

HELSINGIN YLIOPISTO

“We are not English, we are Zambian”:

Attitudes of Zambian university students towards
the language of instruction in basic education

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| Tiivistelmä – Referat – Abstract | | | |
| <p>Tutkielmassa tarkastellaan yliopisto-opiskelijoiden opetuskielen liittyviä kokemuksia sekä asenteita Sambiassa. Monikielisessä Sambiassa, englanti opetuskielenä aiheuttaa haasteita muun muassa oppilaiden lukutaidossa ja opetuksen ymmärtämisessä. Tutkimuksella pyritään selvittämään, millaisia kokemuksia ja kieliasteita opiskelijoilla on Sambian perusopetuksen (luokka-asteet 1-12) opetuskielen valintaan liittyen. Tutkimuskysymykset keskittyvät opiskelijoiden henkilökohtaisiin kielellisiin kokemuksiin ja -asenteisiin liittyen englannin kielen ja sambialaisten kielten käyttöön opetuskielinä peruskoulussa.</p> <p>Tutkimusaineistona ovat University of Zambia -yliopiston opiskelijoiden kanssa tehdyt haastattelut ja niiden ääninauhoitteet. 12 opiskelijan haastatteluissa keskityttiin heidän kielitaustaansa, henkilökohtaisiin kokemuksiinsa kieleen liittyen koulumaailmassa, mahdollisiin opetuskielen liittyneisiin haasteisiin, sekä kieliasteisiin. Haastatteluissa nousi esiin myös opiskelijoiden omia ehdotuksia Sambian koulutuskielipolitiikan kehittämiseksi.</p> <p>Tutkimuksen perusteella useat opiskelijat kokivat haasteita englannin ymmärtämisessä ja luku- sekä kirjoittamistaidossa peruskoulun aikana. Useimmat opiskelijoista kertoivat, että paikallisten kielten käytön kieltämisen takia heillä oli haasteita esimerkiksi osallistua opetukseen tai kysyä neuvoa opettajalta. Opiskelijoiden mukaan opetuskielen valinta ja ainoastaan tiettyjen kielten salliminen kouluissa aiheuttivat haasteita myös sosiaalisissa suhteissa. Kieliasenteita tarkastellessa opiskelijat osoittivat huomattavaa tukea paikallisille kielille ja niiden käytölle sambialaisessa koulusysteemissä. Sambialaisten kielten tärkeyttä korostettiin oman kulttuurin ja kielen merkityksellä, sekä opetuksen ymmärtämisen lisäämisellä. Englannin kieltä pidettiin kuitenkin välttämättömänä osana sambialaista yhteiskuntaa. Opiskelijat ehdottivat opetuskielipolitiikalle sallivimpia asenteita paikallisten kielten käyttöä kohtaan ja tasapainon löytämistä englannin ja sambialaisten kielten käytön välille opetuksessa.</p> | | | |
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1 Introduction

In contexts where several languages are used, choosing a language for educational purposes is challenging. Multilingualism is the reality in most nation states in the world and the African continent is an ideal example of dense multilingualism with over 2000 estimated languages (see e.g. Ethnologue 2020, Kaschula & Wolff 2016). In the African context, language policies in education have traditionally focused on the foreign ex-colonial languages (e.g. English, French, and Portuguese) and undermined the role of local African languages (see e.g. Banda & Mwanza 2017, Adegbija 1994, Kaschula & Wolff 2016). Therefore, the reality is that the majority of African students learn in a language which is not their first language (L1). The effects of this can be seen in overall quality of education and student performance, such as initial literacy development, written language skills, comprehension of instruction and student participation.

The focus of this thesis is on Zambia, a landlocked country in Southern Africa with a population of approximately 18,3 million (Worldometers 2020). Zambia is an example of a multilingual and multicultural African country, with approximately 73 ethnic groups and languages (Mwanza 2017, 101). Due to its British colonial history, the only official language of Zambia is English. In addition, there are seven Zambian languages (Bemba, Nyanja, Tonga, Lozi, Luanda, Luvale, Kaonde) which have the status of national language and which function as lingua francas in different parts of Zambia. Despite the official status of English, few Zambians use English as their predominant or only language of communication (Wakumelo 2013, 134).

Since the colonial era, English has been favoured in Zambian education as the language of instruction (LoI), regardless of learners' various first languages, multilingual backgrounds or insufficient skills in English. Local Zambian languages have been used to some extent, especially for early literacy learning since 1996. However, according to Wakumelo (2013), Zambian languages have not been used in education effectively, regardless of researchers being in favour of using local languages in education. Nonetheless, the latest language-in-education policy in Zambia aims to include Zambian languages more: during grades 1-4, the seven national languages are used as language of instruction and from grade 5 onwards the LoI would be English (Banda & Mwanza 2017). This new programme, however, still ignores dozens of other Zambian languages which are not part of the group of the seven national languages.

The main purpose of this study is to examine Zambian students' experiences and attitudes related to language-in-education. My thesis focuses on a group of Zambian university students

(University of Zambia) and their view on the LoI in Zambian primary and secondary schools (grades 1-12). More precisely, this study aims to gather information on the students' language related personal experiences during their previous education, as well as the students' current language attitudes regarding the language-in-education policy in Zambia. This is a qualitative study and the data was collected by interviewing a group of students in Zambia. By discussing the previous studies on the topic and analysing the results of the present study, I aim to answer the following research questions:

1. What kinds of personal experiences do Zambian university students have regarding the language of instruction used in their primary and secondary education?
2. What kinds of attitudes do the students express towards the language of instruction and multilingualism in the Zambian educational system?

The motivation for my research is based on the combination of my study interests as well as my personal experiences and observations in Zambia. During my studies at the University of Zambia (UNZA) in Lusaka, the capital of Zambia, I became familiar with the reality of linguistic inequality in education. In a culturally and linguistically diverse context such as Zambia, students do not have the privilege to learn in their first languages, often neither in their second languages. In addition, the use of local languages is often forbidden in school environment. Spending time in Zambia and getting to know its linguistic setting offered me a unique opportunity to examine this educational context which is very different from the European one. In addition, I wanted to focus on the experiences from the point of view of students, because I wanted to hear from the people who have recently experienced the Zambian basic education system as students themselves. The previous research on the theme of LoI or language-in-education policy in African education has often focused on other topics, such as teacher attitudes or the materials used, rather than the students' thoughts on these topics.

To support my research findings, I discuss some background research relevant for the present study. In chapter 2, I cover some topics in multilingualism, language attitudes, and multilingual education in African and Zambian contexts. In addition, I give an overview on the history and current situation of language-in-education in Zambia. In chapter 3, I present the methods for data collection, analysis and ethical procedures of the study. In chapter 4, I present and analyse the findings and give direct examples from the data. In chapters 5 and 6, I discuss the results in connection to previously discussed background studies. Finally, I give suggestions for possible future studies on the topic.

2 Theoretical background

In this chapter, I elaborate on some key themes relevant to my topic. I discuss the concept of multilingualism in Africa, language attitudes and multilingual education in general and in the African context, moving step by step closer to Zambia, the focus area of this study. The purpose of this chapter is to introduce and examine multilingualism in the African context in relation to education and give an overview on Zambian language-in-education policy. This chapter supports the analysis and findings in later chapters of this study.

There are some frequent terms and their abbreviations used throughout this paper. “Language of instruction” (LoI) is used interchangeably with “medium of instruction”, meaning the language in which the general instruction is given in schools (separate from language learning). “First language” (L1) (also “mother tongue” and “native language”) is used meaning the first language an individual is exposed from birth. In multilingual contexts and for the purposes of this study, the term “first language” (L1) is possibly the most neutral and descriptive in my view, and therefore it is used in this study. Lastly, I use “local language” and “indigenous language” interchangeably for languages that originate from the geographical area, in this case, the African continent.

2.1 Multilingualism in Africa

The African continent is estimated to have over 2000 languages (depending on the definition and separation of a language and a dialect, see e.g. Ethnologue 2020, Kaschula & Wolff 2016). Africa is an ideal example of dense multilingualism, including numerous indigenous languages (local African languages), exogenous languages (e.g. European languages) and Pidgin languages (grammatically simplified contact languages) (Adegbija 1994). Most of the geographical territories of Africa’s modern states were set by the Western colonial expansion in the continent, which created incoherent and heterogeneous populations (Simpson 2008).

During the colonial period in African states, the aim was to achieve the “European concept of an ideal ‘nation state’” (Kaschula and Wolff 2016, p. 2) where the ideology of “one nation, one state, one language” is valued. With the striking multilingualism in African states, there was a need to create a “collective national whole” of ethno-linguistically diverse groups (Simpson 2008, 2). Therefore, as an intended unifying factor inherited from ex-colonial powers, most

African states have designated a European language as their only official language (e.g. English in Zambia, Portuguese in Mozambique and French in Democratic Republic of Congo) or one of the official languages (e.g. English in South Africa).

In regard to indigenous African languages, Gadelii's annotated statistics on languages in Africa (2004) describe the numbers of speakers of African local languages. The statistics state that roughly half of African countries have only about 50 per cent of the population speaking a shared language as a first language (L1). According to Ouaine and Glanz, there are on average 56 African languages used in state administration, 66 used in written business communication and at least 242 used in mass media in African countries (Ouane & Glanz 2010, p. 8). These figures reflect the enormous quantity of different languages and therefore represent the linguistic challenges in various domains of the society.

Having so many languages in these societies has caused selectiveness with some languages having a status of contact languages or lingua francas in some domains. It is common that the mostly widely spoken local languages have been selected and given the status of "a national language". European languages have remained and gained the status of "neutral", unifying and prestige languages in African societies and are therefore most commonly selected as the official languages in domains such as education (see e.g. Ouaine & Glanz 2010, Kaschula & Wolff 2016).

