

**EXPLORING TEACHERS' AND LEARNERS' EXPERIENCES IN THE USE OF  
CHINYANJA AS MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION IN SELECTED PRIMARY  
SCHOOLS IN CHIPATA DISTRICT, ZAMBIA.**

**By**

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requirements for the award of the Degree of Master of Education in Literacy and  
Applied Linguistics.**

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## **DECLARATION**

I, Tembo Zebron, do hereby declare that this study entitled, “Exploring Teachers and Learners’ Experiences in the Use of Chinyanja as Medium of Instruction in Selected Schools in Chipata District, Zambia.” is my work and that the sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged using complete references.

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## APPROVAL

This dissertation by Tembo Zebron was approved as fulfilling part of the requirements for the award of the degree of Master of Education in Literacy and Language by the University of Zambia.

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## **Abstract**

The purpose of this study was to explore the teachers' and learners' experiences in the use of Chinyanja as a medium of instruction in selected schools in Chipata district. Chinyanja is used as the primary language of teaching in pre-kindergarten through grades one to four in Zambia's Eastern Province. The study was guided by the following objectives; determine teachers' preparedness (readiness) to teach using Chinyanja as a medium of instruction in Grade four (4), describe teachers' and learners' experiences in the use of Chinyanja as a medium of instruction, and finally to establish the challenges that teachers' and learners' experience in the use of Chinyanja as a medium of instruction in selected primary schools in Chipata district.

The study used a descriptive study design. Interview guides, Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), and lesson observations were used as data collection tools. The participants comprised 20 learners, 12 teachers, and 1 Senior Education Standard Officer (SESO) in charge of Languages giving a total sample size of n=33. Data was analyzed using Thematic Analysis in which themes were generated.

The main findings of the study unveiled varying degrees of preparedness by primary teachers to teach using Chinyanja but agreed that using Chinyanja as a medium of instruction for learners was appropriate even though some of them felt it would be better for literacy and not other subjects. Due to their origins outside Eastern Province, some teachers who were not fluent in Chinyanja stated that they were unwilling to use the language as a teaching tool. However, it was established that teachers had a high level of proficiency and competency in using Chinyanja as a medium of instruction. Finally, the study showed that a variety of factors, including inadequate teaching materials, inappropriate teaching and learning resources, lesson planning in English and teaching in Chinyanja, unfavorable attitudes on the part of some teachers, a lack of proficiency in Chinyanja on the part of some teachers, and a lack of teacher involvement in the development of the language in education policy, had an impact on the use of Chinyanja as a medium of instruction.

Therefore, it was recommended that the Ministry of Education should thoroughly train all primary school teachers, University/Colleges of Education lecturers, and Education Standards Officers on the significance of using Chinyanja as the medium of instruction in Eastern Province as it enhances children's learning. Continuing Professional Development (CPDs) was also seen to be an effective method to train teachers on the new deployments in the teaching fraternity.

## **Dedication**

I dedicate this piece of work to my lovely wife and children for their unwavering support.

## **Acknowledgment**

I wish to acknowledge and thank my study supervisor, Professor Manchinshi who worked tirelessly to ensure this work met the required professional and academic standards. Gratitude goes to all the lecturers in the Department of Language and Social Sciences Education in the School of Education at the University of Zambia for their input into this study, without which this research would not have been completed successfully.

Special gratitude goes to my supervisors, workmates, wife and children for their support and sacrifice during the period of my absence from home when my presence and support were mostly needed. To you, I say your contribution to this study will ever be remembered and appreciated.

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## **ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS**

<b>C.T.S</b>	Creative Technology Studies.
<b>CLT</b>	Communicative Language Teaching.
<b>CPD</b>	Continuing Professional Development
<b>DEBS</b>	District Education Board Secretary.
<b>DESO</b>	District Education Standards Officer.
<b>L1</b>	Mother tongue language.
<b>L2</b>	Second Language.
<b>LLE</b>	Literacy and language education.
<b>LOI</b>	Language of Instruction.
<b>MOE</b>	Ministry of Education.
<b>MOGE</b>	Ministry of General Education.
<b>MOI</b>	Medium of Instruction.
<b>NBTL</b>	New Breakthrough to Literacy.
<b>PEO</b>	Provincial Education Officer.
<b>PLP</b>	Primary Literacy Programme.
<b>PRP</b>	Primary Reading Programme.
<b>ROLs</b>	Regional Official Languages
<b>SESO</b>	Senior Education Standards Officer.
<b>SPSS</b>	Statistical Package for Social Sciences.
<b>TBIA</b>	Text-Based Integrated Approach.
<b>UNESCO</b>	United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization.
<b>UNZA</b>	University of Zambia

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## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.0 Overview**

This chapter presents the background of the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, study objectives, study questions, limitations of the study, significance of the study and definitions of terms.

#### **1.1 Background**

The evolution in medium of instruction in education dates as far back as the period before the coming of the missionaries in Northern Rhodesia. During the missionary period, local languages were taught as a subject and used as a medium of instruction from sub-standard A to standard four because it was believed that a local language was a powerful linguistic instrument that one could use to impart knowledge in the local community (Manchishi 2004). The British South African Company (B.S.A. Co) followed the missionary language policy from sub A to standard four. A local language which was chosen in an area was used as a medium of instruction for example Silozi was used in western province. English only became the medium of instruction from standard five and whilst a local language was taught as a subject. In 1963 UNESCO commissioned a study of reviewing the Zambian education system and to find ways of improving it. UNESCO recommended that English should be introduced as a medium of instruction in quest to improve the education system. Hence, when Northern Rhodesia became independent in 1964, the government chose to implement the UNESCO recommendations and English was introduced as a medium of instruction from grade one to tertiary level. This was done because it was believed that English would promote national unity and that the earlier a language was started the better it was for the learners (Mwanakatwe, 1968). The change in the medium of instruction from local languages to English was done through the 1966 Education Act, the statutory instrument number 312 2nd November 1966 Education Act (Manchishi 2004; Mwanakatwe, 1968; Mwanakatwe, 1973; Ministry of

Education, 1996; Ministry of Education, 1992 ). Although there was the above change in the medium of instruction there were reports from conducted studies that children do not easily acquire basic literacy skills when they are taught using the language that is not familiar to them because children have to learn two complex skills simultaneously. Studies in literate societies have made plausible discoveries that a rather high level of proficiency in the language of instruction is required for children to benefit from reading instruction in school (Dickinson, McCabe, Anastasopoulos, Peisner-Feinberg, & Poe, 2003). Therefore, the Zambian education policy then meant that learners were to be taught using the language that was relatively unfamiliar this approach compromised the quality of education being offered not only at Primary school level, but also at higher levels (Kelly, 2000).

Additionally, the missionaries who settled in certain regions of the nation and built churches, hospitals, and schools made use of local languages to advance their evangelistic mission. Manchishi (2004:1) noted the following

*“Without fear of dispute, it can be said that the use of local languages by the missionaries made their evangelism push quite successful. Local languages have been used to translate the bible and other works of Christian literature. People sang hymns in their own local languages, which they could understand the best. Even at schools, instruction was given in the students' own tongues, at least up to the fourth grade.”*

In light of the aforementioned observation, the MoE's (1996) Educating Our Future policy document advised that first-year primary students be taught basic literacy in their native tongue before being introduced to English in grade 2. The remaining subjects should then be taught in English from grades one through four. The Primary Reading Programme (PRP), which was formally introduced in 2000, piloted the Zambia New Breakthrough to Literacy (ZNBTL) in 1998. PRP consisted of four courses: NBTL, Step-Into English (SITE), Pathway, and Read On

Course (ROC), which were taught in the languages of Chileshe, Mkandawire, and Tambulukani (2018:80-82). In the first grade of NBTL, emphasis was placed on using everyday language.

English medium of instruction policy, however, did not achieve desired results. The learners who had succeeded in generating the competences in reading were very few. A study by Southern African Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality (SACMEQ, 1998) on reading performance levels of grade six pupils in the Zambian Basic schools revealed that in 1995, out of the 148 grade six pupils in the target population, only 25 % were able to read at defined maximum levels and only 3 % were able to read at desired levels (Nkamba, and Kanyika, 1998). Additionally Kelly (2000) also found that grade six pupils performed considerably below the levels expected of those in sixth grade in reading. He found that the reading levels of some grade six pupils fell within the level expected of grade four, and that, scores of some grade five pupils in both rural and urban schools fell within the performance band expected of grade three pupils. This also applied the scores of urban and rural pupils whereby the scores of some grade four pupils in rural and urban schools fell within the performance band of grade two pupils. Therefore, the 30 year period between 1965 and 1995 saw a number of attempts to reverse this 'straight-for-English' approach. For instance, in 1977, the new policy, 'Educational Reform: Proposals and Recommendations'(Ministry of Education), provided that teachers be allowed to explain concepts that might otherwise not be understood through the medium of English, in one of the seven official local languages, provided a majority of pupils in a class could understand this vernacular language ( Ministry of Education, 1977).

The MESVTEE (2013) amended the language policy of instruction in familiar languages in order to create a plan for early literacy and later English instruction and to strengthen learners' toolkits for learning to read and write in other languages as well as learn content areas. In line with the point made above, the MESVTEE (2013:19) indicates that:

*“The education policy acknowledges the use of widely-spoken Zambian languages as the official languages of teaching in the early grades (Grades 1-4). At the Lower Primary level, all instruction and learning will be conducted in widely spoken Zambian languages. This is due to data showing that children learn more readily and effectively when using languages that they are familiar with and have a strong grasp of. From Grade 2, English will be a subject available. After acquiring adequate literacy abilities in the Zambian languages, it will be simpler for the kids to rapidly and easily transfer those skills to English literacy in Grade 2.”*

The aforementioned reasoning made it plain that there were no discernible increases in learners' reading and numeracy during the previous language in educational policy. Therefore, a policy change would require that all subjects from grades one to four be taught in regionally common tongues.

In 1996, there was a change in education policy whereby ‘focus on learning’ was replaced by a more liberal policy ‘Educating our future’. The Ministry of Education stipulates the following:

- a) A fundamental aim of the curriculum for lower and middle basic classes is to enable pupils to read and write, correctly and confidently, in a Zambian language and in English, and to acquire basic Numeracy and problem-solving skills.
- b) All pupils will be given an opportunity to learn the initial skills of reading and writing in a local language. Whereas English will remain as the official medium of instruction (Ministry of Education, 1996: 30)

This marked the introduction of the Primary Reading Program. In 1998, New Break Through to Literacy, an initiative of a South African non-governmental organization, Molteno project was piloted in Kasama and Mungwi in Northern Zambia. This was among Grade One learners.

Icibemba was used as the language of initial literacy. The results of the project were positive as learners were able to read in Grade One and by the time they reached Grade Two they were able to read at a level equivalent to those in Grade Four (Ministry of Education, 2001). The Molteno project was later renamed New Break Through to Literacy. In 2000, the project was extended to Mongu where Lozi was used as a language of initial literacy and Chipata and Lusaka where Chinyanja was used to teach initial literacy.

According to Ministry of Education (2003a), the New Break Through to Literacy approach required a child to read and write in their mother tongue or familiar language before attempting to do this in a foreign language (English). The New Break Through to Literacy programme is based on Language Experience Approach and includes phonics, syllabic, look and-say and read books. New Break through to Literacy project stated that the expected outcome for the Grade One was that “learners should demonstrate understanding and knowledge of the writing system of their language, knowing that letters make up words and words make up sentences” (Ministry of Education, 2003, p. 1). Children under this programme are first familiarized with drawing, using of symbols, learning the left to right orientation, and other similar activities which are certainly good for children who may have never seen books or used a pencil before. In 2003, the New Break Through to Literacy course was extended to all the provinces of Zambia.

Ministry of Education Report, (2002) noted that Primary Reading Program involved interventions at each of the seven Primary grade levels. In grade 1, the New Breakthrough to Literacy (NBTL) course, which was taught for one hour per day, is a version of the original South African Breakthrough to Literacy, however, it was modified to suit the Zambian environment in order to help the Zambian Learners. This fast-track one-year initial literacy course in each of the seven official Zambian Languages had significant success. The main aim of the programme was to address the then extremely low literacy levels in Zambian Primary

schools which was a matter of concern to the Government and other stakeholders, including parents of school children in the country.

According to the Ministry of Education (2002) from the inception of NBTL in 2000 and in the few years that followed, it scored notable successes, the major one being grade one children's accelerated reading and writing in a familiar language with an improvement rate from 23% to over 60% (Ministry of Education, 2002). However, the literacy levels of most Zambian school going children were still low and undesirable.

Kotze and Higgins, (1999) noted that the evaluation report on pilot programme carried out in Kasama Northern province of Zambia during 1998 states that 'the programme was an unqualified success; children in NBTL classes were reading and writing at a level equivalent to Grade 4 or higher in non-NBTL classes'. Despite these achievements, there were reported instances where children failed to make improvement at reading despite this effective literacy program in place. The Ministry of Education Report on National assessment (2003) concluded that the proportion of pupils attaining the expected minimum grade level of competence in reading in 2003 was at 1.7% for Lusaka province and 0.7% for Eastern province (Ministry of Education , 2003), which indicates that the expectations for children's performance were still rather low. A follow-up study was conducted in the same year to verify the earlier findings for Lusaka and Eastern provinces respectively. Results of the follow-up showed improved levels of 24% for Lusaka province and 9.4% for Eastern province. It was, however, observed that although the results of the verification study were somewhat higher than the prior results, they fell short of expectations (Ministry of Education; 2003). Matafwali (2005) also found that, only 23% out of 106 pupils in grade three from 4 randomly selected schools in Lusaka province were able to read at a level expected for their grade.

Kalindi (2006) conducted a study which involved 60 grade two poor readers (identified by teachers) from selected schools in Northern Province. The study revealed that only 13 % could read two syllable words, and only 8 % could identify 20 letters of the alphabet. The study showed that even with excellent and intensive instructions in place, some children could still fail to make satisfactory progress in reading. Kelly (2000) cited in Mwanza (2012) also reported that grade six pupils performed considerably below the levels expected of those in sixth grade in reading. He found that the reading levels of the same grade six pupils fell within the level expected of grade four and that scores of some grade five pupils in both rural and urban schools fell within the performance band expected of grade three pupils. Similarly, the scores of some grade four pupils in rural and urban school fell within the performance band of grade two pupils. Matafwali (2010) observed that even if the use of familiar language as the initial language of instruction was introduced in 2000, the reading levels of the majority of Zambian children were regrettably still low by 2005. Specifically, her study sought to know how lack of proficiency in the language of instruction explains difficulties in becoming a conventional reader in a Zambian language and English. The study further sought to evaluate the progress made by children in grade one and Two. The study revealed that lack of proficiency in the initial language of instruction was the hallmark for poor reading and writing skills observed in majority of Zambian children. When deficits in oral language converge with deficits in cognitive skills, children are at substantial risk of developing reading difficulties (Matafwali, 2010). From the above cited studies, one may argue that the Primary Reading Programme was not successful in addressing low literacy levels as low literacy levels still persist among the Zambian children among the Primary school graders.

The above failure of the curriculum to address low literacy levels motivated the Ministry of Education, Science, Vocational Training and Early Education to change the medium of instruction from English to using the familiar language in 2013. Regarding the change in medium of instruction the following has been indicated; “Language of instruction from Grade

1-4 in all the learning areas will be in a familiar language, while English will be an official language of instruction from grade 5 upwards ( Curriculum Framework, 2013: 30)”. It was further pointed out that the core areas that pupils will be learning from grade one to grade four are literacy and languages, or sign language ; Integrated Science; Social Studies; Mathematics; Creative and Technology Studies ( CTS) (Curriculum Development Center, 2013). The above change in medium of instruction from grade one to grade four entails that familiar languages will be used to teach all the above core learning areas except English subject unlike in the past where familiar languages were only used to teach initial literacy skills and Zambian Languages . The above change in medium of instruction brings forth a number of questions. Following a study by Mwanza ( 2012) that has shown that in Lusaka and Chipata districts the dominant language of play in medium and high density areas is Chinyanja and that the dominant language of play in low density areas is English, one may want to know the teachers’ and learners’ experiences in the use of Chinyanja as a medium of instruction in selected primary schools in Chipata district; to learn literacy and languages , or sign language; Integrated Science; Social Studies; Mathematics; Creative and Technology Studies (CTS) in the learning process in these areas.

However, studies conducted after the policy amendment in 2013 have revealed that teachers were not included in the policy review process (Banda and Mwanza, 2017). Even teacher trainers at institutes of education were not consulted or included in the policy reform process, according to Kombe (2017). Mutolwa reported similar outcomes (2019). These results imply that neither the policy's text nor its rules were influenced by teachers. Thus, primary school teachers in all of the nation's language zones have been carrying out the strategy since 2014.

With this context in mind, a study was carried out to explore the teachers’ and grade four (4) learners’ experiences in the use of Chinyanja as a medium of instruction in selected primary schools in Chipata district.

## **1.2 Statement of the problem**

The problem statement highlights the challenge of low reading levels in Chipata District when English was the medium of instruction. To address this, there was a shift to Chinyanja, a local language, for grades 1-4. This transition aims to enhance comprehension, engagement, and academic performance by utilizing a familiar language. As stated by Mwale & Nyirenda (2020), "reading proficiency levels were notably low when English was employed as the medium of instruction." Furthermore, the move to Chinyanja aligns with the Curriculum Framework for Zambia 2013, which designates Chinyanja as the medium of instruction from grade 1-4 in Eastern Province. This decision is supported by research indicating that learners acquire basic literacy skills more effectively when taught in their familiar language (Curriculum Development Centre, 2013). As emphasized by Tembo & Chansa (2019), the shift recognizes the importance of using learners' familiar languages to facilitate better understanding, engagement, and participation in the learning process. The decision to use Chinyanja is also driven by cultural considerations. This comprehensive approach aims to improve the overall educational experiences of teachers and learners in Chipata district. In view of the above, the research sought to find out the experiences of teachers and learner's in the use of Chinyanja in selected primary schools in Chipata District. In a question form, the problem was; what are the experiences of teachers and leaners when a local language is used as a medium of instruction?

