

# Language Practices in Multilingual Classrooms of Selected Primary Schools in Livingstone - Zambia

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## Abstract

This study investigated language practices in multilingual classrooms in selected primary schools of urban areas of Livingstone city in Zambia among teachers and learners. The purpose of the study was to establish the motivations that teachers and learners had for drawing 'linguistic features' from Nyanja, Tonga and English languages in negotiating meaning during teaching and learning activities. The study also interrogated the language practices against the legislative prescription of language(s) to be used in the formal classroom situations in Zambia. Using purposive sampling, the data were collected from twenty teachers and twenty pupils through semi-structured interviews as well as direct observations of the twenty lessons. The study shows that learners prefer using linguistic features drawn from the named languages as resources in making meaning and for the purposes of learning. The study also establishes that teachers use Nyanja and English as resources for linguistic inclusiveness in order to facilitate teaching. These findings seem to counter the traditional expectation in education set ups in Zambia in which highly formalised monolingual languages are to be applied in teaching and learning processes. Therefore, the assumption which language policy formulators make regarding the choice of language(s) to be used in a particular locality for a specific function are contested. In this regard, the study augments the current debate on multilingualism which moves away from the traditional conception of named languages used in informing the formulation of the Zambia Education language policy.

*Keywords:* multilingualism, translanguaging, language practices, classroom, Livingstone, Zambia

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## 1. Introduction

Zambia is found in south central Africa. It is divided into 10 administrative regions called provinces. Each province has an administrative capital which in most cases would be highly urbanized in comparison to outlying towns called districts. Similarly, the country has traditionally been 'zoned' according to languages dominant in the respective regions. For this reason, Zambia has 7 regional official languages designated for use in specific domains while English retains the overall official status of national language. The following are the 7 regional official languages and their designated regions: Bemba for the Copperbelt, Northern, Luapula, Muchinga and parts of Central provinces; Nyanja for the Eastern and Lusaka provinces; Lozi for the Western province; Tonga for the Southern province while Kaonde, Lunda and Luvale for the Northwestern province. Livingstone city which was until 2012, the provincial capital of the Southern province of Zambia was assigned Tonga language as a regional official language for education and other purposes. However, prior to 2014, as will be shown below, the urban area of the city was deliberately assigned Lozi, a regional official language for the Western province as a language for classroom instruction at primary school from grade 1 to 4. This was done following the dominance of the language in the urban area. After, 2014, there was a policy shift to return to Tonga which is the regional language for the Southern province. We will discuss this shift briefly later.

## 2. Sociolinguistic context of Livingstone

Livingstone is one of the four major cities of Zambia located in the far southern part of the country. The city shares its border with Zimbabwe, Namibia and Botswana. Livingstone is home to the famous Victoria Falls, one of the seven wonders of the world as declared by UNESCO, and the Mosi-oa-Tunya National Park and as such it was

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declared the Tourist Capital city of Zambia in the year 2012. Like other cities in Zambia, Livingstone has many languages spoken. These include Tonga (the regional official language), Lozi, Nyanja, Toka, Leya, English (the official national language) and many other languages. However, of these, Tonga, Lozi and Nyanja appear to be the dominant ones with Nyanja being the language of the city among urbanites.

It must be noted here that Livingstone appear to be the only city in which three regional official languages, namely Nyanja of the eastern and Lusaka region, Lozi for the western region and Tonga for the southern region, are relatively dominant in the sociolinguistic make-up of the city. The availability of three regional languages in one place speaks to the mobility of languages and cultural material. However, although there is a presence of three regional official languages in the city, only Tonga is recognized as the zonal regional official language for the city. For this reason, it has been assigned as medium of classroom instruction from Grade 1 to 4 while the other languages remain unrecognized. The other presumably ‘smaller’ languages such as Toka and Leya are found predominantly spoken in the periphery of the city. Owing to the fact that the city is the hub of tourism, a number of foreign languages such as French and Chinese are equally part of the sociolinguistic arrangement of the city. However, they play a limited role in the sociolinguistics of Livingstone.

### **3. Aim and Objectives**

The aim of the study was to analyse the motivations/functions of language practices employed by teachers and learners in multilingual classrooms of selected primary schools in Livingstone urban and implications thereof to the current educational language policy in Zambia. The study sought to meet the following specific objectives:

- a) To establish why educators and learners prefer certain linguistic choices against the others;
- b) To analyse the functions of linguistic choices that teachers and learners deploy in multilingual classrooms;
- c) To determine the practicality of the current educational language policy in selected Livingstone primary schools; and
- d) To analyse the implications of the language practices of teachers and learners to the current educational language policy.

