use of local languages as MoI from grades 1-4, three different data collection techniques were used namely; semi-structured interviews, Focus group discussions and document analysis. The use of more than one method of data collection was aimed at strengthening the validity of the data collected (Webb, 1966).

3.8.1. Semi-structured interviews

Semi structured interviews were chosen as an appropriate technique for this study on the premise that in depth information is gathered due to the open -ended structure of the questions. (Kombo et al, 2006). In support of the technique, Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) equally highlight the importance of the interview because of its tendency to move away from seeing human subjects as being manipulable and data as being external to individuals.

To help the researcher arrive at the desired knowledge about the perceptions of teachers in private schools on the use of local languages as medium of instruction from grades 1-4, semi-structured interviews were used to solicit detailed information from the school administrators. A semi- structured interview guide was used in order to collect comprehensive data that would address the issues raised in both the objectives of the study. The flexible nature of the semi structured interview guide allowed for probing for information and seeking for clarification when need arose. A total of 15 semi-structured interviews were conducted during the study. Prior to each interview, permission was sought and granted, to use a voice recorder. This enabled the researcher to focus on the actual interview instead of worrying about whether some of the vital information had not been written down during the interview. The length of each interview conducted varied from one administrator to the other but most of the interviews ranged between forty -five minutes and an hour and a half. All the semi structured interviews were conducted with the administrators in their various school offices. The semi structured interviews were also used to collect information from the few parents selected using snowball sampling as stated above.

3.8.2 Focus Group Discussions (FDG)

This method was chosen because participants freely discuss issues related to the topic hence providing the researcher with more information. In the current study, the interaction among the teachers in the focus groups provided an environment where they were free with each other and so interacted with the researcher with much ease. This was seen from the spontaneity the teachers exhibited as each one wanted to contribute during the discussions. Leedy and Ormrod (2005, p.146) advises that to conduct an in-depth focus group interview, the researcher should gather several people, about 12, to discuss a particular issue for 1 to 2 hours. However, since the focus groups were small, ranging in numbers from two to four interviewees, the duration of the focus group interviews lasted for approximately forty minutes.

3.8.3. Documents analysis

In addition to semi-structured interviews and Focus Group Discussions, relevant documents related to the subject under study were reviewed. According to Kalusopa and Chifwepa (1999), the analysis of documents provides insights in the various policy strategies that have been initiated towards the development of a given topic. In a similar vein, Patton (2002, p.294) makes the following argument:

Documents prove valuable not only because of what can be learned directly from them but also as stimulus for paths of inquiry that can be pursued only through interviewing. Some of the documents that proved invaluable to the study on the perceptions of teachers in private schools on the use of local languages as MoI from grades 1-4, were the Education curriculum Framework (2013) and the 2014 ministerial speech by the Minister of Education.

A combination of the above data collection techniques (triangulation) proved useful as it enabled the researcher to gather enough information and diverse perspectives on the subject under study.

3.9. Validity and Reliability

For any form of research to be authenticated, issues of validity and reliability should be given attention. In this section, information is provided on how the issues of validity and reliability were dealt with in the study on the perceptions of teachers in private schools on the use of local languages as MoI from grades 1-4.

3.9.1. Validity

Schumacher and McMillan (2006:324) define validity as ‘the degree of congruence between the explanations of the phenomena and the realities of the world’. Validity of qualitative design, therefore, refers to the degree to which the interpretations have mutual meanings for the participant and the researcher. Cohen et al (2000, p.105) state that, “Validity is an important key to effective qualitative research. If a piece of research is invalid, then it is worthless.”

To ensure validity for this study, the researcher did thorough preparations of the research instruments. The validity of the instruments was then verified by a pilot study which enhanced the eradication and correction of interview questions which were otherwise not targeting the ultimate research question. As regards actual data collection, validity was employed through prolonged and persistent field work, tape recording and transcription of interviews as well as

using verbatim accounts in the analysis. Furthermore, the researcher endeavored to be truthful by avoiding intentional distorted accounts. This was done through respondent validation wherever possible in order to give participants the opportunity to confirm that what the researcher captured was what had actually been said.

3.9.2. Reliability

Reliability is defined as ‘the consistency between independent measurements of the same phenomenon’ (Muzumara 1998, p. 49). Qualitative researchers regard reliability as the elimination of casual errors that can influence results. Since situations are continually changing, qualitative research is said to be difficult to replicate as it can be affected by a number of factors (Bryman, 2008). Nevertheless, the reliability of this study’s results was enhanced by the researcher’s use of different data collection techniques. The research used triangulation method by employing three different techniques namely; semi-structured interviews, Focus group discussions and document analysis. The use of a variety of methods enabled the researcher to cross-check the information that was gathered. All the data collection techniques that were used proved useful as they each contributed to the gathering of a rich source of information, thereby adding to the reliability of the findings.

3.10. Reflexivity

According to Bryman (2008, p.682), reflexivity is a term used in methodology to refer to a reflexiveness among social researchers about the implications for the knowledge of the social world they generate, of their methods, values, biases, decisions and mere presences in the very situation they investigate. In the same vein, Cohen et al. (2000) contend that reflexivity is recognition that researchers are an inextricable part of the social world they have become a part of as a result of their researching it. Furthermore, they argue that a researcher needs to be conscious of the effect that he or she has on the whole research process. Being aware of possible biases and of her role as the main instrument of data collection, the researcher tried as much as she could, to maintain a position of neutrality in order to come up with research results that could reflect the perceptions of the informants.

3.11. Data collection procedure

3.11.1. Piloting

The researcher conducted a pilot study in 4 private schools. The researcher had to first arrange for times to visit the various schools. The researcher was able to make necessary adjustments on the instruments by examining the questions in the interview guide for bias, sequence and clarity (Marshall and Rossman (1995) cited in Nkossa (1999, pg 48). For instance, the researcher was then able to make some amendments on the instruments by making the provision of age optional for the informants since some were not comfortable to disclose their age. The researcher had the opportunity to remove the ambiguities that were identified in some questions. The pilot study was, therefore, an assurance that the topic was researchable and the instruments were appropriately designed.

3.11.2. Actual Data Collection

Data was collected over a period of two months. The researcher took the task of first visiting the targeted schools and arranging on how to meet the various informants. The school administrators, who were also the targeted informants, helped in organizing the other targeted informants who were the grades 1 and 2 teachers. The choice of the administrators as well as the teachers was purposive in that the informants were directly involved in the handling of the pupils who were already using the new curriculum.

The researcher mostly used English during the interviews as it was the common language for everyone. Since there were two categories of informants in each school, the researcher used protocol by beginning with the school administrators, followed by the teachers.

3.11.3. Data analysis

Data analysis refers to ‘examining what has been collected in a survey or experiment and making deductions and inferences’ (Kombo et.al, 2000:117). Kombo explains that data analysis involves uncovering underlying structures as well as extracting important variables. The researcher’s choice of data analysis began during data collection. This is in agreement with White (2005:186), who says that, ‘analysis of qualitative data takes place simultaneously with data collection, the first step being that of managing the data so that they can be studied.’ For instance, the researcher was able to notice that in some schools, the informants were not aware that a new

curriculum had been introduced in the education system in Zambia. This was noted and since semi interviews provide a leeway for adjustment of the questioning technique, the researcher was able to rephrase for the benefit of the informants. This enhanced the collection of correct data. In turn, the researcher was able to write down as well as record the responses from the interviewees. In order to avoid any loss or distortion of data, all the interviews conducted were recorded and transcribed soon after the data collection had begun. This enabled the researcher to familiarize herself with the data while taking into account, possible ways in which it could be analyzed and reported. The data in this study was analyzed qualitatively using themes that were generated in the objectives of the research.

The themes were further used in discussing the findings of the study.

3.12. Ethical Considerations

According to Wood and Wood (2006, p.64), ethics are “guidelines or set of principles for good professional practice which serve to advise and steer researchers as they conduct their work.” In Qualitative research, ethical concerns need to be given vital prominence considering that one has to enter into the inner lives and experiences of the informants. In this vein, Bryman (2008) is of the view that the social researcher should do everything in their power to minimize disturbances to the subjects as well as the subjects’ relationships with the environment. Respect for one’s informants is therefore of paramount importance and the researcher kept this in mind throughout the research period and her writing of the thesis.

In line with this study, an introductory letter from the University of Zambia (UNZA) was presented to the administrators in the private schools who gave consent to be interviewed and hold focus group discussions with the teachers. Confidentiality was an essential element on the research agenda. In trying to create anonymity of the schools and of all the informants involved in the research, pseudonyms were used in the study. This was done to ensure that no form of information could be traced back to them.

3.13. Summary

In this chapter an overview of the research methodology selected for this study and the rationale for the choices made has been presented. It is evident that the research design used for this study was qualitative. The instruments which were used to collect data and the procedures applied have also been discussed. It has also been indicated that data analysis and presentation of findings was

been done in line with the research objectives. The next chapter presents the findings of the study.

CHAPTER FOUR: PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

4.1. Introduction

This chapter presents findings from the study on the perceptions of teachers in private schools on the use of local languages as medium of instruction from grades 1-4.

These findings are based on interviews conducted on the school administrators and on the Focus group discussions conducted on the grades 1 and 2 teachers. The document analyses of the Education Curriculum Framework as well as the minister's speech are also presented in this chapter. The findings are presented using the thematic approach. These are divided into three thematic sections derived from the research objectives and are stated below:

1. The views of private school administrators and teachers on the use of local languages as MoI from grades 1-4.
2. Teachers' perceptions on the availability of teaching and learning material based on the new policy of using local languages as mediums of instruction from grade 1-4.
3. Teachers' perceptions on how the new language policy of using local languages as medium of instruction from grades 1-4 is being implemented in private schools.

In identifying themes, the researcher was mainly looking for information related to the research objectives as well as the recurrent patterns in opinions of the informants. The three main thematic areas are further divided into sub-themes. It is important to note from the outset that some ideas presented are interrelated and can fall into more than one thematic section. The findings below are presented in a narrative form, with the use of relevant quotations from informants.

4.2. The views of private school administrators and teachers on the use of local languages as MoI from grades 1-4

There were a number of issues raised by both the administrators and teachers pertaining to the new language policy. The findings are presented in sub themes below.