In general, the multiple local and imported languages of African societies are "layered" with a certain function and present a certain type of language ideological value in the society (Zsiga et al. 2014). It is common in African communities that a smaller language, usually an individual's L1, is spoken at home and within a smaller group of people. On the second layer there is an indigenous language, possibly with a national or official status, spoken by most of the population of the region/country (e.g. Swahili in Kenya, Setswana in Botswana). The third layer language would be a non-indigenous, ex-colonial language such as English, French or Portuguese. This language is usually considered the most prestigious one in the region, used in higher education and official matters. Zsiga et al. (2014) therefore roughly classify the layers of language into "my language", "our language" and "their language", which is the reality in many African states. This phenomenon describes well the unequal status of languages in the multilingual African context.

2.2 Language attitudes in the African context

In sociolinguistics, “language attitude” is a central concept, and describes a speaker’s personal relation to language. Language attitudes, according to McGroarty (1996, 5), are “beliefs, emotional reactions and behavioural tendencies related to the object of the attitude”. In this case, we examine languages as the objects of the attitude. Language attitudes have been studied as psychological constructs, which causes challenges in accessing them (Garrett 2010). Language attitudes cannot be accessed straightforwardly but through other aspects such as the behaviour of an individual. Therefore, some overlapping themes and terms related to language attitudes include “beliefs”, “opinions”, “values”, “habits”, “ideologies” and “social stereotypes” (Garrett 2010).

In multilingual contexts, language attitudes are viewed as being embedded in a larger picture in the society, in contact with social, political, economic and historical contexts (Pavlenko & Blackledge 2004). According to Garrett, language attitudes are almost always learned through the attitudes, beliefs and social stereotypes of communities or societies. He further discusses that the two important sources of language attitudes are the personal experiences and the social environment (including the media) of an individual: language attitudes are learned by observing the behaviour of other people and the consequences and rewards of that behaviour (Garrett 2010, 22).

In educational contexts, language attitudes have seen to have the function as input into and output from social action (Garrett 2010, 21). An example of this phenomenon is Welsh language education (Baker 1992, cited in Garrett 2010): Welsh language learning is an important input for revival and promotion of the language. The language learning creates more positive attitudes towards the Welsh language, which is considered as the output function. This theory can well be adapted to the situation of local African languages as well.

The language attitudes of the population play an important role in multilingual settings in a country or a community. Adebija (1994, 17) states that strong language and cultural loyalties affect the attitudinal patterns in most countries in Africa. In general, as stated above, ex-colonial European languages dominate in official, educational and governmental domains in most African countries and indigenous languages are neglected in official circles (Adebija 1994).

Certain language attitudes significantly define the power relations of languages in a society. Adebija (1994) discusses some of the reasons why non-African languages are considered more

valuable and prestigious than African languages by the native African populations, including policy makers, for instance. An important point is the implantation of Western languages as the language of the elite, achievement and international connections. Therefore, such languages which represent success and “high-domain roles” are more likely to gain positive language attitudes towards them (Adegbija 1994, 20). Consequently, these attitudes have affected the general image of indigenous African languages as inadequate in official domains. In addition, in the colonial history of some countries (especially Portuguese, French and Spanish colonies) the indigenous languages were considered unsuitable for the new “civilised community” of the colony (Adegbija 1994).

In multilingual African states and multi-ethnic societies, language plays a major role in both bringing ethnic groups together and distancing them apart from other groups (Fishman 1991). This has created negative language attitudes towards other local languages between speakers of different indigenous first languages. Therefore, when it comes to language policies policy makers have often seen it as necessary to use ex-colonial languages in order to avoid conflicts between ethnic groups (Beyogbe 2014).

The input of language attitudes in African contexts seems to play a key role in the background of language policy making. Therefore, the output or the outcome of the language policy favouring a non-African language in education, for instance, further affects the general language attitudes in a society.

2.3 Multilingual education

The concept of multilingual education has been widely researched. Multilingual (or bilingual) education is defined by Cummins (2009, 19) as “the use of two (or more) languages of instruction at some point in a student’s school career”. Similarly, according to García (2011), multilingual education means using two or more languages as media of instruction to teach content to students. Therefore, it is different from second or foreign language teaching. Although the term “bilingual” is often used in previous studies instead of “multilingual”, these two terms are somewhat interchangeable and therefore, I will use the word “multilingual” throughout this thesis meaning the definitions given by Cummins and García.

According to García (2011), the purpose of multilingual education is to educate multilingual students equitably and making education meaningful and comprehensible for students who have

different first languages/mother tongues. Multilingual education can be executed in several ways: how the multilingual setting in a classroom forms depends greatly on the socio-political and sociolinguistic situation of the languages used. Also, the competence in the languages used affects the approach to multilingual education. Garcìa (2011) describes how languages used in multilingual education are rarely separate entities, but rather build up on each other dynamically.

Multilingual education inevitably combines languages of instruction which do not have equal statuses in a society. This may create tensions and concerns for children possibly not being able to master the most socio-politically powerful language of the society (Cummins 2009). There has been a lot of debate over whether being exposed to two or several languages in education is beneficial or harmful for students. Cummins (2009) talks about bilingual educational programmes being the least controversial in general when they are favouring the dominant groups in society. It is evident that the minority groups and their languages are often left out. Cummins points out that some common arguments against multilingual education are often related to the possible incompetence of the linguistic minority students in the dominant language. Another example of criticism is possible segregation of immigrant or minority students that can be caused by multilingual education (Garcìa 2011).

Despite the criticism, multiple studies on multilingual education show that learning in more than one language “entails no long-term adverse effects on students’ academic development in the majority language” (Cummins 2009, 20). According to Skutnabb-Kangas (2009, 40), monolingual education in a multilingual society/community could cause harmful consequences socially, psychologically, economically and politically. It can also affect the linguistic minority by creating educational and cognitive problems, and consequently, political marginalization.

There are several different concepts which are essential when examining the theme of multilingualism and which describe the dynamic and variable nature of multilingualism. Garcìa (2011) presents the term “translanguaging” which means hybrid language use in situations where the speakers are multilingual. Language use and choice are determined by the competence of the speakers in each language and situation, for instance. The concept of “translanguaging” is similar to “code-switching” (language alternation between two or more languages). Garcìa describes the phenomenon of “code-switching” being spontaneous and fluent language use among multilinguals. These phenomena are core concepts when looking into multilingual education. Translanguaging in multilingual classrooms means multiple discursive practices taking place, in order to construct meaning (Garcìa 2011). Especially in

multilingual societies and classrooms, code-switching can often be a crucial part of communication and symbolize the speakers' social identity (Mokgwathi & Webb 2013). In the present study, the phenomenon and the possibility of code-switching plays a central part and is discussed more in chapters 5 and 6.

As we can see, it is challenging to find one comprehensive model to describe multilingual education. Depending on the language dynamics and power relations, language competence and the language policies in a society or a country, multilingual education can be executed and understood in many different forms.

2.3.1 Multilingualism in African education

As stated in section 2.1, language density and multilingualism are significant features in African nations. Multilingualism and language attitudes in African societies are complex, which inevitably causes challenges for language-in-education policies. In the African context, the juxtaposition between local languages and European languages as languages of instruction has been widely discussed and researched.

Since several African states share the same kind of colonial and post-independence history, the language-in-education settings and policies are often similar in these countries. Therefore, research done in other African countries is relevant also when focusing on a single country.

In the educational field, the multilingualism of African countries challenges the planning of language-in-education policy, when it comes to language choice or the role of local languages (Tibategeza & du Plessis 2012). As stated in section 2.1, ex-colonial languages are considered more prestigious, economically more valuable and ethnically more neutral. Therefore, in several African states, the most common practice has been the use of European languages as media of instruction, especially in secondary and higher education (Simpson 2008). Also, the choice of LoI in education has a significant power defining national and official languages and re-enforcing language attitudes regarding the prestige of a language, for instance (Simpson 2008).

It is estimated that approximately only 10-15 per cent of the population in most African countries are fluent in some European (e.g. English and French) languages (Ouaine & Glanz 2010, 9). These numbers explain some of the challenges in African education when it comes to language-in-education policies. Studies have been carried on the use of a familiar local language

as LoI. Several studies have shown improved learning results when the instruction and initial literacy teaching are given in a familiar, local language (see e.g. Banda 1996; Mwelwa & Spencer 2013; Obeng & Adegbija 1999).

A common phenomenon in African educational systems is the change of LoI between grades or between primary and secondary schools. An example of this is the language-in-education policy in Tanzania, where the LoI in early education is a regional ethnic language, switching to Swahili (one of the two official languages with English) in primary education, and finally to English in secondary and tertiary education (Gadelii 2004; Tibategeza & du Plessis 2012). The system of switching from a local language to a European LoI, usually after early primary education, is very common in other African countries, including Zambia.

The case of Tanzanian language-in-education policy is a good example of how something initially thought as a functional model can cause several challenges in accessibility and understandability of education when there is a complete transition from one LoI to another. In the Tanzanian context, for instance, Swahili is used as LoI for the first grades of basic education to enhance literacy and comprehension. After this period, the LoI is switched to English. Regardless of the representation of multiple languages, the education in such situations still often remains monolingual where only one language is used in classrooms at a time. In addition, it has been argued that the sudden and complete switch of LoI in Tanzania from Swahili to English rather erases previous knowledge than builds up information for students (Rubanza 2002, 40). In the Tanzanian context, the switch to English in secondary and tertiary education means that both teachers and students must use a foreign language for education (Tibategeza & du Plessis 2012, 192). Also, Tibategeza and du Plessis point out that the pursuit of bilingual (English and Swahili) education “remains a far-fetched ideal, as the trend in the education system is subtractive in nature, where Kiswahili [Swahili] and English are treated differently” (2012, 192).