### **4. Language in education policy in Zambia**

The current language in education policy in Zambia which was revised in 2014 states that the language of instruction from Grade 1 to 4 would be one of the zoned 7 regional official Zambian languages. From Grade 5 onwards, English would be the language of instruction. However, Mwanza and Banda (2020) argue that the 2014 educational policy framework was in fact not a new one since the use of Zambian languages as media of instruction existed during the time of missionaries and in Government schools between 1950 and 1965. For this reason, Banda and Mwanza (2020:118) view this policy as “a revitalization of the missionaries’ policy”. Furthermore, Banda and Mwanza contend that a distinction between using a ‘Zoned’ language and a local language must be made because a Zoned official Zambian language may not necessarily be a ‘Zoned’ language or a standard Zambian language.

Nkolola-Wakumelo (2013) notes that despite Tonga being the prescribed medium of instruction for the rest of Southern Province, an exception was initially made to make Lozi language, a Zoned regional official language for the Western province become a language of instruction in Livingstone urban and Mambova areas only. As stated, the current educational language policy in Zambia prescribes the use of local languages as the medium of instruction from Grade 1 to Grade 4. This prescription requires that Tonga as a Zonal language for the Southern province be used as medium of instruction in all schools across the province regardless of other prevailing languages in the area. Therefore, the earlier exception was reversed in order to strictly adhere to the legal prescription provided for in the Zambia educational framework of 2013. This meant that the implementation of the new educational language policy compelled educational authorities in Livingstone urban to make adjustments by introducing the use of Tonga as a medium of instruction from Grade 1 to Grade 4 in line with what obtained in the whole of Southern province. Therefore, this study interrogates the relevance of this policy in light of the reality of multilingualism in Livingstone urban and its schools. (See Banda, Jimaima, Mambwe & Simungala, 2019, for a detailed critique on the Zambia language policy in Education).

## 5. Theoretical Framework: Multilingualism and Translanguaging

This study is informed by the notion of translanguaging, which is connected to the broader notion of multilingualism as understood in recent times (see Blackledge & Creese 2014). In traditional sociolinguistic terms, multilingualism is explained as the use of more than one language by an individual or community (Gal, 2007). In other parts of the world like Europe, what is seen as multilingualism has traditionally involved named languages (distinct) languages that are independent of each other such as English, French and Spanish (Banda, 2020). This is because these languages would be thought to be used by multilinguals as independent languages, a situation that is not always the case in most African multilingual speech communities such as Zambia (cf. Mambwe, 2014). The practice of multilingualism may, to a large extent, consist in using crossover codes, mixed variants, linguistic features and so on, in ways which reduce the ‘massive’ coexistence of ‘independent’ or bounded languages to a set of linguistic practices that safe-guard the possibilities for communication throughout different layers of society (Meeuwis & Blommaert, 2002).

The concept of multilingualism like in many African states, is unique in the Zambian setting as there are several so called ‘languages’ that exist within the same speech communities. In line with this situation, Mambwe (2014) postulates a rethink on the notion of multilingualism to accept the fact that it should be taken as a notion in which speakers' spaces of interactions and linguistic resources are not constrained by rigid domain boundaries in which languages are seen as discrete, enumerable entities (cf. Blackledge & Creese, 2014). This implies that the notion of multilingualism should not be taken as a situation where independent languages are in existence but that all the perceived ‘independent’ languages are regarded as part of the linguistic repertoire from which linguistic resources are drawn by interlocutors to achieve their communicative aims (Blackledge & Creese, 2014; Banda, 2020).

In this study, we use the notion of translanguaging to ground our analysis. The notion of translanguaging can be traced from the 1980s through Cen Williams. According to Baker (2011) the term translanguaging originated from the Welsh word *trawsieithu*, which was initially coined by Cen Williams during an in-service course for deputy headteachers in Llandudno, North Wales. The term was later translated into English as *translinguifying* but later changed to *translanguaging* after discussions between Cen Williams and Colin Baker. The term *trawsieithu* (translanguaging) was initially invented to name a pedagogical practice which involve deliberate switching of the language mode of input and output in bilingual classrooms. This “translanguaging means that you receive information through the medium of one language (e.g. English) and use it yourself through the medium of the other language (e.g. Welsh)” (Williams, 1996:64). In 2001, a close colleague of Williams publicized translanguaging through the third edition of *Foundation of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism* marking the international launch of the term (Baker, 2001).

