

**ANALYSIS OF THE USE OF MOTHER TONGUE BASED-MULTILINGUAL
EDUCATION (MTB-MLE) STRATEGIES BY TEACHERS IN LOWER PRIMARY
GRADES IN CHONGWE RURAL DISTRICT**

By

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Requirements for the award of Master of Education in Literacy, Language and Applied
Linguistics**

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DECLARATION

I, Clare Mwiinga do hereby solemnly declare that *Analysis of the use of Mother Tongue Based-Multilingual Education (MTB-MLE) Strategies by Teachers in lower Primary Grades in Chongwe Rural District*, represents my own work. The sources of all materials have specifically been acknowledged and the dissertation has not previously been submitted for a Degree at this or any other University.

Signature of Researcher:

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APPROVAL

This dissertation by Clare Mwiinga is approved as fulfilling the requirements for the award of the Degree of Master of Education in Literacy, Language and Applied Linguistics of the University of Zambia.

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the use of Mother Tongue Based Multilingual Education strategies by teachers at Primary level in Chongwe Rural District. The study is informed by the Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) and Ruiz's three language orientation theories. Adopting a descriptive research design, the study used qualitative research approach. The study sought to address the following objectives: (i) to establish teachers' understanding of MTB-MLE strategies used in the classroom. (ii) to analyse teachers' use of MTB-MLE strategies in lower grades of Primary school. (iii) to identify the challenges that teachers face when applying MTB-MLE strategies in lower grades of primary school.

The sample size was thirty teachers of Primary from ten schools of Chongwe District. The population was sampled using purposive sampling and the data were collected using Focus Group Discussion, classroom observation and document analysis and was analysed using thematic analysis. The findings reveal that most teachers in Chongwe District somewhat understood the meaning of MTB-MLE strategies. In addition, the results of the study indicated that teachers of Chongwe District used a variety of MTB-MLE strategies in the classroom. These strategies included translanguaging, use of pictures and picture stories, use of groups, song and real objects. Furthermore, the findings showed that teachers of Chongwe District in an effort to use MTB-MLE strategies faced a number of challenges. Challenges included inadequate materials, unfamiliar concepts in the mother tongue, inadequate preparation time on the part of teachers, and over enrollment. The study concludes that teachers in Chongwe District understand and use MTB-MLE strategies to help learners not familiar with the LOI in multilingual contexts.

The study recommends that MOE should come up with a deliberate policy where teachers from time to time should be capacity built on how to handle learners in multilingual contexts. Also, DCD should capacity build teachers to be able to design materials in Zambian languages that can be used in multilingual classrooms. In addition, teachers should be more liberal and innovative in the classroom by making use of other minority languages as opposed to regional languages.

Key words: strategy, multilingualism, MTB-MLE, mother tongue, language of instruction.

DEDICATION

To my beloved mother Theresah Mwaanga Mwiinga. Mum, may the Almighty God grant you peace, happiness and good health all the days of your life.

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ACRONYMS

L1	First Language
MT	Mother Tongue
LOI	Language of Instruction
MTB-MLE	Mother Tongue Based Multilingual Education
MoE	Ministry of Education
NLF	National Literacy Framework
PLP	Primary Literacy Framework
TESS	Teacher Education and Specialised Services

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Overview

This study investigated the use of Mother Tongue Based Multilingual Education (MTB-MLE) strategies by teachers in lower primary schools in the rural district of Chongwe. This investigation was done by applying Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) theory to the way decisions are made when selecting languages to use in the classroom in Chongwe rural district and the nature of the classroom interaction from a language point of view, as well as Ruiz's three language orientation theory. This chapter introduces the study by giving background information, statement of the problem, research objectives and questions. It further presents the significance of the study, limitations as well as delimitation of the study and definition of terms that were used in the study. The chapter ends by presenting the organization of the dissertation.

1.2 Background to the Study

In the past three decades across the globe, there has been increased research-based evidence on multilingual instructional strategies for culturally and linguistically diverse classes (Mkandawire et al., 2023).

Zambia is a multilingual, multi-ethnic state whose sociolinguistic landscape has been shaped to a large extent by historical factors of migration and colonialism. Zambia's population is about 19 million people, and comprises of an amazing 72 ethnic groups, most of which are Bantu-speaking. Nearly 90% of the population of the country falls into nine major ethnolinguistic groups namely, Nyanja-Chewa, Bemba, Tonga, Tumbuka, Lunda, Luvale, Kaonde, Nkoya and Lozi. In addition, Zambia is also home to a blossoming Asian community, mainly of Indian and Chinese origin. It is also home to a number of European or white immigrants. As a result, Zambia is home to a vibrant mix of cultures, traditions and peoples (<https://www.zambiatourism.com/about-zambia/people/#::~:~:text=>). In addition to the regional languages, residents of Zambia use a number of other indigenous languages (<https://www.worldatlas.com/articles/what-languages-are-spoken-in-zambia.html>).

Regarding language in education or language of classroom instruction, the country has undergone significant shift in language policy, especially during the period 1964 to 2023.

Literacy was in existence from the colonial period of indigenous education, centred on the first language (Brock-Utne, 2000; Ngulube, 1989). This was during the earliest form of education introduced by the early missionaries in the country, then Northern Rhodesia (Chishiba & Manchishi, 2016). During the pre-colonial era, early western missionaries provided formal education in Zambia, then Northern Rhodesia. The missionaries made use of indigenous languages as languages of instruction in all the schools that were under their control, from grade one to grade four of primary education. Even though young men and women preferred to be taught in English, the missionaries opted to provide instruction in indigenous languages (Chishiba & Manchishi, 2016). The use of indigenous languages improved the church's evangelization programme for the Missionaries. Furthermore, as a result of this language strategy, the Missionaries were able to establish a wealth of literature in the indigenous languages (Chishiba & Manchishi, 2016).

Northern Rhodesia became a colony of Britain in April 1924. At that time, The Phelps-Stokes Commission, had already been appointed by the Colonial Office in London to scrutinize the educational system in all the colonies of Britain. The Commission was also asked, inter alia, to give advice to the London Office on how the British Government could enhance the education system in its colonies. the Commission's task was threefold. First, to investigate the educational needs of the people given their religious, social, hygienic and economic conditions. Secondly, to determine the extent to which the needs of the people were being met. Thirdly, to help formulate plans to meet the educational needs of all native races (Snelson 1974). Regarding the languages, the Phelps-Stokes Commission recommended that English be given the status of official language for both education and government day to day business and that the indigenous languages be used for the preservation of national values and self. The commission further emphasised the importance of using indigenous languages for preservation of the good side of African customs, ideals and self-respect (Snelson, 1974). Following the recommendations of the Phelps- Stokes Commission, four indigenous languages; CiBemba, CiNyanja, Citonga and Silozi were selected as official Zambian languages in schools. These four languages were selected by the British Government to be used as media of instruction in the initial four years of primary

schools in African Government schools. The recommendations made by the Phelps-Stokes Commission aimed at improving literacy education and put in place a Three Tier Language in Education Policy. This policy stipulated that the indigenous language was to be used as Languages of Instruction (LOI) in Lower Grades, afterwards learners were to move to being taught in the lingua franca of the area. The English language would be introduced as LOI in the upper grades.

After Independence, Zambia viewed linguistic diversity as a problem and a barrier to national unity, integration and development. This perspective resulted in the selection of English as sole official language at national level in the pretext that as a neutral language its use would not trigger ethnic rivalry which would work against national unity and national development (Simwinga, 2007). In 1966, the Zambian Parliament legislated that English would be used as LOI from Grade One up to tertiary level of education. However, later in the 1970s, it was acknowledged that the use of English as sole language of classroom instruction was proving a disadvantage to the majority of the children whose only contact with the language was inside the classroom (Simwinga, 2007). Afterwards, in 1977, during Educational Reforms, there was a proposal that indigenous languages be used as LOI in early grades but an agreement was never reached. Therefore, English continued to be used as LOI in schools at all levels. Later on, in 1992, there was a further attempt to revert to using indigenous languages as LOI through the document *Focus on Learning* (1992). The Policy document was finally realised and implemented in 1996 in the Policy document, *Educating Our Future* (1996). In this policy, there was a recommendation that learners in lower grades be given an opportunity to make use of a familiar language when being taught foundational reading and writing skills and afterwards transition to English as medium of instruction (MoE, 1996).

Years later, in 2013, the Primary Literacy Programme (PLP) was introduced and was fully implemented from 1st January 2014. The framework uses systematic phonics-based approach with the inclusion of the seven official languages namely Citonga, Ibibemba, Luvala, Lunda, Cinyanja, Silozi and Kikaonde. The PLP is based on the National Literacy framework which focuses on the five key competences of teaching reading namely; Phonemic awareness, phonics, oral reading fluency, vocabulary and comprehension (MESVTEE, 2013). In addition, other skills such as writing and grammar are embedded alongside these key competencies. The PLP is

systematic as the sounds of the indigenous languages are taught in such a way that the frequently used sounds in each language are introduced first and then those that follow in frequency up to the least used ones. Therefore, learners encounter sounds they are more familiar with before coming across those that they are less familiar with.

In addition, Masaiti (2016) examined the three landmark phases: the 1966 pronouncement of English as sole official language at national level and as medium of instruction from Grade one to university level of education. The recommendations of 1977 educational reforms which, despite admitting the shortcomings of English as language of classroom instruction, endorsed its continued use while creating provision for the utilisation of seven Zambian official languages where necessary. Finally, the 1996 language-in-education policy which also maintains the use of English as official language of classroom instruction but, in addition, proposes the making use of community languages for literacy and numeracy from Grade One to Grade Four. As a result of this, a number of innovations and proposals have been brought forward which culminated into the 2013 Literacy Framework. This recommendation came to realisation in 2013 when the National Literacy Framework was documented and implemented from 1st January 2014 as pointed out above. However, in the implementation of this recommendation, the language in education policy still prescribed one of the seven regional languages to be used as media of instruction depending on the region. This perspective meant that many learners would still be taught in unfamiliar languages because Zambia is a multilingual nation with many ethnic communities.

However, the government has come up with a new curriculum which will be implemented from 2025 onwards. The 2023 Curriculum Framework on Education follows the Education Act of 2011 which prescribes the use of English language as the official medium of instruction from Early Childhood (ECE) to Tertiary level of Education. This continuity in language of instruction is considered as helpful for young learners to build a solid learning foundation. The Framework further stipulates that Zambian languages could be used to explain certain concepts while English remains as language of instruction across the curriculum except when teaching a Zambian language or a foreign language such as French or Portuguese as a subject. It further explains that sign language should be used as medium of instruction to hearing impaired learners

at all levels (MOE, 2023). For the purpose of the present study, the focus is on the Literacy Framework of 2013 as this is what was obtaining at the time that the study was undertaken.

In multilingual contexts with multilingual learners such as Chongwe District, there is need for teachers to be innovative or liberal by making use of Mother Tongue Based Multilingual Education (MTB-MLE) strategies in early grades to cater for all learners in order for them to be able to break through to literacy quickly and efficiently (Garcia, et.al., 2018). MTB-MLE strategies are instructional approaches used to help learners who do not operate or understand the official language used in the school. These strategies include translanguaging, sand witching, visual scaffolding, language experience, translation lists, preview-view-Review, think-Pair-Share, Outside-inside Circle, graphic organisers and questioning.

MTB-MLE strategies teach learners to read and write in their Mother Tongue (MT). Rumenapp (2014) describes MTB-MLE as a form of education that underscores the use of the language used at home by the learners as a medium of instruction. The drive to use MTB-MLE is an effort to bring about equitable educational opportunities for speakers of indigenous languages. The Mother Tongue framework strives to achieve increased entrance to education and improved quality of education through the provision of instruction in the first language before transitioning to other languages (Benson, 2004). The learners use their MT during learning to understand, speak, read and write the language of instruction (LOI). The goal of MTB-MLE strategies is that learners achieve grade level competencies and ultimately quality education is attained. Learners in MTB-MLE schools benefit more than learners from their same language community who attend non-MTB-MLE schools (Heugh, et.al., 2019).

Rumenapp (2014) further contends that in many nations globally, learners come into educational contexts that teach virtually exclusively in the national, regional, and increasingly English language. Frequently, speakers of indigenous languages do not have the proficiency to take part in learning contexts that rely solely on the regional language, thus they fail to keep up or are otherwise left out from the education process. In an effort to render education more equitable, multilingual education affords the chance for more than one language to be used both as the target of instruction, as well as the medium of instruction. MTB-MLE makes use of the first language in the initial as the language of instruction, followed by a regional or national language,

and then usually followed by English. Thus, MTB-MLE serves as a form of transitional language education with varying degrees of emphasis on the maintenance of the mother tongue.

In Chongwe District, the indigenous language is Soli, which is a minority language, a dialect of Tonga. However, Nyanja is the lingua franca or widely spoken language of the area due to its proximity to Lusaka and Eastern province where Nyanja is the lingua franca. Since the language in education policy stipulates that it is only one of the seven regional languages that can be used as LOI in the classroom, Nyanja has been adopted as LOI in Chongwe District. Since Nyanja is not an indigenous language in the area, there are individuals and many learners who may not be conversant with Nyanja and therefore there is need for the use of MTB-MLE strategies to help these learners comprehend the teaching in the classroom.

Given this scenario, it is imperative to examine how teachers in primary schools are applying these MTB-MLE strategies in their classrooms. Therefore, the present study investigated how teachers in Chongwe rural district made use of these MTB-MLE strategies in lower grades.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

During the last five decades in Zambia, there has been a concern regarding the low literacy levels. Following this concern, a number of innovations and recommendations have been brought forward until 2013 when the Literacy Framework (2013) was arrived at. This policy states that learners would be taught in a familiar language from Grades One to four. English would be introduced in Grade two as a subject. From Grade five onwards, the language of instruction would be English while a Zambian language would be taught as a subject (Curriculum Development Centre, 2013). The purpose of the National Literacy Framework (NLF) was to bring about guidelines for teaching and learning literacy in all Zambian schools and improve literacy instruction in both in pre and primary schools whether private or public (Curriculum Development Centre, 2013). Chibamba et al (2018) further posited that the aim of the National Literacy Framework and the Primary Literacy Programme was to assist in the improvement of literacy levels of learners in Zambia's primary schools. In addition, Mkandawire (2018) avowed that literacy programmes in Zambia are aimed at enhancing reading and writing skills for learners in early grades.

However, due to multilingual nature of Zambia and that only seven local languages are used as media of instruction, the use of the seven Zambian languages in lower grades entails that some learners would still be taught in unfamiliar languages. Since linguistic diversity has been identified as one of the factors contributing to low literacy levels (Mkandawire, 2022; Mwanza, 2012), there is need for teachers to employ MTB-MLE strategies when teaching lower grades. Chongwe rural district is one such multilingual area with multilingual learners where the official medium of instruction is Chinyanja while the dominant familiar language is Soli. This implies that teachers need to use MTB-MLE in lower grades to enable all learners access learning. As Kaunda (2018) noted, scholars have reached a consensus on the idea that the ideology one adopts in a literacy classroom impacts on the literacy quality and outcomes in children.

However, little is known regarding how teachers in Chongwe rural district make use of MTB-MLE strategies in lower grades of primary school to enhance breakthrough to literacy. It is in this regard that this study investigated the use of MTB-MLE strategies by teachers in their classrooms in the rural district of Chongwe.

1.4 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to investigate teachers' application of MTB-MLE strategies in lower primary schools in the rural district of Chongwe.

1.5 Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study were to:

- (i) establish teachers' knowledge of MTB-MLE strategies used in the classrooms of Chongwe rural District.
- (ii) analyse teachers' use of MTB-MLE strategies in lower grades of Primary school of Chongwe rural District.
- (iii) identify the challenges that teachers face when applying MTB-MLE strategies in lower grades of primary school in Chongwe rural District.

1.6 Research Questions

- (i) What is the teachers' knowledge of MTB-MLE strategies in Chongwe rural District?

(ii) How do teachers use MTB-MLE strategies in lower grades of Primary school of Chongwe rural District?

What challenges do teachers face when applying MTB-MLE strategies in lower grades in Chongwe District?

1.7 Significance of the Study

The study is important in that the findings may benefit the Ministry of Education by providing new knowledge regarding the application of MTB-MLE strategies suitable for multilingual contexts and how teachers help learners to breakthrough to literacy quickly and efficiently using these strategies. This is important given that Zambia is a multilingual and multi ethnic nation. The stakeholders such as Curriculum Development Centre (CDC) and Teacher Education and Specialised Services (TESS) could use this new knowledge to improve the quality of education in the country by rethinking the curriculum for lower grades. In addition, the findings will be helpful to teachers in Primary schools to improve the quality of education by making use of these strategies. Since by using the MTB-MLE strategies in multilingual contexts, the problem of the learners not familiar with the LOI will be addressed, it may enable learners to breakthrough to literacy quickly and efficiently. Furthermore, the findings of the study will add to the body of knowledge regarding instructional strategies in linguistic diverse contexts in Zambia. The findings of the study may back improvement on language use in multilingual classes of Zambia by equipping stakeholders, Curriculum development Center and Primary School Teachers with knowledge about MTB-MLE strategies and their importance in language teaching and learning. Thus, the results of the study may help policymakers, curriculum designers, and school administrators in coming up with appropriate programmes and activities with a view to enhancing teachers' competences to implementing learner-centered MTB-MLE classrooms.

The findings will also give insights on future research regarding language practices in the field of Applied Linguistics and add to the body of knowledge to the field of Applied Linguistics, Literacy and Sociolinguistics.

1.8 Delimitation of the Study

The study analysed the use of MTB-MLE strategies in lower primary schools of Chongwe District. It focused on primary schools only and only teachers teaching at primary school level. The schools under investigation were from Chongwe rural area only. Chongwe district was chosen because the researcher lived there at the time and wanted to understand how teachers how teachers made use of MTB-MLE in their classrooms.

1.9 Limitation of the Study

This study had some limitations. The study was only conducted in selected schools in one district, Chongwe. Therefore, the findings may just be unique to this area and may not be generalised to other areas of the country.

1.10 Operational Definition of Terms

Community language

A local language that is commonly used in a particular locality.

Dialects

Refers to related varieties of the same language. People speaking dialects of the same language have mutual intelligibility, that is, they understand each other.

Explicit instructions

Teaching in a direct, structured way so that learners understand exactly what is expected of them.