Another common linguistic phenomenon in many classrooms in African countries is code-switching or translanguaging (see section 2.3). A study by Mokgwathi and Webb (2013) found various results related to the effect of code switching in classrooms in Botswana, where the languages used were English and Setswana. Positively, code-switching enhanced the overall comprehension in the classroom, since Setswana was the home language for a majority of the students. Also, the use of Setswana alongside English increased class participation and eased the atmosphere and relationship between the teacher and students. Some negative effects of using Setswana in an otherwise English as LoI class were decreased confidence in speaking

English, lack of written communication and discrimination against non-Setswana speaking students. Despite these negative results concerning code-switching in classrooms, Mokgwathi and Webb support the use of code-switching, especially when the primary medium of instruction is English, such as in Botswana. This study comes back to underline the status of English in Botswana, and several other African countries: “[d]espite the high status of English in Botswana, it is still very much a foreign language for many citizens and learners [...]. Therefore, it is doubtful if learners can fully reach their educational potential using a foreign language” (Mokgwathi & Webb 2013, 123-124).

The linguistic circumstances in Africa set up complex challenges for language-in-education policy. However, research with optimistic new suggestions and strategies exists as well. Zsiga et al. (2015) indicate that there are several study results regarding successful multilingual education in the African context, such as smaller local community education programs and the increase of positive attitudes towards local languages. Kaschula and Wolff (2016, 4) also suggest new strategies for more multilingual education. They consider effective strategies for more multilingual education an obvious solution. Kaschula and Wolff discuss the reasons why monolingual education, whether LoI were a local language or a European language, is not practical in Africa. Monolingual strategies in a European language would be copied from a colonial educational system, which does not apply in the African multilingual setting. In these contexts, students and teachers often have different first languages from the LoI used in the classroom, unlike usually is the case in the education systems of European, ex-colonizing countries (Kaschula & Wolff 2016). Monolingual education in a local language would also be a far-fetched idea in many African states. According to Simpson (2008), the challenges in having a local African language as LoI include the lack of resources such as materials, sufficient vocabulary and teachers with enough linguistic skills in the specific local language. In addition, the choice of the local language as LoI would automatically cause ethnic friction between tribes in countries where there are no “neutral” local languages.

In conclusion, the general language attitudes of the public towards language-in-education policy in Africa seem to vary. According to studies carried out in several countries, parents favour a multilingual education for their children, in “their mother tongue and a European language of wider communication”: local language instruction for facilitating learning and promoting cultural knowledge and European language instruction for strengthening possibilities for future higher education and employment (Simpson 2008, 7). However, setting

a suitable and equal language of instruction in Africa seems to come back to the lack of language capacity, resources and linguistic unity, as we have seen in this chapter.

2.3.2. Zambian multilingualism and education

Zambia is a landlocked country which lies in the centre of the Bantu language-speaking area in Southern Africa (Marten & Kula 2008). Zambia qualifies as a multilingual, multi-ethnic and multicultural nation state (Kashoki 2018). Zambia is claimed to have approximately 73 languages based on 73 ethnic groups or tribes (Mwanza 2017, 101). However, the estimation of the total number of languages varies. Mwanza (2016, 39) states that some of these languages are mutually intelligible and the amount of languages can be limited to 25 to 40 mutually intelligible ones. If we consider lexical and grammatical similarity in addition to mutual intelligibility, according to Ohannessian and Kashoki (1978) there would be approximately 26 language clusters. According to Marten and Kula (2008, 292), the estimates of languages spoken in Zambia can even vary from about 20 to over 80. The explanation for this can be found in the different ways to define a language and a dialect, and the connection of language and ethnic groups (Marten & Kula 2008).

English is the only official language of Zambia, accompanied with seven officially recognized regional languages: Bemba, Nyanja, Tonga, Lozi, Kaonde, Lunda and Luvale. The seven national languages are used in several formal contexts alongside English, such as early primary education, radio, health information, and more widely in informal contexts (Marten & Kula 2008). National local languages have specific areas where they are predominantly used (see Figure 1 for provinces of Zambia): Bemba is the primary language in Northern, Luapula, Copperbelt and Central provinces, Nyanja in Eastern and Lusaka provinces, Tonga in Southern province, Lozi in Western province, and Lunda, Luvale and Kaonde in North-Western province (Marten & Kula 2008, 297).

Despite English being the official language in Zambia, only about 1.7% of the Zambian population, according to the 2010 Census, used English as their predominant language (Wakumelo 2013). The largest language group is Bemba with 41% L1 or L2 speakers of the total population, followed by Nyanja speakers with 23.3% and Tonga speakers with 14.5% of the population (Zambia Census of population and housing 2010). However, these figures are ambiguous today since the census is outdated, especially considering the population growth in Zambia during the past 10 years. According to the 2010 Census, the population growth rate of

Zambia is 2.8%, which has only increased during the past decade. In addition, urbanization in Zambia affects the changes in linguistic setup and in numbers of speakers in certain languages. Zambia has faced linguistic challenges in the course of history up to the present day. According to Kashoki (2018, 4), the issues of language in Zambia can be divided in four categories: political, educational, national development and progress, and national and cultural identity. Even though the primary focus of this thesis is on the educational aspects, the other societal fields are connected to one another and cannot be excluded when examining language in Zambian education.

In order to clarify the contents of this study, it is useful to introduce some general information on the setup in Zambian education system for basic education. The Zambian basic education consists of primary school (grades 1-7) and secondary school (further divided into junior secondary (grades 8-9) and upper secondary (grades 10-12)). Primary education is free from school fees, whereas starting from grade 8 there are annual fees for students.

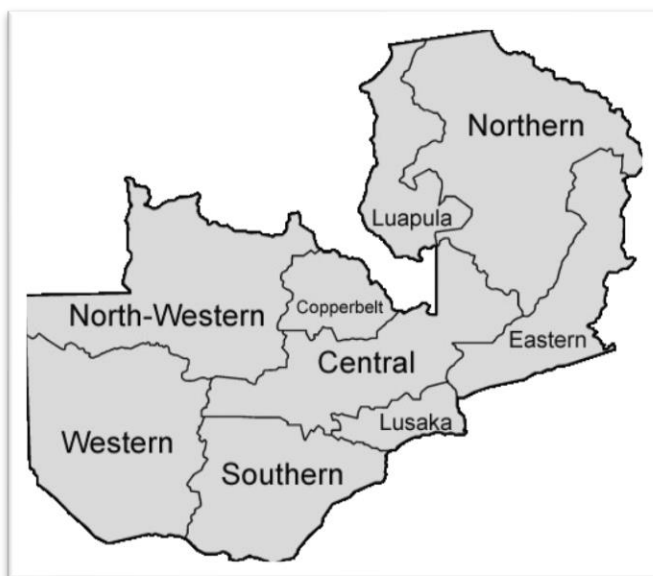


Figure 1: Provinces of Zambia

2.3.3 History of Zambian language-in-education policy

Language-in-education policy in Zambia has undergone several phases during its history. The local Zambian languages and English have been used the language-in-education policy in different ways. During the 1800s when missionaries came to Zambia and were the first providers of western education, local languages were used as a medium of instruction up to the fourth grade or so, and English from there onwards. The use of local languages turned out to be

very efficient in the spread of evangelism by the missionaries (Manchishi 2004 cited in Mwanza 2012, 1). However, English was still promoted above local languages as the language of government, business and education starting from 4th grade. Since this period, local languages and English (or only English) have been used as media of instruction in Zambian education (Banda & Mwanza 2017).

During the British colonial period, Zambia was first under the rule of British South African Company (BSAC), and later became a British protectorate in 1924 (Mwanza 2012, 2). After the investigations by the British colonial office in its colonies, new language policies for education were made. English was recommended to become the official language in education, whereas four main local languages, Bemba, Nyanja, Tonga and Lozi, were recognized as regional official languages. These local languages could be used in government schools for grades 1-4 as languages of instruction (Mwanza 2012, 3). This was the first time when local languages were acknowledged legally in education (Simwinga 2004, cited in Mwanza 2012, 3). By 1953, there was a three-tier language policy in education in Zambia. This meant that in lower primary school the LoI was the learners' mother tongue, followed by instruction in a dominant local language in middle primary school. Eventually, English was used for the subsequent education as a language of instruction (Mubanga 2012, Mwanza 2012). This formed a three-layered language system in education where the local languages were seen as a "transitional phase prior to instruction in English" (Ansre 1979, cited in Mwanza 2012).

After Zambia gained its independence in 1964, a new language-in-education policy was set. In 1966, English became the only LoI starting from grade one and continuing to the end of tertiary education. The reason for this new regulation was mainly the attempt to form national unity by having English as a common language for all citizens. In addition, it was believed that English skills would be increased if learning in English started earlier (Mubanga 2012).

After the change to the "English-only" model, there were attempts to re-introduce local languages in the language in education policy. In 1977, it was suggested by the Ministry of Education that local languages would again be used as media of instruction for lower primary school (MoE 1977). This proposal was declined, but instead the new language policy allowed teachers to use local languages for further explanation of concepts which would not be otherwise understood in English (Mubanga 2012). In the early 1990s the Examination Council of Zambia (ECZ) assessed pupils' reading levels. The results indicated that children's reading performance was low. In addition, the Ministry of Education pointed out some weaknesses in

language in education policy, such as the separation of school and the community and downgrading of local languages (Banda & Mwanza 2017). It had become evident that using English as the only LoI was causing challenges in lower primary school literacy learning. This initiated the Ministry of Education to conduct more research on literacy in early education, and the studies found that using a familiar local language for initial literacy was more efficient (Mubanga 2012).