## **1.3 Purpose of the study**

The purpose of the study was to explore the teachers' and learners' experiences in the use of Chinyanja as a medium of instruction in selected primary schools in Chipata district.

#### **1.4 Objectives of the study**

The study's objectives include, to;

- (i) Determine teachers' preparedness (readiness) to teach using Chinyanja as medium of instruction in Grade four (4) in selected primary schools in Chipata district.
- (ii) Describe teachers' and learners' experiences in the use of Chinyanja as a medium of instruction in selected primary schools in Chipata district.
- (iii) Establish the challenges that teachers' and learners' experience in the use of Chinyanja as a medium of instruction in selected primary schools in Chipata district.

#### **1.5 Research Questions**

- (i) How prepared (ready) were the teachers' to teach using Chinyanja as medium of instruction in Grade four (4) in selected primary schools in Chipata district?
- (ii) What were the teachers' and learners' experiences in the use of Chinyanja as a medium of instruction in selected primary schools in Chipata district?
- (iii) What were the challenges that teachers' and learners' experience in the use of Chinyanja as a medium of instruction in selected primary schools in Chipata district?

#### **1.6 Significance of the study**

Educational research is a powerful tool with far-reaching benefits across the education sector: Institutions like the Curriculum Development Centre (CDC) can utilize research findings to tailor curricula, ensuring they meet evolving educational needs effectively. For the Ministry of Education, research offers evidence-based insights to inform policy decisions, enhancing governance and implementation for better educational outcomes. Researchers contribute to the academic community by enriching discourse and providing a foundation for further innovation in education. Teachers benefit from research-driven insights, which improve teaching methodologies and ultimately lead to more engaging and effective instruction. Most importantly, learners reap the rewards of research-driven improvements in curriculum and

teaching, experiencing enhanced learning experiences that promote academic success and personal growth.

The significance of educational research lies not only in its ability to uncover truths but also in its power to effect meaningful change. By informing curriculum development, guiding policy implementation, enriching academic discourse, empowering teachers, and enhancing the learning experience for students, a comprehensive study catalyzes progress within the education sector. As we continue to navigate the complexities of modern education, we must embrace the transformative potential of research, leveraging its insights to create a brighter future for generations to come.

### **1.7 Delimitation**

This study was restricted to only 4, primary schools where the new curriculum has already been implemented. The area of focus is Chipata urban, this will enable the researcher to have access to other key respondents from the teachers, learners, Provincial Education Office and District Education Board Office (DEBs).

### **1.8 Theoretical Framework**

The study was guided by two educational theories: Bernstein's code and pedagogic discourse, as well as constructivism by Lev Vygotsky.

#### **1.8.1 Social Constructivism**

In the 20th century, Russian psychologist Lev Vygotsky's writings introduced social constructivism (Frank, 2015). Through the works of Brunner and Papert, constructivism's theoretical underpinnings were further developed (Neo, 2007). The constructivist paradigm emphasizes the importance of conversation and interaction amongst learners as autonomous, active actors in the learning process (Vygotsky, 1978). Assimilation occurs when people adapt a new experience into an existing framework without altering that structure. (Ibid, Vygotsky).

The idea is highly helpful in the context of the current study since it highlights that whatever the teacher teaches, it should always be in the learner's best interest since they are the main beneficiaries of the learning process. When it comes to the initial education of children in grades one through four, the use of Chinyanja is a factor that is of utmost importance because, when properly implemented, it can improve students' learning. This is because no meaningful learning can occur without the effective use of the medium of instruction. The theory so fits nicely with the present research.

Therefore, it will be determined in this study if the teachers scaffolded the learners when using Chinyanja as a medium of education and whether they did so when using Chinyanja as a medium of instruction from first to fourth grades. In light of the aforementioned rationale, using Chinyanja as a teaching tool can help children's learning be more scaffolded, particularly if the teachers using it are likewise skilled at doing so.

#### **1.8.2 The Code and Pedagogic Discourse Theory**

The theory of pedagogical discourse is "a principle for appropriating other discourses and bringing them into specific connection with each other for the purposes of their selective transmission and acquisition," according to Bernstein (1990:181). Every discourse is distinguished by power and control, says Bernstein (1973) in his code theory. Given the connection between classroom communications and pedagogical discourse, it is important to acknowledge that power relations are present in both these encounters and throughout the entire educational system. It's crucial to examine how much control the government has over the educational programme and the rules governing what educators must teach. The idea aids in the analysis of how teachers affect students on a micro level by giving each teacher authority over what is and is not communicated through the use of pedagogy, evaluation, and curriculum (Leanne, 2010).

The study's application of Bernstein's code and pedagogic discourse theory led to the conclusion that the notions of classification and framing, horizontal and vertical discourses, the connection between educational failure and linguistic failure, and the idea of re-contextualization were all applied. The theory focuses on the power dynamics and influence that the federal government has over the educational programme. Additionally, it examines how students and teachers interact in the classroom and what impact each of them has on the information taught there. In addition, the theory emphasizes how crucial it is for students to interact in both their native tongues and their academic languages to succeed in school. As a result, the theory helps analyze power dynamics in the classroom and determine how these experiences impact teachers' use of Chinyanja as a language of instruction for students in grade four in Chipata District.

### **1.9 Limitations**

The findings of this study may not be generalized to all primary schools due to a small sample but may provide a general clue on experiences and challenges involving the implementation of the new language policy at Grade 4.

### **1.10 Operational definitions**

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

**Chinyanja:** This is one of the Zambian local languages for the Chewa people of Eastern Province, it sometimes referred to as Chichewa

**Experiences** are practical contact with and observation of facts or events in the implementation of familiar language policy. :

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

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

**Language of instruction (LoI)** language in which subject matter is taught in a public or private school setting.

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

**Local language** is the language that is familiar to a particular community. It can be the mother tongue (LI) or simply a familiar language.

**Medium of Instruction (MoI)/ language of instruction** is a language through which learning in a school takes place.

**Mother tongue (MT) or (L1)** is one's native language. It can be one's first language (L1).

**Official language** one or more languages that a country utilizes as an official form of communication in education, government, or commerce.

### **1.11 Summary**

The above chapter has presented the background of the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, study objectives, study questions, limitations of the study, significance of the study and definitions of terms. In this chapter, it has been noted that the desire by the Ministry of Education, to address low literacy levels among the Zambian pupils motivated it to introduce the use of familiar language as a medium of instruction in the first four years of primary education. It is hoped that teachers and learners have had numerous experiences that this study explored in Chipata District. Hence there was need for this kind of the study. The following chapter is chapter two which has focused on the literature review relevant to the study.

## CHAPTER TWO

### REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

#### 2.0 Overview

This chapter offers an overview of the literature on the subject being studied. It also entails a review of the literature to determine what previous researchers have discovered to be crucial and to serve as a starting point for the researcher (Davis et al (1989: 6). As a result, the objectives serve as headers for the literature evaluation. A summary of the literature review was then completed.

#### 2.1 Concept of Medium of Instruction

The literature being examined in this part relates to teachers' opinions on the use of locally familiar languages as instructional media in the early grades. In reviewing the literature, the researcher started with overseas studies and ended with those conducted in Zambia. The researcher then explained why, in light of earlier investigations, the current study was required to be conducted.

Theresa, et al. (2015) did a study to find out how teachers felt about mother tongue-based education in the Philippines' recently approved K–12 curricula. The sample size was 56 and survey found that teachers appeared ill-equipped to implement the new curriculum's need for mother tongue-based instruction. The study and the current study both focused on teachers' opinions about using local languages in the classroom, but the study sought to identify teachers' opinions about mother tongue-based instruction generally, whereas the current study sought to identify teachers' opinions about using Chinyanja as the medium of instruction from grades one through four in selected primary schools in the Chipata district.

In a study conducted in Nigeria in 2007, Iyam and Ogiegbaen examined the opinions of parents and teachers about the mother tongue as the primary language of instruction policy. The study

found that much of Nigeria's educational shortcomings can be attributed to its colonial and ecclesiastical past, which seemed to place a strong emphasis on European languages at the expense of African languages. The adoption of mother tongue as the instruction language was also met with a significant degree of controversy. It was also discovered that the usage of mother tongue education was valued by both parents and educators. However, in the age of globalization, parents would not support teaching their kids in their native tongue. In accordance with the study at hand, it was essential to ascertain teachers' opinions regarding the use of Chinyanja as a medium of teaching from grades one through four as such opinions were critical to its implementation as a policy.

In order to determine the views of teachers on the use of mother tongue as a language of instruction in lower elementary schools in Hamisi District in Kenya, Khejeri (2014) performed a study in that region's East Tiriki Division. The survey found that the three main languages utilized in classroom instruction are English, Kiswahili, and Mother Tongue. Because it lacked the majority of the instrumental and integrative motives that were perceived to be present in English, the mother tongue as a medium of education was, however, less favoured than English. Teachers even encouraged students to utilize English instead of their native language because they believed that doing so interfered with their ability to learn English. Teachers questioned if using mother languages as a teaching medium would improve students' achievement and comprehension. These findings were at odds with those of Mkandawire's (2017) study, which found that using a mother tongue or other language that is familiar to learners helps them think more clearly and express themselves freely in class. Therefore, compared to English, teachers had a negative attitude about using their home tongue as the medium of instruction. Additionally, it was noticed that, in contrast to mother language as the medium of teaching, English was perceived as providing a ticket to a social group that is linked to achievement in society. In light of the aforementioned reasoning, the study found that teachers were encouraged to teach in English due to its financial advantages and underrated mother tongue

medium of instruction. The study and the current study both aimed on determining instructors' opinions of the classroom medium, which links them together. Both studies agreed that a strategy like this is more likely to be successfully implemented when teachers value the medium of education. The current study examined teachers' opinions towards the use of Chinyanja as the primary language of teaching from Grades 1 through 4 in selected primary schools in the Chipata district, even though the survey was conducted in Kenya.

Oluoch (2017) did a study in Kenya with the aim of determining the causes for variations from recommendations that classes one through three be taught in the language of the catchment area as well as the usage of mother tongue in lower elementary schools in rural parts of Kenya. According to the study, using one's mother language while in elementary school lays the groundwork for developing the literacy abilities that are essential for learning other topics. Despite these advantages, the majority of Kenyan elementary schools hardly ever use it for teaching. In light of the aforementioned rationale, one of the most significant inputs into the production of education in lower primary schools was the language of instruction. The majority of Kenyan students in rural schools were, however, denied the chance to acquire fundamental reading skills in their mother languages, according to survey findings. Every teacher should keep in mind that the decision about the language of classroom education should always be made with the child's best interests in mind. The aforementioned observation was made for the reason that, if the issue of selecting the right language of instruction is not resolved, there will continue to be issues with low standards and a general trend toward poor educational quality in the educational system, especially for students attending schools in rural areas. The study also showed that educators, including teachers, should be made aware of the advantages of mother tongues. The study also showed that educators, including instructors and other key players, need to be made aware of the advantages that native language has for students during the teaching and learning process. The two studies proved that lower primary schools use local languages as their principal medium of instruction. The study conducted in Kenya concentrated

on the general usage of indigenous languages as MOI for kids in rural elementary schools. The current study, however, concentrated on the employment of Chinyanja as a medium of instruction for students in selected urban, peri-urban, and rural primary schools in Chipata District from grades one to four.

In a study done in Botswana in 2012, Major et al. looked into how student teachers felt about their teacher preparation program. According to the report, the teacher education system did not address the quality and relevance that were anticipated to show in a student teacher as they began their careers as teachers. The formation of an effective teacher was also proven to have little to do with the teacher education system. It was also determined that too much time was spent researching theories and not enough time was spent gaining practical experience, such as teaching experience. Because pedagogical issues were given less attention than theoretical aspects, student instructors as a result lacked pedagogical abilities. The current study concentrated on teachers' opinions regarding the use of Chinyanja as a medium of instruction from grades one through four, while the previous study concentrated on student teachers' perspectives of the teacher education program.

Ndeleki (2015) did a study in Lusaka on the perceptions of teachers on the use of local languages as Medium of Instruction (MoI) from grades 1 to 4 in selected private schools in Lusaka. The study comprised 62 informants. 15 of these were administrators, 1 curriculum development officer, 6 parents and 40 Grades 1 and 2 teachers. The study employed qualitative research design. The findings of the study revealed that there was an emerging line divide between what could be termed as “local language” private schools and “English language” private schools. Fears expressed were that this may have a serious implication on enrolment later in that one of the so called English language private schools may have an influx of learners enrolling while the so called local language private schools may have fewer pupils enrolling. The study further revealed that schools located in urban Lusaka opted for English as MoI

because it is the language commonly used in the homes of the children who are mostly foreigners and the elite Zambian. Sub urban schools were in favor of Nyanja as MoI because it is their language of play. The study noted that while English was out rightly preferred to be MoI by urban private schools, the sub urban private schools chose Nyanja but claimed that there was need to employ code switching as MoI. The study focused on private schools in Lusaka urban while this current study focused on all government primary schools and only on teachers and grade 4 learners.

A research by Chishiba et al. (2016) examined Zambia's language policies and the evolution of those policies from 1924 to 2014. According to the report, there was a controversy at the time about whether or not local languages should be used as a medium of teaching for grades one through four. However, because there is scientific evidence that children learn more quickly when speaking their mother tongue, the researchers acknowledged the use of local languages as a medium of education. Both studies sought to determine the opinions that various parties had regarding the use of native languages as a medium of instruction in primary schools throughout Zambia. The latest study looked at the use of Chinyanja as a medium of teaching five years after it was introduced in 2014, whereas the previous analysis covered the years 1924 to 2014.

Mbewe, et al. (2015) looked at how parents, teachers, and students felt about the Lusaka district's use of Cinyanja as a language of instruction. The study showed that instructors believed the usage of Cinyanja was advantageous to students' learning during the formative years of literacy development because it boosted teacher-student engagement. It was also determined that teachers had a variety of challenges while utilizing Chinyanja as a medium of instruction, including the difficulty of describing specific terminology to students, such as "volume" and "matter" in Integrated Science, among others. The survey also showed that teachers were not given the necessary training to instruct in regional tongues. For instance, just

10 of the 30 teachers who participated in the survey stated that they had training. Those who claimed to have gotten training went on to clarify that both the training sessions and the materials they utilized were conducted in English and written in the local language that they would be teaching in. Therefore, while employing Chinyanja in the process of teaching and learning, it was challenging for teachers who were not familiar with the language to translate the contents from books which were still written in English. It was also discovered that although while teachers were working to follow the Chinyanja language policy in the classroom, the majority of the examinations and activities that were provided to students were written in English. In other sense, Lusaka teachers lacked the instructional resources they required to provide students with a meaningful education in the native language. As a result, students suffered significant learning setbacks.

According to the survey, parents were adamantly opposed to Chinyanja being used as a medium of education because they believed it would hinder their children's ability to succeed in their future undertakings. The parents also believed that utilizing English as a language of teaching would improve their children's chances of succeeding in the future. Parents also felt that English would be employed as a medium of instruction as their children grew up and progressed to higher education, thus it is preferable for the children to be taught using English in order for them to have a firm foundation in it. They believed that learning English would not only increase a student's chances of landing a job in the future, but would also instill confidence in their kids and foster interactions amongst kids from all ethnic backgrounds. In contrast to utilizing Chinyanja, which is frequently regarded in low esteem, Kabaghe and Mbewe (2015:30) "acknowledge that parents consider English as a language of power which is connected with success."

It was also discovered that parents held the opinion that when kids start learning in English as their primary language of instruction, it gives teachers a solid foundation and improves

students' English proficiency, allowing students to communicate more effectively in later upper and secondary school grades. Parents in the Lusaka district downplay the value of using Chinyanja as a medium of instruction, despite Matafwali (2010) and Vygotsky (1978) suggesting that when children are instructed in a familiar language, then the acquisition of basic literacy skills and the organising of their thoughts become easy.

The study found that students did not accept the use of Cinyanja as a medium of education since they did not take pride in it. Additionally, they lacked proficiency in the Cinyanja spoken in class. It was found that some kids preferred English to Chinyanja because they thought speaking English showed that they were smart students and good kids in their parents' views. Because it wasn't their native tongue and certain private schools where these kids were attending didn't encourage speaking Chinyanja, it was discovered that Chinyanja was challenging to speak and understand. The survey also revealed that students had a poor opinion of Chinyanja as a language of instruction in the classroom because they thought it was inferior to English. The opinions of teachers regarding the employment of Zonal languages as instructional media were established by both research. The present study was completed in Mongu District, as opposed to the previous study's location in Lusaka District. This study established the opinions of educators, students, and parents regarding the use of Cinyanja as a medium for basic literacy instruction. The current study will, however, establish teachers' opinions on the usage of Chinyanja as a medium of education from grades 1 through 4, covering all subject areas.

## **2.2 Teachers Preparedness to use local languages as a medium of classroom instruction**

This section is devoted to a review of the literature on research on teachers' readiness for using their native tongues as a medium for first- through fourth-grade classroom instruction. The examination of the literature began with studies from other countries and ended with studies

from Zambia. The researcher then explained why, in light of earlier investigations, the current study was required to be conducted.

Little (2009) introduced the idea of choosing Native American language teachers only on the basis of fluency, which was regarded as essential, along with further training. to aid in giving them the classroom skills they'll need to successfully teach their languages. It was made clear that the approach was not intended for people who were among the numerous fluent speakers who were also proficient language teachers. However, there were also a lot of native language speakers who taught languages who had little knowledge in classroom management, teaching strategies, or developing proper practices. Therefore, the model was created for this particular set of people. Given the aforementioned defense, it was evident that the American government understood the importance of having teachers who had received the necessary training in order to promote the use of indigenous languages. The need for undertaking this research stemmed from the fact that it was not yet known how ready the teachers were to utilize Chinyanja as a language of classroom instruction.