4.2.1. Preferences between Nyanja and English as MoI

Various informants had their own perceptions on the use of local languages as MoI. One informant commented that the English language as medium of instruction had been enhancing excellent results in many private schools and in her school, in particular. When asked about how

the new policy had affected the results, the following were responses given by various head teachers from the urban private school:

We are already the best in the area; our children learn how to read before they get to grade five. What problem has the government found with us? Are we not the ones who provide the corporate world with graduates? What study did the government do in order to come up with the conclusion that local language is best for initial literacy? We have not complained of any failures here. Why is the Ministry looking for a solution where there is no problem? The Ministry should have first drawn up a plan, sensitizing the schools on how the policy was to be implemented before it actually did. There is need to get back to the drawing table and revisit this policy. Otherwise, we are comfortable with English here.

More findings from the school administrators showed that there were different interpretations and applications of the newly introduced language policy of using a local language from grade 1 to 4. This was evident in explanations such as this by informant A from a sub urban school:

The New Language policy is a blessing in disguise to us. Our children come from homes that use Nyanja and the use of English as medium of instruction was a big problem to most of them. But the New policy is now acting as a bridge between home and school and it is therefore no doubt that these children will now value what they learn for they will be part and parcel of the system. But I must confess pupils who already have a Nyanja background are excelling in class but not those who use English at home. I have three pupils who have just come from Russia to join my school. These are struggling to even communicate in English. It is now worse for them during the Nyanja lesson. As a way of mitigating this problem, I have ordered teachers to code switch between English and Nyanja even during the Nyanja lesson so as to accommodate all the learners. I do not even know whether introducing Nyanja as a subject and not as medium of instruction is the correct interpretation of the policy.

Some teachers, especially those from sub urban schools stated that once something was policy they could not refuse to implement it as doing so was risky to their jobs. Informant B commented:

We follow the new syllabus which says we must use a Local language as the MoI. This is what we have started implementing. This is a directive from government and we must be seen to be doing the same so that we are not seen as going against the policy. If you checked on pages 30 of the new curriculum frame work, you will see this policy is clearly stated for us to follow. In any case in our schools, I do not think the new policy will make any big change because teachers were mostly teaching using a mixture of local language and English in order to be effective to the pupils who were struggling with English.

The researcher had time to look up what is written on pages 30 of the new Curriculum Framework. It states:

Language of instruction from grades 1-4 will be a local, familiar language, while English will be an official language of instruction from Grade 5 upwards...

Some non-Zambian teachers in the schools showed willingness to take up the policy. Informant C narrated his stance:

Such policies from the government are common in most countries. It is a mandate that everyone gets to learn a foreign language when they are in a foreign country. In my country, such policies are not subject for discussion. When they are passed, everyone follows. I personally don't think we should sit here and complain when we know that government has passed a ruling already. Let us just adjust and do what is needed. If it fails, the government will have to take the blame and not us.

In urban private schools, the teachers who handled grades 1 and 2 classes were mostly subtle on the matter of local languages for their pupils. They commented that they are only supposed to be given guidelines by their administrators on what curriculum to be used in the classes. The teachers gave sentiments that there had been no communication pertaining to the new curriculum between them and their administrators and this made it difficult for them to state their views.

But when asked for their personal comments on the new language policy, most teachers said English as a MoI was better than introducing Nyanja as MoI because they said that most of their learners are familiar with English and not Nyanja. Informant D had this to say:

The new curriculum poses a lot of challenges for our learners who cannot speak Nyanja. Instead of teaching what is in the syllabus, we would be compelled to first teach the learners how to speak the language. This would have negative effects on the performance of the pupils who will have to struggle to read before they can understand any concepts.

When asked how they could account for the few Zambian children in their classes, the teachers responded that the Zambian children in these schools come with English as their familiar language from their homes. The teachers confirmed that these Zambian children barely knew any word in Chinyanja. As a way of emphasizing the point, informant E deliberately called one pupil during the interviews and said *bwera kuno* (Come here). The pupil did not make any move. She stared at the teacher for a long time, trying to make sense of what the teacher had said. Informant M then said “come here”, the girl grinned as she walked to meet informant E. The teachers also defended their stance on English as they referred back the researcher to what the policy says. They argued out that the policy says pupils are to be taught in their familiar language. They therefore stated that for the kind of pupils who come to their school, English is their familiar language.

4.2.2. Teachers’ perceptions on Code switching between English and Nyanja as a MOI.

Most teachers from the sub-urban schools opted for local language citing that it was a language familiar to both the learners and the teachers. The teachers also commented that since the new curriculum was implemented, learner participation in class had improved. Pupils were able to answer as well as ask questions. Informant F from one sub urban school gave this explanation:

School attendance has improved among the pupils. In my class, pupils are now free to speak in Nyanja unlike in the past where I could punish them for using vernacular.’

While discussing the same issue, informant G raised a concern that while they had embraced the policy of using local language as MoI in their schools, this did not mean that they were completely abandoning English.

We still need to use English alongside Nyanja so that our pupils will not feel inferior when they meet their friends who will be speaking English. You see madam (referring to the researcher), we should not rule out English because almost all teachers’ as well as

pupils' text books are still written in English. The exam is in English. We shall embrace the policy yes but with a lot, a lot of caution so that our friends who have not implemented the policy will not laugh at us tomorrow.

The two languages, English and Nyanja were deemed appropriate as simultaneous mediums of instruction in the Sub urban schools towards the enhancement of a favorable learning atmosphere for all children. Most informants from sub urban schools stated that the new curriculum was no different from what they were already doing since they were using English alongside Nyanja. The researcher was informed that in such private schools, the performance was beginning to improve as the local language accommodated a lot of pupil participation in class. The policy is good because children learn better and easily catch up with English because of the Nyanja background', informant M commented.

There were, however, some informants who felt that they had to follow the regulations of the policy since it was a mandate by government. In this vein, informant H enlightened the group through his explanation:

It is a trend in other countries to learn the language of that country, so it should be with Zambia, for all children local and foreign. As a teacher, am willing to take up the task and adjust into Nyanja as a MoI because I have a duty to safeguard and follow the country's policies. The teachers with such sentiments were a mixture of those from urban and sub urban private schools. But not every teacher sided with informant H. For instance, informant I who had been handling grade 1 pupils for many years argued that, "learning Nyanja in a world that is going global would take our children nowhere. English is an easier language for children to read than Nyanja.

In this view Parent A commented that:

We must not pretend that children don't do well in English in these private schools. Look at the results in government schools where Nyanja is commonly used, poor! What evidence do the policy makers have that our children in private schools will not lag behind like those in government schools?

In another school, the school administrator had introduced three mediums of instruction. These were English, Bemba and Nyanja. He explained:

My plan to introduce three languages as MoI may seem offside but it is working well. You see, learners grasp concepts at different stages even if they are in the same grade. A mixture of languages of communication brings every pupil on board. It enhances equal chances of learning. I chose these three languages because I have observed that they are the common languages of play in Lusaka.

Asked if the school had trained teachers for these local languages, informant J said:

Yes, though the teachers I have were trained to teach local language as a subject and not to use it as MoI. My teachers have just been helpful and resourceful. They find ways of improvising teaching and learning materials for the young ones.

The researcher went on seeking more clarity from the teachers that informant J was referring to.

This is what they had to say:

The new policy is welcome. It has provided favorable learning conditions for all English, Bemba, and Nyanja oriented children in the school. We teach with so much pride that we are Zambians imparting academic as well as cultural knowledge in the children through English and the local languages respectively. It is just automatic to switch from one local language to the other when we are teaching. We also use English here and there.

The above findings indicate that there was no one convergent perception as regards the new language policy of using local language as MoI for grade 1 -4 pupils. The informants gave their reasons in line with what they thought was best in the subject matter. One can, however, notice that the preferences seem to have been in line with what each informant was comfortable with depending on the nature of the community where he or she was coming from. The informants from urban schools where most schools are international schools did not welcome the policy because they were apparently doing well with the other policy of using English as the MoI. But those from sub urban schools welcomed the policy because they seemed to have experienced challenges with the policy of using English as MoI. Note, however, that the latter still wanted English to remain the MoI alongside Nyanja.

4.2.3. Exemptions from using the New Language policy

This section presents the findings on the rights of private schools to be exempted from the new language policy of using local language as MoI from grades 1-4. There was common response

from urban private schools that enrolment had not been affected because they had not yet implemented the new curriculum in their schools. They stated that they had the right as private schools belonging to an association called Private schools and colleges association (PRISCA) to apply for exemptions through the Permanent Secretary (PS) to allow them continue with English as the medium of instruction. These had since applied for exemptions and were waiting for the response from PS at the time of data collection. From their explanations on exemptions, one main reason emerged prominently as to why they had to seek permission not to implement the new language policy. Informant K stated:

We are an international school and most of our pupils are foreigners who cannot understand or speak Nyanja. If we introduced Nyanja here, it would defeat the purpose of education which is to learn, understand and apply concepts. Our pupils cannot learn in a language they do not understand.

In the same view, one parent explained on how he deemed English as the better MoI:

I took my child to school in order to learn English and not Nyanja so that he will be able to interact with the rest of society when he grows up.

When asked about how they would cater for the few Zambian pupils in their schools, some administrators stated that even the few Zambians in these schools only spoke English, at home as well as at school. On this matter, informant L stated:

The young Zambians in our schools are safe with English as MOI because they speak it fluently. It is even most likely that they will seek international jobs when they grow up. If they work in Zambia, they will have people to interpret the local language to them.

The speech given by the ministry of education explains that some private schools could be allowed to apply for exemptions since their students are of foreign races. In his speech, the Minister claimed:

I am aware that some indigenous Zambians, especially elite members of society, have taught their children English Language right from birth. In Education and according to curriculum development principles, such children's familiar language is obviously English Language. For this reason, some schools, especially international ones, may be allowed to use English as a medium of

instruction from pre-school to Grade 4 but will teach one of the local languages as a compulsory subject beginning at Grade 2. However, such schools will be required to apply for exemption through the established channel of communication; the community through the Parent Teachers Association (PTA) makes a proposition in a general meeting after which a school applies to the District Education Board Secretary (DEBS) –DEBS forwards the application with a recommendation to the Provincial Education Officer (PEO) – PEO submits the application with a recommendation to the Permanent Secretary (pg. 7).