According to Garcia and Wei (2014) translanguaging is an approach to the use of language based on bilingualism that considers the language practices of bilingualism not as two autonomous language systems but as one linguistic repertoire comprising features that have been socially constructed as belonging to two or more separate ‘languages’. It means that what speakers do in multilingual classrooms is to draw linguistic features from what is perceived to be independent languages and use them (the linguistic features) as resources to facilitate communication. Garcia (2009:45) broadened the concept of translanguaging to refer to “multiple discursive practices in which bilinguals engage in order to make sense of their bilingual worlds.” It means that translanguaging includes any language practice employed in a multilingual context by language users to facilitate communication. This extension of the notion of translanguaging subsumes all multilingual practices “which have been described as codeswitching, code-mixing, crossing, creolization...” (Wei, 2011:123). This broadening implies that any practice of language alternation falls under the umbrella concept of translanguaging making it a wider phenomenon to subsume language practices such as codeswitching and codemixing. The whole purpose of all these language practices is to use them not only “to include and facilitate communication with others, but also to construct deeper understandings ....” (Garcia, 2009:45). The meaning of this postulate is that language practices in multilingual classroom situations are not only for the purpose of one being understood by others but also for one to understand what one hears in other languages. We wish to note here that while translanguaging in its original conception referred to language alternation, we use the term to refer to languaging practices in which speakers draw on linguistic features from named languages and use them as a single communicative system to make meaning and negotiate identities (Banda, 2020).

## 6. Methodology

This study employs a descriptive research design. Kothari (2004) defines descriptive research as a design with a major purpose of describing the state of affairs of a situation, as it exists at present. Furthermore, Manion & Morrison (2007: 205) states that descriptive research is concerned with “conditions or relationships that exist; practices that prevail; beliefs, points of views, or attitudes that are held; processes that are going on; effects that are being felt; or trends that are developing.” It implies that studies may employ descriptive research design to establish what exactly happens in particular contexts such as classroom situations as the case is in the present study. In other words, descriptive designs seek to describe what exactly obtains in particular situations. In addition, descriptive research design enables the researcher to study a phenomenon in its naturally occurring situation without any form of manipulation. The idea of naturally occurring situations in relation to descriptive research designs is supported by Kombo and Tromp (2006: 71) who contend that: “the major purpose of descriptive research is description of the state of affairs as it exists.” Thus, descriptive research leaves the researcher with only the option of describing the state of affairs of the subject matter being investigated. This design is justifiable for the present study because it “relies on observation as a means of collecting data. It attempts to examine situations in order to establish what is the norm” (Walliman, 2011: 10).

Using purposive sampling (Kombo & Tromp, 2006), forty participants, including twenty teachers and twenty learners were selected from two schools. Out of the twenty teachers, ten were from lower primary while another ten were from upper primary school. Out of the twenty teachers in the sample size, twelve were female while eight were males. The teachers were interviewed and their lessons observed. For pupils, ten girls and ten boys were chosen to be part of the study. Furthermore, a total of twenty lessons were observed; ten from the lower section and another ten from the upper primary section.

The data were collected over a period of eight weeks. The researchers observed lessons at the selected primary schools in classroom situations of both lower and upper grades to get the language practices in multilingual classroom situations. The observed data were noted in a notebook and thereafter compared with the recordings. Further, the researchers conducted interviews with teachers and pupils prior to which permission was sought from respective school authorities. The researchers attended and observed lessons of the teachers who consented to participate. All the observed lessons and interviews were voice-recorded.

## 7. Results and Discussion of Findings

The findings of the study highlight the motivations (functions) of language choices made by both teachers and learners during classroom interactions. The findings also discuss teachers’ views/opinions on the obtaining education language policy framework in Zambia (2014) and the implications of the findings on the sociolinguistic outlook of Livingstone city.

