

# **Implications of Teachers' Attitudes towards Unofficial languages on English Language Teaching in Multilingual Zambia**

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## **Background**

Zambia is a multilingual and multi-ethnic country. Amid 73 dialects spoken in the country, English is the official language and the only school compulsory language subject from grade one to the last grade of secondary education. According to 2010 statistics, only 1.7% of a Zambian population which was approximately 13 million people, spoke and understood English. This meant that the vast majority of the people (including pupils) spoke Zambian Languages. Drawing on Basil Bernstein's Code and Pedagogical Discourses Theory, the study intended to establish the attitudes of teachers towards unofficial languages and the implications such attitudes would have on the expected teachers' juxtaposition of the horizontal and vertical discourses in selected Multilingual classrooms of Zambia. A qualitative study involving 18 grade 11 secondary school teachers of English were sampled. Data was collected through interviews and participant observation. The findings show that teachers held monolingual purist language ideologies in which their negative attitudes towards unofficial languages resulted into symbolic violence.

**Key words:** Teachers, English, Multilingual, Unofficial Languages, Zambian Languages, Attitudes, Pedagogical Discourses.

Zambia has an estimated population of 13 million people and Wakumelo (2013) noted that according to the 2010 census, only 1.7% of the population spoke and understood English. This meant that most of the population in Zambia predominantly spoke Zambian languages (see CSO, 2010). Zambia has 73 dialects which can be collapsed into between 25 and 40 mutually intelligible languages. Nkosha (1999:58-59) observed that “Zambia has no national lingua-franca although it uses seven (7) regional indigenous languages, which are widely understood and used in the regions”. However, different people speak different varieties of the same language. For example, Mwanza (2012) observed that while the standard forms of the seven regional languages existed in written form and spoken only in selected parts of the country, other areas especially urban spaces spoke ‘town dialects’ of the language which was characterised with borrowing and translanguaging as the common language practice. It is within this linguistic context that English is an official language and a compulsory subject in school.

Broadly put, there are two varieties of English being spoken in Zambia, namely, formal and informal varieties. Tripathi (1990) observed that in as far as the use of English is concerned there is a growing use of an informal variety of English amongst the English speaking minority which differs phonologically, semantically and syntactically from the standard British English. For example, Bobda (2001) argued that in Zambia, the prevalence of /a/ is very low. It seems to be associated orthographically with <ur> and <our> in words such as burn, purpose, burden and journey. Interestingly, Tripathi (1990) argued that even with comprehensive educational intervention, it will be impossible for standard British English

to become a norm of spoken usage in Zambia. However, he acknowledged that a much smaller population of the Zambian elite now speak and write like educated Englishmen.

Considering the arguments above, it is important to find out the norm of English or the English variety which is recommended for teaching in Zambia. If the majority of Zambians speak the English variety which differs phonologically, syntactically and semantically from the British standard variety, then the norm of English variety in schools should consider the variety spoken by the majority of Zambians. In other words, the English variety taught in Zambia should be or pay respect in a small or bigger way to the one commonly spoken. Interestingly, the syllabus does not state explicitly what the norm of English variety should be taught in Zambia. For example, one of the general objectives on listening and speaking English, the syllabus states that learners should be able to “understand and speak English at an acceptable international standard” (CDC, 2012:6). The phrase ‘international standard’ is not clear and is not specific on which international standard teachers should consider. Thus, it was important to find how teachers interpreted the syllabus on this matter and which norm they followed. Another important focus of the study was the attitudes teachers had towards Zambian local languages and informal English varieties in the context of English language teaching and what pedagogical implications their attitudes had

Although Zambia has two English varieties, it must be noted that within the informal variety, there are several sub-varieties. Since Zambia is highly multilingual, different people speak English differently phonetically and phonologically depending on how strongly they are influenced by their respective mother tongue. Within the scope of this argument, the Tonga speaking people will pronounce the [s] in because as /s/, while the Chewa speaking people pronounce it as /z/. In addition, while [h] is silent among the Bemba

speakers in words such as ‘how’ and ‘here’, it is not silent among the Chewa and Tonga speaking people. The point here is that even within the informal variety, there are sub varieties according to the mother tongue interference in particular people (Mwanza, 2016).