In Ohio, Sanders (2009) performed research at two American universities that were training English language teachers. The mixed methods study with a sample size of 100 found that the majority of what was taught at the two universities was very different from what the student instructors were required to teach once they graduated. The explanation for this was that lectures were designed to help student teachers finish their courses of study. In contrast to what Sanders' study found, the World Bank (1980) emphasized that the level of knowledge the implementers possess determines whether any policy is successfully carried out. It also added that this knowledge can only be acquired through adequate preparation, training, orientation or re-orientation, or in-service training. Similar to Fullan (1994), who believes that time, interpersonal engagement, in-service training, and other types of people-based support are necessary for any program to be effective. The importance of teacher preparation is stressed in

both Sanders' study and the current investigation. Sanders' research centered on the English language curriculum provided to students in universities. It was discovered that there was no connection between what student instructors were taught and what they would eventually be expected to teach. However, the objective of the current study was to determine how prepared teachers were to use Chinyanja as the major language of teaching in particular primary schools in the Chipata area.

Briggs (1985) asserts that in order to successfully administer bilingual education, teachers must be enthusiastic as well as have the support of the parents. Therefore, it is obvious that teachers need to be familiar with their students' native tongues. She discovered throughout her research in Peru and Bolivia that among other things, teacher preparation and some instruction in the fundamentals of the official language and the pupils' native tongues were unavoidable. Therefore, it was not yet known in the current study whether or whether instructors were ready to adopt Chinyanja as the predominant language of teaching from grades one through four at chosen primary schools in the Chipata District. That was because the employment of Chinyanja as a medium of instruction in grades one through four could be impacted by teacher preparation.

Mhindu, et al(2016) study investigated the experiences of teachers at three particular Chiredzi district schools in Zimbabwe's Masvingo region who used Shangani as their primary language of teaching. The study found that the three schools' Shona-speaking teachers lacked Shangani language ability. Due to their propensity for speaking Shangani incorrectly, the teachers often found themselves the target of ridicule from the students. However, it was more effective for teachers who could speak Shangani to implement the use of Shangani as a classroom instruction language policy. Additionally, it was revealed that the colleges of education had not yet begun preparing teachers to utilize Shangani as a medium of instruction. This study and the current study are similar since both emphasized the importance of teacher readiness to use local languages as a medium of instruction. It was not yet known in the current study how prepared

teachers were to use Chinyanja as a medium of instruction for grades one through four. As one study was carried out in Zimbabwe, the results cannot be applied to primary schools in the Chipata District.

Using scientific studies on phonological awareness and letter names to address reading challenges, Duhaze (2014) conducted a study in West Africa to investigate the effect of teacher training on student performance. The results showed that teacher training had a significant impact on students' performance in literacy and other academic areas. The findings revealed that the training of West African teachers had a discernible impact on kids. The study also showed that the reading proficiency of the students taught by these educated teachers increased. The two studies under consideration were connected because they both demonstrated the value of teacher preparation for implementing language in educational policy. But the present study in particular shown that teachers were ready to employ Chinyanja as a medium of instruction from first to fourth grades.

Kombe (2017) carried out a study in Zambia to see whether instructors in certain elementary schools in Kitwe on the Copperbelt were appropriately trained to follow the 2014 updated literacy policy. According to the study, the policy was hastily implemented in schools without sufficient training of the teachers or use of instructional resources. It was also discovered that not all teachers had received the training necessary to apply the revised literacy policy. The reason for this is that the teachers who did receive the training never organized internal workshops to train other teachers who were still working in the classrooms. Schools still lacked the teaching tools necessary to put the strategy into practice even after it was commissioned in 2014. The results showed that the policy-makers and those who implemented the policy did not work together effectively. As a result, rather than following the policy's instructions, the policy's implementers chose to act in a way that they believed would best benefit the students. The study found that the policy was ineffective for teacher education because colleges of

education lacked the necessary knowledge about the 2014 revisions to the literacy policy to adapt their curricula in a way that would take into account the primary school language of instruction. In other words, complete information on the updated policy was not made available to the policy makers. As a result, the teacher education program's mission, which emphasizes the significance of providing instructors with proper preparation for the benefit of students, is defeated. This study however aimed to explore the teachers' and Grade four (4) learners' experiences in the use of Chinyanja as a medium of instruction in selected schools in Chipata District.

The goal of Matafwali's (2010) study of a few schools in the Northern, Eastern, Southern, and North Western regions of Zambia was to determine the value of the Primary Reading Programme (PRP) in raising reading skills for students in grades one and two. According to the study, the PRP's one-week training program was insufficient to provide instructors with all necessary solid pedagogical skills for teaching early reading. It was also made clear that the PRP had to be a crucial component of the pre-service training program to prepare teachers for teaching young children in their native tongue. It also showed that in order to allow children to complete their early years of schooling in a local language, the initial language of instruction time needed to be extended to three years of practice. Even though the aforementioned program was no longer in use as a result of its flaws, it is important to stress the importance of teacher training in programs like the Primary Literacy Programme (PLP), where it is just as important for the adoption of the 2014 revisions to the curriculum. Therefore, this assumption served as the foundation for our investigation.

So there is no connection to actual life circumstances. A student can be viewed as communicatively competent when, in the words of Kilfor and Walt (1997:12), "she has the ability to not only apply the grammatical rules of language in order to produce grammatically acceptable phrases, but also know when and where to employ those sentences and to whom."

It was vital to determine whether teachers in Chipata District were prepared to utilize Chinyanja as a language of instruction because teacher readiness is essential to policy implementation.

A study on the readiness of lecturers in Zambia to train teachers of literacy and language education (LLE) in colleges of education was conducted by Mutolwa in 2019. The goal of the study was to determine if lecturers in the nation's institutes of education were sufficiently prepared to instruct LLE teachers. The study used both qualitative and quantitative methodologies in a mixed-methods descriptive design. The survey revealed that despite having had professional training as primary school teachers, all professors in literacy and language education were not properly equipped to instruct instructors in these subjects. The aforesaid debate arose from the lecturers' failure to understand the literacy and language teacher education program, as well as the fact that the literacy and language teacher education curriculum in most LLE regions did not entirely align with the school curriculum. As a result, there is a discrepancy between how lecturers prepare student teachers and what they are required to teach in primary schools as a result of professors' little or lacking knowledge of the current primary school reading curriculum. Additionally, it was found that the literacy and language teacher education program was less pedagogically oriented and more content-based, which lessened the preparation of student teachers. The two studies are similar because they both focused on the requirement for language in education policy implementers to be ready. The current study established teacher preparedness to use Chinyanja as a medium of instruction from grades one to four in Chipata District, whereas the previous study focused on college lecturers.

It was also discovered that the lack of lecturers at colleges and the Ministry of Education's failure to keep literacy and language education lecturers informed of the most recent changes to the school curriculum contributed to their unpreparedness to train teachers in LLE. The study also demonstrated that inadequate preparation of lecturers to educate instructors of literacy and

language education was caused by a lack of literacy teaching and learning resources, including the failure to fill libraries with the most recent and new literature. The current study and this one are similar since both used a mixed methods strategy for data collection and analysis. The emphasis of both studies is on the level of readiness of the educators tasked with imparting the necessary knowledge to their students. The two studies, however, differ in that the first one sought to determine how well-prepared lecturers of literacy and language teacher education were with regard to the preparation of teachers of literacy and language education, whereas the current study sought to determine how prepared teachers were with regard to using Chinyanja as a medium of instruction.

In order to determine whether teachers were ready to teach basic literacy in well-known languages as part of the new breakthrough to literacy course, Kamangala (2010) performed a study. The study's major objective was to determine how well-equipped pre-service teacher institutes of education were to manage early literacy using native Zambian languages. The study found that respondents' opinions on using local languages as a medium of instruction to teach basic literacy varied. Some respondents firmly believed that they had not received enough preparation through pre-service and in-service trainings in basic schools and colleges of education, respectively. In a similar line, a research by Chella (2015) on how well-prepared student teachers were to teach early literacy while they were in the classroom showed that the majority of them were not. This happened as a result of teacher trainers lacking the required literacy expertise. The two studies by Kamangala (2010) and Chella (2010) that were mentioned above focused on, respectively, trainee teachers' preparations to teach beginning literacy while on a school experience and pre-service teachers' preparation to teach beginning literacy using local languages. Although both studies centered on how well teachers were prepared to teach early literacy, the current study goes beyond to examine how well teachers were prepared to use indigenous languages, particularly Chinyanja, to teach not only early language but also other courses from first through fourth grades.

### **2.3 Teachers and learners' experiences in the use of local language as a medium of instruction**

This section focuses on a review of the literature that examines how teachers in grades one through four use local languages as instructional material. The examination of the literature starts with studies from other countries and concludes with studies from Zambia. Following that, it has shown why, in light of earlier investigations, the current study was required to be conducted.

A study on the use of the local language as a medium of education in Burkina Faso was carried out by Bender et al. in 2002. The study found that students who were proficient and literate in their own tongue were better able to learn an unfamiliar tongue. The study specifically shown that children who had first acquired literacy in the Moore language before beginning French education outperformed kids who had only received instruction in French. The aforementioned study and the current study both focused on the use of local languages as instructional media during children's primary education, which is a comparable focus to the present study. The latter was designed to determine whether instructors were using Chinyanja as a language of instruction from grades one to four in selected primary schools in the Chipata district. The former compared the performance of students in French and Mathematics.

The study by Chivhanga (2012) in Zimbabwe, which compared the use of English as the medium of instruction with Chishona as the medium of instruction in the teaching and learning of Mathematics to a Grade four class, is another study on the use of local language in the classroom. The study found that using Chishona as a language of instruction to teach arithmetic to elementary school students was feasible and had a favorable effect on the education of math to Grade 4 students. The classroom usage of Chishona as a language of instruction in the teaching of mathematics was successful and significantly superior to those who used English as a language of instruction in terms of learner performance. However, later research revealed

that individuals desired that English continue to be the only language of instruction from elementary school through university. This policy was excellent since it was thought to provide better employment prospects than Chishona. In contrast to the current study, which examined teachers' classroom use of Chinyanja as a medium of instruction from Grades one to four across all subject areas, the study above concentrated on the use of Chishona to teach mathematics to learners in Grade Four.

In a study published in 2013, Kudzai, et al., sought to identify a workable strategy for using mother language as a classroom instruction medium in Zimbabwean public schools. After the investigation, it became clear that the goal of using mother tongue in Zimbabwean schools was not feasible. It was discovered that code swapping, a strategy developed by instructors and students to address language issues in the classroom, was the sole way mother tongue was employed in oral discourse at the classroom level. According to Nyawaranda (2000), national policy was not as influential on teachers' classroom decisions as their own opinions. He claimed that deciding which language to employ in the classroom was challenging and that language policies could not effectively regulate language use there. He was quick to point out that attitude, which is a really challenging feature to remove from people's thoughts, is currently the main obstacle to the implementation of laws that recognize the necessity for the mother tongue. He recommends that if, for instance, English is the most widely used language for education, then educators, policymakers, and the government should not waste such good views but rather use them to improve indigenous languages for use as the only language for instruction in the future (Kamwangamalu, 2000). The need for the research to establish teachers' attitudes regarding the use of Chinyanja through classroom observations of their use of the language as a medium of teaching from grades one to four resulted from the fact that the attitudes of teachers were not yet known in the current study.

In a mostly Soli-speaking area of Lwimba in the Chongwe district of Zambia, Mubanga (2012) performed a study to examine the impact of using Cinyanja as a standard language to teach early literacy. According to the study, there was a substantial gap between the reading abilities of the Nyanja and Soli students. According to the researcher's observations, Cisoli is the language that kids in the Lwimba area speak. The study also showed that it was improper to teach early literacy in a Lwimba region where the majority language is Soli using Nyanja since it did not promote speaking with originality. Less vocabulary, sentence structures, and grammatical rules were acquired by students as a result of learning Nyanja, which reduced their capacity for free expression. The majority of Soli-speaking students were forced to use Nyanja as their primary language of instruction, which caused them to score poorly in reading at the conclusion of term 1. The fact that both studies used a variety of data collection techniques was another similarity between them. The government should permit the use of the Soli language as a medium of instruction for the teaching of basic literacy to children in Lwimba and other areas of the Chongwe district, it was advised based on the findings of the aforementioned study. Despite Nyanja being the primary language of instruction in the school, the study was carried out in the Lwimba neighborhood of the Chongwe district, which has a large Soli population. However, the current study was carried out in a few chosen primary schools in the Chipata District, where Chinyanja is the primary language spoken and is also the medium of instruction in the classroom. The current study sought to analyze teachers' use of Chinyanja as a medium of instruction from grades one to four in selected primary schools in the Chipata District, in contrast to Mubanga's study, which looked at the effects of the language of classroom instruction over the language of the majority of learners.

Based on the fact that Chipata is cosmopolitan city, Mwanza (2012) undertook a study to determine whether or not Cinyanja may be used as a language of first literacy in Lusaka. The study found that neither teachers nor students were fluent in Standard Nyanja. It was also determined that youngsters in Lusaka's high-density and medium-density regions played in

Cinyanja. However, English was the play language in the low density areas. Children also talked Nsenga, Tonga, and Bemba while playing in addition to Nyanja and English. It was also discovered that not all children spoke Cinyanja as a language of play, and not all residential areas in the Lusaka district did either. It was also discovered that there were significant disparities between the Cinyanja spoken in the play and the one utilized as the official language of teaching in Grade 1 classrooms. As a result, there was a discrepancy between the Cinyanja that kids used when playing and the Cinyanja that was utilized in classrooms. As a result, it became clear that the standard Nyanja spoken in schools was not suitable for use as the only language of early literacy in the Lusaka district. Between conventional Nyanja, informal Nyanja, Bemba, and English, teachers and students would code-switch. In both research, the use of Zonal languages as a form of instruction in lower primary schools was examined. The former, however, determined whether it was permissible to teach first-grade students in Lusaka District beginning literacy only in standard Nyanja. In the current study, teachers' use of Chinyanja in Chipata District classrooms for all subject areas from grades one through four was examined.

In a majority Tumbuka neighborhood in Lundazi rural schools in Zambia, Zimba (2007) conducted a study with the main goal of determining the impact of employing Nyanja as a language of first literacy for grade one students. The study found that teachers used translation as a pedagogical language activity. In the study's control group, Katete, it was discovered that instructors translated from English to Nyanja, however in the experimental group, Lundazi, it was discovered that teachers translated from Nyanja to Tumbuka and from English to Tumbuka. Zimba (2007), cited in Bwalya, claims (2019:20).

“On the one hand, the study revealed translation in Lundazi enhanced the initial Literacy learning whenever Nyanja became incomprehensible. It was also revealed that translation

created a home environment and eased tension among pupils, and that it facilitated the process of teaching from the known to the unknown.”

The study also showed that more time was spent translating from English to Tumbuka and from Nyanja to Tumbuka than was spent actually teaching literacy. Additionally, it was determined that speaking three languages did not improve children's ability to understand concepts because it hindered their ability to correlate meanings across languages. Additionally, it was shown that translation lacked precision in word and sentence meanings because no two languages have precise counterparts because of environmental and cultural variations. Therefore, in Lundazi rural schools, translation did not aid students in learning basic reading skills fast and readily. The aforementioned study concentrated on how well teaching first-graders fundamental reading skills in Nyanja works. In contrast to the previous study, which examined the effectiveness of using Nyanja as a language of instruction for teaching first-graders basic literacy skills, the current investigation examined classroom usage of Chinyanja in selected primary schools in the Chipata District for grades one through four.

In order to establish whether or not the language practices used by teachers in the multilingual grade 6 classes in the Chibombo area were democratic, Bwalya (2019) carried out a study. The research revealed that some teachers used translanguaging as a pedagogical strategy to democratize their classes.

Others insisted on monolingual language practices, which led to symbolic violence and prevented students from learning while yet allowing them access to the classroom. In terms of translanguaging, it was discovered that teachers were typically responsible for this practice and that all textbooks, board writings, exercises, and taken notes were written in English. As a result, translanguaging in the classroom was only partially translanguaging, and as a result, classrooms were only partially democratic. The study also showed that multilingualism and linguistic variety existed in the Chibombo District. Thus, Lenje, Nyanja, and Bemba were the

most common play languages in the classrooms, which were naturally multilingual. Tonga, a medium-sized island nation, is the regional tongue that is officially acknowledged.

Tonga, however, is the legally recognized regional tongue, while English is used as the primary language of instruction through grade 6. Lenje, Nyanja, and Bemba are the languages that most students speak when they are playing, while Tonga is the language of instruction in lower primary schools and English in upper primary schools. Bwalya (2019:20) reports that the results showed:

“Most teachers had positive attitudes towards the use of both English and informal languages in teaching and learning. However, the findings also showed that the knowledge of local languages being good for learning did not prevent teachers from overwhelmingly choosing English as their Language of choice for classroom instruction because of the grade seven exams that are held in English only. In their minds, using English only for classroom instruction would help Prepare learners for grade 7 exams and the future studies that are done in English.”

The study also showed that teachers struggled with students because majority of them couldn't communicate in English, which is the official language. Since some educators strictly adhered to the policy on language in the classroom and used it to prepare students for the seventh-grade examinations, those who semi-translated were in violation of it. Despite the former's emphasis on students in grades one through six and the present study on students in grades one through four, both studies examined the implementation of the languages in educational policy. Unlike the earlier study, this one examined how Chinyanja was used in classrooms to teach students in Chipata District's first through fourth grades.

Kafata,(2016) conducted a study in which he sought to investigate the impact of teaching using local languages on pupils from grades one to four in selected primary schools in Kitwe district

of the Copperbelt Province of Zambia. The findings of this study revealed that instructing learners in a local language is more beneficial as pupils grasp concepts faster and their participation in class improves greatly. Therefore, such a medium of instruction would enhance the performance of learners in all areas of study. This study however aims to explore the teachers' and Grade four (4) learners' experiences in the use of Chinyanja as a medium of instruction in selected schools in Chipata District.