The researcher wanted to find out the existence of PTAs (Parents and Teachers Association) in these schools. It was noted that in some of these schools, PTA meetings were nonexistent. This is confirmed by one informant who stated that:

In my school, parents are not directly involved in the running of the school. But I talked to a concerned few. I found that they had a mixture of feelings towards the new curriculum. Some were for the idea while others were not. I had to take a final step as the administrator and that was to apply for exemptions. I do not really need many parents' voices on this issue because I already know that the majority will say no to the policy.

The researcher had the opportunity to interview another parent who cited:

I personally feel it is necessary for the learners to learn in both English and Chinyanja because they will understand concepts better. They do not have to go deep in Nyanja. Society demands English too.

There were other school administrators who had welcomed the policy and saw no need for exemptions. Informant J, the one who had introduced three languages as MoI stated:

I cannot apply for exemptions from the policy. I have noticed over the years that children learn to sound syllables in their local language. They develop reading skills for their second language through knowledge of their first language (LI).believe you me, the performance of these little ones is already showing signs of great improvement. It is because local languages in class attract a lot of learner participation. My teachers have reported that there is active participation from slow learners. Even those who just spoke English before are able to speak some

Nyanja or Bemba. The same applies with those who just spoke Bemba and Nyanja. They are now able to use some English words here and there. This is what you call education.

Still in line with exemptions, the response from CDC representative is similar with the minister's explanation. CDC's response was that:

There is such a provision especially for the international schools where most pupils are foreigners. The exemption is given when they apply through the office of the Permanent Secretary (PS). The PS will then direct Standards officers to visit and inspect the school to ascertain if the majority of pupils are indeed foreigners.

From this procedure, one can conclude that the process for exemptions is seemingly long and tedious.

4.3. Teachers' perceptions on the availability of teaching and learning materials based on the new language policy.

In this section, findings on the availability of teaching and learning material are presented.

One challenge which ranked high among the informants' responses was the lack of teaching and learning material. The informants gave a complaint that being in private schools; they were encountering difficulties in accessing books on the revised curriculum. Even the informants from schools where the policy had been implemented said they depended on outdated Nyanja text books which they had borrowed from the nearby government schools. This explains why informant M said she was using an old Nyanja text book entitled *welenga* (read) as she tried to implement the new curriculum in her class. The explanation given on the seemingly lack of text books in schools was that CDC was no longer directly responsible for producing books but rather mandated the private sector to manufacture text books. This was confirmed by CDC representative as he explained:

CDC's job is to maintain quality control over the material that is produced. We agree that this delays the process but the arrangement is books will be produced and distributed per grade each year. For instance, Book 1 for grade 1 was produced and distributed in 2014. In 2015, book 2 will be ready for grade 2 and

the trend will continue. This is to avoid a mix up of books. Production is in phases.

The response from CDC indicates that the arrangement was such that teaching and learning material would be produced and delivered to schools in phases according to the implementation of the new revised curriculum in schools.

The table below shows the various stages of the curriculum input in schools:

Roadmap for implementing the new curriculum

		GRADES			
2014	ECE(Early childhood Education)	1	5	8	10
2015	ADULT LITERACY	2	6	9	11
2016	-	3	7	-	12
2017	-	4	-	-	-

Table 4.1: Roadmap for implementing the new curriculum. (Source: Educational curriculum framework, 2014:61)

The table shows that the implementation of the new curriculum in schools would be done in phases. In 2014, for instance, the target groups were pre -scholars, grades 1, 5, 8 and 10. In line with this, the minister of education, in his inauguration speech gave an explanation that:

I wish to take this opportunity to inform this august house that the implementation of the new school curriculum shall be conducted in phases. In view of this implementation plan I wish to state that the first examination based on the new curriculum will be administered at Grade 9 in 2015. This shall be followed by Grades 7 and 12 examinations in 2016(Phiri, John “New school curriculum” Ministry of education, Lusaka, 2014.

This plan of phases is different from other curricular where all books would be readily available before the introduction of a policy. One would there understand why the findings indicated that books were not available in schools. The explanation given on the ‘lack’ of text books in schools was that CDC was no longer in charge of material

production but rather mandated the private sector to manufacture text books. The CDC representative stated:

CDC's job is to maintain quality control over the material that is produced. We agree that this delays the process but the arrangement is that books will be produced and distributed per grade each year. For instance, Book 1 for grade 1 was produced and distributed in 2014. In 2015, book 2 will be ready for grade 2 and the trend will continue. This is to avoid a mix up of books. Production is in phases.

CDC also commented that other nongovernmental organizations had come on board to produce teaching and learning material. UNICEF was one organization mentioned that it would focus on the production of material for grades 3 and 4 learners in particular.

As regards teacher sensitization on the New Language Policy, the informants said that they had started attending workshops that the government was providing concerning the new curriculum. But the informants still posed a concern over lack of text books in local language. This was brought to light by informant M in her expression:

We are willing to buy text books but we have not been told where the books for the new curriculum can be purchased from. If the government wants us to effectively introduce this policy, they should come up with one central place where we can all go to buy the correct text books for the new curriculum.

4.3.1. Lack of Trained personnel for the NLP

The study established that many respondents were willing to implement the new curriculum but were not adequately trained. What the study further established was that even teachers who graduated from college after this NLP was introduced did not have adequate training in teaching using local languages as MoI. Many respondents reported that their lecturers in colleges had not changed their curriculum to the NLP and trained them as if they use English as MoI. This is what one of the newly trained teachers had to say:

How do you expect the policy to be sustainable when lectures in colleges are not using the policy to train new teachers? This is causing a mismatch between the new curriculum in schools and the previous curriculum in colleges. Besides, there is no logic in the implementation of the new curriculum because Lusaka is a

cosmopolitan city where not every home has Nyanja as a familiar language. English can be a familiar language to a Zambian home. I think there is need for a common definition of the word familiar. In my own understanding, familiar means something well known by everyone. But this policy states that children shall use a local or familiar language. The phrase is packed but someone is trying to downplay the meaning of familiar. Familiar cannot mean local madam. It can mean, in this case, any language as long as it is well known or easily recognized by many people in that area. In this case, English is easily recognized by our learners here.

The CDC representative was further asked to comment on how much preparation the ministry had given to teachers for them to handle the new curriculum. He explained:

Teachers are not trained to teach a language but are given the methodology in which any language can be used, implying that all teachers of language are trained to teach any language.

At a sub urban school, informant N pointed out that the grade 1 teacher was so enthusiastic about teaching in Nyanja but had this to say to justify this teacher's enthusiasm to teaching using Chinyanja as the MoI:

My teacher has been attending the workshops concerning the new curriculum. This has helped her to be very competent. More so, she is conversant with Nyanja because she grew up and went to school in Lusaka. You see, I count myself lucky to have such a teacher who even took Nyanja as a subject even at secondary school. But I just wonder how other schools without such teachers are faring in this new curriculum. My teacher is not trained to teach in local language per say. It is just her interest in the subject that is helping us.

When asked if Nyanja had been taught in the school even before the NLP, one informant stated that there had been no Nyanja subject in the school even if learners sat for Nyanja examination in grade seven. 'They just do guess work in the exam', he commented. But during the same focus

group discussion, there were other Head teachers who cited that they had since introduced Nyanja as a subject in their schools after the introduction of the NLP.

4.3.2. Pupil performance

Most informants from urban private schools claimed that English was the familiar language in the case of their private schools and that they had no problem with the reading levels of their pupils to justify this change of MoI, for example. This is what informant N had to say:

If English hadn't been a familiar language, our schools would not have been recording high pass rates because pupils would have been failing. Private schools have been recording excellent results for the pupils, meaning that our pupils are able to read and write. I agree with the teachers and administrators especially in urban private schools who see no need to change to a local language as though they had not reached their 100 Percent targeted pass rate. The government should have introduced this policy only in schools that had challenges with the use of English as the MoI first before imposing it on all schools including private schools that rely much on the English. English is our marketing tool when it comes to enrolment. Parents feel fine when their children can read in English and speak in English

In the similar vein, informant O who strongly spoke against the NLP cited a number of contradictions with the implementation of the NLP. He also expressed his fears that the NLP would possibly affect the results. This is what he said in defense of his arguments:

I know that the NLP has just been introduced and there are no records yet to show the progress or retrogression in the performance of the learners. I also agree with those who say we should first wait to see what the situation will be like. However, in my opinion, I strongly feel that the results are likely to be very poor. Look, this NLP has brought challenges to pupils as they now have to navigate between English and a Zambian language. Imagine, it is not long time one ago when we were punishing these pupils for speaking in Zambian languages as a way of helping them to practice speaking in English the MoI. Suddenly, we have found ourselves doing the opposite to the same pupils. I am just wondering if we shall

now be punishing them for speaking in English. I think it is just fair to do that. It is like we are playing on their psychology, you see.

The views given by the administrators who had introduced the NLP in their schools were that grades 1 and 2 teachers were not yet conversant in handling the new curriculum since they had only been trained in the old curriculum where English was the MoI. However, some schools expressed positivity by stating that the workshops that the Ministry was organizing were helping the teachers with insights on how to handle their classes using the new curriculum. But the ultimate concern over teacher preparedness by most administrators was that the policy would not produce desirable and sustainable results since the teachers' knowledge on the NLP was inadequate and some even wondered how they would believe that the NLP was there or would die the sudden death like what happened to other old programs such the Primary Reading Program with its New Break Through to Literacy (NBTL):

This policy is like the previous NBTL (New Breakthrough to Literacy) which was brought and cancelled before we could feel the impact. What guarantee do we have that this policy has come to stay when teachers are not even convinced if they are doing the correct thing in class. And with the few that are conversant with Nyanja and can teach it, when they leave, it means the subject leaves too, simple as that.