Considering that different languages and varieties are spoken in Zambia, the question that begs attention is: how should English be taught in the context of multilingualism and multi-ethnicity? Lewis, Jones and Baker (2012) stated that in a multilingual classroom, there is need to bridge the home and school environment by drawing on the child’s linguistic resources to help learners maximise their understanding and classroom performance. This may involve what is called translanguaging and Lasagabaster and Garcia (2014) argued that as a pedagogical practice, translanguaging entails allowing students to draw from their home languages in the process of learning the target language and teachers accept it as legitimate pedagogical practice. As Creese and Blackledge (2015:26) put it “translanguaging as a pedagogy has the potential to liberate the voices of language minority students”. This means that pedagogically, learners should not be discriminated against from participating in classroom interaction simply because they cannot speak the target language. However, it was not known what attitudes teachers had towards English, Zambian languages and informal English and how their attitude impacted on classroom interaction and learning.

## **2. Aim of the Study**

The aim of the study was to establish teachers’ attitudes towards Zambian languages and Informal English varieties and the implications of their attitudes on classroom interaction during English language teaching.

### **3. Theoretical Framework**

The code and pedagogic discourse theory is used in this study together with its extended notion of recontextualisation of education knowledge. Under this theory, it is believed that classroom teaching does not take place in a vacuum. It is affected by several factors such as government through curriculum, syllabus, teacher training, national exams, school inspections, school administration and the context of the school on one hand, and informal knowledge and the learners' social cultural background on the other hand. In the teaching of language, ideologies and how a particular country conceptualises language also play a part. These factors are critical ingredients in effective classroom practice through recontextualisation of prior knowledge.

Bernstein (1973) argued that every pedagogic discourse is characterised by power and control. Haugen (2009:152) offered the following explanation of Bernstein's code theory: 'the code theory examines the reproduction of power in schools by looking at the way content is classified and the interactions are framed'. This shows that the concepts of 'classification' and 'framing' are central to Bernstein's theory of Pedagogic Discourse. Sadovnik (2001:3) noted that "classification is concerned with the organisation of knowledge into the curriculum" while "framing is related to the transmission of knowledge through pedagogic practices". In the education system, classification may refer to governments' powers over the curriculum and regulations on what schools or teachers should do while framing is concerned with the amount of control teachers and learners have over what goes on in the classroom. Framing also includes the control (or lack of it) teachers have in implementing the curriculum. Bernstein (1973b:88) described framing even clearer when he noted that "frame refers to the degree of control teacher and learner possess over the selection, organisation, pacing and timing of the knowledge transmitted and

received in the pedagogical relationship”. It is important to note that this study mainly looked at teachers’ attitudes towards different languages and its implications on classroom language practices and learning. That is the reason why the concept of framing as it relates to the power that teachers and learners have over what goes on in the classroom is very important in this study.

Bernstein (1973:88) observed that “education may be wholly subordinate to the agencies of the state or it may be accorded a relatively autonomous space with respect to discourse areas and practices”. Haugen (2009:12) added that “power relations are exercised and negotiated in discourse”. Zambian secondary schools are not immune to this reality. Hence, the analysis of teaching and the choices about classroom language practices cannot be done without considering these important factors. This is what renders this theory a lot of importance in the analysis of the finding in this study. In this case, the theory helps to understand how language in education policy and the status of different languages influenced teachers’ attitudes and classroom language practices.