### 7.1. *The motivation/function of Language choices made by learners*

According to the findings, most learners in the selected primary schools of Livingstone urban used linguistic features drawn from Nyanja when seeking clarity in order to facilitate understanding of a topic. Furthermore, most learners preferred using linguistic features drawn from Nyanja when conversing with their fellow pupils during teaching and learning both at lower and upper primary as they try to understand the concepts in the language they are more familiar with by seeking clarity from peers. It seems some children preferred Nyanja to converse among themselves when they wanted to learn from classmates because the language was more familiar to them than the prescribed media of instruction (Tonga and English for lower and upper primary, respectively). It must be pointed out here that though Nyanja is a Zoned official regional language for the Eastern and Lusaka provinces, the language defies the traditional geographical and linguistic boundaries assumed to exist between languages thereby challenging the notion of language zoning and by the same token the premises for language policy formulation. However, we must note that the Nyanja spoken in Livingstone is not the standard Nyanja one would find spoken or used in designated areas. We could argue that the Nyanja spoken in Livingstone is an emerging dialect of the Southern province. A dialect which is essentially comingled with linguistic features from Lozi and a few from Tonga. We could further argue that this Nyanja is emerging owing to the ‘meshing’ of ‘languages’ and cannot be qualify as a standard regional official language yet it is used as one of the preferred forms of communication during classroom interaction among teachers and learners alike.

In addition, the findings show that some pupils preferred using Nyanja when responding to their teachers for the purpose of enhancing participation during learning. The possible reason for the use of Nyanja to respond to the teachers would be that the children seemed to express their response better than they would do in the prescribed media of instruction and communication. Furthermore, the findings indicate that the use of Nyanja by most children was for social identity and facilitating discussions during group work. According to Mambwe (2014), social identity is an aspect of social life which speakers actively negotiate and perform through their linguistic choices. The other explanation for children's preference of Nyanja during group work would be that the language enables every group member to freely participate thereby facilitating discussions among the group members.

The findings also indicate that there were some children who preferred using some English forms during lessons to respond to their teachers even at lower primary where it is not the prescribed medium of instruction. This means that the learners are not constrained by the policy framework requiring them to use a prescribed language at that particular level. In fact, they are doing this without assigning names to the languages or linguistic features they are deploying during their communicative activities.

The study further indicates that linguistic features drawn from Tonga and Lozi were used by some learners for solidarity with peers from the same 'ethnic' group or close friends. The use of Tonga or Lozi features between classmates would signify a closer relationship between the interlocutors than the use of commonly accepted languages Nyanja and English as the interlocutors would want to identify themselves more closely with each other. It means that the use of other 'languages' between pupils in a multilingual classroom situation would be an indication of a close relationship between particular interlocutors for the purpose of solidarity, whether ethnic solidarity or any form of it, as they want to identify with each other in a way of showing that their relationship extends beyond the classroom situation. This means that the linguistic choices that learners were making are not limited to communication but to other meaning making functions.

### *7.2. The motivations/functions of language choices made by teachers*

The findings show that most teachers used Nyanja and English for linguistic inclusiveness. Some teachers deployed linguistic features from Nyanja and English alongside Tonga at lower primary and during lessons in Tonga at upper primary for the purpose of linguistic inclusiveness as some pupils do not know the prescribed medium of instruction and communication (Tonga). This means that, although teachers endeavour to adhere to the policy by using the prescribed medium of instruction (Tonga for lower primary and Tonga lessons at upper primary), the communicative needs of their learners compel them to use linguistic features from Nyanja and English. According to Arthur (1996) this practice to use other available languages apart from the prescribed one is as a result of teachers' professional and personal instincts to respond to the communicative needs of the learners. In this regard, teachers consider the linguistic features from the named languages as simply resources for making meaning.

In addition, the findings show that linguistic features from Nyanja and English were used to cover teacher's inadequacy in communicating in monolingual Tonga. Some teachers chose linguistic features from English and Nyanja to enable them teach or provide a point whenever they could not find an appropriate linguistic feature from Tonga. It seems that linguistic features from Nyanja and English played the function of facilitating communication by some of the teachers who were not quite familiar with Tonga when used as a single communicative system. This would lead to a conclusion that teachers in multilingual classrooms tend to select linguistic features that they could be familiar with as long as those features are equally familiar among the majority of the children in class.