In the same vein, some head teachers pointed out that the Nyanja used by most teachers in town is a totally different dialect compared to that found in books and in examination papers. Informant P commented:

This situation could negatively impact on pupils' performances who are already struggling to pass Nyanja at Grade seven. There is need for standardization of the Nyanja used as MoI and the Nyanja that learners meet in books and exams. In fact it is said that most of what we hear people speak in Lusaka and in songs and adverts which our children take as Nyanja is not even Nyanja but Nsenga. Words like *Yokosa* (hard) as in the *Yokosa* candle advert on the famous television advert is Nsenga and many others (*Yokosa* in Nyanja is *yolimba*).

Informants in the sub urban schools reported that they had experienced a transfer of their learners to other schools because of the introduction of a local language as MOI. Mr. C commented:

It is sad that some parents have decided to take their children away from our school because they say we introduced Nyanja as MOI. They say that in the first place they had enrolled their children into our school so that they could learn in English and not Nyanja. Where will the Nyanja take them to? They ask us. The only advantage is that such ones are no the majority. So we are not worried because there are only a few such cases. Surprisingly we have also noted that the other learners have taken up the MOI with much fun and enjoyment. They say it is now easy to learn new concepts. Other children from the community are also eager to start school because their friends have told them that they now learn in Nyanja. This is the dilemma we now have. The NLP is a blessing to some and exactly the opposite of others.

4.3.3. Policy misinterpretations

According to the education Act of 2011, the Ministry of Education Science Vocational Training and Early Education is the custodian of quality education provision and ensures that all providers adhere to the policy and regulations on the curriculum. In the light of the NLP, it is mandatory that learners from grades 1-4 be taught in a local language. However, the interviews and FGD with the administrators and teachers respectively brought to light the fact that Nyanja had proved a challenge to be introduced as MoI in some private schools. As such, Nyanja had been introduced as a subject for all pupils from grades 1 to 7 in most private schools. Informant Q explained saying:

We have removed French from the time table and have replaced it with Nyanja. All our pupils from grades 1 to 7 now have three periods per week for Nyanja lessons. This is a requirement from the revised curriculum” In the same vein, a teacher, Mr. M commented that, ‘ Nyanja as a subject is appropriate for the pupils than using Nyanja as MoI which most pupils did not understand.

In some urban private schools where the policy had not been implemented, teachers had instead introduced a time for pupils to learn the Zambian culture. During one focus group discussion in an urban school, one teacher referred to the drawings on the walls as he explained how the school had improvised extra time to initiate the young learners on the Zambian culture. The

drawings on the walls depicted pictures on agriculture, cultural ceremonies and other village life styles.

CDC was also asked to comment on the researcher's findings that most private schools had turned Nyanja into a subject and not a MoI as the new policy stipulates. The response given was simply that private schools had misinterpreted the policy. CDC, however, stated that these schools still needed to teach the *Zambian* culture to these pupils. 'it is through such lessons that learners come to learn the language, though not made compulsory.'

Nevertheless, there were other schools where some informants felt that it was necessary to endorse the NLP. Informant R from a sub urban school explained:

In my school I have decided to introduce *Zambian* language as a subject and not as a medium of instruction. During the Nyanja lesson, pupils who already have a Nyanja background are excelling in class but not those who use English at home. I have three pupils who have just come from Russia to join my school. These are struggling to even communicate in English. It is now worse for them during the Nyanja lesson. As a way of mitigating this problem, I have ordered teachers to code switch or mix with English and Nyanja even during the Nyanja lesson so as to accommodate all the learners. I do not even know whether introducing Nyanja as a subject and not as medium of instruction is the correct interpretation of the policy.

In the same vein, a grade one teacher from a sub urban private school had this to say:

English is too solid and should not be the first language for a *Zambian* child. We should treat this language policy by relating it to the way a baby is handled. In the early months, the baby is not given any solid porridge for fear that its health might be disturbed. Instead milk is chosen as the appropriate food at this tender age. The same applies to language. Nyanja should be introduced to the younger ones first before English because it is easy for them to grasp concepts. Children who do not use English at home find it difficult to understand concepts in English so the gap between home and school is now filled up by the new policy. You see, the set-up of these schools in this area is such that it mostly encompasses children from a

community where Nyanja is spoken in homes, so when they come here and find the same language in class, they are at ease with learning.

The teachers in some sub urban schools had welcomed the curriculum by going further in being creative in their classes. The teachers mentioned that they had embarked on the use of rainbow trackers by putting the pupils into three groups. Those that had learnt how to read in local language were called the greens, the ones who were on transit into the greens were given the color yellow while as the ones still struggling were in red. The following was a comment passed by one teacher using the public voice ‘we’:

We are happy that the government has introduced this policy. Our initiative of being resourceful has also been supported by nongovernmental organizations that go round our schools, teaching us how to assess the performance of our pupils. Time to Learn (TTL) is one organization that has greatly encouraged us to monitor the progress of our learners by using the literacy assessment tool especially for grade one pupils. We can see that the pupils do understand concepts when we explain in Nyanja. Those that are still struggling to grasp concepts are given more time by telling them to come back for extra lessons in the afternoons. We have also joined our colleagues from government schools in the workshops that the Ministry of Education has been conducting in line with the NLP.

Adding her voice in agreement to pupil improvement, informant S commented:

Since the implementation of the new curriculum, most of our learners are now able to read syllables and combine them to make words. The learners who are foreigners in this school even performed better at reading Nyanja than the local Zambians. The only difference which I have noticed between the foreign students and the locals is that, while the foreigners are better readers, the locals comprehend what they read in a much easier way than their counterparts. In my class, for instance, one Somalian girl reads fluently than most Zambians but she doesn’t know the meaning of what she reads. The Zambians understand what they read even though they are slow at reading. As a way of scaffolding, we normally write two syllable words on placards for the pupils to read. We use words such as

tata(father), *tiye* (we go), *teti* (a Nsenga word which means ‘just like that’,
mama(mother).

It is evident from the above responses that while English was viewed as the MoI for urban schools, local language (Nyanja) was more preferred in the sub urban private schools. The two languages were deemed appropriate as MoI in these schools for they seemingly enhanced a favorable learning atmosphere for all children. Most informants in sub urban schools stated that the new curriculum was no different from what they were already doing since they were using Nyanja as MoI alongside English. Most informants in sub urban private schools were of the view that the performance of the learners was beginning to improve as the local language accommodated a lot of pupil participation in class.

Findings also showed that the urban private schools had not implemented the new curriculum and so the performance of the pupils had not in any way been affected. Commenting on the same informant T stated:

If the local languages were to be the mediums of instruction, they would be detrimental to our learners’ performance since they would not read or write in the local languages, worse still speak it. This would also affect the enrolment levels of pupils whose parents opt for English. If Nyanja was introduced as medium of instruction, the parents would definitely transfer their children to other schools. This will directly hamper on our salaries. We could easily lose our jobs since the schools would have no enough funds for sustenance.

From the point of view of the documents analyzed, the researcher noted that the minister’s inauguration speech on the NLP in 2014 explained that the international schools could be exempted from the policy but they needed to introduce local language as a subject at grade 2.

The minister stated:

Some schools, especially international ones, may be allowed to use English as a medium of instruction from pre-school to Grade 4 but will teach one of the local languages as a compulsory subject beginning at Grade 2(Phiri 2014, pg7).

It was evident from the interviews that most informants were not aware of this clause since it was not enshrined in the Educational Curriculum Framework (ECF)) but was only accessed by

reading the ministerial speech. The researcher further observed a contradiction between the policy's mandate of all schools to teach in local language from grades 1-4 and what was suggested by the minister.

4.4. Teachers' perceptions on how the new language policy of using local languages as MoI is being implemented in private schools.

The findings in this study show that the new language policy of using local languages as medium of instruction had not been fully implemented in all the private schools. This is evident with the fact that even if some schools indicated an adoption of the policy, they were still clinging to the old policy of using English as MoI. However, the fact that the NLP was somewhat endorsed in some schools is worth noting. Commenting on the benefits of the policy, informant U stated:

I am particularly delighted to share with you madam that the new policy has reminded us of some of the duties we need to carry out in schools. In my school, local language was never there on the time table and yet the learners were subjected to an exam in local language as they reached grade 7. But we have been reminded of the importance of local languages. We have since slotted it on the time table. We have managed to introduce Nyanja as a subject from all our pupils in grades 1-7. What we ask for is the availability of teaching and learning material.

Even if the findings indicated that the policy had just been implemented, some informants especially from sub urban schools envisioned a successful story for the grades 1-4 learners. In this vein, informant V spoke with certainty:

Madam, education is not only about the teacher. It also takes into consideration the extent to which the learner is motivated to learn. With the introduction of the NLP, I have personally seen the enthusiasm that my pupils have towards learning. They talk to me in Nyanja. They ask me questions which they could not ask in English. I can see that education will now take the holistic development of the learner.

Informant V's comment resonated with one parent from the sub urban area who cited:

The NLP is a blessing to my child who could not speak or read English. The policy has now enabled me as a parent to help him when he comes home with

homework in Chinyanja. I am part of his education success now because I speak and read Chinyanja so I am able to help him.

The fact that most schools that had implemented the policy registered some ongoing training for teachers handling grades 1- 4 classes was worth noting. In line with this informant W expressed contentment for she had been accorded the opportunity from her school to attend the sensitization workshops which MEVSTEE was offering on the new language policy. She commented:

I am glad to have attended the workshops because apart from my personal interests to teach in Nyanja, I am equipped with the right skills for which to handle the classes from initial literacy'. But what I experienced at these workshops is that the skills offered are not enough. The government should at least sponsor in -service training based on this new language policy so that even teachers without interest can handle grades1-4 classes.

While findings from the sub urban schools indicate several changes in the curriculum, the urban schools indicate less or no changes due to the fact that the new language policy had not been introduced in most of these schools. In view of this, informant X commented:

The policy does not favour us. How can we teach in Nyanja when some of us are not even Zambian, not to talk of the majority of learners who are foreigners. I think there is need to put up deliberate measures towards revamping the status of local languages in this country. As at now, the low status of local languages will have a negative impact on the learners who may just feel inferior to use a language that is used by the *ngwan'gwazi* (callboys) in the streets. I personally feel such a policy can only be sustained if local languages are given a significant role in the development of the country.