Related to the argument above is the fact that Zambian schools, like schools around the world, are characterised by both vertical and horizontal discourses. Bernstein (1999:159) defined horizontal and vertical discourse as follows:

[Horizontal discourse] is a form of knowledge, usually typified as every day or common sense knowledge. Common because all, potentially or actually have access to it...it is likely to be oral, local, context dependent and specific, tacit, multi-layered, and contradictory across but not within contexts... A vertical discourse takes the form of a coherent, explicit and systematically principled structure, hierarchically organised... or it takes the form of specialised languages with specialised

## modes of interrogation and specialised criteria for the production and circulation of texts

Haugen (2009) stated that the background of every learner is very important to every teaching and learning situation in school. I draw on the concepts of vertical and horizontal discourses when analysing the teaching of English grammar in multilingual Zambia, given a language situation characterised by indigenous Zambian languages and the home grown Zambian English. How, in other words, do teachers accommodate learners' sociolinguistic backgrounds while still trying to teach the official language- English?

This question led me to a core concept in this study – 'recontextualisation'. According to Bernstein (1996) cited in Singh (1997:7) "recontextualisation refers to the rules or procedures by which educational knowledge is moved from one education site to another".

In a multilingual country like Zambia where English is only spoken by a very small population, it is expected that most children enter school without English proficiency. They learn English upon entry into school. In most Zambian homes specially the lower and middle class, the home language is one of the Zambian indigenous languages and not English. Another point to consider here is the variety of English spoken in Zambia. As noted earlier, there are two broad varieties of English in Zambia- formal and informal.

With this scenario in mind, the big question is: what is the place of Zambian languages, and the home grown Zambian English in the process of teaching and learning the formal variety of English. In the study, using the principle of recontextualisation, the data was analysed to find out whether or not teachers found Zambian languages and the home Zambian English as resources which they could use to help learners access the Standard English variety. The educational principle of teaching from the known to the unknown

also augments this point. One cannot teach standard English to learners who speak the informal variety without recognising the resources and knowledge which learners come with to the classroom. Concerning the argument that the horizontal discourse can be used as a resource to access the vertical discourse, Bernstein (1999: 169) states the following:

When segments of horizontal discourse become resources to facilitate access to vertical discourse, such appropriations are likely to be mediated through the distributive rules of the school. Recontextualising of segments is confined to particular social groups, usually the less-able. This move to use segments of horizontal discourse as resources to facilitate access, usually limited to the procedural or operational level of the subject, may also be linked to improving the students ability to deal with issues arising (or likely to arise) in the students everyday world.

This part of the theoretical framework informs my analysis of the relationship between the official and unofficial knowledge, power relations in the Zambian education system regarding what the role of unofficial languages when teaching the English which is also the official language in the country. While the language in education policy is crucial in this discussion, Apple (2006) argued that education policies are normally not characterised by progression or regression but by contradictions.

In summary, this study has used Bernstein's code and pedagogical discourse theory specifically using the concepts of classification and framing, horizontal and vertical discourse as well as recontextualisation of education knowledge to analyse the findings. The theory was used to analyse teachers' attitudes towards unofficial languages relative to English which is the official language and the implications of such attitudes.

## **2. Methods of Data Collection and Analysis**

This is a qualitative study and data was collected through face to face interviews with 18 secondary school teachers of English drawn from six secondary schools in Central Province. As Leedy (1993:142) stated that qualitative research is “concerned with human beings: interpersonal relationships, personal values, meanings, beliefs, thoughts and feelings. The qualitative researcher attempts to attain rich, real, deep, and valid data and, from a rational standpoint, the approach is inductive”. Thus, qualitative methods of data collection and analysis were chosen for the purpose of collecting rich and detailed data. Purposive sampling was used to select the teachers. The study area was Central Province of Zambia. Since language attitudes may differ depending on one’s location, two secondary schools were selected from the rural area, two from peri- urban while the other two were from the urban area. This was done in case of any differential effect based on the location. Data was analysed thematically. The collected data was grouped into themes that emerged from the data. After categorisation of the data, it was analysed and discussed qualitatively by commenting on the major points and the implications of the respondents attitudes towards the different language varieties on epistemic access in English language learning.