In 1996, the Ministry of Education created a policy titled “Educating Our Future”. The document suggested that initial literacy should be taught through a language familiar to younger pupils (Ministry of Education 1996). English remained as the primary LoI, but local languages were used for initial literacy learning to enhance pupils’ reading levels. This change further developed the status of Zambian languages in education. A pilot study carried out in 1998 in Northern province, Kasama, showed positive results on literacy levels when a program called *New Breakthrough to Literacy* (NBTL) was experimented. This program was carried out for grade 1 pupils to teach early literacy in a familiar local language. The positive results were notable: after grade 1 literacy teaching in a familiar language, the reading and writing levels of the pupils in Kasama were equivalent to grade 4 or above students who had had English as LoI throughout their education so far (Kotze & Higgins 1999, cited in Mubanga 2012). Later, the program was implemented in all schools in Zambia by 2003 until 2013.

2.3.4 Current situation in Zambian language-in-education policy

The next shift in language in education policy took place in 2014 and it remains the current policy. The policy states:

The policy on education recognises the use of familiar Zambian languages as the official languages of instruction in the Pre-Schools and early Grades (Grades 1-4) [...] In Zambia, the seven (7) zone languages; Cinyanja, Chitonga, Icibemba, Kiikaonde, Lunda, Luvale and Silozi as well as the widely used community languages in specific school catchment areas will be used for this purpose [...] English will be offered as a subject, beginning at Grade 2 [...] English will still remain as the official medium of instruction beginning at Grade 5 up to tertiary education (The Zambia Education Curriculum Framework 2013, 19)

This latest policy has been used in Zambian schools for the past 6 years. The inclusion of local languages in education as LoI was driven by the advantages it had been seen to have on initial learning and literacy. Using a familiar language as the medium enables pupils to express themselves and participate in their own learning process (Mubanga 2012). Another noted effect

of the inclusion of local languages is the reinforcement of the cultural identity of Zambian pupils. Previously, the motivation for monolingual, “English-only” instruction in education was driven by the desire to unite all Zambians regardless of ethnic and linguistic differences (see e.g. Sampa 2005). The new language policy, however, attempts to link home, community and school together and enhance the multicultural and multilingual heritage (Banda & Mwanza, 2017).

Even though the advantages of local language inclusion and instruction have been continuously found in research in Zambia and elsewhere in Africa, there is still controversy remaining since only a fraction of local languages are included in the language in education policy. In such diversely multilingual contexts as Zambia with (approximately) 73 indigenous languages, it is challenging to provide education to pupils in a language that everyone would be able to understand on an adequate level. Since only the major local languages are used for grades 1-4, not all pupils have the chance to learn in their mother tongue. A good example of this is Mubanga’s (2012) case study in Lwimba area in Chongwe district. This district is part of Lusaka province, which means that Nyanja is the dominating, zonal local language set to be the language of instruction. However, the predominant mother tongue in Lwimba area is Soli. The study tested differences in written language performance between Nyanja speaking and Soli speaking students with the regional LoI, Nyanja. The results showed a significant difference between the literacy levels of these two groups. The Soli speaking pupils were less able to produce vocabulary, sentence patterns and correct grammatical rules than Nyanja speaking pupils.

The same area and phenomenon were also studied by Cole (2015). This doctoral thesis was the basis of a trans-disciplinary documentary film on the community of Lwimba. Cole provides a case study of a teacher and three students in grade one. The study focuses on the tripartite language situation of the community. The Lwimba community’s ethnic language is Soli. Secondly, the regional national language and the teacher’s language is Nyanja. Thirdly, the compulsory language for students to learn is English (first as a foreign language subject, later the LoI). The extensive study shows the challenges in comprehensibility of the Nyanja teaching for Soli speaking students, not to mention the challenge of understanding English.

Another interesting set of study results from Zambia is related to further inclusion of a familiar local language to instruction and its relation to comprehensibility. Mwelwa and Spencer (2013) explored the hegemony of English in Zambia and trialled the inclusion of materials in one of

the national local languages, Bemba, for English literature classes in grade 10. The results indicate a positive response from students, who felt that the inclusion of Bemba in class improved their understanding and promoted their cultural identity. The students felt that their indigenous language was given value and their understanding of literary concepts was improved. Mwelwa and Spencer also point out that it is much in teachers' power to initiate the increasing of multilingualism in language teaching. Consequently, the linguistic capacity of teachers is crucial in order to make the local language instruction work.

As stated in this chapter, the official status of English in Zambia has often been explained by the need to create unity – *One Zambia, one nation*, as the motto of the nation goes. English was the only “non-tribal” language available to present that national unity (Marten & Kula 2008, 307). Other motivations for choosing English as the only official language have been its connotation to modernization, prestige and international connections (Mwelwa & Spencer 2013). However, due to the low levels of English comprehension and literacy levels in Zambia, the country faces several challenges having English as the only official language, and therefore, the main LoI. Kashoki (1990) argues that Zambian languages, such as Bemba and Nyanja, would function as official languages more effectively instead of English because they are simply understood more widely. In addition, Kashoki states that English is not neutral in the educational field, since it favours students who come from families from urban areas with well-educated parents, where English is spoken at home.

Multilingualism is the reality in Zambia and the majority of Zambians have more than one language that they use in their daily life, for communicational purposes and representing their ethnic and linguistic identities (Marten & Kula 2008). Multilingualism and local languages play an important role in Zambian contemporary life and that way automatically affect education through young learners' language repertoires and identities.

3 Methods and data

In this chapter I present the methods for the process of data collection and analysis of my study. I discuss the features of the interviewing method in a qualitative study. Then, I introduce the group of informants who were recruited for the interviews and interviewed in Lusaka, Zambia. I further discuss the data collection process and steps. Lastly, I describe the procedures which took place, including consideration towards research ethics and challenges regarding the research, which were considered before, during and after the data collection process.

3.1 Interview method in a qualitative study

This research is based on interview data, which focuses on the informants' personal experiences, opinions and attitudes concerning the LoI in Zambia. For that reason, I chose to use a qualitative interview method for data collection. Interviewing for a qualitative study is not only using questions and answers to receive information, but it also "offers different ways of exploring people's experience and views" (Richards 2009, 183). In applied linguistics, interviews allow the researcher to have better access to people's perceptions, beliefs and motivations which is more difficult with questionnaires, for instance (Richards 2009).

For this study, I chose to follow a semi-structured interview method. As Richards (2009) notes, the semi-structured interview falls in between a structured and open interview, which makes it the most commonly used interview method in qualitative research. The essential features of a semi-structured interview are clear key topics for the interview questions and sufficient flexibility in asking those questions.

Considering the topic of this study, it was evident that I needed to set clear topics for the interview guide. However, it was challenging to predict the informants' reactions and answers for the interview questions since the informant group was relatively diverse based on their background, especially geographically and linguistically. Therefore, a semi-structured interview guide was the most beneficial type of method to use and allowed modification and additional questions if needed. Since the aim of the study was to gather information on the informants' personal experiences, beliefs and attitudes, it was crucial that the data collection method allowed the informants to elaborate and answer to additional questions.

For using the semi-structured interview method and analysing the data, I followed some points discussed by Richards (2003) related to transcription and possible analytical approaches, for instance. For the data of this interview, I paid attention to the interactional aspect of the interviews, underlining the impact of multiculturalism and multilingualism present in the interviews between the interviewees and the interviewer.

3.2 Informants

The target informant group for this study was recruited after some discussions with the university staff at the University of Zambia (UNZA) at the Department of Literature and Languages. All the informants were UNZA students. UNZA is the largest and most highly ranked higher education institution in Zambia and students come there to study from all around the country. It is a public university which is located in Lusaka, the capital of Zambia. There are 13 faculties, two separate campuses and altogether over 30 000 students. The official and only teaching language at the university is English, as in all other higher education institutions of the country.

I decided to choose 1st and 2nd year university students as my informants, since they have recently finished their basic education. I also wanted the informants to have completed the 12 grades of primary and secondary school in Zambia, in order to have clearer and more comparable results for the questions which refer to both primary and secondary level education.

Other factors such as field of study, first language (L1) or geographical origin were not relevant for being part of the informant group. I aimed to recruit an equal number of females and males, and ended up with 5 female and 7 male students. I was unable to recruit the informants based on which province of Zambia they come from since the number of informants was relatively small. Fortunately, I had nine out of ten provinces of Zambia in total represented by my informants, either as a birthplace or a home province at some point during their school time. That was certainly beneficial for having a versatile group of students from different linguistic backgrounds since the provinces in Zambia have a lot of differences when it comes to languages and ethnic groups or tribes.

The informants were found with the help of my contacts at the Department of Literature and Languages at UNZA. For instance, I visited some 1st and 2nd year lectures to introduce my research intentions and inquired for volunteers for the interviews. Since my contacts at UNZA

are mostly at the School of Education and the School of Humanities and Social Sciences, the group of informants also ended up consisting of students from these two schools. I had 12 interviewees altogether. All of them were 1st or 2nd year bachelor level students and nearly all of them studied a subject related to linguistics or foreign languages as their major or minor subjects.

During the recruitment process, the informants were provided with general information about the study and a short introduction to the upcoming interview.

3.3 Data collection

After recruiting the interviewees, I scheduled suitable times with each interviewee. The interviews were carried out around the campus area. I asked the interviewees to suggest comfortable places where to have the interviews to minimize any unnecessary distractions. Before the interviews, I also assured the students that the interview would be very conversation-like and would not require any type of preparation from them. Several of my interviewees seemed to be a bit nervous about the interview so for that reason I found this somewhat lighter approach helpful. I also told the interviewees that it is possible to have breaks and pause the recorder, if needed.