## **2.4 Challenges encountered in the implementation of the language policy**

### ***Challenges of Using Chinyanja as a Medium of Instruction in Zambian Primary Schools***

In Zambia, the question of which language should serve as the medium of instruction in primary schools is a complex one, especially in a multilingual context. Among the indigenous languages, Chinyanja is significant, but its use as a medium of instruction presents challenges for both teachers and learners. This essay explores existing literature on these challenges, analyzing methods, findings, study locations, and identifying gaps for further exploration.

A comprehensive review of academic databases uncovered five pertinent studies focusing on the challenges associated with using Chinyanja as a medium of instruction in Zambian primary schools. These studies utilized various research methods, including qualitative interviews, classroom observations, surveys, focus groups, and language assessments, to investigate the experiences of teachers and learners.

Mwape's (2015) qualitative study delved into the challenges faced by teachers and learners when teaching and learning Chinyanja in Zambian primary schools. Teachers reported difficulties in translating complex concepts into Chinyanja, resulting in comprehension issues among students. Learners, in turn, struggled with language proficiency, particularly in subjects requiring abstract reasoning.

Similarly, Moyo (2018) examined the effectiveness of Chinyanja as a medium of instruction in Zambian primary schools through a mixed-methods approach. While Chinyanja was perceived positively as a cultural and identity-affirming medium of instruction, both teachers and learners encountered challenges in mastering academic content due to language barriers. However, this study lacked detailed exploration of specific teacher and learner challenges.

The reviewed studies were conducted in various regions across Zambia, including urban and rural primary schools in multiple provinces and rural schools in the Eastern Province. This diversity in study locations offers insights into the challenges faced by teachers and learners across different contexts within the country.

Despite the valuable insights provided by existing literature, there is a notable gap in terms of exploring potential interventions or solutions to address these challenges. Future research should focus on developing targeted strategies that support effective teaching and learning in Chinyanja-medium classrooms. Additionally, longitudinal studies could provide valuable insights into the long-term impact of using Chinyanja as a medium of instruction on educational outcomes.

The literature review highlights significant challenges faced by both teachers and learners when using Chinyanja as a medium of instruction in Zambian primary schools. These challenges include difficulties in translating complex concepts, language proficiency issues, and barriers to academic content mastery. While studies have provided valuable insights into the nature of these challenges, further research is warranted to develop effective interventions and strategies that support effective teaching and learning in Chinyanja-medium classrooms, ultimately improving educational outcomes for Zambian primary school students.

The small island nation of New Guinea, which is part of Papua New Guinea and is situated north of Australia, has had difficulties with multilingualism and indigenous teacher preparation. When it comes to the employment of mother tongues as a medium of instruction,

this serves as a barrier to formal education in many nations. The reality is that it is challenging to organize training for teachers who would be deployed across the nation to teach in the many languages. In the past, primary school teachers in Papua New Guinea received their training at teacher training institutions before being dispersed across the country. These could be used wherever because English was the medium of teaching, which would help with the deployment issues. However, this method meant that the professors were frequently unable to communicate with the students in their native tongue. Teachers were frequently alone and unable to inform parents about their children's progress or to connect with the community about the needs of the school because the majority of parents in rural areas did not speak English. The community is mandated to select locals to be instructors under the present changes. These are persons who have completed grade 10 who are in their 30s and 40s. These are locals who are well-known and who are native speakers of the indigenous language. After receiving training, they are prepared to instruct local kids in their native dialect. They can readily communicate with parents and the community since they are native speakers of the language spoken in the classroom.

(<http://www.linguapax.org/congres04/pdf/klaus.pdf>). The use of local languages as instructional material was emphasized in both studies. In the former, local residents had the opportunity to select locals to serve as teachers. But in the present study, teachers used Silozi as their primary language of instruction while instructing students. Consequently, there is a need to identify the variables that influence teachers' usage of Chinyanja as a medium of instruction from first to fourth grade in the Chipata district.

Shangani was not effectively implemented in the chosen schools in Zimbabwe, according to Mhinda et al. (2016), among other things because the government did not provide enough resources for teaching and learning. The text books for the various subject areas were still written in English, which required teachers to translate the content from English to Shangani

and back again because learners were still tested in English. The government did not bother to follow up on the usage of the policy to improve its implementation, and the above analysis also found that the number of teachers needed in Shangani was insufficient. The administration's opposition to using Shangani as a language of instruction, which revealed that it hampered its implementation, was another issue that had an impact on the policy's implementation. Teachers stopped teaching in Shangani because of the aforementioned attitude and comments like this, especially from officials. According to the study's findings, it was evident that only a small portion of the three schools' curriculum was taught in Shangani. Due to the various difficulties, implementation was still a word-of-mouth process. According to the aforementioned study, views held by important stakeholders towards the use of Chinyanja as a teaching tool have the ability to positively or negatively impact its implementation, which was also one of the other elements the study intended to determine.

Mbewe, et al. (ibid) looked into how parents, teachers, and students felt about using Chinyanja as a language of teaching in some lower primary schools in the Lusaka district. The study found that teachers lacked the pedagogical skills necessary to instruct in Chinyanja and that both students and teachers struggled with translation and mispronunciation. Chinyanja's adoption as a language of instruction in classrooms in the Lusaka district was adversely impacted by a lack of teaching and learning resources, linguistic variety among students, and a lack of parental support.

In a research done in 2016 in the Kitwe area of Zambia's Copperbelt Province, Kafata wanted to determine the effects of teaching in indigenous languages on students in grades one through four. The results of this study showed that teaching foreign language learners in their native tongue is more advantageous since students absorb concepts more quickly and participate more actively in class. As a result, using such a medium of education would improve students' performance across the board.

Additionally, it was observed that employing a local language to teach students improves their sense of belonging because it is their language that is being used. Since the language of play was carried over from home to school, teachers were in favor of teaching in the local tongue. The students will be able to effortlessly integrate into their new environment with the help of such a teaching medium. Initial literacy lessons could be taught using a local language that is widely spoken in order to help students comprehend how sounds and symbols correspond to meanings.

Despite the aforementioned advantages of adopting local languages as a medium for education, the study found that teachers had to translate the teaching materials from English into local language, which was a significant problem and time-consuming for the majority of the teachers. It was challenging for some teachers and students to use the local language as a medium of teaching and learning, respectively, because they were unfamiliar with it. The study found that most parents felt conflicted about the fact that local languages are not acknowledged worldwide. Additionally, it was shown that some professors who spoke too much of their native tongues were likely to struggle with English grammar, which could make it difficult for students to transition from their native tongues to English.

In a study conducted in 2005 by Matafwali, she sought to determine whether phonological awareness is a significant predictor of reading proficiency in a sample of elementary schools in the Lusaka and Chongwe districts. The study found a considerable correlation between variances in reading and spelling abilities and variations in phonological awareness. Overall, the survey found that students' phonological awareness, word reading, reading comprehension, and spelling abilities were noticeably weaker than average. Her studies also supported the notion that developing phonemic and phonological awareness is essential for the process of learning to read and spell words. This study and the previous one are connected by the fact that learners in Chinyanja cannot advance to literacy if they are unaware that the individual sounds

in it create syllables. So, when words are put together, they create phrases or sentences that are a component of the Chinyanja language. As a result, if kids can read in Chinyanja, they may apply that knowledge to other disciplines where it is employed as a medium of education from first to fourth grades. The study at hand, however, goes beyond phonemic and phonological awareness to other factors that influence teachers' employment of Chinyanja as the medium of instruction from grades one through four in chosen primary schools in Chipata District.

In order to determine the association between reading proficiency in a transparent orthography and phonological awareness knowledge in selected primary schools in the Solwezi district, Kamalata, (2016) conducted a study. The study showed that phonological awareness and reading ability had a substantial and positive link, more so in Grade two students than in Grade one students. It was also discovered that, despite variations due to orthographic depth, there is a link between phonological awareness and reading ability across alphabetic languages. In this study, students were tested using the transparent orthography of Kiikaonde. The study found that not all of the phonological awareness skills were being taught by instructors. However, they only provided instruction in sound recognition, sound blending, and sound substitution. Their literacy courses did not include segmentation or deletion. Additionally, it was found that segmentation tasks better predicted reading than other tasks did. The study found that teachers were utilizing a teacher-centered approach to teach phonological awareness during literacy lessons.

It was also discovered that teachers had not obtained tertiary-level instruction in phonological awareness. Nevertheless, due to the brief meeting times, they had gotten training in workshops and teacher group meetings, even though the knowledge they had learned there was insufficient.

The association between phonological awareness and reading ability was the only focus of the aforementioned study. This study also covers the factors that influence teachers' decisions to

adopt Chinyanja as the primary language of instruction for grades one through four in the Chipata District.

In order to determine whether peer teaching was still a strategy used in teacher preparation at the University of Zambia, Manchishi et al. (2016) undertook a study (UNZA). 16 educators and 40 final-year students were interviewed as part of a qualitative study. The results showed that there were numerous obstacles to implementing peer teaching, including insufficient staffing, excessive enrollment, a shortage of instructional materials, and unfavorable attitudes on the part of both teachers and student teachers. Peer teaching is still a helpful method in teacher development at UNZA, but the study found that it was less effective due to poor execution and difficulties it encountered.

The two studies are similar since they both focused on the requirement for teacher training and the execution of a certain policy. The present survey, however, was directed at primary school teachers and education standards officers in Chipata region, whereas the previous study was directed at UNZA students and educators.

In order to determine if teachers in Zambia's Lusaka urban area were sufficiently and actively participating in the curriculum development process, Mwanza (2017) performed a study. The study used a variety of methodologies. The survey found that instructors were unhappy with the way in which curriculum development was currently done because it involved them so little. It was discovered that the majority of secondary school teachers in Lusaka urban had not taken part in the creation of the curriculum, which they believed to be the greatest obstacle to successfully implementing it. It was also discovered that teachers were primarily responsible for carrying out the curriculum that had previously been prepared, and that their involvement in the process of developing the curriculum was insufficient. The absence of instructional and learning resources was exposed. It was discovered that another difficulty experienced by instructors in the educational system is a shortage of teaching and learning resources during

the teacher-training process. This study was necessary to determine teacher participation in curriculum formulation because they are the implementers.

The Ministry of Education (1996) emphasizes how important it is for students to have access to and use textbooks and other educational materials in order to receive a high-quality education. Therefore, effective teaching and learning cannot occur without such tools for the learning process. This is because the right materials allow students to learn at their own speed, apply what they have learned, and monitor their own development. The survey also showed that the libraries in Zambian colleges of education are inadequately stocked with the textbooks and other instructional materials required for the development of teachers. The few books that are available are typically too superficial to shape teachers. Works created by the Ministry of Education, such as student textbooks and teacher manuals, are the only ones that can be found; theories and instructional strategies are not covered in these books. If there are any, they can be one book that is difficult for pupils to access or outdated publications. For them to be able to complete the assignments that are required of them, students must purchase their own resources. The aforementioned viewpoint runs counter to Ivowi's (2004) observation that enough tools and materials must be provided for any curriculum to be applied properly.

The two studies concentrated on the instructional materials needed by institutions of education to shape future teachers. The goal of the current study was to identify the variables that influence teachers' usage of Chinyanja as a language of instruction in grades one through four.

A study was undertaken by Manchishi et al. (2013) to determine the value of the University of Zambia School experience. It was discovered that a lack of resources for instruction and learning, a lack of funding, a lack of access to University of Zambia professors, and student discipline difficulties all had a detrimental impact on students.

Both studies recognize the value of teaching and learning aids in the educational system, which links the two research together. The current study, on the other hand, focused on identifying

characteristics that affect teachers' use of Chinyanja as a medium of instruction from grades one through four, whereas the study under evaluation will concentrate on the effectiveness of University of Zambia school experience.

Mubanga (2018) also conducted a study on effects of the use of Chinyanja to teach initial literacy in a predominant Soli Speaking area in Chongwe district. It was found that the use of Chinyanja language in teaching initial literacy skills makes the school to look hostile and alien in some parts of Lusaka province as it makes some pupils not to be part of classroom discussions due to language barriers. This study however aims to explore the teachers' and Grade four (4) learners' experiences in the use of Chinyanja as a medium of instruction.

## **2.5 Summary**

This chapter has provided some readings on research looking into the use of native languages as a medium of instruction for children in grades one through four of formal schooling.

Studies from both domestic and foreign countries were taken into consideration for this literature analysis. Studies from Papua New Guinea, the United States, Peru, and Bolivia were among those conducted outside of Africa. According to the findings, successful teaching and learning require teachers to be prepared and trained in the students' native tongues. The studies conducted in Kenya, Zimbabwe, Nigeria, South Africa, and Burkina Faso are included in the category of African studies that were conducted outside of Zambia. The studies shows that pupils' performance was significantly impacted by their level of proficiency in using their mother tongue as a medium of teaching in the lower elementary school grades. Studies conducted in Zambia found inconsistencies between the Zonal languages used as classroom teaching tools and the children's play languages, while others showed that both instructors and students lacked competency in using regional languages.

Although the results of the research discussed in this chapter may be similar to those of the current study, none of them looked into the use of Chinyanja as a medium of instruction for

students in grades one through four. Therefore, the purpose of the study, which was to explore teachers' and learner's experiences in the use of Chinyanja as a medium of instruction in selected primary schools in Chipata district, was meant to fill the gap between the aforementioned studies and the current study.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.0 Overview**

This chapter focuses on the description of the methods that were applied in carrying out the research. It introduces and describes the following, research methodology, research design, the population of the study, the sample size, sampling procedures, and instruments for data collection, procedure for data collection, data analysis and ethical consideration.

#### **3.1 Research Paradigm**

The study was purely qualitative guided by social constructivism paradigm. The researcher listened to the participants and interpreted the given information. Social constructivism recognized that knowledge and understanding were socially constructed. In language learning, particularly using Chinyanja as a medium of instruction, the process is subjective and influenced by the learners' and teachers' social and cultural contexts. Chinyanja, being a language with cultural nuances, is best understood within the social context of its speakers. Social constructivism allows for the exploration of shared meanings, perceptions, and interpretations within the cultural framework, enriching the understanding of experiences. This paradigm encourages collaborative learning and teaching experiences. In the context of using Chinyanja, it allows for the exploration of how teachers and learners co-construct knowledge, emphasizing the interactive and collaborative nature of language acquisition.. Language acquisition involves the negotiation of meaning. Social constructivism provides a lens to examine how teachers and learners collectively negotiate the meaning of Chinyanja, considering the dynamic interplay between linguistic structures and cultural interpretations. Chinyanja's effectiveness as a medium of instruction is context-dependent. Social constructivism aligns with the idea that language use is situated within specific social and cultural contexts. This paradigm allowed for the exploration of how the contextual nature of

Chinyanja influences teaching and learning experiences. Language plays a crucial role in identity construction. Social constructivism allowed for the investigation of how Chinyanja contributes to the construction of learners' identities within the educational context, considering the sociocultural aspects embedded in language use. Language learning is dynamic and evolves through social interactions. Social constructivism embraced the dynamic nature of language acquisition, offering a framework to explore how Chinyanja evolves as a medium of instruction through continuous interactions between teachers and learners. The paradigm was well-suited for examining the nature of interactions between teachers and learners. In the context of Chinyanja, it allowed for the exploration of how these interactions contribute to the shared understanding of the language as a medium of instruction.

In essence, social constructivism provided a comprehensive framework for studying the experiences of teachers and learners in using Chinyanja as a medium of instruction by emphasizing the social, cultural, and collaborative aspects inherent in language learning. It allowed for a nuanced exploration of the dynamic processes involved in the construction of meaning and knowledge within this specific educational context.

### **3.2 Research Design**

To enable the researcher to gather in-depth information about the views of teachers on the use of Chinyanja as the medium of instruction from grades one to four in selected primary schools of Chipata district, the study adopted a qualitative approach and utilized a descriptive design. A descriptive design was chosen to provide a comprehensive understanding of the teachers' perspectives and experiences regarding Chinyanja-medium instruction in primary schools. The descriptive design was chosen for its ability to provide a detailed and comprehensive exploration of the phenomenon under study. In this case, the aim was to gain a thorough understanding of teachers' views on the use of Chinyanja as the medium of instruction in primary schools. Descriptive research allows researchers to systematically describe the

characteristics of a population or phenomenon, providing valuable insights into its nature, scope, and dynamics. By employing a descriptive design, the study aimed to capture the range of perspectives, experiences, and challenges encountered by teachers in implementing Chinyanja-medium instruction across different grade levels. This approach facilitated the collection of rich and nuanced data, enabling the researcher to uncover patterns, themes, and trends within the teachers' responses. Additionally, the descriptive design allowed for flexibility in data collection methods, such as interviews or surveys, enabling the researcher to adapt to the specific context and preferences of the participants. Overall, the descriptive design was selected to ensure a thorough exploration of teachers' views on Chinyanja-medium instruction, ultimately contributing to a deeper understanding of this educational practice in the Chipata district.

### **3.4 Target Population**

To find out the experiences of teachers and learners', the population of this study comprised of all teachers teaching Grade four (4), all learners in Grade four (4), and the Standard Officers which included the Senior Education Standard Officer (SESO) both at provincial and district level in schools in Chipata District.

### **3.5 Sampling Techniques and Sample Size**

The study sampled four (4) schools ( School A, B, C and D) in Chipata district and these were 1 private school and 3 public schools. Five (5) Grade four (4) pupils from each of the 4 schools sampled which gave a total of 20 learners in the sample. Grade four (4) teachers were sampled purposively from each school giving a total of twelve (12) teachers. 1 SESO for languages was also purposively sampled. The total sample for this study was therefore 33.

Learners were purposefully sampled from each Grade 4 class. Purposive sampling was also used to select the teachers, school managers, and standard officers. In the study conducted in Chipata district, purposive sampling was employed to ensure that participants were selected

based on their relevance to the research objectives and their ability to provide valuable insights into the educational context under investigation.