## **3. Findings**

The study sought to establish teachers’ attitudes towards the different language varieties in Zambia in order to determine their understanding of the value of the linguistic resources learners bring to the classroom. Which variety of English was being taught, and did teachers allow for the use of other languages and varieties in the English classroom? Or were some learners effectively silenced if they could not use proper Standard English? The data was collected through face to face interviews with the sampled teachers of English

from the six secondary schools. The data is presented under three subheadings namely, teachers attitudes towards formal English, teachers attitudes towards informal English and teachers attitudes towards Zambian languages. Finally, a summary of the whole section is presented showing where the findings agree or disagree with theory and the pedagogical implications their attitudes had on classroom interaction and learning.

### **5.1 Teachers' Attitudes towards Formal English**

All the teachers expressed positive attitudes towards formal English. They stated that they taught formal English to the learners because it was the variety needed for one to pass an exam, to get a job after school and to be accepted for further education. Some of the teachers referred to formal English as 'British English' arguing that this was the variety of English where rules of formality were supposed to be followed characterised by formal diction. Other teachers explained that they taught British English (formal English) because Zambia was a former colony of Britain, and this particular variety had achieved a very high and desirable status among Zambians. Some said they were teaching standard British English because it was the variety recommended by the Ministry of Education. Here are some of the interview extracts:

- T1: *English has to be formal because for you to get a job or to go to university, you need formal English. Informal English makes you look like you are from the street.*
- T2: *We teach formal English because it is the one which is needed for one to get a job. It is the one approved by CDC probably.*
- T3: *Here in Zambia, we teach British English which is a formalised form of English. We encounter American English in some books written by Americans but we tell learners that the correct spelling is British.*

T4: *If we are teaching English as an international language, then we should teach formal English which is British. All along, we teach British English. In this one, the rules are followed, the spelling should be British and proper sentences should be constructed. We cannot pronounce like the British but we make sure that when we write or when the learners write, it is correct British English. It should be formal.*

From the responses, it can be reiterated that teachers held positive attitudes towards formal English. They even stated that it was the variety which they taught in schools and they did not appreciate other varieties such as American English which they viewed as being unacceptable in the classroom. The other point arising from the findings is that what teachers referred to as ‘British English’ was actually formal Zambian English. However, based on the colonial legacy, these teachers saw formal English as British English and vice versa. Moreover, in the responses above, they lay emphasis on the rules of language (governing sentence construction) and correct spelling as some of the descriptive features of what they called British English ( formal English).The fact that they do not consider received pronunciation renders the variety taught as mere formal English which should be acceptable internationally (see Curriculum Development Centre 2012). In fact, T3 and T4 above explained that British English was the formalised version of English.

By way of explanation, Received Pronunciation is a class dialect or a sociolect which is normally understood to be a standard pronunciation of British English. Parsons (1998) states that RP has served as one label among others for a speech style that is considered educated, non-regional and generally desirable, and taken to denote a standard. Although RP denotes a standard of British English, Parsons (ibid) argues that officially, there is no such standard. The point to note here is that RP is the English dialect associated with the educated British elites.

The focus on formal English by teachers of English in Zambia as opposed to the actual British RP (Received Pronunciation) English is not strange considering Banda (2009) who argued that after independence in Zambia, the teaching of English was increasingly in the hands of Zambians. This promoted the “Zambianisation” of English, as Zambian teachers and subsequently, their learners, developed their own distinct accents often quite different from standard British English. Thus, it is believed that in Zambia today, even with comprehensive educational intervention, it will be impossible for standard British English to become a norm of spoken usage (cf Tripathi 1990). This is the reason why I argue that what teachers referred to as British English was actually formal English which they taught but without strict adherence to British RP because even teachers themselves do not speak RP English. Regardless, the major points in the findings are that teachers held positive attitudes towards formal English, the variety they actually taught in secondary schools.