Gradual release model

An instructional model where teachers scaffold learning by strategically transferring the responsibility in the learning process from the teacher to the learners ('I do', 'We do', 'You do')

Language of Instruction (LOI): is the language used for teaching and learning in an educational programme.

Lingua Franca: A language used as medium of communication for people who speak different first languages. It is a language widely spoken in a given area or speech community.

Local language

A native language spoken in the area that a speaker resides in

Mother tongue (MT)

The language that children first learn to speak after they are born.

MTB-MLE: An instructional approach for children who do not understand language of instruction or the official school language.

National Literacy Framework (NLF)

The framework from which the PLP is based; it includes five components of reading: phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, comprehension, and oral reading fluency.

Primary Education

Refers to the education offered to Grades 1 - 7 learners

Primary Literacy Programme (PLP)

A reading programme used in Zambia today which was fully implemented in 2014; it uses a systematic phonics-based approach

Reading

The process of deriving meaning from text.

Social Interaction

Any form of communication that occurs between two or more individuals.

Tertiary Education

Any form of education that occurs after secondary.

Zambian language

Any of the prescribed Zambian Languages for use in school.

1.11 Organisation of the Dissertation

This dissertation is divided into seven chapters. Chapter one introduces the study by giving background information to the research, the specific problem under investigation and the rationale for the research. It also gives the purpose and objectives of the study with precise research questions that were tackled by the study. This presentation was done in order to put the study into context. The chapter further presents the scope and limitations of the study and closes by giving a general organisation of the dissertation.

Chapter two outlines the literature related to the study. It begins by outlining the types of MTB-MLE strategies that the study made use of in order to give some understanding of language practices in the classroom. This presentation is done in order to place the investigation within the context of similar studies, thereby making the present study rich. The literature also justifies the study.

The third chapter presents the theoretical framework that informed the study. In order to adequately examine the use of MTB-MLE strategies by teachers in Chongwe Rural District, the study made use of the van Dijk's (2006) CDA theory and Ruiz's (1984) three orientations of language. CDA studies discourse and its functions in society and how especially, forms of inequality are expressed, represented, legitimated, or reproduced in text and talk. Ruiz's three language orientation theory investigated language teaching and learning from the standpoint of language as a right, language as a problem and language as a resource.

The fourth chapter discusses the methodology that was adopted by the study. It indicates the research design, sources of data, sample size and sampling techniques. The chapter also explains the instruments that were adopted and how the data were collected and analysed in the study. The chapter ends by presenting the ethical considerations undertaken in the study.

Chapter five presents the findings on the use of MTB-MLE strategies by teachers in Chongwe District. The presentation of the findings is done by answering the three research questions and objectives which were intended to find out how teachers understood and applied the MTB-MLE strategies in Chongwe District as well as the challenges they faced in the application of these strategies.

Chapter six discusses the findings of the study on the use of MTB-MLE strategies by teachers in Chongwe District. The discussion is done by relating the findings of the present study to the findings of the studies of literature review presented in chapter two of this dissertation.

Finally, chapter seven provides overall conclusions regarding the use of MTB-MLE strategies by teachers in Chongwe District. The chapter brings out key issues that were brought about by the findings of the study. In addition, the chapter presents a summary of the main findings that emerged from the analyses in relation to the research objectives in order to show how far these objectives have been addressed in the study. The chapter further presents some contributions of the study to new knowledge in language teaching and learning and sociolinguistics. Based on the findings, the chapter gives suggestions for future action in the form of recommendations. Appendices follow the last chapter.

1.12 Summary

This chapter has presented the background information and statement of the problem regarding the teachers' use of MTB-MLE strategies in lower primary schools in Chongwe rural district. It further outlined the objectives of the study, research questions, significance of the study, the limitations and delimitation of the study and explained the terms that are used in the study. It has closed by presenting the organisation of the study. The next chapter discusses the literature related to the study.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Overview

The previous chapter introduced the study by presenting the background to the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study and ended with the structure of the dissertation. This chapter discusses the literature review on teachers' use of MTB-MLE strategies in lower primary grades. The literature is presented under the following subthemes. Section 2.1 outlines the types of MTB-MLE strategies, section 2.2 discusses the literature regarding the teachers' knowledge of the MTB-MLE strategies. Section 2.3 presents the literature concerning the use of MTB-MLE strategies in schools. While section 2.3 outlines the literature on the challenges that teachers face when using MTB-MLE strategies.

2.1 Types of MTB-MLE Strategies

The following are MTB-MLE strategies that can be used in multilingual contexts to linguistic diverse learners.

2.1.1 Translanguaging and Bridging

Translanguaging is a strategy whereby multilingual individuals make use of their knowledge of multiple languages in the activity of learning. It is a pedagogical approach that facilitates the use of languages that bilingual or multilingual learners bring to the classroom to teach them language, literacy and content. It encompasses all the various ways of our knowledge when transitioning from one language to another (Heugh et.al, 2019). The teacher can promote learning by making use of L1 and LOI interchangeably during lesson explanations, discussions and project work. The strategy provides a solid foundation of knowledge and communication skills in both languages. Teachers support the understanding of different languages by learners, that is, MT or LOI.

2.1.2 Sandwiching

Kotkov (2021) explains the Sandwich Technique as a method that can be used with our young children when introducing new vocabulary in the target language. The teacher would give explanation to learners by sandwiching LOI and learners' L1. First, the teacher explains in LOI then explains in L1 and in LOI again. For example, if your child's dominant language is Lozi, and you are trying to teach a new phrase in English, it might sound like this:

We are eating

Lwacha

We are eating

When we “sandwich” the familiar phrase between the new phrases, it helps the child integrate new vocabulary and conveys meaning quickly. Sandwiching can be used when giving instructions, for instance, open your book, look at me, listen to the story. It can also be used when giving explanations, for instance, vocabulary words and their meanings. Teachers can further use this strategy to social language phrases such as *I'm fine, I need more explanation*. Sandwiching is a structured way of presenting information across languages and supporting learners when transitioning to using the LOI when listening, speaking, reading and writing.

2.1.3 Visual Scaffolding

This strategy is one of the visual aids that are related to pictures, photos and any nonverbal tools the teacher makes use of during teaching and learning (Nurul & Misdi, 2018). The strategy involves the use actual objects, illustrations, photographs and drawings. The teacher can use visuals alongside LOI to help learners as they relate the words with the visuals. The strategy is helpful in supporting learners' comprehension of text with visuals, especially with vocabulary of which learners have little experience with. Visual scaffolding promotes active involvement of learners at the same time reinforcing vocabulary development as well as the building of background knowledge. Learners can better comprehend the meaning of a word or the function of an object when the actual object or picture is there to be seen. In addition, learners can relate what is said about the object, which is auditory input, with what the object looks like, which is visual input, and how it feels like, which is tactile input.

2.1.4 Language Experience Approach (LEA)

Language experience is a whole language approach that supports reading and writing by making use of personal experiences and oral language (Halstead & Taylor, 2000). Marty, Fersmere and Barnes (2020) submit that LEA begins by learners writing of an experience that is shared using their L1. In small groups learners record their experiences using L1. The teacher helps the learners in documenting these experiences and thoughts using the familiar language and models how their ideas and words are to be written down and read. Learners may use L1 while the teacher reinforces their responses in LOI. After documenting the experience, the teacher may ask questions about the experience. LEA can be used to support learners by building on earlier knowledge, oral language or vocabulary skills while involving the learner in meaningful activities of writing and reading. The teacher can help learners to record ideas and experiences in their familiar lexicon and modelling how their thoughts and lexes can be written, and afterwards read. During this exercise, the learners can use their L1 and the teacher can go through the information using LOI.

2.1.5 Word walls or charts

Word walls are collections of words displayed in classrooms. They are interactive tools that learners can reference during reading and writing lessons (<https://keepemthinking.com/2022/06/10-ways-to-use-word-walls/>). Word walls are designed in such a way that words in the target language are provided along with any words in other languages that are spoken by learners in the classroom. Learners may be given a word, then one partner can say the word while the other partner can explain what it means, use it in a sentence or act it out. The tool is more effective when supported with visuals, pictures or drawings.

2.1.6 Preview-View-Review

This is a strategy in which a teacher takes a few minutes to discuss the lesson prior to teaching it and a few minutes after the lesson to briefly discuss it with the learners. The purpose is to activate prior knowledge and summarise key ideas about the topic to be taught or read. *The Dual Language Hero* (2021), explains that the preview view review strategy is one of the dual language teaching strategies used to aid learners make associations between the LOI and L1. It

helps bilingual learners by previewing and reviewing the content of the lesson in the learners' dominant language. Comprehension can be achieved through the activation of prior knowledge and explanation of fundamental concepts of the topic. There are particular activities that can be employed before (preview) during (view) and after (review) reading a story aloud or completing a lesson. First, before the lesson, the teacher will explain to the learners in the MT or language in which the learners are fluent. Second, during the lesson, the teacher will read the story or teach in the LOI. The learners may answer the questions in either the LOI or MT, then the teacher can summarise the information. Afterwards, learners discuss in the MT. Lastly, the teacher will go through the explanation in the LOI.

2.1.7 Think-Pair-Share (TPS)

TeacherVision Editorial Staff (2015) explains the think, pair, share strategy as a cooperative learning practice whereby learners think through questions using three clear steps, encouraging individual participation. It is an excellent technique for promoting critical thinking and fluent communication in the classroom. Think-pair-share is a collaborative learning strategy where learners work together to find a solution to a problem or answer a question on an assigned reading in the L1 or LOI. This strategy requires learners to first think individually about a topic or answer to a question; and then share ideas with classmates. Discussing with a partner encourages participation, to focus attention and engage in comprehending the reading material. Teachers can employ this strategy by pairing learners who are more fluent in the LOI with those that are less fluent. TPS provides learners with the opportunity to speak with their peers which in turn promotes the acquisition of LOI. The learners have enough time to reflect upon the question, the language or think about the language required to convey the answer. Through discussing their answers with their partners, learners get the chance for increased interaction and therefore teachers can observe comprehension by the learners.

2.1.8 Outside-inside Circle

This cooperative learning strategy is a sharing or discussion that is based on learning strategy that permits learners to work with many partners. Inside outside circle performs well when expended with the whole class, or a large group (Alyssa, 2017). The strategy is implemented by the teacher drawing two circles, an inside circle and an outside circle where the learners face

each other. The teacher can ask a question in LOI and learners share answers in the language of their choice. Learners can rotate to new partners. Preferably, more fluent speakers of the LOI can be put in the inside circle so that they are paired with those learners who are less fluent. In this strategy, learners share information using their L1 or LOI. It encourages learners learning the LOI by hearing the sounds, words, and structure of the language. Learners can answer questions from a story that has been read or heard and answer their thoughts or ideas by answering a question or discussing a topic.

2.1.9 Paired or Partner Reading

Paired (or partner) reading is a strategy used with learners who lack fluency since it provides a model of fluent reading. It also helps learners acquire decoding skills. This is a strategy whereby two learners are assigned a story or text and work together to read it. When using this strategy, students read aloud to each other (<https://www.jct.ie/perch/resources/english/paired-reading.pdf#>). The two learners take turns to read the story, work together to find the meaning of challenging words, give feedback to each other and ask questions to monitor comprehension. This strategy helps learners to read at their own pace and encourages focus on the text. The learners should be paired in such a way that those with stronger LOI should be with those with weaker ones. The strategy promotes the development of reading fluency and supports learners build comprehension of a text.

2.1.10 Story Re-enactment

This is a strategy that supports the building of comprehension, reading fluency and vocabulary. The learners are given a story to read or a story is read to them and are then asked to retell it by performing or acting it out in sequence. In the process, the teacher can either provide the props or ask learners to create the props when re-enacting the story. Story re-enactment provides an opportunity for multiple re-readings, discussion, clarification as well as oral and physical story recreation. This strategy is useful when teaching learners' active involvement in listening (TeacherVision staff, 2019).

2.1.11 Teaching with real objects or Realia

This is a strategy in which concrete objects or manipulatives are used in teaching to promote learners' understanding and language development. When teaching is done by manipulating objects, learners are helped to relate abstract concepts with concrete experiences (Vogt & Sort 2010). The objects could be concrete depictions of the concepts being taught or semi concrete representations such as small coloured blocks to learn colours, to represent syllables and sounds in words. In order to be effective, the teacher should model how learners can connect the object with the vocabulary or concepts in MT and LOI.

2.1.12 Concept Sorts

Concept sorts is a strategy that can be used to teach new vocabulary words that are related. The teacher can have learners compare, contrast and sort words according to certain attributes. These activities enable learners to relate the properties of words to strengthen their knowledge. From these activities, learners learn word structure, understand connections, gain multi-sensory experiences, and ability to use word knowledge to construct meaning. Pettigrew (1995) identifies two types of word sorts; open sort and closed sort. Teachers can decide to either make use of words in the MT or LOI.

2.1.13 Sketch -to-stretch

Sketch to Stretch is a reading comprehension strategy in which students visualize a passage or text and then interpret it through drawing. The strategy is good in that it urges creative thinking, appreciates various standpoints, and promotes discussion of diverse elucidations (<https://www.facinghistory.org/resource-library/sketch-stretch>). This strategy can be used during read-aloud. The teacher will read the story and then pause to have learners sketch a drawing of what they have heard in the story. After reading, the teacher can ask learners to share their sketches and answer questions about their drawings.

2.1.14 Questioning

Questioning is key to acquiring more information and of which without it, interpersonal communication cannot succeed. It is essential to successful communication - we all ask and are

asked questions when engaged in conversation (<https://www.bing.com/search?q=Questioning&q=ds&form=QBRE>). Questioning is helpful to learners whose L1 is not the LOI in that teachers can allow learners to ask in their L1 or LOI. Learners can also be taught to question while reading so that they become active learners. Questioning supports comprehension, keeps the reader involved and minimizes frustration. Learners can ask themselves questions to clarify what they understand and what they do not understand. They ask the questions either in L1 or in LOI.

2. 1. 15 Get the Gist

‘Get the gist’ means to grasp the essential meaning of something, usually done quickly or without requiring to understand all the details (<https://usdictionary.com/idioms/get-the-gist/#:~:text=>). It is a strategy that helps learners in understanding both narrative and expository text. Learners work in pairs or small groups to read the text together and they complete the text. The learners get the skill of identifying the topic, the crucial information, and to make a sentence summary. For learners in higher grades, longer texts could be used. The teacher can assign a summary to be completed after each paragraph or a series of paragraphs. A sequence of summaries can in turn be used to create a one sentence overall summary.

2.1.16 Graphic Organisers

A graphic organiser is a teaching and learning tool used to organize information and ideas in such a way that it is easy to comprehend and internalise. They integrate text and visuals, thereby showing relationships and associations between concepts, terms, and facts. Graphic organisers can be employed in all grade levels, and have proved effective learning tools for all learners (Marty, Fersmere & Barnes, 2020). They aid in simplifying the information for learners and give visual representations. Given the graphic organizer, learners can fill in each area using the L1 and later translate into LOI.

2.1.17 Know-Want to Know-Learnt (KWL) charts:

KWL & KWHL charts are graphic organizers designed to stimulate background knowledge, support higher-order questioning, and involve learners in metacognition (TeachThought Staff, 2022). KWL charts were first designed by Donna Ogle in 1986, and are formatted as 3- to 4-

column charts, in which KWL represents what I know, what I want to learn, and what I learned. With KWHL, an additional column represents how I plan to learn, so learners are also reflecting on means of investigating and knowing.

Table 1: KWL chart

Know	Want to know	Learnt

2.1.18 5W & H Strategy for Oral Language

The five Ws (what, when, where, why, who) plus an H (how) strategy can be used in a variety of ways in the classroom. It is usually used to help learners summarise a text they read (ESOL Online). This strategy is used to promote learners' comprehension of oral language skills. Learners with undeveloped LOI give short answers to questions asked in the LOI. To support the development of LOI, teachers can question using the 5 Ws – who? What? When? Where? And why? As well as the H question – how? These questions and discussion can assist learners in expanding responses in LOI.

2.2 Teachers' Knowledge of MTB-MLE Strategies

Facullo, De Guzman, Del-ong, Dongail, Dulay, and Lartec, J. K. (2022) conducted a study to investigate what subject content was appropriate and necessary for the integration of MTB-MLE in the Teacher Education Curriculum in the Philippines. The study made use of the qualitative approach and employed the case study, and used oral and written interviews to gather data. The interview was administered in five participating schools where the MTB-MLE was being implemented with a total of 35 respondents. Of the 35 respondents 30 were in-service teachers and five were administrators. The data were grouped and themed according to the ideas conveyed by each. From collated answers of teachers and administrators, the study came up with six major subject contents for the MTB-MLE. From these subject contents, the study developed the E.M.B.L.E.M. Content Subject from the Administrators and Teachers; Enrichment of Vocabulary Material Preparation, Books Needed, Learning and Teaching Strategies and Approaches, Empowerment of Teachers and Management. These subjects could be used to help

pre-service teachers to acquaint themselves with MTB-MLE strategies before venturing into teaching. From this study, we can infer that teachers had knowledge of MTB-MLE strategies and applied them appropriately in the classroom. The study by Facullo et.al is important to the current study because the focus of the present study is to investigate teachers' understanding of MTB-MLE strategies and how they applied them in the classroom.

On the other hand, Mulit (2021) investigated teachers' understanding of MTB-MLE and its impact on Grades Two and Three learners' reading performance at Tipanoy Elementary School in Iligan city. Mulit demonstrates in her study that teachers lack training and seminars and were not able to provide learning and teaching materials for MTB-MLE. As a result, learners' reading performance was low. The results indicate that teachers in this area were not very conversant with MTB-MLE strategies. The study by Mulit is pertinent to the present study in that the current study sought to investigate teachers' knowledge of MTB-MLE strategies in Chongwe District of Zambia.

In addition, Yuvayapan (2019) conducted a study on translanguaging in EFL classrooms focusing on the view that making use of one's first language might aid them to be more competent in a second language. This view led to the promotion of a number of bilingual language pedagogies, including translanguaging. Questionnaires were used to examine the views of teachers of English language regarding translanguaging. Besides, in order to ascertain what caused the discrepancy between teachers' perceptions and actual usage of L1, Semi-structured interviews were employed. In addition, classroom observations were done to establish the purposes for which teachers employed the use of L1 in their teaching. The findings of the study revealed that despite their favourable sentiments on translanguaging in some specific circumstances, teachers did not frequently use this strategy due to the demands of their institutions, colleagues, and learners' parents. The study by Yuvayapan is crucial present study as it concerns teachers' knowledge of translanguaging which is one of the MTB-MLE strategies the current study is investigates. The present study analysed MTB-MLE strategies in primary schools as opposed to Yuvayapan who only focused on translanguaging.