The decision to use purposive sampling in selecting the schools was deliberate. By including one private school and three public schools, the study aimed to capture a diverse range of educational settings within Chipata District. This approach allowed the researchers to gather comprehensive data on the various challenges and practices existing across different types of schools in the area.

Similarly, within each selected school, purposive sampling was utilized to select Grade 4 pupils and teachers. By purposefully sampling Grade 4 pupils from each class, the study ensured representation from different classrooms, providing a varied perspective on the experiences and challenges faced by learners in this grade level. Additionally, purposive sampling was used to select Grade 4 teachers based on their experience and expertise, ensuring that the study benefited from insights from knowledgeable and experienced educators.

Furthermore, the inclusion of one Senior Education Standards Officer (SESO) for languages in the sample also followed a purposive sampling approach. The SESO's role and expertise in language instruction and curriculum development made them a valuable participant in providing expert perspectives on the research topic.

In summary, purposive sampling was employed in the study to strategically select participants who could offer meaningful contributions to the research objectives. By purposefully sampling Grade 4 pupils, teachers, school managers, and education officials, the study ensured that the collected data would provide a comprehensive understanding of the educational context and challenges in Chipata District. The total sample size for this study was therefore 33 participants.

### **3.6 Data Collection Instruments**

The opinions of teachers, head teachers, and the education standards officer about the use of Chinyanja as a language of classroom instruction at Grade 4 was gathered using the **interviews** and **lesson observations** for teachers. **Focus Group Discussion** (FGDs) for teachers and learners were also conducted.

### **3.7 Data Collection Procedure**

This study delved into the experiences of teachers and learners using Chinyanja as a medium of instruction in Chipata District primary schools. The researcher employed a multifaceted approach, conducting 8 focus group discussions for both teachers and pupils with recordings for thorough insights. Data collection involved interviews and focused group discussions, ensuring responses were accurately recorded, while simultaneous note-taking provided additional context. Classroom observations assessed teacher fluency, learner responses, and unveiled opportunities and challenges in implementing Chinyanja instruction. The researcher actively engaged in the data collection process, prioritizing ethical considerations. The resulting dataset aims to provide a nuanced understanding of the dynamics surrounding Chinyanja as a medium of instruction in primary classrooms. In the classrooms, the researcher observed how the teachers are using local language as a medium of instruction, detailing how fluent they are, how learners are responding and generally the opportunities and challenges encountered in the actual classroom.

### **3.8 Data Analysis**

Data was analyzed thematically in which data generated was analyzed by processing the data into a form that allows common themes or patterns. This means that the data were not coded sentence by sentence or paragraph by paragraph but for meanings. In this study, the data analysis was conducted through thematic analysis, a method that involves processing the collected data to identify common themes or patterns. Unlike a sentence-by-sentence or

paragraph-by-paragraph coding approach, thematic analysis focuses on extracting underlying meanings from the data. The researcher adopted this method to discern and categorize recurrent themes inherent in teachers and learners' experiences using Chinyanja as a medium of instruction in Chipata District primary schools. By organizing the data around meaningful themes, this approach allows for a holistic interpretation of the qualitative data, facilitating a comprehensive understanding of the nuances and complexities present in the responses obtained during interviews, focused group discussions, and classroom observations. Thematic analysis, therefore, served as a robust and nuanced tool to uncover the underlying layers of meaning embedded in the collected data, contributing to the depth and richness of the study's findings.

### **3.9 Trustworthiness**

In the study exploring teachers and learners' experiences in using Chinyanja as a medium of instruction in Chipata, Zambia, trustworthiness was diligently ensured through several strategies. Firstly, credibility was addressed by employing triangulation, incorporating various data collection methods such as interviews, group discussions, and classroom observations. This approach allowed for a comprehensive understanding of the experiences from multiple perspectives, enhancing the robustness of the findings. Member checks were also employed, providing participants the opportunity to review and confirm the accuracy of their contributions, further ensuring the credibility of the qualitative data. Additionally, transferability was considered by providing a detailed description of the study context, participants, and data collection methods, enabling readers to assess the applicability of the findings to similar settings. Dependability was achieved through systematic data organization and documentation, ensuring consistency and traceability throughout the research process. Lastly, confirmability was maintained by minimizing researcher bias and subjectivity through transparent reporting of the methodology and findings, allowing for an objective evaluation of

the study's outcomes. Overall, these measures collectively contribute to the trustworthiness of the study, reinforcing the reliability and validity of the gathered insights.

### **3.10 Ethical Issues**

Ethical considerations were taken into account in this study by assuring all respondent's confidentiality. The names of all the respondents in this study remained anonymous. The researcher came up with questions that did not cause psychological harm to the respondents emotionally. The researcher also sought permission from the District and Provincial Education offices and school managers and obtained consent from the actual participant before collecting the data. The respondents were further guaranteed that the data obtained was to be used for academic purposes only. The researcher was further ensured that the data collected was treated confidentially as it was not to be shared with anyone to maintain high levels of confidentiality. Confidentiality was also ensured by using pseudonyms for the schools that participated in this study to hide their identity. Confidentiality was ensured through measures such as maintaining respondent anonymity, obtaining consent, using pseudonyms for schools, and guaranteeing that data collected would be used solely for academic purposes and treated with strict confidentiality. The respondents were also fully informed about the aim of the study.

### **3.11 Chapter Summary**

The study adopted a qualitative approach and employed a descriptive social survey design where both qualitative methods of data collection and analysis were used. Justification for the use of the social constructivism paradigm and qualitative approach has been addressed.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS**

#### **4.0 Overview**

The study's results are presented in this chapter. The information is laid down in accordance with the questions of the study. Which were:

- (i) How prepared (ready) were the teachers' to teach using Chinyanja as medium of instruction in Grade four (4) in selected schools of Chipata district?
- (ii) What were the teachers and learners' experiences in the use of Chinyanja as a medium of instruction in selected schools in Chipata district?
- (iii) What were the challenges that teachers' and learners' encounter in the use of Chinyanja as a medium of instruction in selected schools in Chipata district?

#### **4.1 Themes that emerged in the study**

In a study on "Teachers' and Learners' experiences in using Chinyanja as a language of instruction from Grade 1 to 4 in Chipata District," several themes and sub-themes did emerge based on the study questions outlined. The themes and sub-themes emerged based on the objectives of the study, representing different aspects of the experiences and challenges encountered by both teachers and learners in using Chinyanja as the language of instruction in Chipata district from Grade 1 to 4.

#### **4.2 Teachers' preparedness to teach using Chinyanja**

The results of this question investigating of teachers' preparedness to teach Grade 4 through in Chinyanja at selected primary schools in the Chipata district are presented thematically.

**Table 1: Theme 1 Teacher Preparedness**

THEME	SUB-THEME
<b>Theme 1: Teacher Preparedness</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Sub-theme 1.1:</b> Training and Readiness:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><b>Sub-theme 1.1.1:</b> Teacher training in Chinyanja instruction</li><li><b>Sub-theme 1.1.2:</b> Adaptability to the language transition</li></ul></li><li>• <b>Sub-theme 1.2:</b> Resource Accessibility:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><b>Sub-theme 1.2.1:</b> Availability of teaching materials in Chinyanja</li><li><b>Sub-theme 1.2.2:</b> Utilization of resources to support teaching in the language</li></ul></li></ul>

The findings were presented under each sub-theme that emerged as below:

#### ***4.2.1: Training and Readiness***

During the study, some teachers indicated that they would be open and ready to using Chinyanja as a teaching language. The following are some of the respondents' responses:

As the cornerstone of effective education, teacher training and readiness play a pivotal role in shaping the quality of learning experiences for students.

*“I was adequately trained to use Chinyanja at college and I usually use it comfortably in class as medium of instruction,”*

[Teacher Respondent A1, Field Data, 2023]

*“Yes, as a primary school teacher,”*

[Teacher Respondent A3, Field Data, 2023]

*“Yes, very much,”* [Teacher Respondent D4, Field Data, 2023]

## Adaptability to the language transition

Adaptability to language transition is essential for both educators and learners, particularly in multicultural educational settings where language plays a significant role in comprehension and communication. Some educators claimed that they chose Chinyanja as their language of instruction not because they supported the practice but rather because they lacked any other options.

Here are some of their responses:

*“I was only prepared to use Chinyanja during the periods for literacy and language education under New Breakthrough to Literacy, (NBTL) and during the rest of the study areas only English was used as medium of instruction,”* [Teacher Respondent A1, Field Data, 2023]

*“No, the use of Chinyanja is recent. It started when I was already in the field,”*  
[Teacher Respondent C4, Field Data, 2023]

*“I was not trained to use Chinyanja as medium of instruction but I am very comfortable to use it as medium of instruction from grades one to four*  
[Teacher Respondent B1, Field Data, 2023]

*“No, because Chinyanja was only to be used in grade one,”* [Teacher Respondent C2, Field Data, 2023]

*“No, I am not prepared to use Chinyanja as medium of instruction because I did my training at Malcom College,”* [Teacher Respondent A3, Field Data, 2023]

Some educators said they were unsure whether their proficiency in Chinyanja as a language of teaching came from official training at the postsecondary level or from interactions with other educators at the school level. Some believed that while using Chinyanja as a teaching tool, they were not well trained in its use. One of the answers is the following:

*“Not really prepared because some of the words used by children were strange to me,”* [Teacher Respondent D2, Field Data, 2023]

In light of the aforementioned conclusions, the study found that, of the ten (10) teachers who were asked if they were ready to use Chinyanja as the language of instruction for grades one through four in the Chipata district, five (5) teachers said they were ready to use Chinyanja as the language of instruction at the pre-service college level. On the other hand, two (2) of the teachers questioned whether or not they were prepared to use Chinyanja as the medium of instruction from grades one through four, while three (3) of the instructors indicated they were not prepared to utilize Chinyanja as the language of instruction.

#### ***4.2.2: Resource Accessibility***

##### **Availability of teaching materials in Chinyanja**

Access to adequate teaching materials is fundamental for facilitating effective learning experiences and maximizing educational outcomes.

Being the sole available alternative as a medium of instruction, English was used by teachers who were not fluent in Chinyanja and could not convert the content from English texts into Chinyanja texts. Several responses stated the following;

*“It is a good policy but books used do not tally with the current policy, as at our school, we are still using books belonging to the previous curriculum. Books are not enough such that we sometimes use books that are written in English. Besides, learners do not understand certain words that have been used in the text books. There is a tag of war to make learners understand some concepts due to language diversity. You see, in subjects where no materials are provided in the local language teachers have challenges because there are some words that are difficult to translate into Chinyanja,”*

[Teacher Respondent D4, Field Data, 2023]

## **Utilization of resources to support teaching in the language**

Utilizing resources to support teaching in the language of instruction is essential for creating an immersive and engaging learning environment that fosters comprehension and retention among students.

Another respondent said:

*I do enjoy using Chinyanja. The problem is lack of suitable materials for implementing the policy because we teachers lack appropriate vocabulary for interpretation, [Teacher Respondent C2, Field Data, 2023]*

Many of the teacher respondents, indicated in the aforementioned responses that they were sufficiently equipped to use Chinyanja as a medium of instruction for grades one through four. Some respondents, stated they were not adequately prepared, claimed they were "Not sure" if they were enough qualified to instruct in Chinyanja.

On teacher preparedness, many of the teachers said they were well-equipped to use Chinyanja as a medium of instruction for grades one through four in the aforementioned responses. In contrast, some respondents, indicated that they were not sufficiently prepared.

Some of the teachers, who were from outside the province and were not familiar with the use of Chinyanja, were not properly prepared to use it as a medium of instruction.

Many of the teachers, indicated in the aforementioned responses that they were sufficiently prepared to use Chinyanja as a medium of instruction for grades one through four, such teachers only felt comfortable teaching using English, which they actually did.

It was difficult for some people, even some professors who were native speakers of Chewa, to translate specific terms and contents from English into Chinyanja in several subjects where the textbooks were still written in English.

### 4.3 Grade 4 Teachers’ and learners’ experiences in the use of Chinyanja as a medium of instruction in selected schools

#### 4.3.1 Teacher Experiences

The results of the opinions of grade four teachers and senior education standards officer about the employment of Cinyanja as the principal language of teaching in four chosen primary schools in the Chipata District are presented in this goal. The majority of respondents argued that using Chinyanja as the instruction language for grades one through four was appropriate because it greatly aided students in their academic progress. Additionally, it was stated that using Chinyanja as a teaching tool improved the students' comprehension of what they were taught. It was noted that both teachers and learners generally interacted positively and productively during the learning process.

**Table 2: Theme 2 Teacher and Learner**

THEME	SUB-THEME
<p><b>Theme 2: Teacher and Learner Experiences</b></p>	<p><i>Sub-theme 2.1:</i> Engagement and Participation:  <i>Sub-theme 2.1.1:</i> Learners' active involvement in Chinyanja-based lessons  <i>Sub-theme 2.1.2:</i> Teachers' observations of increased student participation  <i>Sub-theme 2.2:</i> Comprehension and Understanding:  <i>Sub-theme 2.2.1:</i> Learners' improved understanding of concepts in Chinyanja  <i>Sub-theme 2.2.2:</i> Teachers' perceptions of enhanced comprehension among students  <i>Sub-theme 2.3:</i> Emotional Connection to Learning:</p>

	<p><b>Sub-theme 2.3.1:</b> Cultural identity and pride among learners</p> <p><b>Sub-theme 2.3.2:</b> Teachers' observations of learners' emotional engagement</p>
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#### **4.3.1 Engagement and Participation:**

Learners' active involvement in Chinyanja-based lessons

Active involvement of learners in Chinyanja-based lessons is vital for fostering meaningful engagement, comprehension, and retention of educational content.

The teacher responses included:

*“My experience is that it helps learners understand concepts easily, however, there are certain words that are also difficult to understand because the Chinyanja that could have been used is beyond the language that learners know. In such a case, we revert to the use of English in order to assist learners understand the concept.”*

[Teacher Respondent B1, Field Data, 2023]

*It is good to use Chinyanja because the transfer of concepts become easy, for example, the clarifications of some terms like, Expanded notation (in English), which is kupasula. However, to make my children catch up with mathematics concepts, I usually use a bit of English so that they don't lag behind when they reach grade 5,*

[Teacher Respondent A2, Field Data, 2023]

*Easy to use as learners are also familiar with it. But there is need for glossary words to be added at the back of Chinyanja text books to make the meanings of some terms clear for teachers to use so that teaching can be carried out confidently,*

[Teacher Respondent D1, Field Data, 2023]

### ***Sub-theme: Teachers' observations of increased student participation***

Increased participation by learners is a cornerstone of effective education, as it fosters engagement, enhances understanding, and promotes active learning experiences.

*It is good because it enhances learner participation and understanding of what is learnt. But I usually find difficulties in translating some scientific terms, for example, red blood cells, platelets, and white blood cells among other terms,*

[Teacher Respondent C4, Field Data, 2023]

*The use of Chinyanja to teach literacy is good because it makes the transition into literacy in English easy. There is also need to have books translated into Chinyanja provided to schools so that we can teach confidently*

[Teacher Respondent School 2, Field Data, 2023]

Some respondents clarified that using Chinyanja as the instruction medium was not recommended because it causes learners' development of the English language to be hindered. It was also discovered that the usage of Chinyanja as the primary language of instruction in all subject areas, other than only Chinyanja literacy, is backwards. Senior Education Standards Officer (SESO) said that it was discovered that the rate of learner breakthrough in literacy was still very low during their mission to monitor the implementation of the policy in schools. Additionally, it was stated that the regularisation of the syllables to fit the Chinyanja phonology had a negative impact on children's ability to write correct spellings when Chinyanja was used as the medium of instruction. For instance, in the writing of words like temperecha (Spanish for temperature) and fotosinsesizi (English for photosynthesis). The study revealed that while some educators were generally persuaded that using Chinyanja as a medium of education stimulates children's learning, it occasionally has a tendency to hinder students' comprehension of particular subjects. For instance, citing the use of terms like "zikwi, mazana, khumi, cimodzi," (which represent thousands, hundreds, tens, and ones, respectively) among other concepts in Chinyanja that are not part of the vocabulary of the children's language of play,

when it comes to the teaching of concepts like "the place value system" in mathematics. It was also mentioned that schools were intended to get the syllabi, as well as teaching and learning materials that matched the altered curriculum, at the precise time the policy was put into effect. Because the older available materials for such grades were written in English, teachers found it challenging to translate the text into Chinyanja in schools where materials were not offered in the local language.

#### **4.3.2 Comprehension and Understanding**

**Sub-theme:** Teachers' perceptions of enhanced comprehension among students

The familiar language plays a pivotal role in enhancing comprehension and understanding among learners. By implementing a familiar language that aligns with students' linguistic backgrounds and abilities, educational institutions can facilitate more effective communication, leading to increased comprehension and deeper understanding of academic content.

Some of the teachers' responses were as follows:

*It is not a good policy of using Chinyanja because it delays the use of English as medium of instruction at grade 5 to 7 level. Learners do not take the use of English orally at grade 2 and Literacy in English at grade 3 and 4 as subjects seriously because of switching off to Chinyanja during the teaching of other subjects. For me, it is difficult to teach using Chinyanja As you saw in the just ended lesson, I mixed Bemba, Nyanja and English because it was difficult for me to use any Chinyanja words,* [Teacher Respondent School 2, Field Data, 2023]

*I am not for the idea of using Chinyanja as a medium of instruction because it has put us in a fix situation where we have no choice but to try and use it. I do enjoy using Chinyanja during the time for teaching it as a subject only, but not when I teach the other subject. Learners move from one grade to the other without having learnt English well. So, by the time they reach grade 7, it becomes difficult for them to pass the national examination,* [Teacher Respondent A3, Field Data, 2023]

*With me, the coming in of Chinyanja, mmmh, I dislike it. In Science and Social Studies, there are no proper words in Chinyanja, so, ah! They have distorted things, mwe! Those who are writing books for grades one to four learners are also not part*

*of the teachers that are implementing the policy .They should have even chosen lecturers from our local colleges of education who have qualifications in linguistics to go and write the books. My concern is when they are making those policies; they should be considering us at the grass root, and not just imposing the policies on us,*  
[Teacher Respondent D2, Field Data, 2023]

*Introducing English late is bad. So, I, recommend a continuation of English from grades one to seven,*  
[Teacher Respondent C1, Field Data, 2023]

*I am not in favor of the policy because there is too little time of exposing children to English, yet grade 7 examinations are written in English. Some teachers are cooperative in the use of Chinyanja as medium of instruction, but others are using it with doubts. I, suggest that English should be used as medium of instruction in all the other subjects and Chinyanja should just be taught as a subject. Since the implementation of the policy, it was this year 2019, when the revised curriculum books for grades 3 and 4 were supplied to this school,*

[Teacher Respondent C2, Field Data, 2023]

The survey found that many teachers had concerns about whether or not using Chinyanja as a medium of instruction was appropriate. Although others were not persuaded of its efficacy as a teaching tool, they tried to utilize it nevertheless because it was the policy that needed to be followed and they had no choice but to do so.