The findings also show that most teachers used linguistic features from Nyanja followed by English and Tonga, in that order, when conducting their classes. The purpose for combining these linguistic features drawn from the three named language systems was meant to facilitate explanations and descriptions of concepts which would otherwise be impossible or difficult to achieve if done in one named language only or with linguistic features drawn from one language system. The practice by teachers to use linguistic features from Nyanja as 'complementary language' to the official language English in Livingstone urban primary classrooms is not quite different from what Ogechi (2009) established in some Kenyan primary schools involving English and Kiswahili. Just like Kiswahili complements English in some Kenyan primary schools according to the study by Ogechi (2009), linguistic features from Nyanja does the same in Livingstone urban primary classrooms. What we notice here is that the teachers are not bothered by the language prescription principle but rather their focus is on the creation of meaning that facilitate easier understanding among learners and ultimately meets their teaching goals. Additionally, the study established that some teachers in the selected primary schools preferred drawing on linguistic features from Nyanja in order to control their classes when they noticed that learners were being disruptive during the process of teaching.

### *7.3. Teachers' views on the educational language policy*

This section is organised according to three categories based on the responses given by teachers regarding their opinions on the educational policy implementation in schools.

The first category has to do with the teachers who are for the idea of revising the policy to prescribe Tonga alongside English as media of instruction at lower primary school while Tonga continues to be taught as a compulsory subject for initial literacy. The main reason advanced in this category is that not all children could speak or understand Tonga but the language should be taught and spoken alongside English so as to expose children to both languages. In other words, the interplay of the 'two languages' affords learners an opportunity to learn easily. In this regard, in as much as English may be seen as 'foreign', it is still considered a resource which could be combined with other languages to facilitate teaching and learning.

However, the teachers under the first category see the implementation of the current policy as a serious challenge. This is because, they believe, some students do not possess sufficient background to enable them learn in Tonga as a single system compared to English. Therefore, the strict adherence to Tonga as medium of instruction would jeopardise teaching outcomes. In other words, this category sees translanguaging as a resource for easy communication and a reflection of ground level language practices which are important for classroom interaction especially among young learners. For this reason, drawing upon linguistic resources from both 'language' systems, Tonga and English should be prioritised rather than privileging a monolingual approach. Therefore, this category of teachers do not support the current language in education policy as it does not help teachers deliver their lessons and meet their objectives.

The second category of responses are those who subscribe to a monolingual approach that privileges English as the sole medium of instruction and communication. This category sees Tonga as simply a language that should be taught as a compulsory subject from Grades 1 to 7 and not necessarily as a medium of instruction. One of their arguments for preferring English as a medium of instruction from Grade 1 is that it is the official language used for teaching other subjects up to tertiary level. This means that if children are exposed early enough to the language, it would advantage them in future subjects taught in English. Moreover, the teachers believe that most of the children nowadays attend preschool education where, despite the policy recommending local languages, they get exposed to English, while most of them use it at home. While this could be true for some children, the reality is that the classroom situation in the study area is highly multilingual rather than monolingual. With their views and explanations, such teachers are clearly against the current policy on the basis that it prescribes the use of a Zonal Zambian language as medium of instruction. This means that these teachers may have difficulties implementing a policy they do not agree with thereby compromising both the policy expectations and the actual multilingual practices on the ground that provide sufficient meaning making resources for the purposes of teaching and learning.

The third category of views is that Tonga alongside English, Nyanja and Lozi should be used as medium of teaching and learning from Grades 1 – 4 while English remains the exclusive medium of instruction from Grade 5 onwards. Tonga should be taught as a compulsory subject from Grades 1 – 7 the whole Southern Province as a way of preserving and promoting local languages. This category appreciates the reality of multilingual situation among learners, hence their views on using all the commonly spoken languages in the Livingstone urban community namely Tonga, English, Nyanja and Lozi. In this category, the teachers see the exclusive use of Tonga as the medium of instruction and communication as unrealistic bearing in mind the reality of multilingualism in Livingstone urban. These teachers view multilingualism as a resource rather than a hindrance to teaching and learning.

The views by teachers in the third category also question the applicability and relevance of the current language in education policy which prescribes the use of one local language (Tonga for Southern Province) as the medium of instruction and communication at lower primary. Therefore, they propose the use of linguistic features drawn from the 'four' languages as media of instruction from Grade 1 – 4. Their proposal is consistent with actual classroom language practices, particularly at lower primary which could be strengthened if and when learners see their teachers using them without struggling or without having to rely on one language.