4.5. Summary

The aim of this chapter was to present the findings on the fieldwork carried out to establish the perceptions of teachers in private schools on the use of local languages as mediums of instruction from grades 1-4. The findings were presented through the main themes that were generated from the research objectives. The chapter also highlighted findings that the researcher obtained from CDC on the new language policy, from the parents as well as from an analysis of documents. Key statements from the informants were directly presented in this chapter.

The findings show that some schools had implemented the new policy while other schools had not. Those that implemented the policy claimed that it was helping learners to grasp concepts faster as they were presented in a local familiar language. On the other hand, the schools that had not implemented the policy cited that they did not need such a policy for they were already in the right track since they were recording outstanding pass rates for their learners through the use of English.

It can further be stated that the two main opposite views from the informants were highly influenced by the locations of their schools. The schools in the sub urban where Nyanja was the language of the community accepted the new policy while as the schools in the urban places could not take up the policy for they claimed that English was the familiar language for them. The findings seem to suggest that the two preferred policies could bring out the targeted results if they could both be legally accepted. Note, however, that the local language advocates still did not want to completely let go of English as MoI.

The chapter that follows is a discussion of the findings.

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

5.1. Introduction

The purpose of this study was to establish teachers' perceptions on the use of local languages as medium of instruction of grades 1-4 in private schools. To guide this study, three research questions which directed the data collection process were formulated. The research questions are as follows:

- What are the views of private school administrators and teachers on the use of local languages as MoI from grades 1-4?
- What are teachers' perceptions on the appropriate teaching and learning materials that have been made available to private schools pertaining to the NLP?
- What are teachers' perceptions on how the new language policy of using local languages as medium of instruction is being implemented in private schools?

This chapter discusses the themes that emerged from the research findings. Apart from the researcher's own analytical interpretations, the discussion is based on findings presented in chapter four as well as the theoretical framework guiding this study and other related literature in chapter two. The findings were analyzed by referring to the results obtained from semi-structured interviews, Focus group discussions and document analysis. The first section of this chapter addresses issues to do with the views of private school administrators and teachers on the use of local languages as MoI from grades 1-4. The second section is the discussion on the availability of appropriate teaching and learning material pertaining to the NLP. The third section is a discussion on how the policy of using local languages as medium of instruction for grades 1-4 learners is being implemented in private schools. For easy discussion, sub themes have been incorporated in this chapter, just as viewed in chapter four.

5.2. The views of school administrators and teachers in private schools on the use of local language as MoI from grades 1-4.

Of interest in this section was to establish the views of school administrators and teachers in private schools on the use of local language as mediums of instruction for the grades 1-4 learners. The study revealed a number views that are categorized into themes as noticed in the previous chapter. The discussions in this section follow the themes as outlined below

5.2.1. Preferences between Nyanja and English as MoI.

The study revealed two main preferences regarding MoI in private schools. The urban private schools still expressed the need to continue with English as MoI whereas the sub urban schools welcomed the new policy of using Chinyanja as MoI for the grades 1 to 4 learners. Referring the two language preferences to the theoretical framework of this study, it can be noted that urban private schools opted for model B which is English exclusive as MoI where learners begin to use the second language (L2) from the early grades and throughout their education. The sub urban private schools opted for model C which advocates for a local language for initial literacy with a hope that when the learners in these schools reach grade five, they would switch to L2 as MoI while L1 would be maintained as a subject. We can then conclude that a precedent has been created in private schools where two main instructional models of Verhoeven (1994) are in operation in some private schools at present.

It is vital at this juncture to discuss the reasons for the two main preferences of the MoI in these schools. The fact that urban private schools comprise mainly foreign students who do not speak Nyanja is an important concern brought forth by urban schools. Other than the foreign students, these schools comprise Zambian children whose first language is seemingly English. As noted by the Minister of education (2014), such children's familiar language is English and they have to continue using English as MoI. The study however, reveals that there is a group of learners that is not addressed in these private schools. The conclusions that all Zambian children in these schools come from homes where English is the language of play may be an over generalization which could end up sidelining the other children in the schools. The findings in the study seem to suggest that class determines which child can go to such schools and which child cannot. While it is obvious that the issue of high fees cannot be refuted, there seems to be a revelation that the issue of class according to how much English a child can articulate is becoming a serious issue creating a line divide even in other aspects of life. This finding resonates with Prah's (2000) study that the use of European languages in Africa cuts off the elite from the population and that only a small population will ever utilize this competence in English.

Furthermore, the studies reveal that the strong defense put up for English as MoI in the urban schools could indicate that prior to the introduction of the NLP; there was no proper sensitization in private schools as regards the new policy. This is backed up by one informant who asked if the

ministry did any research or survey before coming up with the NLP. By such sentiments, it is brought to the reader's attention that most often, educational planners devise policies based on administrative and political considerations at the expense of the so important educational, linguistic and pedagogical factors (Coppersmith, 1980).

The current study shows that sub-urban private schools accepted the NLP as it was viewed as a solution to the learners' problems of failing to express themselves in English. This finding is similar to Alidou's (1997) study that the use of mother tongues in basic education produces positive outcome if carefully implemented. The study further revealed that not every pupil in these schools was a Zambian but the policy was still introduced. One informant gave an example of two Somalian pupils who had just joined the school and found the new policy had been implemented. The point here is not how this was sorted out but what seems to be of value is the question of attitude between the urban and sub urban schools. The study therefore poses a question that since both type of schools would have foreign students (of course in varying degrees), what would make one school accept the policy and the other reject it. It suffices to conclude that despite the facts that are laid down pertaining to the choices of MoI, attitude plays a very vital role on how the policy had been viewed in these schools. This is evident from one informant from the urban schools who commented that using Chinyanja as MoI in a world going global would take the children nowhere. This sentiment could render Plonski's (2003) study true that private schools lack proper information on the cognitive benefits of literacy in the first language. Such a statement, as indicated by Sekeleti (1983), sidelines the cultural and social aspect of language which bridges the gap between generations in all classes of society .The current study suggests inclusive points of view to be used when analyzing issues of language in education so as to incorporate every aspect of society.

The negative attitudes exhibited by some urban private schools could be suggesting that despite the services that these schools render to the public, the fact that they are a business venture remains but an underlying score of every activity.

The study further revealed that in both urban and sub urban schools, there was a claim that there preferred medium of instruction was the familiar language for their learners. English in the urban schools was said to be the familiar language while as Nyanja was deemed a familiar language in

the sub urban schools. In an attempt to clarify this issue, the curriculum framework statement was reviewed and it stated: All the teaching and learning in all the learning areas at the lower primary level will be in local familiar languages (ECF, 2013, p.19).

The study suggests the need to correctly understand the term *familiar*. There is need therefore to analyze the policy statement which reads that, *all children from grades 1-4 shall be taught in a local, familiar language*. This study suggests that the two terms, local and familiar need not be used simultaneously as they may mean two different things. It can therefore be said that a local language can be a familiar language whereas a familiar language may not always be a local language. The situation in urban schools and even communities could be similar with what Schmied (1990) shows that in Zambia, it is increasingly becoming unmarked for a father, a teacher or even a grandparent to use English in communicating with children and other family members. This suggests that English assumes the role of first language in some families in Zambia and therefore is the familiar language. As noted by the minister (Phiri, 2014) in his speech on the NLP that some indigenous Zambians, especially elite members of society have taught their children English language from birth. Such children's familiar language is obviously English Language. In this case, the effect that local languages would have on such children would indeed be detrimental to their education, as some informants argued. This finding therefore proves William's (1992) study futile that English as MoI is detrimental to pupils' performance. William's findings are thus not applicable to private schools.

Several studies assert that children learn better when the language used for instruction is their familiar language which people speak in their everyday lives (Prah, 2000; Brock-utne, 2000; Phillipson, 2000). This assertion therefore answers the question as to how private schools have been producing good results. It could probably mean that the language used as MoI is the familiar language for the pupils. This finding resonates with Mchazime's (1994) study that wherever a familiar language is used as MoI, there is an almost automatic expectance of good results. The study suggests that, for private schools that opted for local language as MoI, these schools' familiar language could be Nyanja and, as some informants explained, good results were already beginning to show in their learners. The assertion posed by Prah (2000), Brock-utne

(2000), Phillipson (2000) and many other scholars is applicable here too. Wherever a familiar language is MoI, children yield good results and teachers teach well too.

5.2.2. Teachers' perceptions on Code switching as a MOI.

The findings reveal that even if most sub-urban schools endorsed the New Language Policy, they still wanted English to continue as MoI alongside Chi Nyanja. The findings showed that code switching for both the teacher and the learner would enhance an acquisition of both Nyanja and English language competence. However, Verhoeven (1994) does not provide any instructional model on code switching. By clinging to English as MoI and embarking on the NLP, the sub urban schools seem to be portraying a sense of insecurity with the NLP. However, this desired model of instruction have similar reasons as those indicated in the 1977 educational reforms where the policy allowed a mixture of English and Local language for better lesson delivery on the part of the teacher and for easy grasping of concepts on the part of the learners. These findings are similar to Kavwaya's (2009) study where informants opted for both English and Local language (Tonga) because while English would help learners to get a better job, Tonga would enhance a continuity of culture in the lives of the children.

The insecurity exhibited by urban schools if they excluded English as MOI seems to be generating from the fact that teaching and learning material is still written in English. More so, the exams would still be set in English. A mixture of English and local language was therefore a strategy towards good lesson delivery. More so, code switching is supported by Myers-Scotton's (1993) study, whose extensive research in Africa concludes that speaking more than one language in one conversation in one day is the rule rather than the exception in Africa. Myers (1993) further states that any model that champions a single language as language of instruction would not be in sync with the linguistic situation and the frame of social networks of language usage in Africa. It would thus be commended that the code switching that certain schools exhibited could be in the right direction towards bilingual education that enhances quality literacy skills. In this context, the study does not support Coppersmith's (1980) findings that clinging to English as MoI is a sign of low self-esteem but a strategy of transitioning from the commonly used language on to the new MoI. Caution should however be observed so that schools are not crowded by many MoI for the learners at the same time. This would indeed turn

the classrooms into towers of Babel where they would be no authentic teaching and learning (Brock-utne, 2001). In this case, the study suggests a need for more sensitization in the private schools on the use of the seven regional languages as MoI in the provinces of origin (Kashoki, 1977). It would be of no harm to further suggest that with the coming up of more districts as well as the expansion of towns and provinces in Zambia, there is need for the country's realignment of regional languages in order to avoid confusions of which language could be deemed appropriate as MoI in an area. The findings in the study call for the ministry of education to give proper guidance to private schools on how effective local languages can be in initial literacy.