**Sub-theme:** Learners' improved understanding of concepts in Chinyanja

Increased participation by learners is a cornerstone of effective education, as it fosters engagement, enhances understanding, and promotes active learning experiences.

Here are a few of the responses:

*It enables learners to grasp concepts easily as learning takes place in a language that is familiar to them. I, for one usually struggle to teach using Chinyanja. So, there is a need to train teachers in the use of Chinyanja as well as have focal persons at school level to carry out in-service training for teachers on issues relating to the use of Chinyanja among others, whenever need arises,*

[Teacher Respondent B4, Field Data, 2023]

*It is a policy in the right direction but text books and other teaching and learning resources that tally with the current curriculum should have been supplied to schools before the actual implementation of the policy. At this school, we are still using books that belong to the previous curriculum,*

[Teacher Respondent D2, Field Data, 2023]

*It is good but lesson planning is done in English. Even if books were written in Chinyanja, it would be hard to translate the content into English, and so, its use would lead to dilution of content through misinterpretation as not every teacher is a good translator, especially teachers who are not conversant with Chinyanja,*  
[Teacher Respondent D2, Field Data, 2023]

*Teachers that are conversant with Chinyanja especially those who hail from Western Province are in support of the use of Chinyanja as medium of instruction. However, teachers that are not conversant with Chinyanja are out rightly opposed to its use as medium of instruction. For now, the only other challenge is the translating of contents from English into Chinyanja as books in use are mostly still written in the English language,* [SESO, Field Data, 2023]

*The policy is a welcome move but teachers are not thoroughly ready to use it. Even teachers that are recently coming from colleges are not adequately prepared to use Chinyanja.,* [SESO, Field Data, 2023]

*Some teachers either use English throughout or teach for the sake of fearing to be fired. Even non Chinyanja speaking learners, some of them do not understand Chinyanja. Some teachers would prefer to teach subjects where English is the medium of instruction at the expense of those where Chinyanja is the medium of instruction. Teachers should be involved in the revising of curriculum. The policy is not good because of deficit of suitable teaching materials in schools to match with the policy,* [SESO, Field Data, 2023].

*For me, the use of English would be the ideal medium of classroom instruction. There seems to be a misunderstanding among teachers as to when to use Chinyanja or English, and teachers' mindset is not yet set for Chinyanja. So, I don't know how we can harmonize the two,* [SESO, Field Data, 2023].

In light of the aforementioned findings, class teachers who were asked about their opinions on the use of Chinyanja as a language of instruction for grades one through four agreed that the policy was beneficial and deserving of being put into practice since it improves the foundational education of learners. However, according to two (2) of the class teachers who took part in the interviews, the policy was flawed. The other three (3) teachers who took part in the interviews stated that they were unsure whether the policy of using Chinyanja as the primary language of instruction from first to fourth grades was appropriate.

The teachers who participated in the interview process to voice their opinions on the employment of Chinyanja as a medium of instruction agreed that it was the best choice. However, four of them thought that using Chinyanja as a language of instruction was a bad idea. The employment of Chinyanja as a language of instruction was questioned by the other three (3) teachers as a sound practice. It was evident from the aforementioned argument that some teachers lacked fluency in the use of Chinyanja as a medium of teaching from grades one to four, which explains their reservations about the language's inclusion in educational policies. None of the teachers or SESO in the district who participated in this survey explicitly said whether they supported or opposed the language in education policy that stipulates that Chinyanja be used as a medium of instruction from grades one through four in Chipata District. However, some teachers who were interviewed voiced scepticism regarding whether or not using Chinyanja as a medium of instruction is the best course of action to take given that primary school teachers' attitudes towards Chinyanja appeared to be developing slowly. The responders' ignorance of the empirical data generated by studies showing that the employment of Mother Tongue media of instruction enhances children's early education is probably the cause of the aforementioned argument.

According to the respondents (teachers) felt that using Chinyanja as a language of teaching from first to fourth grades was the best strategy. However, small part of respondents disagreed,

and while another small part were unsure if using Chinyanja as a medium of instruction was the ideal strategy for usage in grades one through four.

The first research goal was to ascertain teachers' opinions regarding the employment of Chinyanja as a language of instruction for grades one through four in chosen primary schools in the Chipata District. According to the qualitative research on teachers' opinions regarding the use of Chinyanja as a language of instruction, the majority of the teachers believed and agreed that using Chinyanja as a language of instruction for grades one through four was the best course of action. The results also showed that 12 teacher respondents surveyed, agreed that using Chinyanja as a language of teaching from first to fourth grades was the best strategy. The study also showed that the majority of the schools lacked or had limited access to teaching materials that matched the updated curriculum. It was also discovered that even if sufficient educational resources were made available to every school, lesson planning would still be done in English by teachers, creating a problem for compromising subject content standards to the detriment of the students.

### 4.3.2 Learner experiences on the use of Chinyanja as a medium of instruction

Here are some notable qualitative findings regarding learner experiences identified in the study:

#### Learners Experiences

**Table 3: Learners Experiences**

THEME	SUB-THEME
<b>Theme 2.2: Learner Experiences</b>	<i>Sub-theme 2.1:</i> Increased Engagement and Participation (Learners' active involvement in Chinyanja-based lessons) <i>Sub-theme 2.2:</i> Increased Comprehension and Understanding <i>Sub-theme 2.3:</i> Improved Emotional Connection to Learning: <i>Sub-Theme 2.4:</i> Challenges with Proficiency Levels <i>Sub-theme 2.5:</i> Cultural identity and pride among learners

#### *Increased Engagement and Participation*

Several learners expressed heightened engagement and active participation in classroom activities when taught in Chinyanja. They conveyed a sense of comfort and familiarity, which encouraged them to ask questions, contribute to discussions, and collaborate more confidently with their peers. This shift positively impacted their overall involvement in the learning process.

*“Yes Sir, learning in our mother tongue language gives me room to express myself without fear of making mistakes. Some of our friends laugh when we speak broken English and that makes us remain quiet even when we have something to say in the lesson. This is good as we participate in the lesson fully.”*

[Learner 2 School A]

### ***Enhanced Understanding and Comprehension***

Many learners reported a clearer understanding of concepts when instruction was delivered in Chinyanja. They expressed that learning in their native language facilitated quicker comprehension, making lessons more accessible and easier to grasp. This improved understanding contributed to increased confidence in their ability to learn and retain information.

*“We understand very well the lessons taught in Chinyanja. The instructions are crystal clear because they are taught in our mother tongue.”*

[Learner 4 School B]

### ***Improved Emotional Connection to Learning***

Students revealed a deeper emotional connection to their lessons when taught in Chinyanja. They expressed a sense of cultural pride and identity, feeling a stronger connection to their heritage through the use of their native language. This emotional resonance positively influenced their attitudes towards learning, fostering a more positive and receptive learning environment.

### ***Challenges with Proficiency Levels***

However, a subset of learners faced challenges due to varying proficiency levels in Chinyanja. Those less fluent in the language encountered difficulties in fully grasping complex concepts and sometimes felt overwhelmed by the pace of instruction. This discrepancy in language proficiency highlighted the importance of additional support and resources tailored to address varying skill levels.

*“Learning in Chinyanja has challenges such that progression into English language at some stage in Grade 5 poses a problem. English speaking is compromised.”* [Learner 2 School D]

### *Cultural identity and pride among learners*

Most of the learners interacted with in the interviews conducted felt that learning using Chinyanja gave them an integral sense of cultural identity and pride. Learning in Chinyanja made learners feel they were part of a cultural heritage and that gave them so much belonging to the community.

*“Kuphunzira mu Chinyanja kupangitsa kuti tidziwe za mwambo wathu umemene tiyenera kusamalira. Cilankhulo cathu ciri ndi phindu lenileni potizindikiritsa kuti ndife anthu akum’ mawa kwa dziko la Zambia. Citipatsa ulemu ndicikhalidwe coyenera. Ciri ndi phindu koposa...”* [Learner 4 School B] Translated as below:

*“Learning in Chinyanja has made us know our aspects of culture that we need to hold dear. Our language has such an impact in knowing our identity as a people of Eastern part of Zambia. It brings respect, it upholds morals. It is so rich.....”* [Learner 4 School A]

In essence, these qualitative findings underscore the nuanced impact of using Chinyanja as the language of instruction. While many learners experienced increased engagement, understanding, and emotional connection to their education, addressing proficiency gaps among students emerged as a crucial factor in ensuring an equitable and effective learning environment under the Familiar Language Policy in Chipata District, Zambia.

#### **4.4 Findings from lesson observation**

Four (4) lesson observations were made one from each school (A, B, C and D). The classroom lesson observations were meant to analyze the teachers’ classroom use of Chinyanja as medium of instruction from grades one to four in Chipata district. Lessons were observed from the beginning to the end in order to see how teachers practically taught grades one to four; in a way to ascertain views indicated in the questionnaires and during interviews where they stated that

they were prepared to use Chinyanja as medium of instruction. What are presented under lesson observation data are the excerpts from transcribed lesson verbatim. During the observations, I listened to the oral use of Chinyanja and took notes using the lesson observation guide. It was therefore, noted that some teachers were able to put the use of Chinyanja as medium of instruction into practice throughout their lessons. However, other teachers could hardly use any Chinyanja expressions constructively well during their teaching, hence, resorted to the use of English as medium of instruction throughout which was detrimental to the successful learning of children. Some teachers could code mix Chinyanja and English in their teaching and later on give notes and or exercises to children in English.

Below, I present two lessons which were observed: The first lesson observation was a grade 2 Science lesson on, “*Nyama Zamunkhalango*” that is ‘Wild animals,’ taught by teacher 1 to a class of 26 boys and 35 girls at School A.

Excerpt 1: Science Lesson on “*Nyama Zamunkhalango*” (Teacher 1).

Teacher: Sabata lantha tinaphunzira pa mbalame; sitelo? (Last week we learnt about birds, didn't we?)

Pupils: Yes (chorus answer).

Teacher: Kodi nimbaleme yiti imene inkhala mumuzdi? (Which bird do you know lives in the village?)

Pupil: Khunda, njiwa, Nkuku, (Dove, Pigeon, Chicken)

Teacher: Lero tizamphunzira za.... (Now today we are going to learn about this). Teacher proceeded to writing the lesson title on the board including new vocabulary words for the day's lesson. Then she asked anyone from the class to read the title on the board. One boy stood up and read the title as.

Pupil: ‘Nyama zamunkhalango.’ (Wild animals)

Teacher: Kodi nindani angawerenge zili pa bolodi? (Who can read the words on the board?)

Pupils: Kambwe, Kalulu, Njobvu (Fox, Rabbit, Elephant, etc)

Teacher: Tsegulani bukulo pa nsamba 46. (Take the book which I have given you and open on page 46).Kodi ndi nyama zotani muli kuona? (What kind of animals do you see in the picture?)

Pupils: ng’wena, njobvu ndi zina zace (Crocodile, Elephant, etc.).

Teacher then asked learners one at a time to read through the passage aloud under her guidance. She kept on asking oral follow up questions to ensure learners understood what they were reading. She could also demonstrate reading to ensure that children appreciated reading with speed, accuracy and expression, and so helped learners to consolidate what they were learning. After wards a written comprehension exercise was given to learners to write individually. The exercise was marked and feedback from learners was encouraging.

The above lesson revealed that the teacher had positive attitude towards the use of Chinyanja and that she was proficient in its use as medium of instruction from grades one to four. Learners really benefited from the lesson.

The second lesson observed below was a grade 4 Mathematics lesson on the,

“Kuokhesa ndi Kuchosapo” (i.e. Addition and Subtraction) taught by teacher 2 to a class of 14 boys and 21 girls in School B.

Excerpt 2: Mathematics Lesson on, “Kuokhesa ndi Kuchosapo” (Addition and Subtraction,” (Teacher 2)

Teacher: Kodi tinaphunzira chani dzulo mu mumasamu? (What did you learn yesterday in mathematics?)

Pupil: Kuokhesa ndi Kuchosapo'(Addition and subtraction).Teacher then wrote a question on the board for the pupils to answer which was part of recapitulation for the lesson they had previously as indicated below;

Teacher: (i)  $2+8 =$ , “who can come and answer the sum on the board?”

Pupil: 10 (a boy answered).

Teacher :( ii)  $10-8 =$  , “Kuchosa” (From subtraction).

Pupil: 2 (another boy answered).

Teacher: Is he correct? What is the rule? (No answer from the pupils and she went ahead writing tasks on the board)

(2).  $120 + 40 = 160$

$160 + 40 =$  , “who can come and answer number 2?”

Pupil: 200 (a girl answered).

Teacher: Is she correct?

Pupils: Yes (Chorus answer).

Teacher: Rewrite the following sentence: (1).  $22 + 28 =$  ,“Who can read the question on the board?”

The interaction between the teacher and the learners continued until an answer to the example task on the board was arrived at, the process in which most of the learners benefited nothing. The core- teacher could at some points come in to offer help to her colleague but could not do it always. As a result, the learners lost out greatly in the learning process.

The teacher then gave the following written exercise to the learners to assess their understanding of the lesson;

Zocita (Exercise)

Rewrite the following sentences.

(1)  $34 + 10 =$

(2)  $66 + 34 =$

(3)  $600 + 400 = 1000$

(4)  $44 - \underline{\quad} = 24$

(5)  $\underline{\quad} - 34 = 66$

In light of the observed lesson, the teacher was very uncomfortable with the use of Chinyanja as medium of instruction to the class because he could not communicate meaningfully to the learners in it. This could be attributed to the nature of the subject that was being taught. The teacher exhibited some knowledge of the subject matter, but his lack of proficiency in the use of Chinyanja language resulted in learners losing out in the learning process. When he realized about his incompetence in the use of Chinyanja as a medium of instruction, the teacher code switched to English, the medium he maintained up to the end of the lesson, which was against the stipulated policy of using Chinyanja to a grade four class when teaching mathematics. During the lesson development, it did not require the learners to state the rule but just to explain how the answer was arrived at. Even the English medium that he resorted to was not used proficiently according to the mathematical language, for example, who can read the question on the board? That was referring to  $32 + 18 =$ , which was equally wrong even if such a lesson was meant for a grade class to which mathematics was to be taught in English.

### **Lesson 3 Observation at School C**

The third lesson observation was a grade 4 Science lesson on ‘Kufunikira kwa Mpweya.’ (The usefulness of wind) taught by teacher 5 to a class of 25 boys and 28 girls in Zone area A and School C.

**Excerpt 3: Science lesson on, “Kufunikira kwa Mpweya.”** (Teacher 3).

**Teacher:** *Kod muona cani pa chintunzinthunzi ichi?* (What do you see in this picture?).

**Pupils:** *kuona kaiti aku uluka m'mwamba* (we see a flying kite)

**Teacher:** *Chifukwa nichani* (What is making the kite to fly?)

**Pupil:** *m'pweya*. (It is wind).

**Teacher:** *inde mpweya indedi* (it is wind, it is a blowing air...which is moving.)

**Teacher:** *Kodi Mpweya uma nhandiza motani?* (What does wind help us?)

**Pupil:** *Kuulutsa makaiti yanthu* (It helps us to play kites).

**Teacher:** *Eee! Mphepo imatipatsa mphamvu ndinthu*. (Eee! wind can give us energy, or help to move windmills).

The teacher further discussed both the advantages and disadvantages of wind to human beings. Later an exercise was given to learners to assess their understanding of what they learnt. Teacher collected books to mark at home. The teacher's attitude towards the use of chinyanja as medium of instruction from grades one to four was negative and she also lacked proficiency in both spoken and written chinyanja as medium of instruction.

#### **Lesson 4 on Observation on School D**

The fourth lesson observation below was a grade 2 S.D.S lesson on, 'Njila Zotamanda Mulung,' (Ways of praising God) taught by teacher 4 to a class of 16 boys and 18 girls in Zone area B at School D.

Excerpt 4: S.D.S Lesson on, "Njila Zotamanda Mulung,," (Ways of praising God) (Teacher 4).

Teacher: *Kodi nindani angati kumbutse zomwe tinaphunzira dzulo?* (Who can remind us what we learnt?)

Pupil: *Za Mwambo*. (It is about a ceremony)

Teacher: *Kodi Mwambo nichani?* (What is a ceremony?)

Pupil: *Ninthawi yomwe anthu ama kondwele much sangalaro* (it is the time when people enjoy themselves)

Teacher: Wakhoza!!. (Well done).Kod timalandira cani pa mwambo? (What do we receive at ceremonies?)

Pupil: Phaso ndi ndalama (gifts, money).

Teacher: Njila Zotamanda Mulung, ndiye mutu walero. (Our topic today is ways of praising God).Ndi zinthu zabwino zotani zimene ungacitre munzako? (What good things can you do for your friend?).

Pupil: kumu patsa zakudya ndi kumu pempherera. (To give them food, to pray for them)

Teacher: Kodi anatilenga ndani? (Who created us?)