## **5.2 Teachers’ Attitudes towards Informal Varieties of English**

Teachers held negative attitudes towards informal English and disapproved of the presence of informal varieties of English in the classroom. They stated that they corrected those who spelled words wrongly as well as those who wrote or spoke informally (see examples of what they called informal English and spellings in the interview extracts below). However, some teachers said that they were stricter with written forms compared to spoken forms. For example, consider the following three responses:

- T5: *I mark anyone who uses informal language wrong. I even talk to them to be mindful of spellings and avoid errors.*
- T6: *They use sms language (short forms) and also American English. So, in composition, they write ‘gotta’ or ‘gonna’ (will/want), ‘l8t’ (late), ‘4giv’ (forgive) because they think*

*it will give them swag as they call it. So, when, they can't avoid errors in class, I call a learner individually and go through the work sentence by sentence and correct it.*

T7: *No, we can't teach or allow informal English. Where can they (learners) go with informal English? That (informal English) is for yobarrys (informal youths). We correct them and tell them the right thing to do.*

Clearly, teachers held negative attitudes towards informal varieties or forms of English. Some teachers (T7) even label it as 'Yobarrys language' which they argue should not be allowed in the classroom. Yobarrys are normally youths who lead an informal life style. They dress informally characterised by sagging of trousers and exposing of underwear, have informal hair styles normally copied from celebrities, have a distinctive way of walking often seen as pompous by others and they speak informal English characterised by informal registers and diction. In short, 'Yobarrys' are people with an informal lifestyle both in appearance and speech. They are called by the term 'Yobarrys' because they normally use the word 'yo' when they speak as an attention grabber. Since they use the word 'yo' interchangeably with 'ekse', which is an Afrikaans word for 'I say', they are also called ekxes. The word 'Barry/s' is the term these youths use to mean 'father'. Note also that 'Yobarrys' or 'Ekxes' are stereotyped as lazy people who are unemployed and always depend on their 'Barrys' (fathers) to give them money to finance their lavish informal lifestyles. Thus, they are viewed as not being good examples of how youths should grow up. Their life styles are often times stigmatised as being unserious and with no proper future. It is therefore interesting how respondents in this study referred to informal English as English for 'YoBarrys'. It simply shows how unwanted and unwelcome informal English is in the classroom space. Thus, as noted in the findings, whenever a

learner uses or writes in informal English, they are corrected and reminded that the correct form is formal English. The respondents also considered what they called ‘American English’ as informal and unacceptable in the classroom. According to them, only ‘British English’ was allowed in their classrooms.

## **5. Teachers’ Attitudes towards Zambian Languages**

Another interesting question was about the place and value of Zambian languages in the teaching of English in Zambian schools. The findings showed that teachers held negative attitudes towards Zambian languages. Both formal and informal varieties including blended local vernaculars were considered unacceptable when teaching English. Teachers stated that Zambian languages were not important and were not needed in the English language classrooms. They explained that when they taught English, the focus was on learners’ abilities to speak and write in English. Thus, Zambian languages were a barrier and interference to the objective of teaching English. They said that the medium of communication was strictly English and they did not allow any learner to speak in any other language. Some teachers even said that it was better for a learner to be silent and never participate in class discussions if they cannot speak English. The following are some of the responses from selected teachers:

- T8: *On that one, here, they speak the local language both in class and outside. So, we tell them to speak English. Now, when we tell them to use English, one funny thing is the child will just keep quiet.*
- T9: *I cannot allow a learner to speak in the local language. I can just ask another learner to speak even in broken English. I am very much against (Zambian languages).*

- T10: *It's better for a learner to keep quiet than using the local language in an English lesson*
- T11: *English is a foreign language. It needs commitment and discipline on the learners. They need to practice the language but you find that they speak their own languages. So, they don't understand English because they don't practice speaking the language. So when they do not speak, the level of translation is not high. The local environment has nurtured them in a bad way.*