The interviews were audio recorded and transcribed (the transcription conventions are listed in Appendix 1). There were 12 interviews altogether, including one pilot interview. The purpose of the pilot interview was to test the questions and structure of the interview, to see how the questions were understood and responded to by the pilot interviewee. I decided to include the pilot interview in the final data, since it did not differ greatly from the other interviews. The interviews took approximately 25-30 minutes each, the shortest being 16 minutes and the longest 39 minutes. Before the interviews, I informed the interviewees that they should reserve one hour for the interview session altogether, in order to have enough time for signing the consent form and settling down before the actual interview.

The interview guide (see Appendix 1) included four categories of questions and it consisted of 12 main questions overall. The topic areas were related to background information, language skills, personal experiences related to language of instruction and thoughts about the language-in-education policy in Zambia. Since these were semi-structured interviews, some questions were added, and some removed depending on the interviewee's background and experiences.

There were some interviews where I had to remove or replace several questions if the interviewee's experiences deviated considerably from the assumed ones (regarding the use of local languages, for instance). I had additional questions in almost all the 12 interviews, since there were some points which I had either no previous knowledge of or topics which were particularly interesting and required further questions.

3.4 Ethical procedures and challenges of the study

The 12 students were given a consent form with an overview of the research and information on their rights when participating in the study. Students who agreed to participate were told that they would remain anonymous throughout the study and any names or other identifying information mentioned in the interviews would be deleted from the transcripts. The protection of anonymity was extremely important because some of the topics dealt with in the interviews could be sensitive in this particular social group.

The informants were asked for permission to have the interviews audio-recorded and were told that the audio recordings and transcriptions of the interviews would be destroyed after the research is finished. The students were also provided with the contact information of the researcher in case of any unclarities after the interviews. The participation in the interview was completely voluntary and it was made clear for the students that they can cancel their participation at any point.

One of my main challenges concerning the interviews was related to cultural differences between the students and myself. This type of challenge is discussed by Talmy (2010). He describes power relations playing a part in the qualitative interview method. It is relevant to take into consideration the power relations between the interviewer and the interviewee, regarding institutional status, age, and background, for instance (Talmy 2010, 137). In these interviews, however, the differences related to background between the interviewer and the interviewee did not seem to affect the results considerably.

When planning the interview guide, I had to consider the way the students might perceive me as a foreigner interviewing them. As discussed in sections 2.2 and 2.3, the attitudes towards local African/Zambian languages can be negative and they are often not given equal value in all areas of the society compared to European languages (English in this case). I considered the possibility that the students might think that not valuing local Zambian languages and

promoting European languages is the “advanced” and academic way of thinking, which they might want to represent in front of a European person, and which could affect the overall results. To avoid this as much as possible, I mentioned to the interviewees about my background studying at UNZA, for instance, to gain certain type of common ground, so to say. Fortunately, the atmosphere in the interviews felt relaxed and open minded in general and the students did not noticeably avoid talking freely about their own local languages.

4 Analysis

In this chapter, I present the findings from the interviews. I have divided the chapter into different subsections based on the main topics which were discussed in the interviews. First, in section 4.1, I present some background information on the informants. In section 4.2, I describe the students' answers on general language related questions. Section 4.3 focuses on the informants' personal experiences and possible linguistic challenges they faced related to LoI. In the last section 4.4, I present the students' thoughts and attitudes towards the current language-in-education policy in Zambia, with their future hopes and suggestions.

For analysing the interview data, I followed some guidelines discussed by Richards (2003). For developing an analysis based on this qualitative interview data I examined the recordings and transcripts carefully and multiple times. From the data, I identified patterns from the informants' responses. According to Richards (2003), the purpose of identifying patterns is to expand the understanding of what is said in the interviews. I also paid careful attention to possible unusual elements and themes discussed by the informants and the way the informants represented their "institutional identities" as students (Richards 2003, 192). In my view, these aspects played an important role taking into consideration the topic and target group of the study.

For direct quotes of the interview transcriptions, I have used the transcription conventions listed in Appendix 1. For closer examination of the questions used in the interviews I have provided the original interview guide in Appendix 2.

4.1 Background of the informants

In the first phase of the interviews, I asked the informants about their age, field of study, year of study and where they are from originally.

Basic information of informants is presented in Table 1. For clarity, I have also included information on the students' languages and English skills and other information from section 4.3 in the same table. In order to protect the informants' anonymity, I refer to the students as S1, S2, S3, and so on. For the same reason, I have not marked the gender for each informant. As mentioned in section 3.2, there are 5 female and 7 male students among the informant group.

| Student | Age | Birthplace (Province except S10) | Also lived in | Study field and year | Languages | English taught/spoken since |
|---------|-----|--|---------------------------------|--|--|-----------------------------------|
| S1 | 21 | Western | Copperbelt, Lusaka | Literacy and language, 2 nd year | Bemba , Lozi, Nyanja | Primary school |
| S2 | 25 | Lusaka | Central, Southern, Lusaka | Literacy and language, 2 nd year | Nyanja , Chewa, Bemba, Lenje, Tonga, Kaonde, Swahili, Kirwanda | Preschool |
| S3 | 22 | Muchinga (Northern) | Lusaka | Literacy and language, African linguistics, 2 nd year | Bemba , Nyanja | Secondary school |
| S4 | 24 | Eastern | Lusaka | Literacy and language, 2 nd year | Nyanja | Spoke at home |
| S5 | 22 | Eastern | Lusaka | Zambian cultures and ceremonies, 2 nd year | Nyanja , Chewa, Tumbuka, Bemba | Preschool |
| S6 | 24 | Copperbelt | Lusaka | General linguistics, Chinese, 1 st year | Bemba , Nyanja | Preschool |
| S7 | 19 | Central | Lusaka | Educational psychology, general linguistics, 1 st year | English | First and only language |
| S8 | 21 | Lusaka | Luapula, Lusaka | Mass communication, French, 2 nd year | Nyanja , Bemba Tumbuka, Ngoni, Chewa, French | Spoke at home |
| S9 | 20 | Southern | Lusaka | Zambian cultures and ceremonies, 1 st year | Tonga , Nyanja, Bemba | Primary school |
| S10 | 20 | *Tanzania | Central, Lusaka | General linguistics, Chinese, 1 st year | Tonga , Swahili, Bemba, Nyanja, Chinese | Spoke at home |
| S11 | 22 | Lusaka | - | English, geography, 1 st year | Lamba , Bemba, Nyanja | Primary school |
| S12 | 22 | North Western | Lusaka, Southern | Educational psychology, civic education, 2 nd year | Bemba , Nyanja, Tonga, Lunda, Luvale | Spoke at home |

Table 1: Basic information

In Table 1, I have included the informants' birth places (provinces) as well as other provinces where they lived and attended school before university. All except one student (S11) had moved within Zambia either several times or at least to Lusaka to attend the university. The group of students was very diverse regarding the places they were born or had lived in. All the Zambian provinces except the Northern province are covered in the data either as a birthplace or as a place where the students lived and went to school at some point. This already indicates the vast cultural and linguistic diversity of students at UNZA.

The Languages column in Table 1 indicates the languages other than English which the informants reported to be able to use. The language the informants were most comfortable with reporting as their L1 or most fluent language are marked in bold font. The question of L1 or mother tongue was challenging since some informants could not pick a language which they would consider their ultimate L1, or they felt that their L1 had changed over time from one language to another.

It was common that the students reported to be able to understand and use several local languages, but they would not consider their skills to be completely fluent or similar to their first language. I chose not to ask about their tribe or ethnic group even though some students mentioned it. This was because several of them had parents from different tribes and/or had grown up in a different area from their own tribal area. Therefore, there was a lot of variation in which tribe the informants identified themselves as belonging to. Indicating the tribe was not only complicated but also less relevant for this study in comparison to the language competence of the informants.

The last column in the table indicates the point when the students reported starting to use or learn English. According to the interviews, it was obvious that all the informants were very fluent in English. Regarding the starting point of being exposed to English there was a lot of variation among the informants. Some informants had English as their only or main home language before school, whereas some started learning to speak English fluently only after the beginning of secondary school.

Even though the data for this study is limited to a small group of students, Table 1 already shows a striking linguistic variety within one country and one university.

4.2 Language skills and previous languages of instruction

The next section in the interviews included questions about language skills. As stated in section 4.1, the informants were asked to name all the languages they can speak or use and to put the languages in a rough order from the most fluent one to the least fluent, according to their own perception. As also discussed earlier, it was challenging for some informants to provide an answer on their L1 because they considered to have two or more equally fluent languages. The informants were further asked about the languages used as languages of instruction in their primary and secondary schools.

Regarding the question about the fluency of their languages, there was an interesting answer from student 8, for instance. He said that his mother's language was Tumbuka but he was not fluent in it himself. Instead, he had spoken Nyanja, Bemba and English at home and reported his skills in all these three languages as very fluent:

- (1) S8: I can't remember which was my first language I spoke ... ah cause of what I've explained – it's a mixed culture so you find that other people are speaking this language other people are speaking this language – so ah I don't know ... but I think English

In total, there were 17 different languages mentioned in the interviews, including English. In the group of 12 informants, there was only one monolingual student (S7), English being their only language, and one student with skills in two languages (S4), Nyanja and English. Other students' language abilities varied from three to nine different languages.

Question 5 was about the language of instruction in the students' primary and secondary schools. The aim was to find out how and for which grades local languages were used as LoI, compared to English use as LoI. According to the answers to question 5, there is variation depending on the individual school policies in terms of whether LoI is a local Zambian language or English.

In general, the data shows that the primary schools (grades 1-7) which the students went to had a regional local language as LoI to some extent. Four students in total (S1, S2, S3 and S10) told me that their primary schools used solely a local language as LoI, English being used only in English language classes. Student 3 pointed out that at her primary school there were very few staff members who could speak English so for that reason the English language classes were not paid much attention to either.