Further, Yuan and Yang (2020) explored teacher educator's insights and practice of translanguaging, one of MTB-MLE strategies, in their classrooms as teachers of English as a medium of instruction (EMI). The study demonstrated that the teacher educators made use of

three translanguaging strategies namely; integrating academic discourse with everyday discourse, linking verbal and other semiotic resources, and using students' first language, to create a 'translanguaging space' in their EMI classrooms for teaching content and learning. The study shows the importance of teacher educators' reflective practice in their implementation and improvement of translanguaging practice in EMI classroom settings. The study by Yuan and Yan shows that teachers have knowledge of MTB-MLE strategies. The current study investigated whether similar trends prevail in Chongwe District in Zambia.

In Norway, Haukås (2015) conducted a study on Norwegian language teachers' beliefs about multilingualism and the use of multilingual pedagogical approach in the third language (L3) classroom. The aim of the study was to show how knowledge of teachers' beliefs is crucial to understanding teachers' decision-making in the classroom. This study analysed data collected through focus group discussions with 12 teachers of French (N = 4), German (N = 2) and Spanish (N = 6) making use of qualitative content analysis. From the analysis, three main themes emerged. First, the teachers viewed multilingualism as a potentially positive resource. However, even though they thought that multilingualism benefited their own language learning, they did not assume that multilingualism is certainly a benefit to students. Secondly, the teachers claimed to have made use of their students' linguistic knowledge of Norwegian and English frequently when teaching the L3. However, the teachers did not often focus on the transfer of learning strategies since they believed that learning an L3 was entirely different from learning the second language (L2) English. Finally, the teachers thought that if there could be collaboration across languages, students' language learning could be enhanced. However, there was no such collaboration that existed at that time. Therefore, teachers did not fully understand and utilize multilingual pedagogies in the classroom. The study by Haukås is related to the present study in that the current study focused on the teachers' knowledge of MTB-MLE strategies and how they applied them in the classroom in Chongwe. The gap is that the present study investigated the use of MTB-MLE strategies in multilingual contexts as opposed to Haukås who examines teachers' use multilingual pedagogical approaches in general.

Bravo (2019) conducted a study investigating teachers' attitudes and methods for teaching reading in multilingual contexts. The study utilized case studies with various, linguistically heterogeneous settings employing a cross-disciplinary, qualitative research technique approach.

In German, for Swedish, and Chilean grade 4 classrooms, the case studies involved interviewing teachers and lesson observations. There was a realisation that language separation is considered extremely important, leaving very little room for academic language of instruction. This perspective is shown in the teachers' approach, which results in a stagnant implementation that typically excludes the use of the students' life world multilingual resources (MULR). An inattentive style of strategy, involving a blindness to diversity, appeared to predominate among the four types of techniques for teaching reading in multilingual contexts.

The study by Bravo (2019) is crucial to the present study since it sought to gain deeper understanding of teachers' perceptions and teaching methods for teaching reading in multilingual settings, which is a concern of the present study. The present study analysed the use of MTB-MLE strategies which the study by Bravo did not focus on.

In the Phillippines, Lartec, Bellisaro, Bendanillo, Binas-o, Bucang, and Cammagay (2014) at a melting pot and the educational center of the North, Baguio City, demanded teaching strategies that not only adapt to the interplay of the different cultures and languages at the same time giving importance to them. This was in a study in which they analysed the strategies of teachers in implementing Mother Tongue - Based Instruction in a Multilingual Classroom and identified some problems that teachers encounter in implementing them. The study used qualitative analysis with interview as the main data gathering tool. The respondents were teachers who were purposively selected from the suggested pilot schools of Mother Tongue - Based Multilingual Education (MTB-MLE) in Baguio City. The findings of the study revealed that the teachers made use of strategies such as translation of target language to mother tongue, utilization of multilingual teaching, utilization of lingua-franca, improvization of instructional materials written in mother tongue, remediation of instruction, and utilization of literary piece written in mother tongue as motivation. The study further brought out problems encountered by the teachers in implementing mother tongue - based instruction which include absence of books written in mother tongue, lack of vocabulary, and lack of teacher-training. The study by Lartec et.al. (2014) is significant to the present study in that the present study investigates the use and challenges faced by teachers when implementing MTB-MLE strategies in Chongwe District.

In Africa, Leketi (2015) investigated whether the purposeful alternation of languages in teaching indigenous African languages is efficient in advancing language and literacy skills and

multilingual identities for pre-service teachers. The findings revealed that the interactions during the course enabled an expanded cultural identity of the speakers as the students through classroom interactions realised that their cultures were similar with those of other languages. Noteworthy from the results was the teachers' changing identities from monolingual teachers to being multilingual teachers themselves. This study reveals that pre-service teachers had knowledge of MTB-MLE strategies and the present study investigates how teachers use these strategies in their classrooms in Chongwe District.

In Zambia, Mkandawire, Zuilkowski, Mwansa & Manchishi (2023) investigated multilingual teachers' pedagogical strategies meant to assisting linguistically diverse learners learn initial reading in diverse classes of Lusaka District of Zambia. The data was collected through face to face interviews, focus group discussions and lesson observations. The results of the study indicate that teachers in these multilingual classrooms made use of translanguaging, bilingual materials, remediation and reading intervention strategies to teach literacy in Early grades. In addition, the teachers also made use of multilingual teachers, parents and bilingual learners as resources in multilingual classrooms. The study by Mkandawire, et al. (2023) is crucial to the present study since it focused on multilingual teachers' pedagogical practices to assisting linguistically diverse learners which is in line the investigation of the use of MTB-MLE strategies which the present study concerned itself with about the teachers in Chongwe rural District.

2.3 Teachers' use of MTB-MLE Strategies in Schools

A study by Maulad and Magbata (2022) sought to examine the execution of MTB-MLE in schools in which many learners are indigenous. Its focus was to describe the implementation of MTB-MLE by teachers and their experiences and to analyse the teachers' concerns in the implementation of MTB-MLE strategies. The study adopted purposive sampling and semi-structured interview technique. The results indicate that though the teachers believed in the programme's purpose, in practice, there are some issues that needed reflection among policymakers and programme implementers. The teachers looked at MTB-MLE as irrelevant because it is a duplication of the Filipino subject which is not the learners' Mother Tongue in the first place. Another problem is the implication of the presence of a multilingual classroom. The diversity of the linguistic backgrounds of the learners poses a problem. Much as the teachers

received training on MTB-MLE, such training had no practical relevance to their day-to-day classroom instruction. Furthermore, the teachers mentioned the dearth of teaching and learning materials. It could be safely said that the implementation of MTB-MLE failed to meet its goal, and therefore needed more rethinking. The study by Maulad and Magbata is crucial to the present study since it focused on the implementation of MTB-MLE strategies in schools which is related to the focus of the present study.

Bercasio, Remolacio, and Reonal (2016) performed a quasi-experimental study in which they used a pre-test-post-test design to two groups of fourth-year BEED students at Bicol University during the school year 2014-2015. The study investigated how effective the Special MTB-MLE Programme was in upgrading the level of awareness of the Teacher Training Institutions on MTB-MLE policies and problems, literacy level, and instructional competence. They documented the good practice options for the mainstream of the Teacher Education Programme. The researchers obtained the data from five sources as follows: first, from the pre-test and post-test results, secondly, class observations of the pre-service teachers, thirdly from questionnaires, fourthly, student outputs like lesson plans and sample translations into Bikol as the subjects' mother tongue, and lastly, from focus group discussions and interviews with officials, faculty and students. The results of the study reveal that the level of awareness on MTB-MLE policies and issues, literacy level, and pedagogical competence were significantly enhanced. The learner participants, experts/ practitioners and the teacher education faculty posited that the training programme and the materials used were highly relevant, useful and informative. In particular, the learner-participants were optimistic to the training programme in considerably preparing them for pre-service teaching. Useful practices along partnership with various stakeholders were regarded as collaborative and proactive. Instructional strategies were interactive, making use of the relevant technology-supported materials. Besides, assessment practices were reported as adequate, competency-aligned and viewed as combining both conventional and authentic tools of assessments. The MTB-MLE Special Programme was supported and recommended by those participating as useful in preparing them for a career in education. Teachers used the MTB-MLE strategies effectively in their classrooms. The study by Bercasio (2016) is crucial to the present study in that the study investigated how teachers use the MTB-MLE strategies which is the focus of the present study, to examine how teachers in Chongwe district make use of MTB-MLE strategies.

In Indonesia, Sahib (2019) investigating the use of Translanguaging as a pedagogical strategy by an EFL teacher in terms of interaction between the teacher and the students in teaching and learning process, focused on the practices of translanguaging in EFL classroom. The study concluded that the teacher used translanguaging in seven situations during teaching process. While students used translanguaging in six situations during the teaching and learning process. The study by Sahib is pertinent to the present study since it examined the use of translanguaging which is one of the MTB-MLE strategies which the current study sought to investigate.

A study by Bhatt (2022) attempted to investigate the differences between MTI and MTB-MLE, outcomes of MTB-MLE in an effort to identifying the differences between MTI and MTB-MLE, outcomes of MTB-MLE, challenges of MTB-MLE as well as how to overcome these challenges in Nepal, South Asia. The study made use of the convenience sampling technique to select respondents and semi-structured interview for data collection. It also presented a literature review relevant to the study that informed the study to attain the conclusions. The study analysed the data thematically. The findings of the study revealed that MTB-MLE is a useful strategy for preserving people's identities, to enabling them cope with global market, and to save the languages that are threatened of dying. The study further gave the possible means of overcoming the challenges in the implementation of MTB-MLE strategies in the classroom. The study by Bhatt is important to the present study in that it investigated the use of MTB-MLE strategies and how to overcome the challenges when implementing MTB-MLE strategies in the classroom which is the focus of the present study. The present study further sought to find out whether MTB-MLE is a useful strategy for preserving people's identities, enable people cope with global market, and to save the languages that are threatened of dying as alluded by Bhatt (2022).

In Italy, Leonardi (2011) investigated pedagogical translation as a cognitive and linguistic activity occurring naturally during the study of foreign languages. She gathered the data from learners who translated texts in a classroom, using qualitative method. Afterwards, the texts were analysed to ascertain how much translation was undertaken. The study reveals that translation facilitates global relations and connections as well as interaction between two or more diverse linguistic communities. Since a message becomes translated from one language into another minus losing its sense of norms, translation is regarded as a linguistic endeavour. Leonardi further demonstrates that translation is a cultural phenomenon as it acts as a goal between two

cultures in a way that bridge and closes cultural gaps. The ability to translate is a cognitive activity that comes about naturally by bilingual and multilingual individuals and cannot be stopped. According to Leonardi's (2011) study, equipping learners with translation skills to their full capacity is more useful than compelling them not to rely much on translation. The study by Leonardi is related to the present study in the that it dealt with translation, one of the crucial MTB-MLE strategies that the study investigated. The present investigates the use of MTB-MLE strategies by teachers in Chongwe Rural District.

In Namibia, Mashinja and Mwanza (2020) investigated the initial literacy epistemic benefits of translanguaging as a pedagogic practice in Multilingual classrooms. The results of the study indicate that translanguaging enabled positive language teaching and learning experiences; propagating and naturalising multilingualism as a classroom standard and investing in their manifold linguistic identities. The study affirms the effectiveness of MTB-MLE strategies in primary schools and the present study establishes the benefit of MTB-MLE strategies in schools.

In Zambia, Nyimbili and Mwanza (2020) evaluated the effect of translanguaging which is one of the MTB-MLE strategies, on the literacy competence of learners in the first grade in Lundazi District. They submit that employing translanguaging improved classroom participation by learners, multiliteracy acquisition, preservation of culture and affirmation of identity by learners. The present study investigates the use of MTB-MLE strategies in the classroom with a view to establishing whether the use of MTB-MLE result into positive learning outcomes in Chongwe District.

Another study in Zambia by Muzeya (2023) investigated classroom language practices in the multilingual primary schools of Choma district. The study was informed by Ruiz's (1984) three-language orientation theory. Muzeya made use of the phenomenology research design, and adopted a qualitative research methodology. The findings of the study revealed that teachers of grades one and two in Choma District, employed translanguaging to foster linguistic inclusivity. Muzeya concluded that translanguaging was a formidable strategy to employ when teaching diverse learners in multilingual contexts of Choma district as it enhanced learners' involvement, perception and aided the link between what they were working on in class to their language of play and home language. The study recommended that teachers of grades one and two of Choma district required to be oriented on how to utilize translanguaging and code switching in classes

that are diverse linguistically and culturally. The study by Muzeya is important to the present study as it analysed classroom practices in multilingual primary schools. However, Muzeya analysed classroom language practices in multilingual schools in Choma in general without focusing on MTB-MLE strategies and therefore the present study fills up this gap.

Furthermore, another study was conducted by Simachenya (2017) motivated by the notion of translanguaging which is an MTB-MLE strategy. The study investigated language practices in a multilingual classroom context in selected primary schools in Livingstone Urban in Zambia. The main objective of the study was to analyse how teachers and learners utilised language in multilingual settings in Livingstone Urban and the implications for the sociolinguistic context and present educational language policy. Data was collected using semi-structured interviews and direct observation of lessons with twenty teachers and twenty learners. The learners and teachers were sampled using purposive sampling. Further, a voice recorder, a semi-structured interview guide, and a notebook were employed as tools. Of the twenty teachers who were interviewed and had their lessons observed, ten had previously taught in lower primary. The ten learners from lower primary and ten from upper primary participated in the other interviews. The study made use of qualitative approach to analyze and separate the data, after which the results were categorised into themes in line with the goals. One of the study's key conclusions was that most learners, both in lower and upper primary, preferred utilizing Nyanja and English for a variety of purposes. Children turned to Nyanja when they needed clarity to encourage peer learning and to reply to their teachers in order to increase engagement. The study also found that learners only occasionally spoke Tonga or Lozi to express their unity with other members of their own ethnic group or close friends. The survey also showed that teachers incorporated both English and Nyanja into their lessons to be linguistically inclusive. The study by Simachenya is crucial to the current study since it investigated language practices in linguistic diverse classrooms motivated by translanguaging, an MTB-MLE strategy. However, the study by Simachenya focused on language practices in general and not MTB-MLE and therefore the current study fills up the gap.

2.4 Challenges Teachers face when making use of MTB-MLE Strategies in Schools

In the Phillippines, Ezayra (2017), posits that the problems faced by teachers when employing MTB-MLE in the classroom are lack of materials written in mother tongue, lack of vocabulary,

and influence of social media over the students. This was in a study conducted to identify the strategies and problems encountered by teachers in using MTB-MLE strategies. The study by Ezayra is pertinent to the present study since its concern was the problems teachers face when applying MTB-MLE strategies in the classroom and the present study investigates the challenges faced by teachers when implementing MTB-MLE strategies in the classroom. The present study investigated the challenges teachers during Chongwe face in using MTB-MLE strategies.

Dequiña and Oliva (2022) conducted a study whose purpose was to describe the lived experiences of public school teachers, specifically their attitudes and problems about teaching the implemented MTB-MLE and its daily use as a medium of instruction in other subjects in the Philippines. The study made use of the snowball sampling technique to select six teachers for in-depth interviews (IDIs) and five teachers for focus groups with eleven teachers from the region's five (5) public schools. The findings revealed that through the participants' attitudes and problems regarding the significant challenges in teaching MTB-MLE, are difficulty of understanding terminology, language use confusion, as well as translation challenges. In addition, regarding their strategies, teachers had problems with translation, the use of additional instructional materials, the use of technology, and consultation with other teachers. Finally, for their insights and knowledge, including the importance of MTB-MLE in student learning, the need for instructional materials development, and teacher readiness to teach were stressed. This study is crucial to the present study because the study brings out problems faced by teachers through the lived experiences when implementing MTB-MLE strategies just as the current study investigates the challenges that teachers face as they apply the MTB-MLE in Primary schools of Chongwe District. That is, to find out whether similar trends prevail in Zambia.

Narvacan (2023) reports that over a decade into the implementation of Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education (MTB-MLE) in the Philippines, those implementing the programme have continued encountering challenges, especially regarding learner-centered instruction. This was in a study in which she investigated the extent to which MTB-MLE teachers conduct learner-centered instructions in a public elementary school. At the same time, the study examined challenges teachers face and coping strategies in relation to classroom instruction. The results of the study revealed that learner-centred instructions were effectively applied in the MTB-MLE classes. Further, learner-centered instruction challenges emerged as follows: first, learners

exhibited unruly behaviour during activities; secondly, teachers found it difficult to use the mother tongue; and thirdly, there was lack of cooperation among learners. Nevertheless, teachers put in measures to address these concerns by making use of strategies such as setting clear classroom goals, making use of translation and code-switching, and provision of varied activities to match the interests of learners. The study by Narvacan is important to the current study because it brings out teachers' experiences in the implementation of MTB-MLE strategies with a view to achieving learner-centered instruction in classroom and the measures taken by teachers to solve these problems. The present study sought to investigate the challenges teachers face when employing MTB-MLE and the measures they take to address these problems.

Dagelea, Peralta & Abocejo (2022) performed a critical evaluation of the "Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education (MTB-MLE)" programme as implemented in the Philippine primary education level. They submit that the MTB-MLE programme plays a critical role in the learners' developmental process especially in the domain of language acquisition. The study analysed the strengths and weaknesses of the implementation of the programme. The findings of the study revealed that the programme implementation brought about in the Philippines far reaching beneficial effects like adherence to cultural and linguistic origin while learning and comprehending deeper native language. However, the enactment of the programme also resulted to some drawbacks as confirmed by the DepEd owing to the fact that public schools were not yet ready to implement the MTB-MLE as it required additional funds concerning the address of the inadequacy on instructional and developmental resources. The study by Dagelea et.al. is related to the current study as it investigated the use of MTB-MLE strategies at primary school level and established that it plays a significant role in the domain of language acquisition.