Pupils: Mulungu. (God), (chorus answer).

Teacher: Kod tinga mutamande motani Mulung,? (How can we praise God?)

Pupil: Kupephera kwa iye Mulungu, Kosa nyoza Iye, Kumapita ku chalichi. (To pray to Him, not to insult Him, to be going to Church).

Teacher: Esau, pray for the whole class, (then a boy named Esau offered a prayer for the whole class).

Then after that the teacher asked learners to open on page 38 of the S.D.S text books given to them and read through the story. Learners were asked to do the reading one after the other while the teacher guided them. Almost each pupil was asked to read a sentence from the story under study. Teacher then asked oral follow up questions to consolidate the children's understanding of the story about ways of praising God. A recapitulation of the lesson was orally done before learners were given an individual exercise to help assess their understanding of the lesson learnt.

The Teacher's attitude towards the use of Chinyanja as medium of instruction was positive, although she lacked proficiency on the written part of the lesson, as evidenced by the exercise

which she gave to the learners where the researcher had to correct her on the sentence constructions and grammatical part of the questions.

#### 4.5 The challenges that teachers' and grade four (4) learners' experience in the use of Chinyanja

The respondents advanced several challenges paused by the language policy on teachers and Grade 4 learners in primary schools:

**Table 4: Challenges Encountered**

THEME	SUB-THEME
<p><b>Theme 3: Challenges Encountered</b></p>	<p><i>Sub-theme 3.1:</i> Resource Constraints:  <i>Sub-theme 3.1.1:</i> Lack of adequate instructional materials in Chinyanja  <i>Sub-theme 3.1.2:</i> Challenges due to limited access to resources  <b>Sub-theme 3.2:</b> Proficiency Discrepancies:  <i>Sub-theme 3.2.1:</i> Varied levels of Chinyanja proficiency among teachers  <i>Sub-theme 3.2.2:</i> Impact of proficiency disparities among learners  <b>Sub-theme 3.3:</b> Policy Implementation Issues:  <i>Sub-theme 3.3.1:</i> Challenges in executing the Familiar Language Policy  <i>Sub-theme 3.3.2:</i> Obstacles faced in aligning teaching methods with the policy  <i>Sub-theme 3.3.3 :</i> Challenges with Proficiency Levels</p>

*Resource Constraints*

#### ***4.5.1 Improper materials for teaching and learning***

It was determined that most of the schools under review did not provide teachers with any teaching or learning materials that corresponded with the updated curriculum. As a result, teachers were using textbooks designed for the previous curriculum. As a result, it became challenging for the majority of teachers to accurately translate the information from English into Chinyanja in order to comply with the updated curriculum. Then it was seen that professors were typically weakening or complicating the subject matter to the detriment of the students. It was also observed that the office of the senior teacher in the research schools did very little, if anything, to assist class teachers in resolving their situation. Teachers were thus free to interpret the information as they saw fit.

As a result of the aforementioned development, children in the same grade who were exposed to the identical learning materials but were taught by various teachers left the classroom with varying degrees of understanding.

Being the sole available alternative as a medium of instruction, English was used by teachers who were not fluent in Chinyanja and could not convert the content from English texts into Chinyanja texts.

#### ***Lack of adequate instructional materials in Chinyanja***

The lack of adequate instructional materials in Chinyanja poses a significant challenge for educators and learners alike. In many educational settings where Chinyanja is used as a medium of instruction, there is a scarcity of teaching materials tailored to the language's specific linguistic and cultural nuances. This shortage hampers teachers' ability to effectively deliver lessons and engage students in meaningful learning experiences. Without access to appropriate instructional materials, educators may struggle to convey complex concepts and reinforce key learning objectives in a manner that resonates with students. Additionally, the absence of Chinyanja-based materials limits students' exposure to diverse educational resources, hindering

their ability to fully comprehend and engage with the curriculum. As a result, learners may experience difficulties in grasping essential concepts, leading to gaps in understanding and academic achievement. Moreover, the lack of instructional materials in Chinyanja undermines the inclusivity and cultural relevance of the education system, particularly for students whose primary language is Chinyanja. Addressing this challenge requires concerted efforts to develop and distribute high-quality teaching materials in Chinyanja that are aligned with curriculum standards and pedagogical best practices. Additionally, investment in teacher training programs and educational infrastructure is essential to support educators in effectively utilizing these materials to enhance teaching and learning outcomes in Chinyanja-medium classrooms.

Several responses stated the following;

*“It is a good policy but books used do not tally with the current policy, as at our school, we are still using books belonging to the previous curriculum. Books are not enough such that we sometimes use books that are written in English. Besides, learners do not understand certain words that have been used in the text books. There is a tag of war to make learners understand some concepts due to language diversity. You see, in subjects where no materials are provided in the local language teachers have challenges because there are some words that are difficult to translate into Chinyanja,”*

[Teacher Respondent C3, Field Data, 2023]

Another respondent said:

*I do enjoy using Chinyanja. The problem is lack of suitable materials for implementing the policy because we teachers lack appropriate vocabulary for interpretation, [Teacher Respondent D1, Field Data, 2023]*

#### **4.5.2 English lesson planning and teaching in Chinyanja.**

Planning lessons can also have an impact on how Chinyanja is used as a teaching tool, either favourably or unfavourably. Teachers, particularly those who were unfamiliar with the use of Chinyanja as a language of instruction, complained that when text books that matched the revised curriculum were in use, the issue of compromising the standard of content through

translation also arose because the text books were written in Chinyanja and lesson planning was done in English. Additionally, it was discovered that the practice of lesson planning, in which teachers were required to plan in English and then use the lesson plans as a guide for the actual teaching in Chinyanja, had a negative impact on the transmission of content because the majority of the teachers could not translate the contents accurately. Children suffered significant learning losses as a result.

### ***Challenges due to limited access to resources***

The following are a few of the respondents' responses:

limited access to resources presents a significant challenge in educational settings, hindering the quality of teaching and learning experiences for both educators and students.

*“It is good but lesson planning is done in English. Even if books were written in Chinyanja, it would be hard to translate the content into English and thereafter making the lesson plans as reference points when conducting the actual lessons in Chinyanja, So, this practice would lead to compromise in the standard of contents through misinterpretation because not every teacher is conversant with Chinyanja, Even teachers who are conversant with Chinyanja, it is not all of them that have the capacity to translate English into Chinyanja i or vice versa,” [Teacher Respondent A1, Field Data, 2023]*

One teacher also indicated:

*“Yes, I do enjoy teaching using Chinyanja i, but when it comes to planning which is done in English from Chinyanja; some words usually pose a challenge of translation,” [Teacher Respondent B4, Field Data, 2023]*

Another teacher said;

*Some Chinyanja words used are complicated to an extent that learners can hardly tell the meaning. Even me I sometimes struggle to understand. [Teacher Respondent School A3, Field Data, 2023]*

One teacher also indicated:

*The challenge is that sometimes it is difficult to understand certain words, as the teacher sometimes uses deep Chinyanja.* [Teacher Respondent D4, Field Data, 2023]

#### **4.5.3 Inadequate teaching and learning resources**

Any language in education policy will unavoidably succeed or fail depending on the accessibility of teaching and learning resources. According to the current study, a dearth of pertinent learning resources has a significant impact on the usage of Chinyanja as a language of instruction for students in grades one through four.

The study found that teachers' use of Chinyanja as a language of instruction was severely impacted by a paucity of materials for teaching and learning that corresponded with the updated curriculum. Teachers in certain schools were given some instructional resources, but they were unable to accommodate all grade levels. In some other schools, the textbooks were available, but the syllabi were not, making it difficult for teachers to design lessons and carry them out. In other schools, text books for specific grades were not provided until 2019 when they received volumes for grades 3 and 4, indicating that such students were always being taught using the previous curriculum. As a result, maintaining consistency in knowledge levels for such kids has become difficult for both the teacher and the students. Several responses stated the following;

*“It is a good policy but text books and teaching and learning resources should have been supplied to schools before it was implemented,”* [Teacher Respondent School 3, Field Data, 2023]

*“I do not enjoy Chinyanjai because of communication barrier between me and the learners, and the other thing is lack of materials for this class.”* [Teacher Respondent B4, Field Data, 2023]

*“Some of the Chinyanja words used in books are beyond the teachers and learners scope.”* [Teacher Respondent C4, Field Data, 2023]

*“The policy is not good because of deficit of suitable teaching materials to match with the policy, for example, computers, and even part of the syllabi are not provided for in most of the schools. The policy also favors schools with adequate resources to scout for materials but for under resourced schools like ours, it is difficult to access materials, be it through buying or even photocopying from other schools that have the teaching and learning materials.” [Teacher Respondent A4, Field Data, 2023]*

#### **4.5.4 Lack of teacher proficiency in the use of Chinyanja as medium of instruction**

The study found that some of the teachers lacked skill in using Chinyanja, which is both the language of teaching and one that students in grades one through four are familiar with. The worried teachers struggled to communicate clearly in both oral and written materials. Some of the teachers' responses are listed below;

*“It enables learners to grasp concepts easily as learning takes place in a language which is familiar to them. I, for one, usually struggle to teach using Chinyanja. So, there is need to train teachers in the use of Chinyanja as well as having focal persons at school level to carry out in-service training for teachers on issues relating to the use of Chinyanja among others whenever need arises.” [Teacher D4, Field Data, 2023]*

*“I am not for the idea of using Chinyanja as medium of instruction because it has put us in a fix situation where we have no choice but to try and use it. I do enjoy Chinyanja using during the time for teaching it as a subject but not when I teach the other subjects. Learners move from one grade to the other without having learnt English well. So, by the time they reach grade 7 it becomes difficult for them to pass the national examination.” ([Teacher Respondent C4, Field Data, 2023]*

*“The using of Chinyanja is not good because it delays the use of English as a medium of instruction at grade 5 to 7 Levels. Learners do not take the use of English orally at grade two (2) and literacy in grades three (3) to four (4) as subjects seriously because of switching off to Chinyanja during the teaching of other subjects. For me, it is difficult to teach using Chinyanja as you saw in the just ended lesson, I mixed Bemba, Tonga, and English because it was difficult for me to use any Chinyanja words.” [Teacher Respondent D1, Field Data, 2023]*

#### **4.6 Summary**

The study's findings, which were given in this chapter, showed that the majority of primary school teachers in the Chipata district agreed that it was appropriate to teach students in grades one through four in Chinyanja. According to the survey, some teachers acknowledged being ready to use Chinyanja as a teaching medium, while others claimed they weren't. The employment of Chinyanja as a language of teaching was further proven to be unpopular among some teachers. Additionally, it was determined that the use of Chinyanja as a language of instruction was impacted by poor instructional materials, ineffective teachers, inappropriate teaching and learning resources, unfavorable teacher attitudes, lesson planning in English and teaching in Chinyanja, and a lack of teacher involvement in the policy-making process.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **DISCUSSION**

#### **5.0 Overview**

Having presented the findings of this study in the preceding chapter, the chapter offers the discussion of research results with specific reference to research objectives. The layout is as follows:

- (i) Determine teachers' preparedness (readiness) to teach using Chinyanja as medium of instruction in Grade four (4) in selected primary schools in Chipata district.
- (ii) Describe teachers' and learners' experiences in the use of Chinyanja as a medium of instruction in selected primary schools in Chipata district.
- (iii) Establish the challenges that teachers' and learners' encounter in the use of Chinyanja as a medium of instruction in selected primary schools in Chipata district.

#### **5.1 Grade 4 Teachers' preparedness to teach using Chinyanja as MOI**

This study found that some of the teachers were ready to teach students in grades one through four in Chinyanja. According to the study's findings, teachers had a varying responses on their preparedness to utilize Chinyanja as a medium of teaching for grades one through four and that they were confident doing so English was the only language of instruction in the remaining academic areas. Kombe (2019) agrees that the policy was hastily implemented in schools without ensuring that teachers and instructional materials were well prepared. The aforementioned studies are relevant to the current study since most of the instructors recognised that they had not received enough chinyanja training during their pre-service and in-service periods, although claiming to be adequately prepared to use it as a teaching tool. Therefore, their level of preparation can only be explained by their teaching in Chinyanja.

According to the study, some teachers were ready while others were not adequately prepared to use Chinyanja as a medium of instruction for grades one through four because they were

unfamiliar with it. This is because some teachers were either from outside the province or simply lacked proficiency in it. They continued by saying that, even when they were placed in schools, there were no focal points to help them get started using Chinyanja as a teaching language. Some of them claimed to have received their education from institutions where Chinyanja was not utilised in any way as a medium of instruction for any of the relevant subject areas. As a result, they chose Chinyanja as their primary language of instruction not because they supported the idea but rather because they lacked any other options. The aforementioned argument is consistent with Bernstein's power and control over the curriculum, as the government is well aware that teachers are not properly trained to use indigenous languages, namely Chinyanja, but they are nonetheless expected to successfully apply it (Mwanza, 2012). The studies by Kombe and Mwanza (2019) also showed that not all teachers were prepared to use local languages as a medium of instruction in schools because they had not received training to implement the literacy policy, and those who had never provided in-house training to their fellow teachers who were still working in schools.

The use of Chinyanja as required by the language in education policy was disregarded by such teachers, who only felt comfortable using English as a medium of instruction from grades one to four. In light of the aforementioned contention, the study unequivocally demonstrates that classroom instruction is not carried out in a vacuum (Mwanza, 2016), but rather is influenced by a variety of variables, some of which include teachers, government policies, and linguistics, as noted by Bernstein in 1973. Some of the teachers decided to defy the policy of using Chinyanja when they realized they were not fluent in the language used for classroom instruction. By doing so, they were able to exert control over the curriculum in the classroom, though it was to the detriment of the student who should have benefited from the learning process.

This is so because some students could not access Chinyanja, their horizontal discourse that was intended to serve as a resource base to make it easier for them to access the vertical discourse (Bernstein, 1975). In fact, Mwanza (2020) suggested that the primary reason Zambia's literacy rates have remained so low is the disconnect between the home and the classroom caused by the failure to acknowledge students' whole linguistic repertoires.

Some teachers, even those who were native speakers of Chinyanja, admitted that they weren't really ready to use the language as a teaching tool. In several topics where the reference texts were still written in English, they found it difficult to translate certain concepts and terminology from English into Chinyanja. They continued by saying that occasionally they experienced communication problems with students because of words that were unfamiliar to them as professors. The teachers claimed they weren't truly ready to educate students in grades one through four in Chinyanja. Wherever these instructors are assigned to teach in the Chipata district, the issue of some of them not being ready to use Chinyanja MOI even though the policy requires it has become a barrier to the educational development of kids. The connection between language and education is what led to the aforementioned development. As a result, the language that is used to distribute educational access has a significant impact on that distribution. Therefore, in a broad sense, educational failure is strongly associated with a linguistic failure (Clark, 2005). Therefore, the entire learning process fails if a youngster is instructed in a language that they are not used to hearing or speaking.

In order to implement Chinyanja as a language in educational policy, teachers must be adequately equipped. The survey found that while some instructors claimed they were unprepared, others claimed they were well prepared to utilize Chinyanja as the language of instruction for classes one through four. The third group of educators claimed they weren't truly ready to teach in Chinyanja. Additionally, it was determined that fluency in Chinyanja is essential for both teachers and students if any real learning is to occur during their interactions.

## **5.2 Grade 4 Teachers' and) learners' experiences**

The results showed that some teachers were highly proficient in using Chinyanja as a language of teaching and were able to put it into practice. The qualitative data also showed that most teachers agreed that using Chinyanja as the language of teaching in the classroom was appropriate and that they enjoyed doing so. The findings of the present study are consistent with those of Bender, et al. (2002), who found that students who were proficient and literate in their first native language were better able to master an alien language. In particular, children who had first acquired literacy in the Moore language before beginning in French achieved better results in French and Mathematics than students who did not. This suggests that students who receive training in Chinyanja, their first language, are more likely to perform well across all other courses than those who receive tuition in an unfamiliar language, as it was demonstrated in the lesson. In the same spirit, it is asserted that students learn best in a classroom setting when the teacher leads conversations about texts in connection to their social and cultural values; this is known as social and functional language (Halliday, 1985). In this context, it alludes to a learner's familiar language that carries the child's social and cultural values.

Some teachers felt comfortable using Chinyanja as a medium of instruction and were skilled in the spoken form of the language but not in the written version. According to Nyawaranda (2010), attitudes are particularly hard for people to get out of their heads. As a result, improving indigenous languages can benefit from favourable attitudes (Mwanza, 2017). According to this study, it can be argued that since most teachers view its use as a medium of instruction favourably, it is a step in the right direction. What is left to do, however, is to find a way for those in charge of the curriculum to address the problem of teacher proficiency for the benefit of students in the classroom.

The study also revealed that some teachers found it difficult to use Chinyanja as a medium of instruction because they found it difficult to employ Chinyanja terms in a useful manner. Although the teacher showed some subject-matter expertise, the students suffered from the lack of Chinyanja competency, which hindered their ability to learn. The teacher code moved to using English as the primary language of teaching during the course after realising he couldn't communicate with students in Chinyanja, which was clearly against the requirements of educational policy. According to the aforementioned research, the process of imparting knowledge to students breaks down if there is a language barrier between the teacher and the student (Mubanga, 2012; Mwanza, 2012). The aforementioned findings are so closely related to Bernstein's (2000) theory that distribution of education is strongly correlated with the language used in that distribution. Therefore, as was seen in the lesson above, linguistic failure is the general cause of educational failure.

The study also showed that some teachers' attitudes towards the use of Chinyanja as a medium of instruction during their interactions with students in the classroom were neutral. The teacher code shifted between English and Chinyanja during one of the observed lessons, but it was obvious from her interactions with the students that this was not done to the students' advantage. According to Wodak (2003), teachers have the ability to oppose, compromise, or embrace policy when it comes to the actual implementation of language in educational policy. In connection to this study, the instructor fought the policy by incorporating English into the lecture, but this never helped the students because anytime she did so, they displayed confusion, but the teacher didn't seem to care.