From these findings, it can be reiterated that teachers held negative attitudes towards Zambian languages and they had a monolingual approach to teaching English where they believed in the exclusive use of formal English during classroom interaction and communication. It is also clear from the findings that some learners come to the English language classroom with minimal English language proficiency. As one respondent put it above, some learners resort to keeping quiet in class because firstly, they are not proficient in English and secondly, they are not allowed to speak in a Zambian language in class. This means that even if a learner has not understood what the teacher is saying, such a learner will not be able to ask for clarification if they cannot express themselves in English. Thus, learning appears to be accessible to only those who can understand and speak English. The negative attitudes of teachers towards Zambian languages can be attributed partly to the language policy in Zambia where English is the only officially sanctioned language (cf GRZ 1996,) despite Zambia being a multilingual country (cf Simwinga 2006; Wakumelo 2009; Mambwe 2014). Language policy documents seem to influence teachers' attitudes and classroom decisions. In this case, teachers do not see multilingualism as an educational resource which can be used to enable learners of different language background and

abilities to participate in classroom activities (see Wakumelo 2013).

However, the contradiction was that the teachers in the study did not speak formal English in their interaction outside the classroom. They spoke in mixed varieties and code switched at will. I recorded some of their conversations in the staff room. Here is an example of a conversation between teachers:

T1: *How are you sir (greeting me)*

ME: *I am fine, how are you madam?*

T2: *He is Mr. Mwanza from the University of Zambia. Balefwaya bachisungu (He wants those who teach English).*

T1: *Ok. Nomba bafwile bamona ba Head first kabili. (But he should first see the Head teacher).*

T2: *He has already seen her*

T2: *Ba X (name of teacher), iseni kuno mwebachisungu (come here you who teach English). Great the sir*

T3: *How are you sir?*

ME: *I am fine, how are you sir?*

T3: *(He turns to teacher 2). Iwe, uniitanila chani? (what are you calling me for)*

T1: *The visitor (me) would like to see you. He is from UNZA*

T2: *He will observe someone but nabakwata ama (he has questionnaires, you help him).*

T3: *Ok. Sir you can come. Let's go to the office.*

Note that the conversation involved two female teachers of other subjects and one male teacher of English. Three of them alternated between English and Bemba in the case of female teachers and between English and Cinyanja in the case of the male teacher. They

code switched and translanguaged with ease. However, when the three of them talked to me, they used formal English and they were consistent in doing so. Therefore, while they were informal among themselves, they were formal when addressing me (the researcher). What I see here is a contradiction between their monolingual purist language classroom ideology and the actual practice outside the classroom where they translanguaged. Thus, even with teachers, there was a separation between language use in the classroom and language use outside the classroom where teachers changed linguistic identities from one domain to the next within the school environment.

In short, based on all the findings on teachers' attitudes towards different languages and varieties in Zambia, it can be concluded that teachers held positive attitudes towards the use of formal English in the classroom, while they held negative attitudes towards informal English, including American English, which is also present in Zambia. They also held negative attitudes towards Zambian languages and various local blended vernaculars. Teachers held monolingual language ideologies where only the target language was allowed in classroom instruction while all other languages and varieties were considered unacceptable and interfering with the teaching and learning of English. This is despite the fact that they themselves code switched when they spoke outside the classroom space.

## **6. Discussion**

Finally, it has been observed in this section that teachers held positive attitudes towards formal English while holding negative attitudes towards informal varieties of English and Zambian languages. This has a significant impact on the ability of many learners to participate successfully in classroom activities, since they are forbidden to use the linguistic resources they actually have. Ultimately, such learners