A study by Hunahunan (2019), explored the status of the implementation of the MTB-MLE programme, the challenges confronting the programme implementers and the strategies employed by the implementers to address these challenges. Issues identified by the study include the inadequate representation of the cultural heritage of the children in their first language, insufficient and inadequate instructional materials and equipment, and the lack of teachers training for appropriate MTB-MLE teaching techniques and learning styles. The study by Hunahunan is pertinent to the present study in that the current study investigates the challenges faced by teachers when applying MTB-MLE strategies which include teaching and learning

materials. The present study established that inadequate materials and equipment are also challenges that teachers face when using MTB-MLE strategies in Chongwe rural District.

A study conducted in Zambia by Nyimbili and Mwanza (2021) established a number of challenges teachers and learners faced as a result of teaching and learning using the translanguaging pedagogical practices in a multilingual grade one class of Lundazi District. The challenges included the mismatch between the language of instruction and dominant learners' familiar languages, rigidity of the language policy, strict monolingual based assessment which only tested skills in the regional language and inadequate teaching and learning materials. This study is related to the current study in that it brings out the challenges faced when implementing translanguaging, an MTB-MLE strategy, which the present study focuses on. Besides, the study by Nyimbili and Mwanza was done in Lundazi focusing on translanguaging only, the current study was done in Chongwe rural district examining a number of MTB-MLE strategies.

2.5 Summary

The chapter has outlined the literature review regarding the MTB-MLE strategies in the classroom. The literature reviewed has to the large extent to do with effects and benefits of MTB-MLE strategies leaving us with very little understanding of how these strategies are used by teachers. The present study therefore fills up that gap. The next chapter presents the theoretical framework that informed the study.

CHAPTER THREE

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3.0 Overview

The previous chapter discussed the literature related to the study. This chapter presents the theoretical framework that informed the study. It explains the two theories; Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) and Ruiz's three language orientation theory, their proponents and their characteristics or what they are about. The chapter further explains how the two theories are applied to the study.

3.1 Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)

The first theory that informed the study is Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) theory. According to Luo (2019), CDA is a research method for studying written or spoken language in relation to its social context. The goal of the theory is to understand how language is used in real life situations. CDA examines how language functions and how meaning is constructed in different social contexts. It can be employed in any instance of written or oral language, as well as non-verbal aspects of communication such as tone and gestures.

As Van Dijk (2006) argued, CDA examines patterns of access and control over contexts, genres, text and talk, their properties, as well as the discursive strategies of mind control. CDA studies discourse and its functions in society and how especially, forms of inequality are expressed, represented, legitimated, or reproduced in text and talk. Van Dijk's research shows that CDA does so in disapproval against those groups and institutions who abuse their power, and works in solidarity with dominated groups. For instance, by discovering and denouncing discursive dominance, and by cooperating in the empowerment of the dominated. On this standpoint, Benwell (2006) submits that Van Dijk is clear that CDA implicitly treats identities as consequences of the ideological work.

3.1.1 Application of CDA to the Study

CDA is applied to this study by analysing the language used as medium of instruction in lower Primary schools of Chongwe District and, the use of MTB-MLE strategies. When considering

the relationship between power and discourse, usually the dominant language is adopted and the less dominant is suppressed. In Chongwe, Nyanja has been adopted as medium of instruction in lower primary schools because it is a dominant language enjoying more power than Soli, the indigenous language of Chongwe. Nyanja is also one of the seven official Zambian languages which has been given a higher status than Soli, a minority language. When implementing MTB-MLE strategies, teachers are likely to make use of other dominant languages such as Tonga as opposed to Soli the indigenous language of the area while other teachers may use unofficial languages such as Soli because it is the widely spoken language in Chongwe. Thus, the theory was used to analyse both transparent and opaque relationships between teachers and learners on one hand, and between official and un official languages on the other hand. In so doing, the theory shows how power is exercised, circulated, used and abused in classroom interaction because as stated earlier, these power relationships result into inclusive and exclusive interactions.

3.2 Richard Ruiz's Three Language Orientation Theory

The second theory that informed the study is the three language orientation theory by Ruiz (1984) which operated as a basis for language in policy and practice in multilingual contexts. Ruiz investigated language teaching and learning from the standpoint of language as a right, language as a problem and language as a resource. Ruiz contends that regarding the orientation “language as a problem,” English is considered as the language of importance, and monolingualism is regarded as the norm. When educational policies are shaped with this orientation, the objective is to eliminate multilingualism. From this standpoint, minoritized languages are deemed as threats to a unified national identity, and the inability to speak English is viewed as the cause of disabilities and social problems (Hult & Hornberger, 2016). Under this orientation, programmes for education emphasise on putting Racialized Emergent Bilinguals (REBs) in classrooms for English-only; therefore, this orientation points towards assimilative, deficit-based principles (Hult & Hornberger, 2016).

Regarding the “language as a resource” orientation, bilingualism is understood as an important element of a diverse society and considered as giving personal and societal benefits (Ruiz, 1984). This orientation falls within a neoliberal setting by alluding that in a diverse society, being bilingual can render people more competitive in a worldwide marketplace (Rosa & Flores,

2017). This neoliberal standpoint is used to win support of two-fold language immersion agendas, one of the most pronounced bilingual education paradigms (Freire et al., 2022). In double language programmes, both heritage speakers of minoritized languages and heritage English speakers are tutored together in two languages, to encourage their bilingualism and enhance their cross-cultural perception. Yet, the main shortcoming of these programmes is that bilingualism is not regarded as an endowment, or resource, for everyone (Rosa & Flores, 2017).

This theory posits that monolingual discourses founded on the dominant language is regarded suitable for instruction with the reasoning of inclusivity while multilingualism is perceived as a problem. Yet when diversity is perceived as a resource, heteroglossic discourse can be employed to help learners acquire basic reading skills and acquire knowledge. Therefore, how language is deciphered impacts on how it is utilised. The current language in education policy in Zambia supports the use of a familiar language as medium of instruction from grade one to four. In Chongwe District, Chinyanja was chosen as the language of instruction over Soli the indigenous language of the area due to its dominance. In this case, Chinyanja is deemed as suitable for use as the medium of instruction in the lower primary grades.

Under Ruiz's (1984) third orientation of "language as right," orientation, the argument is that, speaking and maintaining one's language (or languages) is a human right attached to one's personal autonomies. That is to say, when language is professed as a fair, lawful prerogative, it is perceived as an influential arbitrator to having access to very important domains of society such as the labour force and health care (Hult & Hornberger, 2016). Principles and practices that ascribe to this orientation are motivated by the conviction that REBs identified as dis/abled are suitable to be bilingual since this is who they are and how they convey information genuinely in their communities.

The two orientations; language as a problem and language as a right, currently compete for predominance in the international literature. Whereas, problem-solving has been the central pursuit of language planners from early on, rights-affirmation has increased in prominence with the enhanced emphasis on the safeguard of minority language groups. The third orientation has not received much attention; it is recommended as imperative to the pursuit of language planning in the United States. Bilingual education is contemplated in the outline of these orientations. Many of the hurdles of bilingual education programmes arise due to the antagonism and

divisiveness deep-rooted in the rights- and problem -orientations which largely underlie them. The amplification of the language as a resource orientation is viewed as influential for the incorporation of bilingual education into a trustworthy language policy (Ruiz, 1984).

3.2.1 Application of the Theory to the Study

These three orientations professed by Ruiz (1984) are uncompromising tools to assisting in the perception of policy and educational programming. They are suitable to SLTs as representations of hegemonic philosophical orientations about bilingualism. Hegemonic ideologies are overriding convictions about idealised versions of “normality” and formations of “deviance” that oblige hierarchies between people influencing their rights and privileges (Irvine & Gal, 2000). These hegemonic ideologies present conceptualizations of who is regarded a well-meaning learner and deviant operator of two or more languages, how the languages are to be arranged within teaching, and what the sociopolitical main concerns are for REBs labeled as dis/abled to fully participate in society.

It might be reasoned that due of circumstances such as marriages and employment needs, among others, societies have become more integrated and therefore making use of one indigenous language as a medium of instruction in school might not be fair to learners in multilingual contexts as those from other language backgrounds who may have been exposed to various dialects may not benefit during the learning process. From this perspective, the theory of the three-language orientation endorses diversity in the classroom during teaching and learning process as a resource, in order for learners to make meaning of what is being taught to acquire initial literacy and to enable epistemic access. Thus, this theory is suitable for this study whose focus is the use of MTB-MLE strategies in selected multilingual primary schools of Chongwe district. In Chongwe District, which is a multilingual area with multilingual learners, making use of one indigenous language may not be helpful to some learners whose first language is not Soli. Therefore, to enhance learning, teachers need to incorporate other languages spoken by learners for effective teaching and learning. In this way, multilingualism should not be seen as a problem but rather as a resource that can be employed to aid learners to break through to literacy quickly and efficiently. In addition, through liberal approach by teachers to employing other languages other than Nyanja, the teachers are giving the learners to exercise their personal autonomy and therefore employing the notion of language as a right. By making use of this theory, the study

determined the applicability of MTB-MLE strategies in a multilingual classroom and drew meaningful conclusion.

3.3 Summary

The chapter has presented CDA and the three language orientation theories, guiding the study, by explaining what they are and their proponents. For CDA, the relationship between power and discourse and language has been discussed and how they were be applied to the classroom. For the three language orientation theory, the language as a problem, language as a right and language as a resource orientations have been discussed and how these can be applied to the classrooms in multilingual contexts to enhance learning. CDA was used to explain the how social relations, identity, knowledge and power are constructed through written and spoken texts in communities, schools and classrooms. It was used to show the relationship between power and discourse in language teaching and learning. While three language orientation was used to bring out the fact that when teaching language in multilingual contexts, aspects of rights of individuals should be taken into account and that multilingualism should be seen as a resource and not as a problem. Therefore, the two theories were employed to complement each other. The chapter closed by explaining how the theories were applied to the study. The next chapter discusses the research methodology employed by the study.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.0 Overview

The previous chapter presented the theoretical framework that informed the study. The current chapter outlines the research methodology that was employed in the study. The presentation is done by outlining the actual steps that were used in the process of conducting the research, which eventually led to finding answers to the objectives of the study discussed in chapter six of the dissertation.

Methodology is crucial as it presents a sense of vision by pointing out where that which the researcher wants to embark on is, in the process. The process to bringing this vision into actuality is afforded by techniques and procedures employed in the process (Strauss and Corbin, 1998). The present study adopted a qualitative method to investigate the use of MTB-MLE strategies in multilingual classrooms of Chongwe District. Furthermore, the chapter presents the ethical principles which informed the research activity.

4.1 Research Design

Mwiinga (2015) explains study design as a frame which elaborately delineates the steps to be followed from the beginning to completion in the course of executing the research work. This build-up is outlined in a way that endeavours to deliver answers to the research questions in the study. It is an outline for the intended research project or strategy, delineating step by step from the fundamental philosophical presupposition to participant selection, the data collection methods to be employed, and the analysis to be conducted. In order to analyse the use of MTB-MLE strategies by teachers at Primary school level in Chongwe District, the study adopted the descriptive research design with qualitative data approach. McCombes (2022) submits that descriptive research aims to precisely and systematically describe a population, situation or phenomenon. It answers what, where, when, and how questions, but not why questions. The study was purely qualitative because the aim of the study was to study the views and classroom language practices with a view of getting deeper insights into the subject under study (see also

Milingo, Tambatamba & Cheyeka, 2021; Milingo, Ilubala-Ziwa, Mwale, N & Madalitso, 2020; Milingo, 2019).

4.2 Study Population

A population is a whole set of people with a specific set of attributes. It is an entire group about which some information is required to be determined (Banerjee & Chaudhury, 2010). When dealing with sampling, the term ‘population’ is not conceived in the traditional sense that refers to people only, but takes up a new meaning as the concept in research need not necessarily be people (Welman et al. 2005). The population for the current study were all schools, learners and teachers in Chongwe Rural District.

4.3 Sample Size

A sample is any part of the fully defined population (Banerjee & Chaudhury, 2010). Cohen, Manion and Morison (2018) further submit that a sample is a segment of the population that shares the same attributes as the broader population the researcher aims to investigate. To ensure accurate inferences, the sample has to be representative. The sample for the present study consisted of ten schools from which 3 teachers were sampled per school giving a total of 30 teachers.

4.4 Sampling Techniques

According to Kombo and Tromp (2006), sampling is “a method of picking a number of individuals or things from a population such that the selected group contains elements indicative of the qualities found in the full group”.

The concept of sampling is usually connected with choosing the ‘right’ cases from a known ‘pool’ of cases which can be done at once. However, in qualitative research the practice of sampling is often an iterative process which means that it is a continuous and repetitive process (Flick, 2007).

The present study employed purposive sampling technique. In the purposive sampling technique, the researcher uses their knowledge to choose a sample that is most helpful to the study’s objectives (Singh, 2018). In the study, the ten schools and the three teachers per school were

sampled using purposive sampling technique. As Ngandu (2013:41) submits, “the power of purposive sampling lies in selecting cases with rich information for in-depth analysis related to the focal issue being studied.”

4.5 Data Collection Techniques and Instruments

A research instrument is a device employed to collect and measure, and data related to your research topic. Mkandawire (2019) avows that research instruments are the tools a researcher employs to gather data. Research instruments can be tests, surveys, scales, document analyses, questionnaires, or even checklists (Nolfi, 2019). The present study made use of three data collection instruments namely, Focus Group Discussion guide, Classroom lesson Observation checklist and Documents.

4.5.1 Focus Group Discussion

Focus Group Discussion guide was conducted to teachers in the same schools to establish how teachers understood MTB-MLE strategies and the challenges they face when employing these methodologies.

4.5.2 Classroom Lesson Observation

Lesson Observation guide was used to see what MTB-MLE strategies teachers employ during their teaching. Teachers were observed teaching in the classroom to identify the MTB-MLE strategies they employed and they employed them.

4.5.3 Document Analysis

Document analysis was also employed by analysing lesson plans, and schemes or Weekly focused to identify the MTB-MLE strategies employed when teaching. The researcher analysed the lesson plans, and schemes or Weekly focused of the teachers she observed to see they employed the MTB-MLE strategies.

4.6 Data Collection Procedure

The researcher got clearance from the University to go out and conduct the research. Before undertaking research, permission was sought from Chongwe DEBS and before talking to teachers, permission was sought from all the ten schools. Further, the teachers were requested to avail their documents for analysis and to show willingness to being observed in the classroom.

4.7 Data Analysis

According to Kivitha (2014), data analysis is grouping and translating data into manageable pieces, synthesising information, looking for patterns, and determining what is important and what can be learned. Since the study is purely qualitative, the data were analysed using thematic analysis. Thematic analysis is a method of analysing qualitative data which is usually applied to a set of texts, such as an interview or transcripts (Caulfield, 2022). It requires identifying displays of meaning in the data by systematically categorising and coding them into themes or patterns. Thematic analysis is crucial for qualitative research as it is used to understand in-depth implication of the data (Kiger & Amp; Varpio, 2020).

The researcher closely scrutinizes the data to identify common themes which could be topics, ideas and patterns of meaning that appear repeatedly. The data collected was coded and then the patterns were identified before they were classified and reorganized (Cameron, 2011). Finally, the data were presented in thick descriptions. Themes from each response was extracted and then grouped according to the research questions.

The reason for making use of thematic analysis is that it is a widely used and flexible method for analysing qualitative data. It allows for the identification and investigation of patterns and themes within the data, affording a deep and full understanding of the research topic. Thematic analysis is an orderly and transparent approach to data analysis, which assists in ensuring that the findings are robust and reliable. Besides, it is useful in identifying both expected and unpredicted themes that transpire from the data, which can result into to new acumens and perceptions. Generally, thematic analysis is an important tool for acquiring a deeper comprehension of complex phenomena and for producing rich and meaningful data that can guide theory, policy, and practice.

4.8 Trustworthiness

Credibility, dependability, transferability, conformability, and authenticity are terms used to describe the elements of data trustworthiness in qualitative research (Lincoln et al 2011). According to Creswell (2007), there are eight steps for ensuring reliability: member checking; thick description; external audits; triangulation and various data sources; peer review and debriefing for external checks; negative case analysis; clarification of researcher bias. Since researchers do not employ instruments with established criteria to ascertain validity and reliability in qualitative investigations, trustworthiness is used to accomplish this (Creswell, 2012). In this study, trustworthiness was centered on the study's dependability, believability, and conformability.

4.8.1 Credibility

The confidence that can be placed in the veracity of the research findings is known as credibility (Mulenga, 2015). This guarantees the validity and accuracy of the research findings. Credibility in this study will be ensured by using a variety of data collection techniques and altering the questioning criteria during FGD. The responses were cross-checked and validated by the researcher using member check.

4.9 Ethical Considerations

Permission to undertake research was sought from the university and clearance was obtained from University of Zambia Ethics Committee. Permission to conduct research in Chongwe Primary schools was obtained from the DEBS' office. Before conducting the FGD participants were told that the FGD would take about ten to fifteen minutes. Participants were assured that the information that would be collected from them would be purely for academic purposes. The researcher requested the participants to choose a place and time convenient for them to do the FGD from. The participants were further assured that the information would not be used against them and that it would be treated with the confidentiality it deserves. In addition, respondents were informed that they would withdraw from participating in the research at any time if they so wished.

4.10 Summary

This chapter has outlined the methodology and research design adopted by the study. It has explained the population of the study, the sample size and sampling techniques. The chapter further presented the data collection instruments that were used in the study, the data collection procedure and data analysis. It has ended by presenting ethical considerations that were adopted in the study. The next chapter presents the findings of the study.

CHAPTER FIVE

PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

5.0 Overview

The previous chapter presented the methodology of the study. The current chapter presents the findings of the study. The results are presented according to the research questions indicated in chapter one of this dissertation. The following are the research questions: (i) What is the teachers' knowledge of MTB-MLE strategies? (ii) How do teachers use MTB-MLE strategies in lower grades of Primary school in Chongwe District? (iii) What challenges do teachers face when applying MTB-MLE strategies in lower grades of Chongwe District? These research questions are presented as themes with further subthemes emanating from the data.

5.1 Teachers' Knowledge of Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education (MTB-MLE) Strategies

The first research question was intended to establish teachers' knowledge of MTB-MLE strategies used in the classroom in Chongwe District. The results indicate that some teachers had knowledge about MTB-MLE strategies while others did not have the knowledge of MTB-MLE strategies to use in multilingual contexts to linguistic diverse learners. When asked whether they had knowledge of MTB-MLE, teachers they gave different answers. Some indicated that it was language which learners were familiar with. Others said that it referred to teaching using a local language or a familiar language. While others indicated that it was teaching using a language used at home.