Student 10 told me that his L1 is Tonga but he went to a primary school which mostly used Nyanja and Bemba for instruction. When I asked him if he would have wanted to learn in his L1, he responded no because he likes to be exposed to other languages.

All the students indicated that English was the main LoI in the secondary school level (grades 8-12). Three students (S3, S6 and S12) said that local languages were sometimes used to facilitate and explain difficult things to students. Students S1, S2, S8 and S9 said that the use of local languages was strictly forbidden in school classes or even on school premises in secondary school level.

Question 6 focused on the students' English use. I asked them when they started using or learning English and whether the English use was only in school or at home as well. I have

indicated the answers in Table 1. Five informants (S4, S7, S8, S10 and S12) used English at home to some extent. Others started to learn English either in preschool (S2, S5 and S6), primary school (S1, S9 and S11) or secondary school (S3). There was again a lot of variation within the group. Student 7 went to school in an international school where English was strictly the only language:

- (2) S7: because where I grew up ... they wanted to create this atmosphere where everyone was speaking a language everyone understands ... so speaking vernacular or my mother's tongue was almost prohibited

Student 3 had had very little exposure to English during her primary education years where the LoI was Bemba, and her parents did not know any English. She described the presence of English in the primary school as follows:

- (3) S3: all that I can remember was ... it was ... yes it was used it was a subject but then it wasn't like ... paid attention to that much than the local language

Overall, the students had various starting points for their first English exposure or education, depending on whether the informants reported if their parents knew English or whether local languages could be used alongside English to help understanding. The results of this part of the interviews portrays the unequal starting point among students when it comes to English use and skills.

4.3 Personal linguistic experiences and challenges

The third part of the interview guide focused on the students' personal experiences related to language during their time in primary and secondary schools. For this part, there were several modifications to the question frame because the students' experiences were quite different from each other. The interview guide included questions on possible challenges in comprehensibility of teaching during basic education. The informants were also asked if they had opinions on the possible avoidance of such challenges, if they experienced any. At this point the informants were also asked about the possible prohibition of local languages in schools and how they felt about it. Especially question 7 about the possible challenges was expanded in most interviews by including additional questions about other types of language related challenges as well, such as switching from one LoI to another, and social issues.

4.3.1 Experiences in English use

Four students (S2, S7, S8 and S12) said that they did not have any challenges related to English use in school. They had started using English in a very early phase of their lives, either when growing up at home or in preschool.

Most of the students had at least some challenges with the English language in schools. The challenges the students reported were mostly related to reading comprehension and writing. Student 4 described his difficulties related to understanding some meanings of English words and the lack of materials for advanced English learning. He reported that when growing up, he used both Nyanja and English with his parents, but advanced English comprehension at school was sometimes challenging due to the lack of materials:

- (4) S4: some of the challenges I had were umm ... [###] big words like ... understanding the meaning ... then umm also – to some extent - like there used to be a time when we lacked some books to read – we used the same old basic English – for just learning the basic stuff [...] some challenges I used to have was like lack of materials ... to go in depth with – with English

Student 5 also had challenges understanding English, especially in reading comprehension and writing in specific subjects:

- (5) S5: I remember in grade one yeah – English was too difficult for me to understand – especially sciences umm ... literature and writing reading – reading as in English cause I was – I was more fluent reading in Nyanja ... umm I learned to read at first – how to read in Nyanja – so English was too difficult for me ... so even learning – learning was too difficult

Student 5 continued describing the class policy if someone did not understand the instruction. He said that since other local languages were forbidden in primary school, he had to ask for help from his friends in a local language in order to understand the English teaching:

- (6) S5: the policy in class was like if you – if you don't understand you have to ask ... and then – they only used to allow English – so some of us – even if you don't understand but ... [###] they say English so you have to express yourself in English [...] so I didn't used to say anything – it's better just ask from your friend then they explain it in Nyanja than ask from your teacher [...] a very good friend of mine – used to understand most of the English stuff ... so he used to explain to me in Nyanja ... not the teacher cause I used to be scared of English

This student's answer is an example of discouraged student participation due to the lack of skills in LoI and the strict class policy of not using other languages.

Other challenges were related to pronunciation of English and understanding the orthographical conventions of English. Student 10 said that he did not have challenges in understanding either English or local language teaching but only had some difficulties in his English pronunciation. Student 11 reported some challenges in English writing since she thought that the written form is so different from pronunciation.

4.3.2 Experiences in local language use

The informants reported some challenges related to local languages as well. Some of the students had moved from one province to another and went to a new school with a new dominant local language as LoI. Students S1, S2, S3 and S12 talked about their challenges in understanding a local language that they did not know. For instance, Student 1 had to switch primary schools, during which also the LoI changed from Bemba to Lozi which caused challenges in understanding. Even though some of the local Zambian languages can be mutually understandable since they belong to the Bantu language family, it does not apply to every Zambian language. To give an example, Bemba and Lozi originate from geographically distant parts of Africa and therefore are not mutually understandable.

Student 12 described her experience when she moved from Lusaka province to Southern province for secondary school. In the new school, the dominant language was Tonga which she did not know well. She felt intimidated because out of the local languages the school would only allow Tonga:

(7) S12: with Tonga – I think ... yeah I did have some challenges but the thing you know – I would have friends who would speak Tonga – you know if you don't know a certain word you could ask them

She further explained that Tonga being the LoI in her primary school was not necessarily that difficult to understand because her friends helped her, but rather underlined the social distinction the presence of different local languages created:

(8) S12: I kind of feel there are certain tribes or languages that want to be segregative ... like let me say Bemba and Tonga those people are so segregative ... they want you to feel so

inferior like they own the place you can't say anything ... so that's a very bad thing for anyone

The linguistic challenges related to local languages the informants reported can be argued to be the consequence of dense multilingualism and social conflicts between different ethnic groups, as discussed in chapter 2.

I also aimed to find out whether the informants had thoughts on how these various linguistic challenges they faced during their school time could have been avoided. Student 11 emphasized the importance of being able to ask clarification in one's own language, or in other mutually comprehensible local languages:

(9) S11: the most important thing when it comes to asking – first it enables the pupils to express themselves ... learning is something that one has to understand you can't just take in everything someone says ... learning requires you to understand – and for you to understand you need to ask questions and answer questions in the sense that you are being trained for the future

Student 9 thought that simply having been able to start learning English earlier would have saved him from several challenges. Student 6 suggested including simpler English materials for the initial phase of learning to help understanding written English. Student 3 thought that more qualified teachers in primary school would have helped her to learn better.

4.3.3 Social challenges related to language

Several students mentioned social issues which were caused by the lack of skills in either English or in certain local languages. These kinds of challenges were already referred to in example 8 by S12.

Student 4 described some challenges related to finding the right words and expressions in English and social pressure related to assumed English fluency:

(10) S4: whenever you break the English – you break words in English ... your peers your friends would laugh at you ... it kind of brings you back [*down*] in terms of expressing yourself

Student 6 also had similar type of experiences related to social pressure caused by language in secondary school:

(11) S6: when we were learning English ... no Bemba is allowed @@ so ... so when you don't understand something maybe someone trying to ask in Bemba then the whole class would laugh ... so the person would lose confidence – and the teacher would be like no if you want me to respond to your question – you must ask in English

Other informants also reported similar experiences. Student 9 explained that when he entered secondary school, students including himself were afraid and shy to speak English because they thought they would be laughed at. He compared the situation to his time in primary school, where the atmosphere was easier because the use of Tonga was allowed.

Student 8 described another type of situation of trying to fit in. He said that when he switched from a private “English-only” primary school to a governmental (secondary) school, he had to adapt to speak local languages. He said that when initially he spoke in English, teachers and students would be surprised and mock him. Therefore, he had to start speaking in Nyanja in order to fit in.

4.3.4 Restrictions in the use of local languages

The informants reported that forbidding the use of local languages was common during their school time. All the informants said that the use of local languages was forbidden by teachers and staff in secondary school, at least to some extent. Some mentioned that sometimes they could use local languages for certain expressions or teachers used them for emphasising something or telling jokes or proverbs in secondary school.

Student 3 told how local languages were forbidden in her secondary school and that there were “punishments from speaking vernacular”. Student 4 felt that it was a bit unfair that they could not use Nyanja in the school premises in secondary school because he thought that Nyanja would have carried more meaning in certain situations. Student 6 told about their teachers forbidding local languages and that “using local languages was an offense”. Student 12 told how Nyanja was forbidden because the teachers said “it would bring violence” in school. Since S12 went to a Tonga speaking school, it is assumed that “violence” here refers to conflict between ethnic groups. Based on these answers, it can be assumed that S3, S4, S6 and S12 felt deprived of using their L1 or familiar languages.

Student 5 gave an example of the punishments in the secondary boarding school he attended:

(12) S5: we had tuma [*small*] ... the cards where it was written vernacular speakers who were punished ... so that card ... umm it used to be in the class each class had that that card – so for example if I am in the dorm – if anyone is speaking any local language like I hear it – then I am the one having that card – I give that person a card then that person again will look another person who is speaking vernacular then ... yeah will give that card – so the card used to ... during lunch time the first one who was given that card would come in front and point the one who they gave it to so yeah ... then all of us would be punished [...] that's how I learned English in the secondary school

Student 5 continued telling that they had two days per week when they were allowed to speak in local languages up to 6 pm. At first, he felt bad about having to only use English but later he got used to it. Student 9 reported how the use of Tonga was forbidden everywhere within school premises in his secondary school. At first, he considered it as a punishment but afterwards thought that it was only a way of learning English. Student 10 expressed the same idea: local languages were strictly forbidden in his secondary school, but he thought it was fair because otherwise he would have struggled to learn English properly. Based on these reports, S5, S9 and S10 seemed to eventually accept the forced “English-only” policy since that developed their English skills.