will struggle to acquire the target variety of English. These attitudes are testament of the monolingual ideologies held by teachers and their conceptualisation of language as separate bound entities. These attitudes are at variance with recent developments in the study of language in multilingual contexts which reject the ideology of languages as stable, discrete and bounded entities and instead project languages as socially, culturally, politically and historically situated set of resources and their use as a social practice (Heller 2007; Makoni and Pennycook 2007; Blackledge and Creese 2014). The findings in this study in which teachers held positive attitudes towards formal English and negative attitudes towards Zambian languages including all other language varieties are in agreement with findings from selected studies. For example, Wakumelo (2013) observed that through the functions and status assigned to English relative to other languages, the government favoured English at the expense of any other language and they viewed multilingualism as a negative phenomenon. Further, considering that English is the only language of official business, Africa (1980) argued that there is an instrumental motivation among Zambians to learn English since it was the language associated to employment, higher education and almost all the government documents and public media were predominantly in English. Thus, people hold positive attitudes towards formal English since it is the one which is expected to be used in all formal domains in the country. Benzie (1991) also stated that most teachers in Africa (Zambia inclusive) had greater interest in English than indigenous languages. Thus, teachers' attitudes seemed to be influenced by the language policy in which formal English is the language of the economy while other languages and varieties have been relegated to informal domains. As noted earlier, the English language syllabus also holds this ideology where it recommends that learners should be able to speak and write English of international standard, indirectly suggesting formal English.

Educationally, the purist and monolingual ideologies held by teachers are at variance with the notions of vertical and horizontal discourses to teaching. According to Bernstein (1999), vertical discourses are defined as officially recognised knowledge and policies emanating from the state via its Department of Education, while horizontal discourses are the unofficial ones largely shared by teachers, parents and learners. In the context of this study, the formal variety of English as recommended by the syllabus falls under the vertical discourse. On the other hand, Zambian languages and the informal varieties of English fall under the horizontal discourse. Thus, Zambian languages and the informal English varieties form part of the learners' background which a teacher need to consider when preparing the lesson as well as when teaching.

The vertical and horizontal discourses should work hand in hand to enhance learning achievements by the learner (Haugen (2009). In this case, Zambian languages and the informal varieties of English become stepping stones or resources which learners and teachers will use to access the formal variety of English and slowly move away from the local languages and informal varieties. This could involve what is called translanguaging, which in its original conceptualisation is defined as “the purposeful pedagogical alternation of languages in spoken and written, receptive and productive modes” (Hornberger and Link 2012: 262, see also Baker 2001, 2003; Williams 1994).

The basic tenet of translanguaging as a classroom practice is to engender multilingual and multimodal literacies. As García (2009: 44) notes, translanguaging is about “engaging in bilingual or multilingual discourse practices [and] not on languages as has often been the case, but on the practices of bilinguals that are readily observable.” According to Garcia ( 2009:51), “translanguaging ‘shifts the lens from cross-linguistic influence’ to how multilinguals ‘intermingle linguistic features that have hereto been

administratively or linguistically assigned to a particular language or language variety”. In addition, translanguaging is multimodal in that it transcends verbal communication (both spoken and written language) to other mediated and mediatized modes and related literacies learners bring to the classroom.

Zambian children, even those in rural areas have been exposed or are incrementally being introduced to various forms of languages and new technologies such as cell phones and other computerised gadgetry. Following Banda (2010) and Creese and Blackledge (2010), alternative bilingual models of classroom practice such as translanguaging can help the learners of English and teachers alike to mitigate and counteract the negative effects of monolingual language ideologies and policies as well as to bridge home and school multilingual literacy practices and identities.

## **7. Conclusion**

This study sought to establish teachers attitudes towards English and Zambian languages in the context of English language teaching in selected secondary schools in Zambia. Findings have shown that teachers held positive attitudes towards formal English while holding negative attitudes towards Zambian languages and informal English varieties. Pedagogically, this meant that learners’ linguistic repertoires and home literacies were sidelined in the process of English language teaching/learning. By implication, this effectively silenced those who could not speak English and consequently would not participate wholly in classroom communicative activities requiring exclusive use of formal English. This also means that teachers held purist language ideologies and further believed that the target language would be the only language of classroom instruction and interaction.

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