5.1.1 Data From Focus Group Discussions

Data from FDG indicate that some teachers were familiar with the concept Mother Tongue Based Multilingual Education while others did not have the knowledge of the concept.

Those who had knowledge of the concept gave the following answers:

From school G one teacher said:

... to begin with in a school when you have multilingual situation where learners speak different languages, that is a challenge in itself, so these strategies are solutions to these challenges of pupils speaking different languages.

Another teacher at the same school added that,

... these are different ways and means of teaching the multilingual children from different language backgrounds.

Yet another teacher at school I explained that:

...strategies used where there are many learners speaking other languages. But you find that in some areas they are teaching languages which are not familiar.

Those who did not have knowledge of the concept, said it was a language used at home. One teacher from school C said:

It is a language used to help teach learners using a language they are familiar with, e.g. using a language that a child uses at home.

At school G, a teacher explained:

Not really hearing about it but I think from the way it is, one would be able to tell, mother, mother, mother tongue that has to do with the mother tongue, L1, the first language that the child learns, from home that is.

At school H one of the teachers explained:

It is teaching a language that learners are familiar with. They are strategies that uses the mother tongue.

Another one at school H said:

This is what am sure what the government say where they use the language used at home to teach...

Another one said:

Just to add on, there are learners who speak different languages, so they want learners to learn in their own mother language. But you find that in some areas learners do not speak their language, so in other words in some areas they are teaching languages that are found there, in other words learners will be exposed to other languages.

A teacher from school I said that:

...it is a strategy where you use the language of play when teaching.

While at school J one teacher said *...it is teaching in the first language.*

At school E a teacher said:

This is something that is used to teach different languages. We have got different languages in Zambia, and people they think different languages should be taught according their areas.

While from school D, one teacher said:

These are strategies of teaching learners using the mother tongue language from what they know to what they don't know. Examples are songs, stories, picture stories, passages or Read aloud.

From the foregoing, we can say that some of the teachers had some idea of what MTB-MLE strategies are but some of them did not have a clear knowledge of the concept. The concept Mother-Tongue based Multilingual Education is the problem, that is, it is the concept that teachers did not comprehend.

5.2 How Teachers use MTB-MLE Strategies in Lower Grades of Primary School

The findings of the study show that teachers, despite some of them not having the knowledge of the concept MTB-MLE clearly, made use of some strategies in the classroom. Teachers were able to explain how they help learners coming from diverse language backgrounds and demonstrated how they help these learners in the classroom.

5.2.1 Data from Focus Group Discussions

When asked how teachers help learners whose mother tongue is not the LOI in the classroom, they indicated a number of strategies that they employed. These strategies include using other learners in the classroom who understand the L1 of those learners whose L1 is not the LOI or peer interpretation. Others said that they consulted fellow teachers who were familiar with the L1 of those learners who were not familiar with the LOI, and in some cases invited them to their classrooms to explain some concepts. Yet others indicated that they used community members or parents to help explain what was being taught among others.

5.2.1.1 Using Simple Books and Sounds

Some teachers indicated that they used simple books to help learners not familiar with the LOI. One teacher from School C said:

I use simple books with simple words which are easy to understand. These words could be made of single sounds or two letter sounds such as: /b/ /p/ /k/ /m/ /ch/ /mb/. Since learners see the sounds, they can understand easily.

Teachers, with the help of these simple books with elementary language, are able to explain clearly to the learners and learners understand the lessons. This practice promotes the teaching of MTB-MLE strategies in the classroom.

5.2.1.2 Use of Peer Interpretation / Group Work

Some teachers from FGD revealed that they put learners who are not familiar with the LOI in groups with those that are familiar with the LOI. Teachers also use fellow learners by pairing one learner conversant with the language and another one not familiar with the language of instruction. The teachers prepare these learners before the lesson to ensure they go about the interpretation correctly. Furthermore, teachers use groups in the classroom to help learners not familiar with LOI by changing the sitting arrangements, making learners sit facing each other. As the lesson is going on, the learners are also explaining to the fellow learners while the teacher is monitoring from time to time. Those learners who are not familiar with the LOI learn faster from fellow learners that way.

A teacher from school E said:

Using other learners, let me give an example of a child who came from Southern province who was speaking Tonga. So, there was this child who was speaking Nyanja and knew Tonga, so this learner was explaining to this girl. I tell her that kamba mu ci Nyanja, this child will be explaining in Nyanja to that girl who doesn't understand then within a short time she will be able to understand the language.

A teacher from school D explained:

In my case, there was an instance where I identified a learner who was able to operate in Lozi, so when I was explaining, there is a term that I used and then I asked if there was any learner who understood what I was saying so she was able to explain to the other learner who had just come from Western province.

From school J teachers said:

We also use group work at times. You find one child who is conversant with that language that that child knows and through group work, working together you tell this other child that help your friend. What am speaking, this that am saying, how do you say in your language? In very little time, language is a fun thing children grasp very fast. Through doing that every day the child will grasp the language quickly and efficiently.

Another one explained:

I think those we use a fellow learner who is fluent in Soli as well as Nyanja...coz there might be some learners who are conversant with Soli who are sometimes conversant with English so they can explain in Soli to the friends... especially in Primary, we use group work or pairs while as a teacher you are listening.

The teachers indicated that group work and use of fellow learners were effective MTB-MLE strategies used in multilingual contexts.

5.2.1.3 Translanguaging

Some teachers explained that they employed translanguaging when teaching in the classroom to help learners from different language backgrounds. One teacher from school E said:

I had a child who came from Luapula province. To help that learner I used the words in English and Nyanja and then translated them into Bemba. I did this for four weeks and then stopped since the child had become familiar with Nyanja. Afterwards I continued using Nyanja as LOI. The learner understood instructions in Nyanja thereafter.

From school D, a teacher explained:

... yes we do help after you explain to the whole class you ask them, who didn't understand? Then they will say, me teacher, me teacher... so if that person is able to understand English, we do explain in English for them to understand. For Bemba, I also use Bemba to explain to them.

From school F teachers explained:

We use translanguaging and code switching to help learners not familiar with the language. First, we explain what we are teaching in English and then in Nyanja. The translation could either be done using other learners or we ask fellow teachers to translate. Sometimes, the same learners who are not familiar with the LOI can be asked to say the unfamiliar terms in their language.

It came out that translanguaging is a formidable strategy that teachers make use of in the classrooms with diverse linguistic learners.

5.2.1.4 Observation Learning

Teachers went on to explain that to help learners who are not familiar with the LOI in the classroom, they engaged in Observation Learning. Using observation learning teachers demonstrated the meaning of certain concepts. For instance, one teacher from school C explained:

If I am teaching using a story about two people, a fat and a slim one, I use either pictures or actual persons so that the learner can understand what is being talked about. I also ask learners whether they are familiar with certain words or not then I build from known to unknown.

Real objects and pictures are powerful MTB-MLE strategies which teachers depend on in multilingual classes.

5.2.1.5 Use of Song

Teachers also indicated that they used songs to help learners who are not familiar with the LOI in the classroom. They did this by singing songs together with the learners and then asking the learners questions based on the songs. In some cases, songs are just sung at the beginning of the lesson to motivate learners.

A teacher from school D explained:

We use, sometimes we use songs, stories, picture stories, we use passages to read aloud to the pupils...

For instance, Head and shoulders, knees and toes, knees and toes, and then teach the parts of the body while learners are seeing and touching the parts of the body.

Songs are usually used in introductions of lessons acting as motivation or to arouse learner's interest before the lessons. Songs are usually complemented by stories and pictures to give meaning to the lessons.

5.2.1.6 Translation Lists

In addition, teachers indicated that they used translation lists to help learners who may not be familiar with the LOI. For instance, Teacher 7 at School C made use of translation list in her lesson:

Nyanja	English
<i>Madibba</i>	<i>gardens</i>
<i>Masamba</i>	<i>vegetables</i>
<i>Umpawi</i>	<i>poor</i>
<i>Madoilo</i>	<i>doormats</i>

Bakastwili experts

Ampondamatiki rich people

5.2.1.7 Picture Stories

Yet other teachers explained that they employed picture stories, charts or other objects to assist learners not familiar with the LOI in the classroom to enhance learning. One teacher from school D explained:

I use a picture story explaining what each picture is about and connecting to the other pictures making a story. That way those learners from different language backgrounds will be able to follow through the story.

Another teacher from school H explained:

I will get a picture and show it to the learners. The picture that will have more like a story. For example, the first part someone is going to the river to fetch water, the second part they are coming back cooking, the third part they are done cooking, they are now playing netball or football. I will show them. Upon showing them, they will be able to detect to say apa munthu uyu ayenda kuvilova kutapa manzi. They are able to see and to contemplate kuti uyu munthu apa ayenda kutapa manzi. And then you go through with them, then after that you are going to ask them questions. What is this one doing? Akachoka apa azayenda kucita vicani? They will be saying. Not until you reach the last part, ukafika manje pa last part, that is when now you ask them questions: pali vamene mwaona pa first uja muntu anali kuchita vicani? They will be able to say: anali kutapa manzi. Manje tiyeni tipange kantano more like a story kuli vamene tawona. Children will be saying: pamene achoka kutapa manzi ayenda mukupika...

The learners not familiar with LOI, will be able to detect through that story and they will be able to see that this one is from drawing water...

She went on to say:

From the picture story, they will be able to detect through the story on the picture there and then they will be interpreting in their language that this one is from drawing water, then wapika nsima then wayenda wasobela...in their own language.

5.2.1.8 Use of Flash Cards

The data from the study indicate that teachers make use of flash cards and remedial work to help learners who may not be familiar with the LOI in the classroom.

From school G one teacher revealed that:

We get cards with vowels, syllables or words and show learners. Then we ask questions about what they are seeing. Then they will be answering. Those who don't know the language will see what is written on the card. They will also hear the sound. If they don't understand we invite them for catch up after class.

At school H teachers explained that they made use of Look and say, where they used a picture or words and learners say what they see, which helped to teach phonemic awareness. The teachers develop this strategy by using a picture discussion and syllables whereby the learners not familiar with the LOI are able to comprehend what is being taught. With pictures, the learners would be able to follow in their own language. They explained:

We can use look and say whereby you use a picture, learners will be able to see and then they see and they say what they see which helps to teach phonemic awareness.

We also use discussion and syllables making phonemic awareness of the children... and learners will be able to discuss in small groups or pairs. Those who don't understand the language will follow by seeing the picture and hearing the discussion...

5.2.1.9 Using Phonics

In addition, the teachers indicated that they help learners not familiar with LOI in the classroom by following phonic sounds by using sounds, syllables and words. From school G a teacher said:

When you are teaching especially reading, you follow phonics, you start with a sound, then from there, because sounds are there in all the languages, that wouldn't be so much

something new to a child who is not so familiar with Chinyanja. So, from there like you observed, after teaching the sound, then you go to the syllables, after sound you now blend with syllables to make a word. So, it's the same concept; sounds and phonics you come to syllables then whole word. So even if the child does not speak Chinyanja, they will be able to sound and then they will be able to blend the consonant with a vowel and then eventually whole word.

5.2.1.10 Use of other Teachers and Community Members

The data further revealed that they used other teachers and community members to help learners not familiar with LOI. For instance, teachers from school H and school G indicated that they made use this strategy to help with explaining concepts to the learners and to the teachers. For instance, one teacher from School G explained that she had a Tonga learner in her class, so she invited the parents and explained to them that their child would be taught from Tonga to Nyanja. The parents were asked to help teach the learner.

The teacher explained:

I had a learner who came from Southern province who didn't know Nyanja. In class I was explaining in Nyanja and then there was one learner who knew Tonga, so she was explaining to her in Tonga when I was teaching. I also told the parents that your child will be taught from Tonga to Nyanja and I asked the parents to be teaching the child.

They went on to explaining that...

There was this child who was extremely Tonga. You are talking to this person, you can't communicate. We had difficulty in knowing his name because the way he was pronouncing his name it was sounding different. So, we had to call one of our teachers who knew Tonga to help us. So, she started explaining, when he speaks, she started explaining. From there now he opened up, from extreme Tonga now to Nyanja...

Another teacher from the same school further explained:

We also ask some members of the community who know the languages which some learners use in class to help us translate for us when we are preparing for lessons. Sometimes we even ask them to come and help explain in class.

5.2.1.11 Using Real Objects

A teacher from school J explained:

We do this with the help of teaching aids because some children learn just like that. We use concrete ones, concrete teaching aids – charts, concrete real objects... for example, if you are teaching a topic about a garden, if you take the children to the garden to see what happens at the garden, how plants grow, how the watering is done, that information is going to stick in the head of that child for a very long time. So, when you use concrete objects, it can help a child who does not understand the language that am using, so concrete objects help a lot...

5.2.2 Data from Classroom Observations

Teachers were observed teaching in the classroom. The teachers demonstrated the following MTB-MLE strategies.

5.2.2.1 Lesson One by Teacher 1 at school A

Teacher one from School A presented this lesson in her classroom.

Literacy Grade 1 class

Sound /ch/

Teacher: *Mwauka bwanji aphunzi?*

Learners: *Tauka bwino ba Teacher kaya namwe?*

Teacher: *Lelo tizapunzila nvekero /ch/*

Mwamene tilembela nvekero iyi; kuli malemba yabili: /c/ na /h/

Lemba yoyamba /c/: tiyilemba motele:

Kumbuyo, ibwelele pansi, yazunguluka pansi. 'behind, it comes back, it goes round and then down.'

Lemba yachibili tiyilemba motele:

/h/: pamwamba, yabwerera, pamwamba, pansi. 'on top, it comes back, it goes up and then down.'

Tiyeni manje tilembe pamodzi:

/c/: Kumbuyo, ibwelele pansi, yazunguluka pansi.

/h/: pamwamba, yabwerera, pamwamba, pansi.

Manje pachi pepa camene naika pa bolodi nifuna kuti musonte mvekero 'sound' /ch/.

Nizayitana umodzi umodzi, mukazibwera kusogolo.

John bwera usonte....

Bupe bwera usonte...

Mavis bwera usonte...

Manje mukumbuka ma vawelo:

a e i o u

Kutenga mvekero /ch/ nakufaka ma vawelo tipange ma silabe

cha che chi cho chu

Tikapange malemba kuchokela kuma silabe aya: chacho

Manje pama lemba aya nifuna muniyonense ma silabe ali na mvekero /ch/

(Teacher translanguaged into Bemba)

Nomba pama lembo aya ndefwaya mu sonte ama silabe ayomfwika ciwunda /ch/

Chalichi

Choko

Chimuka bwera uni onese: very good

Misozi bwera naiwe uniyonese silabe ili na nvekero /ch/

Very good; timuombeke manja...

Manje lembani izi muma buku yanu:

Written Exercise

C C C C C C

h h h h h h

Nizambopita ku markingir zamene mulemba.

Conclusion

Lelo tapunzila pali mvekero /ch/. Mukayenda kunyumba mulembe ma lemba yenangu ali namvekero iyi.

Mungayende ku bureki manje.

5.2.2.2 Lesson Two by Teacher 3 at school D

Grade 3: Literacy: Zazilengedwe

Teacher: *Mwauka bwanji aphunzi?*

Learners: *Tauka bwino ba Teacher kaya namwe?*

Lelo tizapunzila Zazilengedwe

Zazilengedwe nivija zintu zina lengedwa, tili nazisanzo zambiri monga mitengo yamene yiteteza, naziga zapatupi monga linso navinangu...

Manje apa nizabelenga kantano. Mumvetsetse chifukwa nizakufunsani mafunso. Kantano kali motele:

(teacher reads the story)

Manje tiyeni tione malemba ali mukantano aka:

Yoyamba ni mitengo; mitengo tikuti bwanji muchi zungu?

Yes Tabita

Tabita: *trees*

Teacher: *Very good; tiyeni timuombe manja*

Learners: *wakonza, wakonza, excellent!*

Na inangu lemba ni yiteteza; ndiye kuti bwanji muchizungu?

Yes Sibeso

Sibeso: *shaking*

Teacher: *very good Sibeso, timuombe manja...*

Learners: *wakonza, wakonza, excellent!*

Teacher: *Mitengo ipezeka mwambiri; muma piri namusanga. 'coz mu mapiri kupezeka mitengo kumankala ci wind olo ci mpepo. Mwanvela?*

Learners: *yes*

Teacher: *Manje mu maguru yanu pangani ma sentences kusebenzesa ma words aya:*

Mitengo 'trees'

Yiteteza 'are shaking'

Alinso 'on the eye'

Cimpepo 'wind'

Ma piri 'mountains'

Manje guru na guru izatiwuzwa ma sentences yamene bapanga. Tizayambila na group one

(groups presented)

Very good

Conclusion

Lelo taphunzila pali zazilengedwe.

Mungayende ku breki

5.2.2.3 Lesson Three by teacher 9 at school F

The teacher employed translanguaging, code switching and translation to help learners not familiar with LOI. She was teaching internal parts of the human body.

Teacher: *Mwauka bwanji aphunzi?*

Learner: *Tauka bwino ba Teacher kaya namwe?*

Teacher: *Today we shall learn about the parts of the body.*

The human body has major internal parts – Tupi ili na zamukati mwatupi.

The bones of head are called skull – vija vamene vigwira brain

Brain imatandiza ku ganiza naku cita reason – we use the brain to learn and to remember, nakukumbuka, kupunzila, nakukumbuka.

Look at the picture of the head and brain and the lungs.

Lungs of the body are used to breath in and out. Can you breath in and out. Ma lungs apezeka mu chest. Ija mpepo yamene tingenesa tikamba ati oxygen. Mpepo yamene tichosa tiitana ati carbon dioxide.

Mutima naweve is part of the body.

Exercise

(i) *Brain imatandiza ku*

(ii) *Mpepo yamene tichosa tiitana ati.....*

(iii) *Ma lungs apezeka mu*

Muka siliza mulete mabbuku ku office.

5.2.2.4 Lesson Four by Teacher 8 at school C

Teacher 8 at school C used Real objects with Explicit instructions to help learners not conversant with the LOI in the classroom. The teacher used a picture of a duck and letter sound /d/.

Teacher: *Mwauka bwanji aphunzi?*

Learners: *Tauka bwino ba Teacher kaya namwe?*

Teacher: *Lelo tizaphunzila nvekero /d/*

Onani cithunzithunzi ici; iyi ni duck



Figure 1.1 Picture of a duck

Tiyeni tiyimbe kanyimbo aka:

Amai nu, tamuona /d/ wamung'ono, tamuona /D/ wamukulu...