Student 7 had a different kind of setting compared to the other informants because she went to an international, “English-only” school for both primary and secondary school and her only fluent language is English. She emphasized that the teachers strongly forbid the use of local languages and the students who broke the rule were usually given a warning. She expressed her disappointment of not knowing her local language:

(13) S7: it's a bit ... you feel like you missed out on learning your mother tongue when you were young and I think that's kind of like ... detrimental to the development of somebody of that country ... cause at least you should know your mother tongue and then English should've been my second language but the fact that it was my first and only language – it gets a bit difficult again to communicate with my peers umm ... those who don't necessarily understand English those who would rather use vernacular I mean - the local language ... it's a bit of a language barrier for me – I mean ... I'm 19 trying to learn a language I should have learnt by the age of 5 ... it's quite a challenge

In Student 7's case, the reason for the prohibition of other languages (including other foreign languages such as Chinese) was to create a unified and equal linguistic setting for all students.

Altogether, the informants' experiences related to LoI used during basic education varied depending on their linguistic background and skills. Informants mostly reported challenges related to comprehension of instruction, verbal participation and social relations. Another repeated theme were the sanctions against using local languages in school classrooms and on

school premises. The informants reported mixed feelings on the prohibition of local languages: on one hand, they felt that their right for using their own language was deprived, and on the other hand, they thought it was useful and necessary in order to learn English properly.

4.4 Attitudes towards language of instruction in Zambian schools

In this section I will present the findings for the last set of questions in the interview guide. This last topic is related to the informants' attitudes and personal thoughts on LoI in Zambia in a more general sense, as well as their possible suggestions and ideas for the future of language-in-education policy in Zambia.

This section especially was very conversation-like and I let the students freely express any possible thoughts on the subject. I alternated, removed and added questions quite a lot in this part of the interview. The aim was to let the informants express their attitudes freely without setting unnecessary restrictions by strictly following the interview guide.

4.4.1 Opinions on current language-in-education policy

As discussed in section 2.3.4, the current Zambian language policy in education, which was modified in 2014, states that LoI from grade 1 to grade 4 should be one of the seven national local languages of Zambia, depending on the area or province. During these grades, English would be taught as a foreign language. From grade 5 onwards, LoI would be English all the way to higher education. First, I asked the informants whether they are aware of the latest change in the language policy. If they were not, I briefly described the above information to them.

The response from the students was mainly positive towards using Zambian languages as LoI in the first four grades of primary school. Most of the students mentioned that arranging teaching in local languages would help the overall understanding. Student 2 explained that young children simply learn better in their own languages. Student 3 mentioned that when kids have literacy skills in their local languages, it is easier to learn English in a later phase. Student 4 strongly supported local languages used as LoI and mentioned the risk of having more and more endangered languages, such as Soli, a minority language in Zambia discussed in section 2.6.

Another advantage of the use of local languages in education that was mentioned by several students was the preservation of Zambian culture and languages. Especially students S1, S2, S3, S7, S8, S10 and S11 talked about the importance of promoting Zambian culture through local language instruction. Student 1 said that “every Zambian child should have a background of local language”. Student 7 backed up her opinion in favour of local languages by saying that they are “the basis of our culture”. She expressed some concerns that if the next generation only speaks English, they will lose the connection to Zambian culture.

Student 8 talked about Zambians valuing English over Zambian languages and the importance of having pride of their own culture:

(14) S8: most people value English over the local languages which ... which shouldn't be the case cause umm @@ we are not English we are Zambian – we are local people we have to be proud of our local languages

Knowing one's own local language and culture was clearly valued within the group of informants. However, looking at the study fields of the informants, this result was rather expected from this particular group of students.

Some students also mentioned some disadvantages in the use of local languages for the first four grades. Student 5 said that it was hard for him to suddenly start using English. Therefore, he thinks that the switch to English after fourth grade would cause some difficulties for school kids. He also points out the lack of suitable vocabulary in local languages for the purpose of teaching sciences, for instance. Student 6 thought that pupils should be taught in English starting from the first grade. He expressed some concerns that kids would struggle greatly when the LoI changed to English. However, he would not exclude local languages but use them to help understanding if necessary. Student 8 explained that there would be conflicts regarding which languages would be used as LoI, also between local languages. He thinks that local languages help understand the teaching but still suggested including more English in the first four grades because he considers English inevitable to increase the level of education. Student 9 thinks that the latest language-in-education policy is two sided and is concerned that pupils would have inadequate English skills for secondary school level if English was not included enough in an early stage of learning. He emphasizes the importance of the English language in Zambian society:

(15) S9: you can't go to an office and start using your local language ... you need to use English - so which means if you are ... been using it from grade 5 ... speaking and speaking – it won't be a challenge to you if you go to an office which means you'll be able to speak ...

so I think we should work hand in hand with English it should not be put aside as the way of instruction

Student 8 pointed out his opinion about the importance of English language skills in Zambia:

(16) S8: in Zambian culture ... if you don't speak English you are labelled as somewhat inferior or less intelligent

What is interesting is that Student 8 also had an opinion (see example 14) in favour of local languages. This seemed to be a dilemma which repeated among other informants to some extent as well. The latter opinion (example 16) reported by S8 is a common language attitude in Zambia and other African states which is discussed in section 2.2. Since the English language is often linked with prestige and modernization in Zambia, this statement (example 16) by S8 is not surprising.

Consequently, despite valuing local languages in order to preserve national and cultural identity and to have pride over Zambian languages, it was also evident that the informants consider English an essential and important part of Zambian society. Also, the opinions on the Zambian language-in-education policy seem to stem from their own experiences, especially related to various challenges they faced during their school time.

4.4.2 Students' suggestions and ideas for the future

I wanted to give the students a chance to conclude and add anything else related to the topic that they might have left out. With the last question, I wanted to find out whether the students would like to improve the current language-in-education policy in any way. The matters students mentioned were related to the balance between local languages and English, adequate and sufficient teaching materials, the teacher's linguistic competence and cultural and linguistic preservation, for instance.

When talking about multilingualism in education, none of the informants expressed solely negative attitudes towards it. Most of the informants mentioned that multilingual education is necessary and beneficial in Zambia. As mentioned earlier, some discussion arose about whether the new language-in-education policy would create difficulties in understanding teaching if pupils were to have inadequate English skills in a later phase of studies. Therefore, several

informants talked about finding a balance between the use of local languages and English as LoI:

(17) S7: it would be good to strike a balance between English and some Bantu languages

(18) S1: there are local languages that we can't do without ... people from other provinces ... we need to communicate with them – not everyone had the privilege to come to school ... it would help us to live our daily life as we interact with so many people

Evidently, enhancing wider comprehension of instruction seemed to be valued among the informants. Student 10 thought that multilingualism would be beneficial for increasing overall mutual understanding within Zambia and internationally.

Student 12 stated that having a local language as LoI is simply beneficial for the kids who do not understand English. However, some informants mentioned the lack of suitable vocabulary being a weakness of local languages. Student 3 suggested that local language used as LoI from grade 5 onwards would be “impossible”:

(19) S3: if we had to ... to use a local language at the later stage it would also distort everything because ... as you go to like grade 5 or to upper primary – you find that in sciences you can't explain it in Bemba @ or something like that because there are no words that exist in there – in local languages

Other informants also mentioned insufficient local language materials being a problem for further local language inclusion. However, students 3 and 5 pointed out that writing and translating new materials into local languages would create more job opportunities.

To avoid challenges in English language learning, student 1 suggested increasing English grammar materials around classrooms and add more teaching of English phonetics and phonology to facilitate pronunciation.

Student 2 and 5 suggested increasing the number of teachers who are competent in the local language of a specific region. Student 2 pointed out the challenge of teachers and pupils having language barriers if the teacher is not fluent in the dominant local language of that area. Student 3 also mentioned that the salaries of teachers should be increased to improve the quality of education. Student 8 would support programmes for local language teacher training in order to get more competent teachers in local languages.

Promoting Zambian cultures was clearly important for the majority of the informants. Student 7 emphasised the importance of local language instruction by saying that it is “the basis of our

culture”. She would further incorporate local language instruction with English, without ignoring either of them.

As a conclusion to the results of this study, it seems that the experiences, thoughts, attitudes and ideas of these 12 informants correspond to the phenomena of multilingual education in African states. Within this rather small group, the informants represented Zambia in a versatile way when it comes to linguistic background, school experiences and language attitudes.

The primary aim was achieved for this data collection, which was giving the turn of speech to a group of young adults and hearing about their first-hand experiences and ideas as students.

5 Discussion

In this chapter, I examine the results of this research in connection to the previously discussed theoretical framework and studies. I answer the two research questions which are indicated in chapter 1. I also discuss the significance of the results, the limitations of the study and suggestions for further research.

As stated in chapter 1, the purpose of this study is to shed light on the experiences and attitudes of students, who obviously form a very central and essential group in the education system. Regardless of the rather limited number of informants in this study, the set of results are comprehensive and answer the original research questions.

The results of the interviews provide interesting insights into real-life scenarios of the linguistic situation in Zambian basic education. The results also provide some examples of shared language attitudes of the target group.

The results of this research support the previous theoretical framework and research discussed in chapter 2 on the phenomena of multilingual education and language attitudes in Africa and more precisely, in Zambia.

5.1 The impact of the language of instruction

For the first research question there are several examples of the experiences which the informants reported from the student point of view. The examples are in parallel with several studies and theories discussed in chapter 2. A common example reported by the informants was the insufficient language skills in LoI (mostly English but also local languages in a few cases), which caused challenges in comprehension, access to materials and social acceptance. These same challenges have been in the centre of the previous research on African education (see e.g. Kashoki 1990, Skutnabb-Kangas 1996). LoI, whether English or a local language, seems to create an unequal starting point for learning by either facilitating it for some students or by creating barriers of inaccessibility and incomprehensibility for others. Inevitably, this is the situation in multilingual contexts where linguistic minorities exist and using multiple languages in instruction is restricted by language policies or resources.