5.2.3. Exemptions from using NLP.

The study revealed that most private schools belong to an association called private schools and colleges association (PRISCA). This association sees to it that the private schools and colleges maintain some degree of autonomy where the curriculum is concerned (Phiri, 2014). Most of these institutions have a two-way system of the curriculum in their schools. They run the Zambian as well as the internationally recognized curriculum.

The findings of this study reveal that most urban private schools belong to PRISCA and had applied for exemptions from the NLP. The study shows that one main reason that prompted such applications was the fact that most learners in these schools are foreigners who cannot speak or understand Nyanja. The policy therefore allows these schools to apply for exemptions after proper scrutiny from the ministry. Findings however revealed that because of this right, the new curriculum appeared to be a policy only for a certain type of private schools. The sub urban private schools that do not belong to PRISCA have no option but to embrace the new curriculum. The exemption seemed to have been turned into a favor to the urban private schools whose business had not been affected. While it could be understood that the majority of learners in these urban private schools are foreign and therefore cannot interact with Nyanja, the reasons that some administrators allude to for exemptions do not concern the foreign students but rather registers their attitude towards local language. Sentiments such as 'Nyanja will not take the children anywhere' may not need consideration for exemptions. Such sentiments go against Kanga's (2000) proposal that every African country should promote the use of African languages

in all spheres including private schools. In this context, one realizes the need to improve the status of local languages in every sphere. People's mind-set needs to begin changing if local languages are to indeed be recognized as essential tools of communication.

The findings of this study further reveal that the process to acquire an exemption is attached with too much bureaucracy such that it may take a long period to get the final response from the permanent secretary. One wonders what the private school teachers and administrators would be doing with the children during this period of waiting. If they decide not to introduce the policy and then the response from the PS decides otherwise, the pupils would be behind and would probably never catch up. If they decide to implement the policy, they would have wasted their time if the response proved otherwise too.

From the findings of this study, it was noted that more private schools had started considering exemptions as a better choice, not for the sole purpose of safeguarding the foreign students from a strange language which may yield negative results but rather to safeguard their business where the elite parents take their children to these schools because English, is still regarded as the language of the educated (Phiri, 2014). The findings of this study indicate that this trend could turn out to be a menace to the policy because local languages might be pushed to the sub urban schools only, thereby creating barriers on the effects of the NLP as a whole. As noted Bunyi (1999), private sector schools are a potential obstacle to a shift toward local languages of instruction in that implementation of such a policy might induce wealthier sectors of society to migrate to private schooling, which, in turn, might produce the kind of English–vernacular divide taking root in most developing countries. The reasons which some administrators gave in opposing the NLP and the need to be given exemptions did not concern the foreign students at all. Rather, they were merely registering their own personal attitudes and feelings towards the use of English as MoI as opposed to using local languages as MoI. This resonates with Sampa (2003) who argues that teaching in mother tongues is still viewed by many Africans, as a second class occupation compared to teaching in international foreign language.

When policies are formulated and implemented, the process could be tedious to the point where some important aspects of a phenomenon are forgotten. The study reveals a small but important

group of learners that could be disadvantaged as a result of the exemptions. The fact that international private schools are open to whoever is able to take their children implies that there is a possibility that some children who are enrolled in these schools could be coming from homes where English may not be the language of play. The policy of exemption to such learners would therefore deprive them of their right to articulate themselves in a local language. As observed by Bunyi (1999), foreign language provides for imperfect education in Africa.

There are, however, other several factors that could make schools to apply for exemptions. For instance, if they have questions about the effects of the new curriculum, they would not want to lead their institutions in jeopardy. The schools already experienced the lack of teaching and learning material, not to mention the absence of trained personnel to use local language as MOI. If the schools deem the policy unsustainable, showing a bleak path of success for their institutions, they are likely to abandon the policy. It should be realized that apart from offering a service to the community, private schools are mostly a business. In business there is need to avoid any foreseeable losses. Maximization of profit is therefore one of the goals. As Mchazime (1994) posited, if a policy does not meet all the essential logistics, it may fail to bring out the targeted results.

While most sub urban private schools have embraced the NLP and seem to like it, there are those that still feel forced to use the curriculum. This could be the reason why some schools seem to have misinterpreted the policy by introducing Nyanja as a subject to the grades one to seven pupils and not as a medium of instruction for the grades 1-4 learners. The findings reveal that those that have opted to take on Nyanja as a subject and not as MoI feel they just have to associate themselves with the new curriculum in order to avoid any interrogations from the ministry.

The findings of the study show that the option for English by some teachers is an indication of how deeply rooted the English language is a MoI in private schools. The findings of this study revealed that private schools have seen no or less value in local language for them to change their MoI. This reason could be attributed to the low status given to local languages in Zambia as cited by Sampa (2003). The place that Zambian languages are given on the Zambian syllabus is that of optional while English is treated as a compulsory subject. It is from such a background

that private school teachers still cling to the language that attracts the masses to bring their children to school. In this way, some private schools may seem indifferent towards the promotion of local languages as MoI. The study therefore reveals that the low status accorded to local languages may not be wholly blamed on the private schools as the situation is the same even in other sectors of society.

Furthermore, findings revealed some amount of ignorance by private schools over some policy regulations stated by the minister (Phiri 2014) on the mandate to introduce a local language as a subject in grade 2. This is so because such a mandate does not appear explicit in the policy statement but only in the educational directives. What seem to have been announced in schools were the policy exemptions and not the introduction of a local language at grade two. This may explain why most private schools ended up introducing Nyanja as a subject from grades 1 to 7. In this case, the findings reveal that a seemingly resentful attitude by certain private schools may not be a mere thing of attitude as Sampa (2003) perceived it but rather a lack of proper guidance and direction from policy formulators.

5.3. Teachers' perceptions on the availability of teaching and learning material based on the new language policy.

Teaching and learning resources play a critical role in the enhancement of teaching and learning activities. However, the findings of this study suggest that there was little to less teaching and learning materials based on the NLP. At the most, the study indicated that there was only one grade one English reader for the learners at the time of the study (2014) in schools where the policy had been endorsed. The findings suggest that the ministry of education hastily introduced the new language policy before certain logistics on policy implementation could be put in place. This should not, however, imply that the private schools expected the government to provide books for them. As per trend, the schools were ready to purchase these books, but as observed by some informants, teaching and learning material based on the new curriculum was not available in book shops. The response given by CDC on this matter that material was being produced in phases may tempt one to confirm the ministry's unpreparedness for this policy. There is always a preparation of schemes and lesson notes in schools that require the availability of teaching and learning material in advance. If books are delivered to schools in phases and at the end of the year when schools are on recess, then the preparations for schemes and lesson notes by the

teachers would have to be made during the term when they are supposed to be attending to the learners' needs. The findings in this study therefore do not foresee the policy as a success like in the Malawi education policy where Mchazime (1994) explains that the language policy made some impact on the education system in Malawi because pupils' as well as teachers books were available and translated into Chichewa.

The concern on the lack of teaching material led to the issue of lack of trained personnel to handle the grades 1-4 learners. The study established that the workshops that the Ministry of Education offered as a way of sensitizing teachers on the new curriculum could not suffice for the skills needed to handle the classes. In response to this concern, CDC representative stated that language teachers in all colleges are taught to handle any language class because the methodology they learn cuts across all language teaching and learning skills. To the contrary, the findings of this study were that teachers, regardless of their interest in teaching using Nyanja as MoI, lacked proper training with which to handle the new curriculum. Even though there were concerns over logistics about the curriculum, there were some schools, especially in the sub urban that expressed willingness to embrace the curriculum in their schools (Phiri, 2014).

Similar to this concern was the issue of different dialects between the Nyanja that is spoken in town and the one used in books. The study deemed this as the right time to standardize the orthography when the text books are still being translated from English to Vernacular. Standardization of the orthography would enhance easier grasping of concepts for children so that the language they meet verbally would be the same type they find in the text books. This would then create a potential baseline for a successful policy as witnessed by Mchazime (1994) in Malawi.

A few incidences were however cited that some children had been transferred from these schools where the new curriculum had been introduced. Unlike the urban private schools, the enrolment in some sub urban schools where the new curriculum had been introduced was negatively affected by low turn outs but the performance of pupils had greatly improved especially in the area of reading. This is in line with what scholars allude to that

Effective communication leads to more successful learning opportunities in classrooms where languages familiar to both children and teachers are used as Language of instruction at least in the first three years of education (Alidou 1997; Bamgbose 2005; Brock-Utne 2000)

The other finding of this study was that CDC was no longer in charge of producing teaching and learning material. While there could be advantages to this move, it however poses a danger to a country's education curriculum especially if such a task is completely left to the private sector. The study suggests that while other organizations could be consistent in the production of books, the content could probably be compromised since the writers may be alien to the Zambian culture. This may eventually disadvantage the Zambian children.

5.3.1. Lack of Trained personnel for the NLP.

For the success of every program, the aspect of professionalism cannot be overemphasized. In the light of this study, it is common knowledge to infer the need for trained personnel to spearhead in the school deliberations as regards the NLP. However, the study discovered that the teachers in private schools had not been trained to handle classes using the NLP that was implemented. This is a source of concern due to the fact that sustainability of such a policy is placed into jeopardy (Mchazime, 1994).

The study revealed that while the CDC's response may be viable, it may not, however, address this issue adequately since the methodology that teachers obtain from colleges focuses more on how to teach a subject and not on how to speak it. The repercussions on teachers' lack of knowledge and inability to speak a language of instruction may be seen in the avoidance of difficult topics in the syllabus, thereby disadvantaging the learners. This is consistent with findings revealed by Plonski (2013) who posits that not knowing the MoI affects teachers and learners' morale.