So mwamene iwonekela mvekero /d/ ni motele natupendelo natumabwe (bottle tops and stones).

Mwamene tilemba ni motele:

Pamwamba, kawani tabweza nakufaka kamimba /d/. 'on top, we put the one and put a small belly.'

Manje tiyeni tipange nvekero /d/ natupendelo na tumabwe.

Mwaona tapanga.

Manje muma guru yanu tengani tupendelo na tumabwe mupange mvekro /d/

Osayibala: Pamwamba, kawani tabweza nakufaka kamimba /d/.

(Learners worked in groups and made letter sound /d/ with bottle tops and stones.)

Conclusion

Teacher: *Manje tione zamene tapunzila lelo:*

Mvekero /d/

Tilemba bwanji?

Pamwamba, kawani tabweza nakufaka kamimba /d/.

Mungayende ku lunch manje.

5.2.2.5 Lesson Five by Teacher 18 at school I

Teacher 18 at school I employed the Preview-View-Review strategy in the classroom.

Reference: Jolly Phonics Teacher's Book 1

Teacher: *Good morning Class*

Learners: *good morning Madam*

Teacher: *Look at these word cards. Can you sound these sounds as I show the cards.*

/c/ /k/ /h/ /w/ /a/ /u/ /w/ /x/ /l/ /y/ /v/ /r/

Okay, Good.

We have short and long sounds; these are short sounds.

Now look at these sounds, can you sound them as I show you

/ai/ /ie/ /er/ /eu/ /oi/ /ee/ /oa/ / / /or/

These are long sounds.

Now listen to this story that I am going to read

(Teacher reads the story)

Apa manje niza londolola ma lemba yenangu mu chinyanja kucitilati mumvere bwino ka ntano

(teacher explains some words in Nyanja)

Did you notice the long sounds from certain words in the story?

Can you give the sound that was dominant in the text. The learners answered:

/ai/ as in hand, train, rain, snail

The teacher explained the sounds, for instance, brain [bu/re-in]

[This helped learners not familiar with LOI to understand as the teacher was teaching].

Spell the following words correctly:

Hand, snail, train, rain.

Conclusion

Now let us sing this song to end our lesson.

5.2.2.6 Lesson Six by Teacher 19 at school I

Teacher 19 at school I employed visual scaffolding when she was teaching using a story about mutu ‘head’.

Teacher: *Mwauka bwanji aphunzi?*

Learners: *Tauka bwino ba Teacher kaya namwe?*

Teacher: *Lelo tizapunzila ziga za mutu*

Wonani citunzi ici camene na faka ba bolodi.

Ndani anga niuze ziga zacitunzitonzi ici?

Masauso tiwuzeni...

Masauso: *menso*

Teacher: *inde, muombeleni manja*

Learners: *wakonza, wakonza, indee...*

Teacher: *Nanga benangu? George tiuze enangu ma parts*

George: *matu*

Teacher: *inde, muombeleni manja*

Learners: *wakonza, wakonza, indee...*

Teacher: *Yenangu ma parts, Chinyama*

Chinyama: *mpuno*

Teacher: *inde, muombeleni manja Chinyama*

Learners: *wakonza, wakonza, indee...*

Teacher: *Nanga yenangu ma parts, Tembo*

Tembo: *mulomo*

Teacher: *inde, muombeleni manja Tembo*

Learners: *wakonza, wakonza, indee...*

Teacher: *tibelenge kantano muma buku yatu, poyamba tizabelenga mumutima.*

(learners read silently)

Teacher: *Manje nizakubelengelani ka ntano ako kachibili, mvetsetse*

(teacher read the story)

Mu ma guru, yankani mafuso aya kuchokela kukantano. Muziyangana pachitunzitunzi pamene simuna nvetsitse.

5.3 Challenges Teachers Face when applying MTB-MLE

Teachers from the ten schools that were sampled brought out a number of challenges that they faced when applying MTB-MLE strategies in their classrooms in order to help learners not familiar with the LOI.

5.3.1 Data from Focus Group Discussions

During Focus Group Discussions, teachers cited a number of challenges they met in an effort to make use of the MTB-MLE strategies in the classroom.

5.3.1.1 Time Consuming

A number of teachers indicated that applying MTB-MLE strategies in the classroom was time consuming. Teachers spent a lot of time attending to learners who were not familiar with LOI. Beginning from preparation stage, teachers took many hours consulting fellow teachers on how to translate certain concepts from LOI to L1 of learners. When using fellow learners to help those not familiar with LOI, teachers had to prepare those learners first before the lesson and spent a lot of time to do that. In some cases, teachers could not find someone to help them translate certain concepts among fellow teachers and had to consult people from the community. Where teachers could not find someone to help them, they ended up deferring or skipping some lessons or topics.

Teacher from school D said:

I think time also is a challenge because as you are trying to help, time is running out. Because they say literacy is one hour, so you can go beyond one hour.

Teacher from school E recounted:

Yes, challenges are there, the way I would explain it, kaili by translating you are wasting that time, we have limited time; here we only have two hours per grade. So, in one hour

you teach then if you need to help this learner, sometimes we remain to help the learners under the tree after class.

From school C, a teacher said:

Teachers spend a lot of time looking for someone to help with translation of the content. Sometimes it is difficult to find someone to help and so teachers end up skipping the lessons until one to guide is found.

5.3.1.2 Language used too unfamiliar to be interpreted

Teachers expressed themselves that the variety of Nyanja used is too unfamiliar for learners and even to some teachers to comprehend. The variety of Nyanga used in textbooks is the standard Chewa instead of elementary one that can easily be interpreted and understood by many people. Teachers find it difficult to interpret these deep Nyanja words such as *mpira* for *bola* and *Kukunenepa* instead of *kuina*. A teacher from School D explained:

The other challenge is that also some words are written in typical Chewa, so they need to be a little bit translated in a language they know, for example the mpira as the ball; instead of mpira, it should just be bola because bola they know it mu Chinyanja to say this is bola.

From school J teachers said:

The language used in text books is deep, its Chewa but there are times you need to lighten it. Yeah, some words they know. Sometimes you need to lighten it into the language they are familiar with. It is difficult especially for teachers whose first languages are different from the LOI. Sometimes you find that there is a ka child who has come from the village, you find that you are belt out as that ka child will be able to give you the meaning.

This perspective is due to the language policy which stresses the use of the standard variety of the seven official Zambian languages for education purposes.

At school B one teacher said:

Text books are too detailed, deep language is used. Sometimes words are changed from English to Nyanja and so it is difficult for teacher to teach expressions from English to Nyanja. For example, Thursday to Thezide...

From school I teachers said:

Here in Chongwe, learners speak Soli at home. So, using Nyanja in the classroom does not help the learners. It is better to use Soli which learners speak at home.

5.3.1.3 High Teacher Pupil Ratio

The data also indicate that the high teacher-pupil ratio makes it difficult to implement MTB-MLE strategies in the classroom. Strategies like Think-pair-share can only be monitored easily when the size of a class is normal. This problem is compounded by late enrollments where learners are enrolled later during the term. The teacher may be forced to reteach some lessons or keep changing the already established groups to take care of the new comers.

At school H teachers said:

Teacher-pupil ratio should be controlled. Classes are overcrowded due to shortage of teachers and inadequate infrastructure in schools. It is difficult to teach overcrowded classes effectively. For instance, where a teacher has to use fellow learners to explain in the L1 of the learner not conversant with the LOI, it is difficult for the teacher to monitor these groups or pairs in overcrowded classes.

5.3.1.4 Inadequate Materials

Teachers expressed themselves that further challenge they faced is inadequate teaching and learning materials to enhance the use of MTB-MLE strategies in their classrooms. For instance, real objects are very expensive, say, traffic lights which are situated very far from the schools of Chongwe. The nearest traffic lights are about 30 kilometers from most schools in Chongwe.

Where there are no real objects, learners end up confusing the learning of the concept and learning the language.

Teacher from school I said:

The real objects such as pictures and real objects are difficult to find and expensive. Where do I buy? How do I get it? You find that some lessons that explain it may be that cannot be drawn like let's say traffic lights, it is difficult to teach traffic lights here... it is difficult for the learners to get the concept. Learners end up confusing learning the language and the concept...

Besides, Chongwe being a rural area, some learners may not be exposed to certain real objects which seem obvious.

At school C teachers observed:

Some learners in rural areas are not exposed to simple real objects such as stove, fridge and television set, therefore have no knowledge of these and so we will find it difficult to use these as teaching or learning aids.

Teaching using real objects is one of the effective methods to apply MTB-MLE strategies and to enhance understanding of the lessons. Therefore, teachers should strive to use them whenever possible.

5.3.1.5 Mother Tongue Interference

The data from the study revealed that learners find problems when transitioning from Nyanja to English and end up writing English in Zambian Languages. Since learners are used to the local language from Grade 1 to 4, they end up confusing concepts of English and ZL when they transition to English in Grade five.

Teacher at school B said:

You find that since the sounds are different in some languages, learners experience spelling problems when the learners are from different language backgrounds. For example, in Tonga, the sound /b/ is pronounced as voiceless /β/ and there is a double /bb/ to sound the voiced /b/. So, learners get confused when it comes to spellings...

At school F one teacher said:

Because learners are exposed to local languages in lower grades and those not familiar with LOI are helped using other local languages, when they transition to English they end up confusing English with the local language and write some words of English in Zambian languages. So, using mother tongue should be a temporal measure...

At school H teachers observed:

When using English, for example, in Grade 4, it is difficult to spell words in English. Learners find it difficult to spell words in English correctly, e.g. cook /kuku/, can /keni/.

5.3.1.6 Slow Learners affect the Pace

The data from the study revealed that one of the challenges affecting the application of MTB-MLE in the classroom is that learners are very slow. Teachers need to exercise a lot of patience to ensure that every learner is brought on board. Teachers from school J indicated that:

We are talking of these learners who learn slowly, so learning slowly is one of the challenges, you find that no wonder we group them so we can have this group at this pace and this group is at this pace. You will not be able to see the fruits as early as you want, you need to have patience. You need to run with them, you can run with them the whole term, they are just slowly improving, slowly improving because they are already slow. And some of them it's totally a new language...

5.3.1.7 Parents not Supportive

The results from the study further indicated that parents whose children are not familiar with LOI do not support the efforts by teachers to help their children with learning. Parents are urged to help their children at home with homework and to complement teaching using LOI. However,

parents have not been very supportive of this initiative as they think that teaching is the work for teachers and not parents.

A teacher from school B explained:

Parents do not feel the need of helping their learners, they feel it is the teachers that should teach, especially if their language is different from the language of instruction. Sometimes, those parents who try to help their children at home do not use the LOI, they continue with their first language and this delays the progress of learners.

5.4 Summary

This chapter has presented the findings on the use of MTB-MLE Strategies by Teachers in lower Primary Grades in Chongwe Rural District. It began by presenting teachers' knowledge of MTB-MLE strategies used in the classroom. The chapter has also presented findings on how teachers made use of some strategies in the classroom. It has ended by bringing out challenges that the teachers face when applying MTB-MLE strategies. The data presented in this chapter was collected by use of FGD, classroom lesson observation and document analysis. The next chapter discusses the findings of the study.

CHAPTER SIX

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

6.0 Overview

The previous chapter presented the findings of the study. The present chapter discusses the findings on the use of MTB-MLE Strategies by Teachers in lower Primary Grades in Chongwe Rural District. The findings are discussed with reference to the literature review in chapter Two and the theories that informed the study in Chapter Three, to bring out the implications of the findings on the use of MTB-MLE Strategies by Teachers in lower Primary Grades in Chongwe Rural District. The discussion of the findings of the study is presented according to research objectives presented in Chapter One of this dissertation.

6.1 Teachers' Knowledge of MTB-MLE Strategies used in the Classroom

The findings of the study revealed that some teachers had some knowledge of MTB-MLE strategies while some did not understand what was meant by MTB-MLE strategies. Those who did not understand the meaning of MTB-MLE strategies indicated that MTB-MLE referred to teaching in the mother tongue. Others said that it is teaching in the language learners use at home. While others referred to MTB-MLE as teaching the language of play yet others indicated that these are strategies that uses the mother tongue. The implication of these findings is that some teachers in multilingual schools of Chongwe district do not understand the meaning of MTB-MLE strategies. These findings are in line with Mulit (2021) who demonstrates in her study that teachers lack training and seminars and are not able to provide learning and teaching materials for MTB-MLE. As a result, learners' reading performance was low and therefore teachers in this area were not very conversant with MTB-MLE strategies (section 5.1.1). In addition, the results agree with those of Bravo (2019) who submits that where teachers focus on the academic language of instruction, there is a stagnant execution that usually leaves out the use of the students' life world multilingual resources (MULR). This is in with CDA, one of the theories that informed the study, showing the relationship between power and discourse in language teaching and learning (van Dijk, 2006). The result of this is a negligent style of strategy, involving a blindness to diversity, which prevail amid the kinds of procedures for

teaching reading in multilingual contexts. This view is further supported by the other theory guiding this study where language is seen as a resource (Ruiz, 1984). Furthermore, the results concur with what Yuvayapan (2019) found out that there is a discrepancy between teachers' perceptions and actual usage of L1 and that in some specific circumstances, teachers did not frequently use MTB-MLE strategies due to the demands of their institutions.

However, some teachers showed understanding of MTB-MLE strategies. They indicated that MTB-MLE strategies are solutions to the challenges of pupils speaking different languages and yet a few teachers revealed that these are different ways and means of teaching the multilingual children from different language backgrounds. While others explained that these are strategies used where there are many learners speaking other languages (section 5.1.1.). These findings are supported by Facullo, et.al (2022) who submit the subject content appropriate and necessary for the integration of MTB-MLE are used to help pre-service teachers to acquaint themselves with MTB-MLE strategies before venturing into teaching. This entails that, some teachers had knowledge the MTB-MLE strategies and applied them appropriately in the classroom. These findings are also supported by Mkandawire, et al. (2023) who posit that teachers in multilingual classrooms make use of translanguaging, bilingual materials, remediation and reading intervention strategies, which are MTB-MLE strategies, to teach literacy in Early grades. Therefore, to some extent, teachers had knowledge of MTB-MLE strategies.

Furthermore, these results are in line with those of Yuan and Yang (2020) who in their study demonstrated that teacher educators made use of three MTB-MLE strategies namely; integrating academic discourse with everyday discourse, linking verbal and other semiotic resources, and using students' first language, to create a 'translanguaging space' in their EMI classrooms for teaching content and learning. On the other hand, these findings are in line with those of Haukås (2015) who submits that teachers did not fully understand and utilize multilingual pedagogies in the classroom.

6.2 Teachers' Use of MTB-MLE Strategies in Lower Grades of Primary School

The results of the study showed that teachers used various MTB-MLE strategies in a variety of ways to help learners who might not have been conversant with the LOI in the classroom. These MTB-MLE strategies include translanguaging in the form of translation, code switching and cold

mixing where the content is first explained in English and then in Nyanja and other indigenous languages (section 5.2.1.3.). Teachers also make use of translanguaging in order to be inclusive and to enhance participation of learners (section 5.2.3.3; lesson 3). These findings tend to agree with the views of Muzeya (2023) who submits that teachers employ translanguaging to foster linguistic inclusivity in their classrooms. She contends that translanguaging is a formidable strategy to employ when teaching diverse learners in multilingual contexts as it enhances learners' involvement, perception and aid the link between what they were working on in class to their language of play and home language. Besides, Nyimbili and Mwanza (2020) avows that employing translanguaging improved classroom participation by learners, multiliteracy acquisition, preservation of culture and affirmation of identity by learners. While Mashinja and Mwanza (2020) added that translanguaging enabled positive language teaching and learning experiences; propagating and naturalising multilingualism as a classroom standard and investing in their manifold linguistic identities. This perspective supports the concept of using other languages other than LOI in the classroom as a justifiable practice and useful teaching tool to enhance learning in the classroom. As it is argued that using one's first language is a human right, learners should be given the freedom to express themselves in their first languages (Nyimbili and Mwanza, 2021; Mashinja and Mwanza, 2021; Mwanza, 2020; Mubita and Mwanza, 2020; Banda and Mwanza, 2020; Mwanza and Bwalya, 2019, Banda and Mwanza, 2020).

From the foregoing, it can be safely stated that the language in education policy or the teachers should not restrict learners regarding the use of language, a view supported by Ruiz (1984). Since the learners are entitled to personal freedom, they have the right to receive classroom instruction in the languages they are familiar with (Ruiz, 1984). Given this scenario, teachers in the classroom should be innovative and liberal enough to accord linguistically inclusive learning environments to learners by taking into account the languages used by learners. Besides, the study shows that teachers made use of translanguaging in the classroom to afford learners linguistic inclusivity according to the learners they were involved with and the circumstances that prevailed in the classroom as posited by Muzeya (2023). In this way, language is seen as a resource (Ruiz, 1984) since teachers are able to make use of learners' first languages to explain concepts to enhance comprehension on the part of the learners in multilingual classrooms.

Consequently, meaningful learning can be realised through the recognition of language diversity such as the multilingual schools of Chongwe District.

The other MTB-MLE strategy that teachers use is peer interpretation whereby other learners in the classroom are asked to help fellow learners not familiar with LOI by changing the sitting arrangements, making learners sit facing each other. While the teacher is explaining, the learners who are conversant with the LOI and the L1 of those learners not conversant with the LOI, explain to the friends while the teacher is monitoring them. In this way, those learners who are not familiar with the LOI learn faster from fellow learners (see section 5.2.1.2). These findings are in line with the views of Mkandawire, et.al (2023) who avow that the teachers also make use of multilingual teachers, parents and bilingual learners as resources in multilingual classrooms to enhance learning. However, this view is not supported by Maulad and Magbata (2022), who view multilingualism as a problem. They contend that the diversity of the linguistic backgrounds of the learners poses a problem and that even though teachers receive training on MTB-MLE, such training has no practical relevance to their day-to-day classroom instruction. This is one instance where Richard Ruiz's orientation of language as a problem is supported (Ruiz, 1984) by focusing on monolingual ideologies as the norm during classroom instruction. However, multilingualism should not be seen as a problem but rather as a resource to enhance learning as pointed out above.