### ***Learner Experiences***

#### *Learner Engagement and Participation:*

Research has consistently highlighted that when students are taught in their native language, such as Chinyanja in Zambia, their engagement and participation in class significantly increase.

A study by Banda and Banda (2019) found that learners demonstrated higher levels of involvement in classroom discussions and activities when taught in Chinyanja compared to when using a second language.

*Improved Understanding and Comprehension:*

Moreover, learners' understanding and comprehension levels have been observed to be notably higher when education is delivered in Chinyanja. A report by Mwape et al. (2021) indicated that students showed a clearer grasp of complex concepts and subject matter when taught in their indigenous language.

*Enhanced Confidence and Expression:*

Another significant aspect is the enhancement of students' confidence and expression. According to a longitudinal study by Kamanga (2021), learners exhibited more confidence in expressing themselves academically and socially when using Chinyanja, contributing to their overall academic growth and personal development.

*Cultural Connection and Identity:*

Learners' experiences also highlight the importance of cultural connection and identity. Research by Simukonda and Mwanakatwe (2020) emphasized that utilizing Chinyanja in education not only aids comprehension but also fosters a strong sense of cultural identity among learners, boosting their pride in their heritage.

*Overcoming Language Barriers:*

Moreover, learners faced fewer language barriers when being taught in Chinyanja, as noted in a study conducted by Ngoma et al. (2019). This reduced linguistic obstacle positively impacted their ability to engage with the curriculum effectively.

In essence, the study found that most instructors in the selected primary schools in the Chipata district have a favorable attitude towards the use of Chinyanja as a teaching language. While some of them demonstrated a high level of expertise in its application, others lacked it in Chinyanja's written form. Others, on the other hand, demonstrated a high level of incompetence when using Chinyanja as a teaching tool. The study also revealed that some teachers had unfavorable views on the usage of Chinyanja as a teaching language.

#### **5. 4 The challenges that teachers' and learners' experienced**

##### ***5.4.1 Inadequate teaching and learning resources***

Any language in education policy will unavoidably succeed or fail depending on the accessibility of teaching and learning resources. The Ministry of Education highlighted the value of educational resources in 1996, asserting that providing access to textbooks and other resources is essential to providing high-quality instruction. The reason for this is that the right materials allow students to learn at their own pace, apply their information, and monitor their own development. The current study found that a dearth of pertinent learning resources had an impact on the usage of Chinyanja as a language of instruction from first to fourth grades. The study found that teachers' use of Chinyanja as a language of instruction was negatively impacted by the absence or deficiency of teaching and learning resources that corresponded with the revised curriculum in the majority of schools. Mbewe, et al. (ibid) concur with this study in that a shortage of teaching and learning resources in schools had an impact on the use of Cinyanja as a medium of instruction when they performed a study in which they studied the opinions of teachers, students, and parents towards the usage of Cinyanja in the Lusaka district. In school A, teachers were given some instructional resources but were unable to accommodate all grade levels, while in school B, textbooks were easily accessible but no syllabi were provided to assist teachers with planning and lesson execution. In school C and D, text books for some additional grades were not provided until 2019 when they received volumes for grades 3 and 4, indicating that such students had previously been taught using the previous curriculum.

As a result, maintaining consistency in knowledge levels for these kids became difficult for both teachers and students. It should be emphasised that a recurrent issue in Zambia that is frequently cited as one of the reasons for the low levels of literacy accomplishment in schools is a lack of suitable and appropriate teaching materials (Mwanza, 2012; Banda and Mwanza, 2017; Banda and Mwanza, 2020; and Mwanza, 2020). The government must make investments in education so that teachers can do their work with the fewest obstacles possible.

It was determined during the investigation that teachers lacked instructional materials that matched the updated curriculum. This meant that educators were using textbooks created for the previous curriculum. As a result, most of the teachers found it challenging to accurately translate the information from English into Chinyanja in order to comply with the new curriculum. The aforementioned conclusion is consistent with Kafata's (2016) study, which attempted to examine the effects of teaching in local languages on students in grades one through four at chosen primary schools in the Kitwe area of Zambia's Copperbelt Province. The study found that teachers had to translate the instructional materials from English into local languages, which was a significant problem and time-consuming for most of the teachers. This was owing to the fact that sufficient teaching and learning resources were not easily available in schools. It was discovered that teachers were frequently weakening or confusing the content standards to the detriment of their students. It was also observed that the Senior Teacher's office in the research schools did very little, if anything, to assist teachers in this area. Teachers were thus free to interpret the information as they saw fit. Children in the same grade who were exposed to the same topics but were taught by various teachers emerged from the classroom with varying degrees of information imparted to them as a result of the aforementioned development. Therefore, it was evident from the aforementioned argument that although translation can assist in addressing issues caused by a lack of adequate learning materials, it also has some drawbacks. The same observation was emphasised by Zimba (2007) in his study, which sought to determine the impact of employing Nyanja as a language of first literacy for

grade one students in a region of Lundazi rural school in Zambia that spoke primarily Tumbuka. The study found that more time was spent on translating from English to Tumbuka and from Nyanja to Tumbuka than was left over to actually teach literacy. In Zulu's (above-mentioned) study, it was also found that translation lacked clarity in word meanings because there are inconsistencies between languages due to cultural and environmental variances. Some teachers were forced to teach in English since they had no other choice because they were unfamiliar with the usage of Chinyanja as a language of instruction and could not convert the lesson plans from English into Chinyanja. Inadvertent code switching by certain teachers between English and informal Chinyanja was also harmful to the scholastic growth of the students.

The recently advanced argument is based on Bernstein's thesis, according to which teachers can now exert significant control over classroom learning activities and even deviate from the language policy (Leanne, 2010).

#### ***5.4. 3 Lesson planning in English and teaching in Chinyanja.***

One of the essential practices for effective and efficient teaching is lesson planning. However, this study found that lesson planning could either positively or negatively impact the usage of Chinyanja as a medium of instruction. When curriculum-aligned text books were easily accessible, teachers particularly those who were not fluent in Chinyanja complained that because lesson planning was done in English and the books were written in Chinyanja, there was a risk that the quality of the contents would be compromised during translation. Additionally, it was discovered that the practice of lesson planning, in which teachers were required to plan in English and then use the lesson plans as reference materials for the actual teaching in Chinyanja, had a detrimental effect on the transmission of content because the majority of the teachers could not translate the content correctly. Children suffered significantly in the learning process as a result of the aforementioned. According to Zimba (2007), translation is not a simple operation because there are no exact counterparts in any two

languages, which makes it difficult to translate words and sentences with precision. In fact, it makes sense to recommend that language policy makers take into account allowing teachers to create lesson plans in the language in which students are instructed in order to lessen, if not totally eliminate, the difficulties connected with content translation. Additionally, this has effects on the training of teachers. During teacher preparation, it is important to introduce student instructors to lesson planning in local tongues. If they are not introduced to it and given instruction on how to do it during college-based micro teaching, teachers cannot simply master this technique. Manchishi and Mwanza (2018) emphasized the significance of connecting the training that student teachers receive with their future work in classrooms.

#### ***5.4.4 Lack of teacher proficiency in the use of Chinyanja as medium of instruction.***

The survey found that several of the teachers struggled with using Chinyanja, which is the language that the students are comfortable with, in the classroom. Additionally, it was determined that each school required the appointment of focal individuals to serve as guides for other instructors, especially those who are unfamiliar with Chinyanja as a language of teaching, if necessary. The aforementioned result negates the entire purpose of using Chinyanja, which, in accordance with Bernstein's (1975) theory, the language of the classroom should be familiar to both the teacher and the students in order for the learner's horizontal discourse to support the child's easy access to the vertical discourse. The teacher can choose to code switch to English or any other language they may find appropriate for their convenience based on the idea of power relations in the classroom, as long as the language is close to what youngsters may have a slight sense of hearing even if it is foreign to learners. The exercise of power relations can be observed in a classroom setting, even when the teacher speaks a language that the students are not familiar with. The students may choose to remain silent out of fear of reprimand from the teacher. Even if the teacher is fluent in Chinyanja as a language of instruction, some students may be present in class who are not fluent in it and have no choice but to put up with its use and follow its rules.

Lesson planning in English and teaching in Chinyanja, teacher negative attitudes towards the use of Chinyanja as a medium of instruction, lack of proficiency in the use of Chinyanja as a medium of instruction, and lack of teacher involvement in the formulation of the curriculum were all factors that were identified by the study as having an impact on teachers' use of Chinyanja as a medium of instruction.

### **5.5 Summary**

Regarding the employment of Chinyanja as a medium of education from grades one through four, the teachers had varying opinions. The majority of the teachers agreed that grades one through four should be taught in Chinyanja. Other instructors, on the other hand, had negative opinions about the use of Chinyanja as a language of instruction. They believed that the only subject matter that should be taught in Chinyanja from first to fourth grade is literacy. Those who had mixed opinions about the efficacy of Chinyanja as a teaching tool incorporated it into their lesson plans with skepticism. The survey also showed that the majority of the primary schools in Chipata District lacked adequate teaching and learning resources, which made it difficult to successfully adopt the use of Chinyanja as a language of instruction. Additionally, it was determined that teachers lacked competence in the use of Chinyanja as a medium of instruction due to their inadequate preparation for it at the university level.

## CHAPTER SIX

### CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 6.0 Overview

This Chapter presents the conclusions and the recommendations arising from the study findings.

#### 6.1 Conclusion

In conclusion, this study delved into the experiences of teachers and learners in utilizing Chinyanja as the language of instruction from Grade 1 to 4 in Chipata District, Zambia. The objectives set out guided the exploration of teacher preparedness, experiences of both teachers and learners, and the challenges encountered with the Familiar Language Policy in Zambia.

*Objective 1: Determine teachers' preparedness (readiness) to teach using Chinyanja as medium of instruction in Grade four (4) in selected primary schools in Chipata district.*

The research unveiled varying degrees of teacher preparedness in executing the introduced policy. While some showcased commendable readiness, others faced notable gaps in adapting their teaching methods and materials to effectively utilize Chinyanja as the medium of instruction.

*Objective 2: Describe teachers' and learners' experiences in the use of Chinyanja as a medium of instruction in selected primary schools in Chipata district.*

The study illuminated a range of experiences among teachers and learners. Positive experiences were evident, showcasing improved understanding, engagement, and participation among learners when taught in their native language. Teachers also expressed satisfaction in seeing enhanced comprehension and enthusiasm among their students. The evidence consistently demonstrates that learners' experiences with Chinyanja as a medium of instruction are

overwhelmingly positive, showcasing improved engagement, comprehension, confidence, and a stronger sense of cultural identity among students.

***Objective 3: Establish the challenges that teachers' and learners' encounter in the use of Chinyanja as a medium of instruction in selected primary schools in Chipata district.***

The research highlighted several challenges encountered with the Familiar Language Policy in Zambia. These challenges encompassed inadequate resources and materials in Chinyanja, insufficient training for teachers in utilizing the language effectively, and disparities in the level of proficiency in Chinyanja among both teachers and learners.

This study emphasizes the significance of adequately preparing teachers, providing comprehensive resources, and continual training to ensure the successful implementation of the Familiar Language Policy. Addressing these challenges will be crucial in optimizing the benefits of using Chinyanja as a language of instruction and enhancing the educational experiences and outcomes for both teachers and learners in Chipata District and potentially across Zambia.

A variety of implications can be derived from the discussion of the findings in light of the research objectives. First, according to the study, the majority of primary school teachers in Chipata District favour using Chinyanja as the major language of teaching for classes one to four. The majority of the teachers were persuaded and agreed that using Chinyanja was appropriate, even though some of them thought it should only be used to teach literacy in Chinyanja and the other subjects be taught in English. Additionally, the utilisation of Chinyanja as a teaching tool improved the comprehension of the material by the students. It also made it simple to translate ideas from Chinyanja to English. However, some other teachers were unsure of whether it was a good idea to utilise Chinyanja as a language of teaching.

Second, the study found that the teachers were willing to teach students in grades one through four in Chinyanja. Due to their origins outside of Eastern Province, some teachers who were not fluent in Chinyanja stated that they were unwilling to use the language as a teaching tool.

Thirdly, the research revealed that some of the teachers had a high level of proficiency in using Chinyanja as a medium of instruction.

Thirdly, the study showed that some of the teachers had a high level of competency in using Chinyanja as a medium of instruction. Even though they lacked writing skills, some teachers were able to use Chinyanja as a medium of education. Other educators found it difficult to use Chinyanja in the classroom and either chose to code-switch between English and casual Chinyanja or outright taught the entire lesson in English.

Finally, the study showed that a variety of factors, including inadequate teaching materials, inappropriate teaching and learning resources, lesson planning in English and teaching in Chinyanja, unfavorable attitudes on the part of some teachers, a lack of proficiency in Chinyanja on the part of some teachers, and a lack of teacher involvement in the development of the language in education policy, had an impact on the use of Chinyanja as a medium of instruction.

## **6.2. Recommendations**

Based on the findings from the findings advanced in this study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Teachers should be allowed to explain in other languages to cover those that are not using Chinyanja as their mother tongue.
2. Design and implement targeted training programs focusing on Chinyanja language instruction for teachers in training colleges and Continuing Professional Development (CPD) in schools.

3. Ensure availability of adequate teaching materials, including textbooks and supplementary resources, in Chinyanja to support educators in delivering effective instruction.
4. Periodically assess the Familiar Language Policy to address challenges and make necessary adjustments for more effective implementation
5. Engage parents and communities in supporting and understanding the benefits of the language policy to garner broader support and cooperation

### **6.3. Areas for Future Research**

- 6.3.1 *Continuous Evaluation:* Conduct ongoing assessments and evaluations to monitor the effectiveness of Chinyanja as a language of instruction and make data-driven improvements
- 6.3.2 *Further Research:* Encourage additional research to delve deeper into specific challenges and solutions, fostering a continuous improvement cycle in language policy implementation.

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## **Appendix 1: Interview Guide for Teachers**

1. Gender
  2. For how long have you been teaching in the MOE?
  3. Are you aware of the Familiar Language Policy in Zambia?
  4. What is the current policy on the medium of classroom instruction from Grades one to four?
  5. Where you prepared (ready) to teach using Chinyanja as medium of instruction in Grade four (4)?
  6. What are your experiences in the use of Chinyanja as a medium of instruction in Grade four (4)?
  7. How stocked is your school with books in local languages that you and your pupils can use as teaching and learning materials in line with the new policy?
  8. What effect do you think the use of local languages as MoI at this school have had in comparison with the other GRZ schools or pre-school centers in the area?
  9. What are the challenges that you have or are facing in the use of Chinyanja as a medium of instruction in Grade four (4)?
  10. What recommendations are you giving in relation to Familiar Language Policy
-

## **Appendix 2: Interview Guide for Learners**

1. Gender
  2. For how long have you been learning in local language?
  3. Are you aware of the Familiar Language Policy in Zambia?
  4. What is the current policy on the medium of classroom instruction from Grades one to four?
  5. Where you prepared (ready) to learn using Chinyanja as medium of instruction in Grade four (4)?
  6. What are your experiences in the use of Chinyanja as a medium of instruction in Grade four (4)?
  7. How stocked is your school with books in local languages that you can use as teaching and learning materials in line with the new policy?
  8. What effect do you think the use of local languages as MoI at this school have had in comparison with the other GRZ schools or pre-school centers in the area?
  9. What are the challenges that you have or are facing in the use of Chinyanja as a medium of instruction in Grade four (4)?
  10. What recommendations are you giving in relation to Familiar Language Policy
-

### **Appendix 3: Interview Guide for Senior Education Standard Officers (SESO)**

1. Gender
  2. For how long have you been a standard officer in the MOE?
  3. Are you aware of the Familiar Language Policy in Zambia?
  4. What is the current policy on the medium of classroom instruction from Grades one to four?
  5. Where the teachers prepared (ready) to teach using Chinyanja as medium of instruction in Grade four (4)?
  6. What are your experiences in the use of Chinyanja as a medium of instruction in Grade four (4) as a monitor and supervisor?
  7. What do you think are some of the challenges faced in the use of Chinyanja as a medium of instruction in Grade four (4)?
  8. What recommendations are you giving in relation to Familiar Language Policy?
-



**THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA**  
**DIRECTORATE OF RESEARCH AND GRADUATE STUDIES**

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**APPROVAL OF STUDY**

**IORG No. 0005376**  
**HSSREC IRB No. 00006464**

**REF NO. HSSREC-2023 – MAY- 018**

Mr Zebron Tembo,  
The University of Zambia,  
School of Humanities and Social Sciences,  
P.O. Box 32379,  
**LUSAKA.**

Dear, Mr, Tembo,

**RE: “EXPLORING TEACHERS AND GRADE FOUR LEARNERS, EXPERIENCES IN THE  
USE OF CHINYANJA AS A MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION I N SELECTED SCHOOLS  
IN CHIPATA DISTRICT IN ZAMBIA ”**

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- 018
Approval and Expiry Date	Approval Date: 19 <sup>th</sup> June, 2023	Expiry Date: 18 <sup>th</sup> June, 2024
Protocol Version and Date	Version - Nil.	18 <sup>th</sup> June, 2024
Information Sheet, Consent Forms and Dates	<input type="checkbox"/> 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		

*Towards Improving Service and Excellence in High Education Beyond Fifty Years*

Specific conditions will apply to this approval. As Principal Investigator it is your responsibility to ensure that the contents of this letter are adhered to. If these are not adhered to, the approval may be suspended. Should the study be suspended, study sponsors and other regulatory authorities will be informed.

#### **CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL**

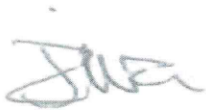
- No participant may be involved in any study procedure prior to the study approval or after the expiration date.
- All unanticipated or Serious Adverse Events (SAEs) must be reported to HSSREC within 5 days.
- All protocol modifications must be approved by HSSREC prior to implementation unless they 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

**ACTING 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