Nevertheless, the study revealed that some teachers benefited from the workshops that the ministry conducted in line with the NLP. Such a strategy from the ministry could be seen as one way of creating a standard approach towards the NLP. However, besides all sensitization, there is need for teachers to be trained in line with the curriculum in order to avoid a mismatch

between policy and practice. Such a direction would be in line with Malawi's successful policy of Chichewa as MoI cited by Mchazime (1994).

One other important revelation in the study was that in most schools, it was found that even if the grade seven pupils attempted Nyanja during the final examinations, Nyanja had not been offered as a subject in these schools. In this case, the studies indicate that Nyanja has had no place in most urban private schools. The fact that pupils do guess work in the final exam shows that there are no serious implications even if they were to fail Nyanja. The need for trained personnel who are competent in both spoken and written is a matter of urgency in schools where the policy was introduced.

5.3.2. Teachers' perceptions on Pupil Performance.

The findings of this study show that most urban schools had not implemented the policy and so had nothing new to show in terms of pupils' results. The results which were available were a reflection of the other policy where English was the MoI. In these results, it showed that there was excellent performance from the pupils. But findings of the study could not verify as to whether the good performance would continue even with the introduction of Nyanja as a medium of instruction.

Findings of the study as regards sub urban schools revealed a lot of pupil participation accompanied with reduced absenteeism. More so, the excitement by some parents that they were now able to help their children with homework since it was in Nyanja was a sign that a bridge was been created between school and home, thereby enhancing the learners' education. These findings resonate with studies done by Spolsky (1985), that a mother tongue is the language through which a person perceives the surrounding world and through which initial concept formation takes place. These findings indicate that, as a way of implementing the new curriculum, most teachers exhibited some creativity by putting the pupils into groups according to performance. This was done in order to know the amount of help that each child needed as they learnt to read, write or understand new concepts. The teachers in these schools used more of local language with a bit of English as they explained concepts to the children. The teachers strategies are in line with other studies that advocate that initial literacy should begin from the learners' familiar world into the unfamiliar (Matafwali, 2006, Vygotsky 1979). This grouping of

kids according to their performance was an improvised way of assessing their reading levels. Note, however, that even if this initiative seemed to have worked well, the trend to put the learners into groups does not follow the policy regulations of using local language as a medium of instruction.

The findings, therefore, reveal that the misinterpretation of the policy by teaching and not using Nyanja as a subject extended further by employing incorrect methods of assessing performance. Evidence to this effect was the information that teachers could write four syllable words for the learners to read. In this context, the study did not indicate any test administered in terms of understanding the concepts before they could learn to read. It is therefore safe to mention that the many policy errors revealed in this study have a bearing on the lack of trained personnel. If teachers knew exactly what to do with the new curriculum, there could be no doubt that they would spend more time on using local language to explain concepts and not teaching Nyanja as a subject. Nevertheless, the fact that sub urban schools were already showing better pupil performance cannot be ignored. What was exhibited in these schools is the aim of the policy, to enhance initial literacy for every child (NLP, 2013). In this case Model C of Verhoeven (1994) instructional models seem suitable for these schools. Model C, just like the new curriculum advocates, is a transitional kind of model where learners eventually take up a second language (English) as the MoI. The study however envisions the danger side of this model in that it is likely that the first language might easily be forgotten as the learner embarks on a popular and prestigious majority language as MoI. The Zambian curriculum needs to put up stiff measures to ensure continuity of local languages not as optional subjects but that a simultaneous arrangement should be created to ensure the continuity of the local language. This will perhaps improve the low status of local languages in private schools and indeed other spheres of society as indicated by Sampa (2003). Further the improved status of local languages would promote thinking skills in the learners who would use their cognitively developed minds to solve problems and not to replicate answers (Luangala, 2010).

One other issue of great concern that this study revealed was that while the medium of instruction could have well been accepted by schools in the sub urban, there seems to be two different dialects between the one used in the text books and the one that learners and teachers

use as the medium of instruction. If not given due attention, this situation could result into poor reading skills by the learners who may equally fail to understand the deep Nyanja that is used in text books and finally in the grade seven examinations (Williams, 1994). The consequence to this would be learners' failure to transfer literacy skills from the local language into English as the policy purports.

From the point of view of the sub-urban schools, it is evident from the findings that pupil performance has begun to improve despite the several misgivings spotted in the new curriculum. This is an indication of the great potential for positive effects that the new curriculum has in these schools. The overwhelming response to the policy in the sub urban private schools is a sign that initial literacy is indeed best achieved in one's familiar language.

Consequently, the urban private schools also maintained that English being the familiar language for most learners would continue exhibiting excellent pupil performance

5.3.3. Policy misinterpretations

The new education curriculum states that local languages shall be used as medium of instruction from grades 1-4 in all primary schools. The findings of this study however, reveal that most private school teachers had misinterpreted the NLP guidelines by introducing Nyanja as a subject and not as a MoI. Nyanja had been introduced as a subject in most sub urban schools and as a co-curricular activity in urban private schools where aspects of the Zambian culture were discussed among the learners. The findings, however, reveal a violation of the policy guidelines in that most private schools had already introduced Nyanja as a subject even before they were certain of receiving permissions for exemptions as explained by the minister that the introduction of a local language as a subject at grade 2 would only be allowed to those with permission for exemptions (Phiri, 2014). The danger that this scenario poses is that individual schools would now carry out whatever plan they think would work for them. Eventually, there will be no standard guideline pertaining to the new policy in private schools. In other words, the NLP would be non-existent in private schools. Even if private schools can be blamed for such occurrences, the bigger blame goes to those responsible for disseminating information on the NLP as it is evident from the study that inadequate preparations were done in private schools concerning the new NLP.

In this regard, the study revealed that there is no private school that had wholesomely adopted Nyanja to be the Medium of instruction as the policy stipulates. Model C, the advocated model in the NLP is therefore not clearly implemented even in the sub urban schools where it seemed to have been accepted. The sub urban schools' inclination to English is in line with Muyebaa's (2000) study that because Zambia is a former colony of a Western power, every language policy will be influenced by this factor where English will always be given a safe place.

More so, findings revealed exhibitions of Zambian cultural artefacts on school walls mostly depicting the African slave trade. These drawings had been supported as one way in which learners could grasp the Zambian culture without necessarily having to be taught in a local language. While it would seem important to teach the Zambian culture to the foreign students, the artefacts that these children learn in these private schools do not achieve the intended goal that the new curriculum posits (ECF, 2013). More so, the time that is set aside to draw and learn about the Zambian culture is the time set aside for co-curricular activities. This stems back to the low status attributed to local languages and the Zambian culture too. There is little or no importance attached to local languages in most private schools. These findings go against Baker's (2006) arguments that the taste and flavor of a culture is given through its language; its memories and traditions are stored in its language. What Baker (ibid) attempts to put across is that no one must claim to know a culture without knowing the language in which that culture is embedded.

It is therefore safe to say that the cultural artifacts that children in some private schools exhibit do not help them to know that culture since they cannot interact with the language of that culture. Baker argues that there is more to a culture than learning patches of it which might not result into anything essential. Separating the teaching of culture from language offers only a superficial experience of the target culture because language *encodes* and *reflects* its culture. Without access to the target language, learners will not attain the depth of understanding the need to engage with cultural knowledge in any meaningful way (Baker, 2006). The claim that culture can be taught in the absence of its language is therefore not in line with scholars such as Baker (ibid) who state that the two components are interconnected and therefore cannot be independently handled. The mandate from the minister's speech as well as the CDC representative to offer the Zambian culture in international schools even when learners cannot speak any Zambian language go

against the theory which argues that Learning another language offers insights into other cultures and ways of relating to the world which no other area of the curriculum can offer. When we learn another language, we are learning not only the words used by speakers of that language to designate everyday objects and ideas, but we gain insights into other ways of thinking about and relating to the world (Baker 2006).

From the findings of this study, It can be concluded that UNESCO's (2010) directives that minority and majority languages should not compete but rather complement each other as an ideal rather than a reality of what is obtaining regarding local languages and English in countries such as Zambia.

5.4. Teachers' perceptions on the extent to which the new language policy of using local language as MOI from grades 1-4 is being implemented in private schools.

Findings in this section suggest that the introduction of the new language policy of using local language as MoI only served a purpose in one type of private school while as in the other type, English was still the MoI. As earlier stated in the other sections, private schools seem to have two models of literacy instruction going on. Model C for the sub urban schools and Model B for the urban schools. The situation in the schools may imply that the MESVTEE need to formalise the two models so that issues of exemptions will be sorted out permanently. Caution should however be considered to maintain continuity of the local language unlike the transitional arrangement suggested in Model C where the majority language(English) eventually dominates the minority languages such as Nyanja (Banda 2002). This is also in line with what Sekeleti (1983) posits that vernacular languages can be detrimentally affected by the position of English since vernacular languages possess little instrumental value.

The explanation by informant U that the grade 7 learners had also benefited from the policy even if they are not the direct target is an indication that the policy, if well implemented could have positive results in the schools where it was deemed appropriate. However, the findings reveal that teachers put much emphasis on teaching local language as their discussions were more concerned with slotting time for local language on the time table. One would want to find out in what language the local language slotted on the time was taught.

One way in which a teacher can know that learning is taking place in class is through the involvement of the learners in the lesson. Findings in this section further reveal that some schools had already witnessed learners' better concept attainment. This is evident from one informant who explained that learners were now able to participate better since they were freely using vernacular unlike the previous policy where they used to be punished. This new development resonates with the aim of education in EOF (1996) that it strives to bring about a whole rounded person, emotionally, intellectually, psychologically, spiritually, socially developed.

Findings of this study further suggest that most of the teachers in schools where the policy had been implemented were not trained as teachers of literacy but were handling the lower grades out of interest of the language. While this could be a plus on the volunteers, such a situation poses a danger as the teachers had no mandate and would therefore drop the classes at any time. One other caution would be that such teachers would have the interest and not the skill to use in class. Nevertheless, one informant acknowledged that she needed skills besides her interest. The workshops that MEVSTEE offered were highly appreciated as an enhancement towards implementation of the NLP. It could therefore be right to conclude that the other teachers would not volunteer to teach in Nyanja as they may not know the language. In this view, Plonski (2013) points out that not knowing the MoI may affect the whole teaching and learning process. The findings suggest the need to train teachers who will use local language as medium of instruction from Grades 1 -4.