Teachers also employed picture stories, charts or other objects to assist learners not familiar with the LOI in the classroom (refer to lesson four, section 5.2.3.4). When a teacher explains a picture story, explaining what each picture is about and connecting to the other pictures making a story, a learner who may not be familiar with the LOI will be able to follow through the pictures and connecting them to their experience and to understanding the story. Due to this understanding, these learners are able to participate as they are motivated by the pictures and consequently breakthrough to literacy quickly (see section 5.2.1.7). These results are in line with those of Nyimbili and Mwanza (2020) who submit that employing MTB-MLE improved classroom participation by learners, multiliteracy acquisition, preservation of culture and affirmation of identity by learners. These views are also according to Dagelea, Peralta & Abocejo (2022) who revealed that the MTB-MLE programme has far reaching benefits which include adherence to cultural and linguistic origin while learning and the comprehension of deeper native language.

The perspective is further supported by Bercasio, Remolacio, and Reonal (2016) who submit that the use of MTB-MLE strategies resulted into high literacy levels, and enhanced pedagogical competences. This is due to the fact that MTB-MLE makes use of highly useful, relevant and informative materials. As a result of MTB-MLE implementation, instructional strategies are interactive, making use of the relevant technology-supported materials which in turn motivate learners. Besides, the use of MTB-MLE resulted into assessment practices that are adequate, competency-aligned combining both conventional and authentic tools.

Furthermore, the results reveal that teachers used Real objects to help learners not conversant with the LOI in the classroom (refer to lesson 4; section 5.2.3.4). The use of real objects helped learners not familiar with LOI to comprehend what was being explained, since they were able to visualise the object as the teacher was explaining (section 5.2.3.6). Related to this strategy, teachers used visual scaffolding where learners were able to visualise what was being taught through a picture or real object (see section 5.2.1.11; lesson 6). Learners who may not be familiar with LOI are able to follow through the lesson and learning is achieved quickly and efficiently. These findings are in line with Muzeya's (2023) views that translanguaging, one of MTB-MLE strategy, was a formidable strategy to employ when teaching diverse learners in multilingual contexts as it enhanced learners' involvement, perception and aided the link between what they were working on in class to their language of play and home language.

Besides, the use of MTB-MLE gave freedom to learners in the classroom where they were able to give answers in different languages such as Soli and Tonga. As Bhatt (2022) posits, MTB-MLE is a useful strategy for preserving people's identities, to enabling them cope with global market, and to save the languages that are threatened of dying. In this case, learners were trying to preserve their identities by expressing themselves in the languages they were familiar with and in turn contributed to saving those languages (especially Soli) from dying. Given that expressing oneself in one's language is a human right, this is an instance where learners exercised their personal freedom by answering questions using their own L1, where language is seen as a human right, a view supported by the theory that informed the study (Ruiz, 1984). Therefore, with 'language as right,' orientation, learners have the right to be taught or express themselves in the language familiar to them since speaking and maintaining one's language (or languages) is a human right attached to one's personal freedom and autonomy. Moreover, this perspective is in

line with that of Lartec et.al (2014) who avow that the teachers made use of strategies such as translation of target language to mother tongue, utilization of multilingual teaching, utilization of lingua-franca, improvization of instructional materials written in mother tongue, remediation of instruction, and utilization of literary piece written in mother tongue as motivation.

The results further indicate that some teachers in Chongwe District made use of translation lists and read aloud to accommodate learners not familiar with LOI in the classroom. The teachers explained the meaning of words by use of flash cards written in Nyanja and English, for example; Garden - *madibba*, cabbage- *kabicci*, expert – *kaswili*, rich people- *ampondamatiki*. The teachers further explained these words in other familiar languages such as Bemba and Tonga to enhance learning (see section 5.2.1.6, lesson by Teacher 7). These findings concur with those of Lartec, et.al (2014) who revealed that the teachers make use of strategies such as translation of target language to mother tongue, utilization of multilingual teaching, utilization of lingua-franca, improvization of instructional materials written in mother tongue, remediation of instruction, and utilization of literary piece written in mother tongue as motivation. As Leonardi (2011) submits, translation is a linguistic endeavour which preserves the meaning of a message even after the application of norms. It is also a cultural phenomenon which links cultural divides and arbitrates cultures in such a way that it fills gaps that may be there. Leonardi further posits that translation is a cognitive process which happens naturally and cannot be stopped in a multilingual situation as it appears usual to depend on translation when faced with foreign words and expressions. The findings are further supported by Mkandawire, et.al (2023) that teachers in these multilingual classrooms make use of bilingual materials, remediation and reading intervention strategies to teach literacy in early grades. In addition, this view is in line with one of the theories guiding the study that language is seen as a resource according to Ruiz (1984) in that the L1 can be used to help teach the LOI using learners in the classroom.

The implication of these findings is that, teachers must understand the cultural background of their learners for them to be able to handle the content of their lessons effectively, as meaningful learning takes place when the learners' culture is taken into account. Besides, teachers should be urged to translate instructional content from the target language to other languages that are familiar to their learners. This in turn cultivates critical thinking on the part of the learners. As Ruiz (1984) submits, language in this way is used as a resource in that the other languages

familiar to the learners can be used to explain the target language. The findings are also supported by Leketi (2015) who revealed that the interactions as a result of MTB-MLE during the course enabled an expanded cultural identity of the speakers as the students through classroom interactions realised that their cultures were similar with those of other languages.

In Chongwe District, teachers make use of other languages such as Bemba, Soli and Tonga to explain concepts in the target language, English. At the same time, the aspect of language and power comes out clearly that the seven dominant languages, those used as *linguae francae* in their designated zones are still frequently used even in other areas as languages of wider communication in communities. This perspective is supported by CDA theory which shows how power is exercised, circulated, used and abused in classroom interaction because these power relationships result into inclusive and exclusive interactions (Van Dijk, 2006). The use of Tonga and Bemba in Chongwe district can only be explained in terms of language and power, in that Bemba and Tonga are prestigious languages among the seven official languages. Even though for the use of Tonga, there is a Sociolinguistic explanation in that Soli is a dialect of Tonga and therefore, is easily understood by Solis, and since it is a dominant language enjoying more power than Soli, it is more likely to be used in formal domains like education.

Furthermore, the findings of the study reveal the teachers use fellow teachers and community members to help learners not familiar with LOI in the classroom. Teachers seek help from community members to help them translate some concepts that they may not understand when preparing lessons. In some cases, the teachers invite these community members to class to help explain certain concepts to the learners for better understanding (see section 5.2.1.10). This view is in line with that of Mkandawire et.al (2023) who affirm that the teachers also make use of multilingual teachers, parents and bilingual learners as resources in multilingual classrooms. These findings are also supported by Simachenya (2017) who showed that teachers incorporated both English and Nyanja into their lessons to be linguistically inclusive.

Some teachers indicated that they used phonics as a strategy to help learners not familiar with LOI in the classroom. They explained that they used phonic sounds by using sounds, syllables and words. They indicated that they start with a sound and that since sounds are there in all the languages, the learners not familiar with LOI will be able to follow through the content. From the sounds they attach vowels to form syllables and blend syllables to make words (see section 5.2.1.

9). This strategy is not helpful to the learners who are not familiar with LOI since sounds are not same in Zambian languages. This is not a good MTB-MLE strategy and should not be encouraged. As Maulad and Magbata (2022) submit, much as the teachers receive training on MTB-MLE, such training has no practical relevance to their day-to-day classroom instruction. With such teachers, it could be safely said that the implementation of MTB-MLE fails to meet its goal, and therefore needs more rethinking.

From the findings of the study, it was revealed that some teachers did not understand the meaning of MTB-MLE but were able to use MTB-MLE strategies in the classroom. This means that these teachers do not theoretically know what MTB-MLE strategies are but are able to practically use them. This perspective suggests that sometimes teachers make use of strategies which they cannot account for theoretically. This is not good for the learners. Teachers need to do things that they consciously understand. The Ministry of Education through CDC should be checking on the teachers or give them some training to ensure they understand what they are doing.

6.3 Challenges Faced by Teachers when applying MTB-MLE Strategies in Lower Grades of Primary School

The study revealed that one of the challenges faced by teachers when applying MTB-MLE strategies is inadequate materials. For instance, real objects are very expensive while others such as traffic lights are situated very far from the schools of Chongwe District. As a result, teachers find it difficult to teach certain concepts without referring to real objects (see section 5.2.1.11). Teaching without real objects is a challenge especially with learners who are not familiar with LOI. In such a scenario, learning just remains abstract in the mind of the learner and learners may end up confusing the language and the concept. These findings are supported by Nyimbili and Mwanza (2021) that the challenges faced by teachers when implementing translanguaging, one of the MTB-MLE strategies, included the mismatch between the language of instruction and dominant learners' familiar languages, rigidity of the language policy, strict monolingual based assessment which only tested skills in the regional language and inadequate teaching and learning materials. Hunahunan (2019) adds that challenges confronting the programme implementers of the MTB-MLE strategies include the inadequate representation of the cultural

heritage of the children in their first language, insufficient and inadequate instructional materials and equipment, and the lack of teachers training for appropriate MTB-MLE teaching techniques and learning styles. The lack of representation of cultural heritage is crucial, for instance, when learners are taught in a language that they are not familiar with, they will not get the meaning of what they are being taught as culture and language are inseparable. The teachers therefore should endeavour to be familiar with the languages and culture that learners speak or languages spoken in the area for them to teach learners meaningfully.

Furthermore, teachers need to be innovative and creative to design suitable materials in the first language of the learners because it is only when teaching is done taking into account the cultural context that learners can be useful members of society. To this end, the Ministry of Education through Curriculum Development Centre should come up with deliberate programmes aimed at equipping teachers with skills to design and implement local materials to teach using MTB-MLE strategies in schools.

Besides, other challenges cited by teachers include mother tongue interference and that some concepts used in the mother tongues are too unfamiliar to be interpreted. Deep Chewa words such *mpira* instead of *bola* ‘ball’ are used which are too deep to be comprehended by learners in elementary Nyanja. In this way both learners and teachers are confronted with the problem trying to understand the words in order to comprehend the content (see section 5.3.1.2). These views are in line with those of Nyimbili and Mwanza (2021) who posits that challenges affecting the use of MTB-MLE strategies include the mismatch between the language of instruction and dominant learners’ familiar languages, rigidity of the language policy and inadequate teaching and learning materials. Regarding the rigidity of the language policy, a word like *mpira* is used because it is in Chewa, the standard variety of Nyanja which the language in education policy insists upon using in the classroom. This view is supported by CDA theory in that it studies discourse and its functions in society and how especially, forms of inequality are expressed, represented, legitimated, or reproduced in text and talk (Van Dijk, 2006). In this case, the concepts from Chewa are used in the classroom due to the fact that it is a dominant language associated with power over other varieties of Nyanja and minority languages such as Soli.

Given this scenario, there is need for policy makers to be flexible to allow teachers use minority languages such as Soli in Chongwe District, to explain some concepts during classroom

interaction with learners. Besides, teachers also should be liberal to give explanations in other minority languages spoken in the area and make use of the MTB-MLE strategies that promote minority languages. Teachers should learn and teach in the minority languages spoken in the area where the school is situated. This is important because it helps to preserve the cultural heritage of a people as culture is expressed through language. In addition, the usefulness of a given language in terms of tradition which includes knowledge of medicines contained in plants and other existing things in a given language should be preserved for the benefit of society. In line with this perspective, Leketi (2015) posits that expanding cultural identity of the speakers and the students through classroom interactions is important as it enables them realise that their cultures are similar with those of other languages. In addition, this view is supported by the CDA theory showing how social relations, identity, knowledge and power are constructed through written and spoken texts in communities, schools and classrooms (van Dijk, 2006).

The findings are further supported by Dequiña and Oliva (2022) who cited difficulty understanding of terminology, language use confusion, as well as translation challenges as affecting teachers' application of MTB-MLE strategies in the classroom. Dequiña and Oliva (2022) further contend that teachers had problems with translation, the use of additional instructional materials, the use of technology, and consultation with other teachers. The teachers should be encouraged to equip themselves with skills of translation, and be able to design materials in the mother tongue in order to come round this challenge. As Leonardi (2011) avows, translation is a cognitive process which teachers need to employ from time to time in a multilingual classroom to help learners when faced with foreign words and expressions. Furthermore, these findings concur with those of Lartec et. al (2014) who cited problems encountered by the teachers in implementing mother tongue-based instruction which include absence of books written in mother tongue, lack of vocabulary, and lack of teacher-training. The difficulty of understanding terminology, language use confusion and translation challenges is seen as a problem according to Ruiz's (1984) orientation of language as a problem. In Chongwe District, the LOI is Nyanja for lower grades, and therefore the translation of concepts is done in the standard variety which is Chewa and which is sometimes difficult to comprehend by learners in Chongwe District who speak elementary Nyanja not as deep as Chewa. Therefore, insisting on translating concepts into Chewa ends up to be seen as a problem as learners have problems comprehending such unfamiliar terms during lessons. To this end, teachers need to be liberal in

the classroom and help learners understand lessons by following Ruiz's orientation of language as a right by explaining concepts in a language that is familiar to learners. This motivates learners as they exercise their personal autonomy through using the language they are familiar with.

Yet another challenge cited by teachers in the application of MTB-MLE is that it is time consuming. Teachers spend a lot of time trying to translate concepts from the target language to the local language or from the LOI to the L1 of learners. Where teachers have to use other learners to help explain the concepts to learners not familiar with LOI, they spend a lot of time preparing those learners to be able to explain to the friends correctly. In addition, the teachers have to monitor those learners in class while they are teaching and while the learners are doing peer interpretation. Where teachers are not familiar with the L1 of the learners, they spend a lot of time consulting fellow teachers and members of the community to help them with the explanation of certain concepts before going into class to teach (see section 5.3.1.1). In some cases, teachers invite members of the community to class to explain concepts better in the mother tongue or LOI. At times the teachers do not manage to find people to help them with translation and end up deferring some lessons or skipping them altogether. These findings are supported by Dequña and Oliva (2022) who submit that teachers have problems with translation, the use of additional instructional materials, the use of technology, and consultation with other teachers and therefore teacher readiness to teach is stressed. To this end, teachers should learn the L1 of learners in the area and MOE through Curriculum Development Centre should help capacity build teachers by providing training in translation and instructional material development. These views are also in line with those of Maulad and Magbata (2022) who pointed out that the diversity of the linguistic backgrounds of the learners posed a problem during the implementation of MTB-MLE programme. Even though teachers have knowledge and receive training on MTB-MLE, such knowledge and training may have no practical relevance to their day-to-day classroom instruction and therefore spend a lot of time seeking for help from others. In addition, this view is in line with that of Yuvayapan (2019), who revealed that despite their favourable sentiments on MTB-MLE in some specific circumstances, teachers did not frequently use this strategy due to the demands of their institutions, which include over enrolment and other duties. These demands of the institution leave teachers with very little time for them to implement MTB-MLE activities such as consulting fellow teachers and community members,

preparing learners for peer interpretation and designing other MTB-MLE materials. In addition, these findings concur with those of Lartec, et.al (2014) who revealed that the teachers made use of strategies such as translation of target language to mother tongue, utilization of multilingual teaching, utilization of lingua-franca, improvization of instructional materials written in mother tongue, remediation of instruction, and utilization of literary piece written in mother tongue as motivation. In this way language is used as resource (Ruiz, 1984) since the material when translated in the mother tongue and when there is improvisation of instructional materials written in the mother tongue, learning is enhanced in the classroom.

The results are also supported by Ezayra (2017), as she posits that the problems faced by teachers when employing MTB-MLE in the classroom are lack of materials written in mother tongue, lack of vocabulary, and influence of social media over the students. Since there are inadequate or lack of materials written in the mother tongue, teachers have to spend a lot of time trying to translate concepts from the target language to L1 of students. Where they are not able to translate, especially those who are not familiar with the LOI, they have to consult fellow teachers and community members. This entails that they have to cover long distances during preparation of lessons to consult community members. In cases where they do not find help, teachers either defer or skip the lessons until they find someone who can help them.

The other challenge affecting the application of MTB-MLE strategies is the high teacher-pupil ratio whereby teachers have to handle large classes. Applying MTB-MLE strategies such as using peer interpretation to explain some concepts, using groups, picture stories and real objects becomes very difficult with large classes. This problem is compounded by late enrolments and absenteeism by learners. From classroom observation, the results of the study reveal that the use of methods such as group work, pair work, discussion and read aloud to help learners whose L1 was different from LOI in the classroom by teachers were not effectively done. This is due to high teacher-pupil ratio and high enrolments which makes it difficult for the teacher to apply these methods to large classes. These views concur with what Dagelea, Peralta & Abocejo (2022) postulated, that MBT-MLE activity is difficult to implement as it required additional funds concerning the address of the inadequacy on instructional and developmental resources to cope with large classes or over enrollments. Furthermore, Narvacan (2023) reports that learner-centered instruction faced challenges such as learners exhibiting unruly behaviour during

activities; secondly, teachers found it difficult to use the mother tongue; and thirdly, there was lack of cooperation among learners. Unruly behaviour and lack of cooperation among learners is only possible with large classes which poses problems with class control. In Chongwe district, many schools have high enrolment contributing to challenges in implementing MTB-MLE strategies.

Furthermore, data from document analysis revealed that some teachers could not formulate learning outcomes correctly in their lesson plans covering the affective, cognitive and psychomotor domains. Some covered only two domains, others only one. The three domains complement the application of the MTB-MLE strategies in the classroom. When teachers do not formulate the learning outcomes correctly, they end up not applying MTB-MLE strategies appropriately in class. The data further showed that in some cases, teachers formulated the learning outcomes correctly covering the three domains but did not apply them in their actual teaching. The planning did not much with the actual delivery thereby affecting the quality of education negatively. These findings are supported by Dequiña and Oliva (2022) who cited the lack of instructional materials development, and teacher readiness to teach as challenges faced by teachers when applying MTB-MLE strategies.

In addition, the analysis of teachers' lesson plans and schemes of work revealed that majority of the teachers have problems with sourcing teaching and learning materials especially real objects. Even pictures are a challenge for them to secure. As a result, many of them just resort to using flash cards, songs and read aloud without aligning them to MTB-MLE principles. The implication of this is that some teachers teach learners without paying particular attention to learners not familiar with the LOI due to inadequate teaching and learning materials. These findings concur with what Hunahunan (2019) found out, that challenges teachers face when applying MTB-MLE strategies in the classroom include insufficient and inadequate instructional materials and equipment, and the lack of teachers training for appropriate MTB-MLE teaching techniques and learning styles. The findings are also supported by Haukås (2015) who submits that teachers did not fully understand and utilize multilingual pedagogies in the classroom.