### *7.4. Implications of the findings on the educational language policy and the sociolinguistic aspects*

The findings indicate that teachers and learners in the classroom deploy a multiplicity of linguistic features drawn from the named languages available in their repertoire. The purpose for this is mainly to negotiate meaning in their

attempt to teach and learn, respectively. This is against the provisions of the language in education policy which prescribes otherwise. Therefore, the first implication of this situation on the policy is that the legislated provisions are challenged owing to the obvious language practices that counter such provisions of the policy. This means that the government expectations remain unfulfilled thereby rendering the policy irrelevant in the context of the classroom situation. These findings further suggest the need for policy formulators in matters of language to be paying particular attention to what people do with language and support such practices rather than prescribe the 'ideal' which often is 'unreal' and unproductive.

The findings further imply that there is need to rethink the meaning of language in multilingual contexts because what is considered to be a 'familiar' or zonal language as is the case with the current policy does not seem so to some children in the selected primary schools of Livingstone urban. This raises some questions on the appropriate basis of determining a familiar language in an area. Should the familiarity of a language be determined by the geographical location of an area or should it be based on the zoning of languages according to regions (as the case seems to be for Livingstone)? Or should it be dependent on the actual linguistic situation in area? This means that the notion of familiarity of the medium of instruction in the current policy seems to be challenged too especially for Livingstone urban. With this at play, it means that the basis for the selection of a language to be used for the purposes of classroom instruction needs to be redefined.

#### *7.5. Implications of the findings on the sociolinguistic landscape of Livingstone*

The findings of the study show the presence of Nyanja in the linguistic landscape of Livingstone urban which was never the case many years ago. It also shows that about three official regional languages namely Lozi for the Western region, Nyanja for Lusaka and the Eastern regions and Tonga, being used in Livingstone. These named languages, particularly Lozi and Nyanja are have evolved into what we loosely call 'southern regional dialects' in that they are never used as standard languages. This is because of how interlocutors have been using them, mainly in combination with other available language resources during communication. In other words, speakers use linguistic features drawn from these language systems in the manner that appears to reconstitute them into a single communicative system (Banda, 2018).

The other sociolinguistic implication of the findings is that the notion of English being labelled as a foreign language is being contested (cf. Mambwe, 2014). This is because the language practices by children and their teachers too in the selected primary schools show that they use English in its adapted form just like any other Zambian local language as some of them even use it as a home language. Moreover, some children are even more familiar with linguistic features drawn from English than the local language, Tonga. That being the case, there is no justification to continue regarding English as a foreign language. In other words, English has become part of the linguistic repertoire of many urbanites in Livingstone.

From the findings, it seems clear that the language zoning as undertaken by the Government in Zambia is being challenged in the sense that languages are not bound by geographical boundaries. This is the reason why other zoned Zambian languages (for other regions) can be found spoken in Livingstone and used equally like other the recognised regional Zonal languages (Nkolola-Wakumelo, 2013). Consequently, it would be appropriate to contest that the current language zoning, as it has been for some time, is to a greater extent irrelevant owing to the fact that the actual linguistic situation is not in tandem with the language zoning principle, particularly for Livingstone urban. This is because children and teachers alike prefer using English and Nyanja as the two languages are more widely used and familiar than the so-called familiar language Lozi or regional language Tonga. Therefore, it would be right to assume that the language practices in classroom situations are a reflection of what takes place in the communities in terms of language choices. We must add here that in as much as these languages are being named, they are in fact not used as single entities but rather a mixture of linguistic features.

## **8. Conclusion**

In relation to the aim and objectives of this study, the findings of the study indicate that learners and teachers tend to deploy linguistic choices that challenge the practicality of the current educational language policy. This is because what actually happens on the ground in the selected primary schools of Livingstone urban is a total mismatch to the recommendations of the current policy resulting in several implications. The first one is that Nyanja is preferred by the majority of the children, hence arguably emerging as a lingua franca. Another implication is that some children would have to begin learning the medium of instruction when they get into Grade

1. In addition, the linguistic choices imply that English is familiar to nearly all the children in the selected primary schools of Livingstone urban, a situation that raises questions as to whether it is justifiable to continue labelling it as a foreign language. Apart from that, one other implication inferred from the findings is that there is a mismatch between the actual practices and what the policy prescribes. Moreover, the basis for selecting a familiar language in a multilingual area like Livingstone urban is being challenged by the language choices according to the findings of the study. The findings also imply that the actual reasons for recommending use of a local language as the medium of instruction are challengeable.

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