Besides the positive effects of the policy cited mostly by sub urban schools, the study reveals other concerns on the NLP. The sentiments on the low status of the local languages cited in urban schools were one common factor throughout the study. The fear by urban schools that such a status of the MoI could affect the performance of the learners would be a topic for serious consideration. If the learners do not use the purported channel of communication, evaluating such a policy would prove difficult. In this view, Higgins (1976) states that a deficit in communication skills results in negative consequences on the learners' performance and self-esteem. As suggested by the informants, there is need to revamp the status of local languages in Zambia. The schools would probably be the appropriate starting point where learners, who

occupy a larger part of society, can be sensitized on the need to appreciate and value the local languages.

5.5. Summary

In this chapter, the major findings of the study have been analyzed and discussed using the theoretical framework and other related literature presented in Chapter Two. As the findings reveal, teachers' perceptions on the use of local languages as medium of instruction from grades 1-4 in private schools have diverse implications on the new language policy and on initial education as a whole. The main finding in the study is that there are now two models of instruction that are operating in private schools. There is Model B (English exclusive) for some private schools and Model C (transitional) for the other schools which seem to have accepted the policy even if they opted to code switch between the old policy of English as MoI and the NLP. Each of the two types of private school has given reasons for their choice of MoI which are contextually genuine. The Ministry of education has also tried to put up directives to enhance the policy regulations. It is hoped that the discussions on the findings will meet the ultimate aim of the NLP which is to revamp the low levels of literacy especially in lower grades.

The next chapter gives a summary of the findings, conclusions and recommendations of the study.

The findings of the study revealed a number of deliberations showing how the use of local languages as MoI has affected the status quo in private schools. While some findings indicate positivity towards the policy, others register resentment coupled with much unsettledness. This unsettledness could be due to the fact that the NLP had just been implemented and there was still that transition from the previous policy as well as the fact that other schools that had not endorsed the policy lacked direction through which the new curriculum could be implemented in their schools.

CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1. Introduction

The purpose of this study was to establish the perceptions of teachers in private schools on the use of local languages as mediums of instruction from grades 1 to 4. The conclusion in this study is in line with the findings and discussions. It is hoped that the recommendations given in this study will be of positive effect to the curriculum planners administrators, teachers in private schools and beyond and indeed to all those who will take time to read this work.

6.2. Conclusion

This analysis placed into perspective findings and data showing that the new language policy which the ministry of education introduced in 2013 had been implemented in some and not all private schools. It should be noted from the outset that one of the findings which may help the reader to appreciate the study is that within the broader picture of private schools, there lies another type of private schools called international private schools. The international private schools are the ones commonly situated in the urban places of Lusaka while as the other private schools are spread between urban and sub urban areas.

The study revealed a line divide between the urban and sub urban schools in the sense that the two types of schools opted for two different MoI: Nyanja for the sub urban schools and English for the urban schools. This therefore entails that at present, there are two mediums of instruction running in private schools. Model B (English exclusive) is for the international private schools while as model C (transitional) is found in sub urban schools. Note, however, that model C followers have also clung to English for fear that they may lose out on the privileges that come along with the language.

The study concludes that despite the genuine concerns on which the policy of exemptions was founded, it may encounter some abuse by some schools and individuals whose aim of maintaining English as MoI may simply be for economic and prestigious gain at the expense of the local languages. This concludes that local languages still maintain a low status not only in the education sector but in other sectors as well. This may have influenced other schools not to endorse the policy for it would impact negatively on the 'business'. The need to revamp the

situation is of great importance if the policy is to be embraced and therefore sustained by many stakeholders in the country. The concern on the lack of teaching and learning material coupled with incompetent personnel cannot be overemphasized. The study concludes that if not given due attention, this situation may pose a threat on the sustenance of the policy. Related to this is the issue of performance. It can be concluded that in schools where the policy was introduced, better results may be expected since there were already signs of better performance by the learners.

The discussion on the misinterpretation of the policy by almost all schools suggests some serious lack of miscommunication between private schools and the ministry. The fact that most schools concentrated on teaching and not using Nyanja as a MoI indicates that no private school wholly followed the policy's regulations. Nevertheless, schools that accepted the policy seem to have been in the process of transition towards a complete embrace of the NLP.

All in all, the ultimate research question for the study which was to establish the perceptions of teachers in private schools on the use of local languages as MoI from grades 1-4 was deliberated upon successfully in that all discussions pointed towards the research. In a piecemeal, the response to the research question was that the perceptions of private school teachers on the use local languages as MoI revealed a line divide between what can be called *English language private schools* on one hand and *Local language private schools* on the other. The implication is that the policy may take off in some schools while as other schools may not endorse it completely

6.3. Recommendations

1. The findings revealed a lack of awareness on the new language policy in most private schools. The MESVTEE should therefore provide more sensitization on the new curriculum in these institutions.
2. To a large extent, the findings showed that most private schools in the urban areas had a bias towards the policy of exemptions. To avoid this, there is need for the government to revisit the policy to prevent any possible abuse of the policy.

3. School administrators should revive the spirit of Teacher Parent Association (PTA) meetings in schools so that all stakeholders have a say in the language of initial literacy for their children unlike the case in some schools where administrators did not involve the parents at any level of the school curriculum.

4. Considering the fact that the local language policy had just been implemented around the time of the study, there is need for a follow up study which will evaluate the performance of learners under the new curriculum.

5. A new study on the promotion and development of equality on language status between local languages and English is necessary. This will curtail the English- vernacular language divide that is emerging in private schools.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I: INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Dear Respondent,

This serves to give you an understanding of the purpose of this research and procedures that will be followed. Further implications for your participation are explained. Finally you are being asked to sign this form to indicate that you have agreed to participate in this exercise.

Thank you in advance.

1. Description

This exercise is an education research. The researcher is a student at the University of Zambia pursuing a Master of Education degree in Literacy and Learning. This research is a major requirement for the researcher to complete her program. Thus this exercise is purely academic.

2. Purpose

The researcher wishes to find out what games young children play and analyze them for skills knowledge and attitudes that are foundations of literacy.

3. Consent

Your child’s participation in this exercise is dependent on your consent. You are free to stop your child/ ward from participating in this exercise.

4. Confidentiality

All data collected from this research is treated with ultimate confidentiality.

Participants are assured that they will remain anonymous and untraceable in this research.

5. Rights of Respondents

All efforts will be taken to ensure that the rights of the participants are protected and respected.

You are assured that your child will suffer no harm as a result of participating in this exercise.

You are free to ask for clarification at any point of the exercise and to inform the researcher if you feel uncomfortable about any procedure in the research

6. Declaration of Consent

I have read and fully understand this document/ the contents of this document have been explained to me. I therefore agree that my child/ward should participate in this exercise.

Data

Signature.....

APPENDIX II: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS

1. Your sex: Male Female

2. Your age:

3. Your Marital Status: Single Married Separated
4. What is the specific name of your institution/School?.....
5. If your Institution is a school, what type?
 private primary school private Pre-School private Nursery
6. Highest Qualification you hold?
 None Certificate Diploma Degree Masters or Higher
7. For how long have you been head?
 1 Year 2 Years 3 Years 4 Years or more

Section B:

9. What language has been used as MoI from grade 1-4 in this school before this new language policy was introduced in 2013?
10. What effect did the use of that language as a MoI at this school have on status of your school, enrolment, literacy levels and general performance of your pupils?
11. What effect do you think the use of local languages as MoI at this school have on status of school, enrolment, literacy levels and general performance of your pupils?
12. How well trained are your teachers to ably teach all subjects in local languages from grade 1 – 4?
13. How stocked is your school with books in local languages that teachers and pupils can use as teaching and learning materials in line with the new policy?
14. How many of the grade 1 pupils you enroll every year come from pre-schools and how many do not come from such schools.
15. What language related challenges, if any, do you see among the two groups of pupils?
16. Explain whether or not the new policy will help to solve those challenges or complicate them even more.
17. What are the views of parents during PTA meetings do they express on the use of local languages as MoI in early grades?

18. What are the views of your teachers on the use of local languages as MoI in private schools such as this one?
19. If the government made an allowance for some schools to apply for exemptions from this policy and continue using English as MoI, would you apply? What reasons for either a yes or no answer.
20. What general comment can you make on the use of local languages as MoI in private schools?

THANK YOU

APPENDIX III: GUIDE FOR FGD WITH TEACHERS.

Section:A

1. Your sex: Male Female
3. Your Marital Status: Single Married Separated
4. What is the specific name of your institution/School?
5. If your Institution is a school, what type?
6. What is the Highest Qualification you hold?
7. For how long have you been a teacher in this school?

Section:B

8. What language has been used as MoI from grade 1-4 in this school before this new language policy was introduced in 2013?
What effect has the use of that language as a Mol at this school had on the status of your:
(a). status of your school,

(b). enrolment,
(c). literacy levels and;
(d). general performance of your pupils in the school?
9. What effect do you think the use of local languages as MoI at this school have had in comparison with the other GRZ schools or pre-school centers in the area?
10. How well trained are you to ably teach all subjects in local languages from grade 1 – 4?
11. How stocked is your school with books in local languages that you and your pupils can use as teaching and learning materials in line with the new policy?

12. How many of the grade 1 pupils you enrol every year come from pre-schools and how many do not come from such schools. What language related challenges, if any, do you see among the two groups of pupils?
 13. Explain whether or not the new policy will help to solve those challenges or complicate them even more.
14. What views during PTA meetings do parents express on the use of local languages as MoI in early grades in your school?
15. What are your views as teachers on the use of local languages as MoI in private schools such as this one?
16. If the government made an allowance for some schools to apply for exemptions from this policy and continue using English as MoI, would you apply?
17. What general comment can you make on the use of local languages as MoI in private schools?
18. Would you love your child to learn initial literacy in a local Zambian language before English?

THANK YOU.