Therefore, MOE through CDC should come up with programmes aimed at capacity building teachers to be able to use MTB-MLE strategies appropriately. At the same time, teachers themselves should be encouraged to be creative, innovative and liberal enough to come up with

teaching materials using local materials and methods in line with MTB-MLE strategies. Besides, Nyimbili and Mwanza (2021) support these findings since they posit that challenges faced with teachers when implementing MTB-MLE strategies include the focus on skills in the regional language and inadequate teaching and learning materials. The focus on the regional language is in line with CDA, that when considering the relationship between power and discourse, usually the dominant language is adopted and the less dominant is suppressed (Van Dijk, 2006). In Chongwe, Nyanja has been adopted as medium of instruction in lower primary schools because it is a dominant language enjoying more power than Soli, the indigenous language of Chongwe or even other varieties of Nyanja. Nyanja is also one of the seven official Zambian languages and therefore when translating materials from English usually Chewa is used as opposed to other varieties of Nyanja such as Tumbuka and Chikunda.

The data further revealed that when implementing MTB-MLE, teachers face the challenge is mother tongue interference with the learners (section 5.3.1.5). Since sounds are different in different languages, learners experience spelling problems. For instance, a child whose first language is Tonga may find problems in spelling words like *bola* in Nyanja since in Tonga the voiced /b/ is spelled with double *b* /bb/ while a single /b/ is voiceless /β/. Also, the voiced /h/ and voiceless /h/ in Tonga are spelled differently. Therefore, when a learner is transitioning from Tonga to Nyanga, they can have problems with spelling. The same is the case when learners are transitioning from local language to English in Grade Five, some of them end up pronouncing and spelling words wrongly as a result of mother tongue interference. This gives teachers challenges on how to handle these learners in the classroom. These views are supported by Nyimbili and Mwanza (2021) that the challenges that teachers face when implementing MTB-MLE activities included the mismatch between the language of instruction and dominant learners' familiar languages, rigidity of the language policy and inadequate teaching and learning materials. This perspective is in line with CDA theory bringing out how social power abuse, dominance, and inequality are enacted, produced and resisted by text and talk in social and political contexts (van Dijk, 2006).

On the other hand, some learners are very slow which gives teachers challenges of progressing in their lessons (section 5.3.1.6.). This problem is compounded by transfers of learners from other schools especially those from other regions where a different LOI is used. In such circumstances,

teachers are forced to reteach lessons to take care of the learners who are enrolled late and those who come on transfer from other schools. Therefore, employing MTB-MLE strategies with such learners becomes a challenge. These findings are in line with those of Narvacan (2023) who posits that challenges that teachers face when applying MTB-MLE strategies in schools include unruly behaviour by learners and lack of cooperation among learners. With unruly behaviour and lack of cooperation, learners lag behind as teachers face challenges of class control which may result in not achieving their learning outcomes and therefore forced to reteach lessons which in turn slows the progress in the classroom.

A further challenge teachers face when applying MTB-MLE strategies is that some parents are not supportive (section 5.3.1.7). Where a learner's L1 is different from the LOI, it is helpful that parents help the learner at home with lessons and homework. However, some parents feel that teachers are the ones who are supposed to teach learners and shun that task. This is especially common where the LOI is different from the parents' L1. Where parents decide to help the learner, they may use their L1 and not the LOI, which poses a challenge on the part of the teachers. This perspective is supported by Hunahunan (2019) who identified issues when implementing MTB-MLE including the inadequate representation of the cultural heritage of the children in their first language, insufficient and inadequate instructional materials and equipment, and the lack of teachers training for appropriate MTB-MLE teaching techniques and learning styles. When teachers lack appropriate MTB-MLE teaching techniques and learning styles, they will not be able to help the learners in the classroom let alone parents at home.

6.4 Summary

The chapter has discussed the findings of the study. From the views of teachers through Focus Group Discussions and Classroom Observations, the results revealed that some teachers vaguely understood what was meant by MTB-MLE strategies. The study further found out that teachers applied a number of MTB-MLE strategies to help learners who were not familiar with LOI in their classroom. In addition, the findings revealed that the use of these MTB-MLE strategies were affected by a number of challenges which included inadequate teaching materials, high teacher-pupil ratio due to over enrollments and poor infrastructure. Despite these challenges, it is still advantageous to use MTB-MLE strategies than using a single regional language without applying MTB-MLE strategies. The next chapter presents the conclusion and recommendations.

CHAPTER SEVEN

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.0 Overview

The previous chapter discussed the findings of the study. The current chapter presents the conclusion and recommendations on the use of MTB-MLE Strategies by Teachers in lower Primary Grades in Chongwe Rural District. The conclusion brings out key viewpoints that were brought about by the findings of the study. The chapter begins by highlighting the research questions and objectives that the study had set out to investigate. The chapter then gives a summary of the main findings that arose from the results in relation to the research objectives in order to show how these objectives have been dealt with. The chapter further presents some implications of the findings and suggests some recommendations for future action.

The research questions and objectives are presented in chapter one of this dissertation. The first objective sought to establish the teachers' knowledge of MTB-MLE strategies in Chongwe District. The second one analysed how teachers made use of MTB-MLE strategies in lower grades in Chongwe District. The third objective examined the challenges that teachers face as they apply MTB-MLE strategies in lower grades.

7.1 Conclusion

Chapter five addresses the research objectives of the study. Regarding objective number one and the teachers' understanding of the MTB-MLE strategies, the findings reveal that some of teachers do not understand the concept Mother Tongue Based Multilingual Education. The teachers explained the concept of MTB-MLE as the practice of teaching in the mother tongue or teaching using language used at home. Others referred to MTB-MLE as teaching the language of play while others indicated that these are strategies that uses the mother tongue. Nevertheless, some teachers understood the meaning of MTB-MLE strategies as they were able to explain that these MTB-MLE strategies are solutions to the challenges of pupils speaking different languages and yet a few teachers revealed that these are different ways and means of teaching the multilingual children from different language backgrounds.

Objective number two analysed teachers' use of MTB-MLE strategies in the classroom and found that teachers used a number of these strategies in the classroom. These MTB-MLE strategies include translanguaging in the form of translation, code switching and code mixing, and translation lists where the content is first explained in English and then in Nyanja. As it is argued that using one's first language is a human right, learners should be given the freedom to express themselves in their first languages. The language in education policy or the teachers should not restrict learners regarding the use of language. The results also show that teachers used groups in the classroom to help learners not familiar with LOI. Therefore, teachers incorporated both English and Nyanja into their lessons to be linguistically inclusive. In this way, language is used as a resource in that the other languages familiar to the learners can be used to explain the target language. Furthermore, the teachers employ picture stories, charts and other objects to assist learners not familiar with the LOI in the classroom. In addition, the results reveal that teachers used Real objects, visual scaffolding and Explicit instructions to help learners not conversant with the LOI in the classroom.

Objective number three identified the challenges that teachers face when applying MTB-MLE strategies in the classroom. The study revealed that one of the challenges faced by teachers when applying MTB-MLE strategies is inadequate materials which is made worse by the inadequate representation of the cultural heritage of the children in their first language. Real objects are very expensive while others such as traffic lights are situated very far from the schools of Chongwe District. The results also indicated that mother tongue interference is a challenge when applying MTB-MLE strategies in that some concepts used in the mother tongues are too unfamiliar to be interpreted. This is due to the rigidity of the language policy in Zambia, that it is only one of seven regional languages that should be used as media of instruction in lower grades. Yet another challenge revealed by the study is that applying MTB-MLE strategies in the classroom is time consuming. Teachers spend a lot of time trying to translate concepts from the target language to the local language or from the LOI to the L1 of learners, consulting fellow teachers or community members on the meaning of some concepts and preparing learners to help their friends during the lessons. The results further show that teacher-pupil ratio is a challenge affecting the application of MTB-MLE strategies in that teachers have to handle large classes. Applying MTB-MLE such as using fellow learners to explain some concepts, using group, picture stories and real objects becomes very difficult.

The influence on the field of study in language teaching and learning and sociolinguistics can be evaluated from the point of view of the research objectives. One of the motivations of the study was to investigate how teachers use MTB-MLE to help multilingual learners in multilingual contexts in lower grades. Teachers use a variety of MTB-MLE strategies to help learners in multilingual classrooms including translanguaging, use of real objects, picture stories, use of groups, picture stories, translation lists and questioning. This is new contribution in language teaching and learning. Another contribution made is that in the process of teachers applying the MTB-MLE strategies, they face challenges such as inadequate materials, concepts used are too unfamiliar to be interpreted into the mother tongue, time consuming and high teacher-pupil ratio.

7.2 Recommendations

From the overall study and conclusion drawn, the following are some of the recommendations that emerged.

- MOE should come up with deliberate policy where teachers should be capacity built on how to handle learners in multilingual contexts.
- CDC should capacity build teachers to be able to design materials in Zambian languages that can be used in multilingual classrooms
- MOE should come up with a deliberate policy where all teachers of lower grades should be able to operate at least four Zambian languages to be able to handle their learners effectively.
- Teachers should be more liberal and innovative in their classroom by making use of other minority languages as opposed to regional languages
- There should be a study conducted to evaluate teacher training programmes to establish whether teachers are prepared to handle learners in multilingual contexts

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I: FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE FOR TEACHERS

To be conducted to Teachers in groups of six

1. What do you understand about MTB – MLE strategies?
2. Can you give examples of MTB-MLE strategies?
3. Which strategies do you employ in your classroom?
4. How often do you use MTB-MLE strategies in your classroom?
5. What kind of problems have you experienced when using MTB-MLE strategies?
6. Have you met any challenges while using MTB-MLE strategies in the classroom?
7. Cite the challenges you have met while implementing the MTB-MLE strategies in your class.
8. What are the benefits of MTB-MLE strategies?
9. What are the disadvantages of using MTB-MLE strategies?
10. Which types of MTB-MLE are commonly used in Chongwe district?
11. Is there anything else you would like to say about using MTB-MLE strategies?

APPENDIX II: OBSERVATION CHECKLIST

To be used in lesson observation of teachers

Lesson Plan / Actual Delivery

Item	Aspects to be checked	Observations
Learning Outcomes	Are the learning outcomes covering three domains: psychomotor, affective and cognitive?	
Lesson Development	Is the teacher using Explicit Instructions, Gradual Release Model, etc?	
MTB-MLE Strategies	Is the teacher using MTB-MLE strategies in the lesson? What MTB-MLE strategies is the teacher using?	
Effectiveness of the MTB-MLE strategies	How effective are the MTB-MLE the teacher is using in class?	
Teaching / learning Aids	Is the teacher using effective Teaching/learning aids during the lesson?	
Reference Materials	Is the teacher using suitable reference materials?	
Overall outcome	Have the learning outcomes been achieved in the lesson and how?	

APPENDIX III: DOCUMENT ANALYSIS

To analyse the following documents used by teachers.

1. Lesson plans

Document	Aspects to be checked	Observations
Lesson plan	• Whether formulation of learning outcomes covers three domains ▪ Whether they are measurable ▪ Whether they are attainable • Whether the introduction is stimulating • During the development stage: ▪ What activities the teacher employs during this stage and how? ▪ What T/L aids the teacher makes use of and whether they are effective ▪ How the teacher uses language (s) in the classroom ▪ Which language(s) is the teacher using? ▪ Does the teacher meet all the learners language wise? ▪ Which strategies did the teacher use? ▪ Of the strategies used which ones are MTB-MLE? ▪ Are the MTB-MLE strategies used effectively to meet multilingual learners' needs?	

	• Conclusion: how the teacher concludes the lesson ▪ Does the teacher do a recap of the lesson correctly? ▪ From learners' responses have the learning outcomes been achieved? ▪ What necessitated the achievement of the learning outcomes if so	
	• Overall impression	

2. Schemes of work / weekly forecast

Document	Aspect to be checked	Observations
Schemes of work	Content: • Does the content suit the grade level? • Is there fair coverage? • Is the content adequate? Methods: • What methods are employed? • How does the teacher make use of these methods? • Are they effective? • Are the methods in line with MTB-MLE strategies? • Which MTB-MLE are in line with the methods?	

	• Do they fit the grade level? Reference Materials: • What reference materials are used? • Are the materials current? • Are they in line with the key competencies for reading? • Are there materials promoting the MTB-MLE strategies? • If so, which ones are these?	
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APPENDIX IV: PERMISSION FROM DEBS

All communications should be addressed
To the District Education Board Secretary
Telephone +260 211 620 111
Fax : +260 211 620 111



REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

In reply please quote

No.....

DISTRICT EDUCATION BOARD
P.O. BOX 3
CHONGWE

7th July, 2023

To: The Headteacher
Chalimbana Primary
Chongwe Primary
Bimbe Primary
Matipula Primary
Mulola Primary
Chainda Primary
Kampekete Primary
Evergreen Primary
Silver Rest Primary
Kabeleka Primary School
CHONGWE DISTRICT

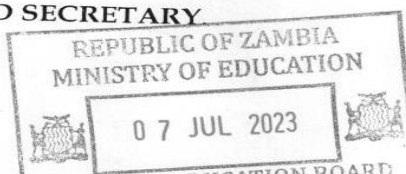
RE: PERMISSION TO CARRY OUT YOUR RESEARCH

Reference is made to the above mentioned subject.

I write to inform you that permission has been granted for you to carry out your research activities in our schools on condition that classes are not disturbed at any cost especially examination classes.

Joseph C. Chanda
DISTRICT EDUCATION BOARD SECRETARY
CHONGWE.

/tmp



APPENDIX V: APPROVAL OF THE STUDY



THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA DIRECTORATE OF RESEARCH AND GRADUATE STUDIES

Great East Road Campus | P.O. Box 32379 | Lusaka 10101 | Tel: +260-211-290 258/291 777 Fax: (+260)-211-290 258/253 952 | E-mail: director.drgs@unza.zm | Website: www.unza.zm

APPROVAL OF STUDY

IORG No. 0005376
HSSREC IRB No. 00006464
REF NO. HSSREC-2023-MAY-036

30th January, 2024

Ms Clare Mwiinga
The University of Zambia
P. O. Box
LUSAKA

Dear Ms Mwiinga

RE: "AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE USE OF MOTHER TONGUE BASED-MULTILINGUAL EDUCATION (MTB-MLE) STRATEGIES BY TEACHERS IN LOWER PRIMARY GRADES IN CHONGWE RURAL DISTRICT"

Reference is made to your submission of the protocol captioned above. The HSSREC resolved to approve this study and your participation as Principal Investigator for a period of one year.

REVIEW TYPE	ORDINARY REVIEW	APPROVAL NO. HSSREC:- 2023- MAY - 036
Approval and Expiry Date	Approval Date: 30 th January, 2024	Expiry Date: 29 th January, 2025
Protocol Version and Date	Version - Nil.	29 th January, 2025
Information Sheet, Consent Forms and Dates	☐ English.	To be provided
Consent form ID and Date	Version - Nil	To be provided
Recruitment Materials	Nil	Nil
Other Study Documents	Questionnaire.	
Number of Participants Approved for Study		

CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL

- No participant may be involved in any study procedure prior to the study approval or after the expiration date.
- All unanticipated or Serious Adverse Events (SAEs) must be reported to HSSREC within 5 days.
- All protocol modifications must be approved by HSSREC prior to implementation unless they are intended to reduce risk (but must still be reported for approval). Modifications will include any change of investigator/s or site address.
- All protocol deviations must be reported to HSSREC within 5 working days.
- All recruitment materials must be approved by HSSREC prior to being used.
- Principal investigators are responsible for initiating Continuing Review proceedings. HSSREC will only approve a study for a period of 12 months.
- It is the responsibility of the PI to renew his/her ethics approval through a renewal application to HSSREC.
- Where the PI desires to extend the study after expiry of the study period, documents for study extension must be received by HSSREC at least 30 days before the expiry date. This is for the purpose of facilitating the review process. Documents received within 30 days after expiry will be labelled "late submissions" and will incur a penalty fee of K500.00. No study shall be renewed whose documents are submitted for renewal 30 days after expiry of the certificate.
- Every 6 (six) months a progress report form supplied by The University of Zambia Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee as an IRB must be filled in and submitted to us. There is a penalty of K500.00 for failure to submit the report.
- When closing a project, the PI is responsible for notifying, in writing or using the Research Ethics and Management Online (REMO), both HSSREC and the National Health Research Authority (NHRA) when ethics certification is no longer required for a project.
- In order to close an approved study, a Closing Report must be submitted in writing or through the REMO system. A Closing Report should be filed when data collection has ended and the study team will no longer be using human participants or animals or secondary data or have any direct or indirect contact with the research participants or animals for the study.
- Filing a closing report (rather than just letting your approval lapse) is important as it assists HSSREC in efficiently tracking and reporting on projects. Note that some funding agencies and sponsors require a notice of closure from the IRB which had approved the study and can only be generated after the Closing Report has been filed.

- A reprint of this letter shall be done at a fee.
- All protocol modifications must be approved by HSSREC by way of an application for an amendment prior to implementation unless they are intended to reduce risk (but must still be reported for approval). Modifications will include any change of investigator/s or site address or methodology and methods. Many modifications entail minimal risk adjustments to a protocol and/or consent form and can be made on an Expedited basis (via the IRB Chair). Some examples are: format changes, correcting spelling errors, adding key personnel, minor changes to questionnaires, recruiting and changes, and so forth. Other, more substantive changes, especially those that may alter the risk-benefit ratio, may require Full Board review. In all cases, except where noted above regarding subject safety, any changes to any protocol document or procedure must first be approved by HSSREC before they can be implemented.

Should you have any questions regarding anything indicated in this letter, please do not hesitate to get in touch with us at the above indicated address.

On behalf of HSSREC, we would like to wish you all the success as you carry out your study.

Yours faithfully,



Dr. J. I. Ziwa

DR. J. I. Ziwa

CHAIRPERSON

**THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA HUMANITIES AND
SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE - IRB**

CC: Director, Directorate of Research and Graduate Studies
Assistant Director (Research), Directorate of Research and Graduate Studies
Assistant Registrar (Research), Directorate of Research and Graduate Studies