The sudden change of LoI either during primary level education or between primary and secondary levels is one of the most notable causes for challenges in comprehension. As

discussed in section 2.3.1, switching LoI from one language to another rather erases than builds on previous knowledge (see e.g. Rubanza 2002, Tibategeza & du Plessis 2012).

The experiences the informants shared about social challenges, language related discrimination and restrictions to use their own L1 languages in school further represent linguistic inequality and denial of linguistic human rights, as argued by Skutnabb-Kangas (1996). Prohibiting the use of local languages in secondary school to some extent was reported by all 12 informants. This phenomenon has functioned as a unifying factor but also as a way to teach English. It can be assumed that forbidding one's first language has consequences to the language attitudes towards that language.

Using English as a unifying factor in the Zambian basic education system has its advantages: avoiding possible friction between ethnic groups, preparing students for higher education and promoting international relations, for instance. However, it is evident that this benefits mostly only the English-speaking elite and ignores the large part of the Zambian population with limited proficiency in English. As we have seen in the previous research and the results of the present study, the disadvantages of English as LoI are very clear-cut in multilingual (African) contexts with English hegemony, including weak learning results, lower student participation and inequality between students.

The above discussed disadvantages of an “only-English” policy apply also to local languages in a situation where the language used as LoI is unfamiliar for a student. This is again a frequent phenomenon in densely multilingual contexts such as Zambia, as became evident in the analysis section of the present study and in the previous works on the Soli language minority, for instance (Cole 2015, Mubanga 2012). Especially in the case where someone moves from one province to another where the dominant national language is different, students experience the same kind of disadvantages. Observing only the results of the present study, it seems that challenges understanding local language instruction tend to be more on the social side (e.g. example 8 in section 4.3).

The positive aspect in the results regarding the informants' experiences of LoI was the possibility to ask for explanations in a more familiar language in classroom settings. Some students reported that this was possible at some stages of basic education, especially in lower primary level. Learning in local languages or even allowing the use of local languages in schools creates an input for positive language attitudes, as discussed by Baker (1992). This could be an indication of the change of general attitudes towards local languages. However, it

seems to depend a lot on individual school policies and teachers whether the use of local languages is supported.

5.2 Language attitudes of Zambian students

The study of language attitudes is challenging yet very interesting and useful for research on the relation between an individual and their sociolinguistic environment: challenging because language attitudes are not directly accessible, and useful because the language attitudes of the population help to understand linguistic phenomena in the society. The experiences of an individual and the influence of their environment affect their attitudes, as discussed in section 2.2 (Adegbija 1994, Garrett 2010). This assumption is at the core of the present research, as answering the first research question would most likely explain some of the results for the second one.

The second research question considers attitudes towards LoI and multilingualism in Zambian education. Looking at the responses of the informants, it seems that there is a continuous contradiction in the language attitudes in the Zambian context. While almost all informants supported the inclusion and promotion of local languages in education, there were also strong opinions for the necessity of adequate English instruction in the basic school level.

Based on the data of the present study, positive attitudes towards English in the Zambian context appeared to be related to overall success in the society, including education and official affairs. These results go hand in hand with several arguments discussed in chapter 2. The reason for the positive attitudes towards English in education can be understood with Garrett's (2010) argument related to rewarding. In Zambian society, the individuals who are competent enough in English are able to handle official affairs, get higher education and get better employment, for instance. That reward can be linked straightforwardly to positive language attitudes and motivation to learn in English instead of local languages.

Cultural preservation and identity are the key elements in the present study that seem to affect the positive language attitudes towards local languages. Being part of the surrounding culture and being able to use the regional local language were considered valuable socially (see e.g. example 13 in section 4.3). However, negative attitudes towards local languages stem from

their dysfunctionality in official domains, including secondary and higher education, for example, because for the lack of suitable vocabulary and materials.

Based on these considerations, neither solely English nor local language as LoI would function ideally. As Kaschula and Wolff (2016) argued, monolingual instruction in most African states, whether in an African or non-African language, would be an unrealistic idea. The results of the present research support this argument. There are simply too many individuals and groups with their own L1 languages in Zambia which makes it extremely challenging to find a common ground for all in the field of education.

All in all, there are clear pros and cons related to both English and local language instruction or inclusion, which affects the language attitudes of students. English being the only official language in Zambia, there is no doubt that the language will remain as LoI in education. However, local Zambian languages are needed in contemporary Zambian education. As the results of the current research suggest, the students support finding a balance between the inclusion of local languages and English instruction. In the Zambian context, the balance can be possible if the schools in different districts and provinces are permitted to customize their language policies so that they benefit as many students as possible and improves their learning results.

A realistic solution to improve both positive language attitudes towards local Zambian languages and learning results would be more widely allowed code-switching in multilingual classrooms. Code-switching (or translanguaging), as discussed by García (2011) and studied in the African context by Mokgwathi and Webb (2013), has a flexible and hybrid nature which could improve the language policy in Zambian classrooms as well. With the aid of code-switching, comprehensibility would increase and the blanks in local language vocabulary could be filled in English or other local languages, depending on the classroom's linguistic capacity.

5.3 Limitations and further suggestions

Looking at the results of the present study, what must be kept in mind is the latest language-in-education policy change in Zambia which indicates that LoI for grades 1-4 of primary level education is one of the national Zambian languages. This policy coming into effect only after 2014, it did not apply to the informants of this study when they completed their primary

education. Therefore, a comparative study with informants who have completed the early primary education with the 2014 policy in place would be an intriguing topic for further research.

A limitation that occurs in this research is the rather uniform group of informants. Even though the informants had diverse linguistic and geographic backgrounds, all of them were students at UNZA. In this context, being a student at the university means having a sufficient level of competence of English and having a higher social status. Therefore, another suggestion for further study would be to have an informant group of non-university students, grade 12 graduates or students who are still in secondary school, for instance. This kind of study would help to get a wider perspective on the attitudes towards language-in-education in Zambia as a whole.

Another clear unifying factor among the informants was their field of study. All the informants studied in the School of Humanities or School of Education of UNZA and most of them studied either language subjects or Zambian cultures and ceremonies. This indicates that the group of informants of this study is possibly much more aware of the linguistic and cultural topics discussed and debated in Zambia, compared to students in other study fields. This matter also sets ideas for further comparative research on language attitudes, including students from various fields of study, for instance.

All in all, this research suggests further solutions for improving language-in-education policy in Zambia. To find constructive solutions, the general suggestion for further research is to combine previous studies and grassroots level expertise (from students and teachers). Further research could focus on teacher attitudes towards LoI, experiments of allowed classroom code-switching and the use of local language materials in education.

6 Conclusion

The primary objective of this research was to analyse and discuss the student experience and language attitudes towards the language situation in Zambian basic education. The purpose of this study was to give the turn of speech to students who have recently experienced the Zambian basic education system (grades 1-12) themselves. In the light of the information on their experiences and attitudes, possible suggestions for future improvements for the language-in-education policy in Zambia regarding language of instruction were discussed. The core topics related to the informants' linguistic experiences and attitudes were English as LoI, inclusion of local languages and multi/monolingualism in classrooms.

The results of this study show that the students had several challenges during their school time mostly related to comprehension of English instruction, restrictions to the use local languages and social pressure due to inadequate skills in English or in a dominant local language. In a relatively small group, there was noticeable variation in the informants' linguistic backgrounds and experiences in primary and secondary school level.

It was discussed that the informants' linguistic experiences are connected to their language attitudes. The results on language attitudes indicated considerable support for local Zambian languages and their further inclusion in the education system. The reasons for favouring local languages included improved comprehension, presence of local cultures, the importance of knowing Zambian languages, enhanced student participation and wider accessibility of education.

However, several points were brought up which opposed local language inclusion in education. The informants talked about the importance of having adequate English skills in the Zambian society and suggested earlier English exposure for school children, for instance. Therefore, the informants did not favour reducing English instruction in education.

Despite this challenging language situation in education, the informants had several possible suggestions for improving the language-in-education policy further. Many students recommended finding a balance in multilingual classrooms, where local language use would be allowed in order to ask questions and reduce social pressure. In order to find balance in such multilingual situations, allowing code-switching between English and local languages could provide feasible solutions.

The students also brought up the need for materials and sufficient vocabulary in local languages in science subjects, for instance. They suggested writing more materials in local languages and practicing flexibility between languages to fill the blanks in vocabulary with English. At the same time, some informants pointed out that neither some local language vocabulary nor expressions can be translated to English. Consequently, flexibility and balance between the use of languages in multilingual classrooms in Zambia would enrich the fluent communication and learning results, in addition to the representation of local languages and cultures.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Interview transcription conventions

| | |
|-----------------|--------------------------------|
| ... | long pause (untimed) |
| – | short pause (untimed) |
| [...] | part of transcription left out |
| [<i>word</i>] | translation/explanation |
| @ | laugh |
| [###] | unintelligible |
| #word# | uncertain |

Appendix 2: Interview guide

a) Background

1. What is your age?
2. What do you study in the University of Zambia? Which year?
3. Where are you from originally (town/village, province)? Where did you live or go to school before coming to the University of Zambia?

b) Linguistic background

4. Which languages do you speak? What is your home/first language (or languages)?
5. Which were the languages of instruction in your primary and secondary schools?
6. Please shortly describe your English use:
 - When did you start using English?
 - Did you speak English at home or only in school?

c) Personal experiences

7. Did you have any challenges understanding the teaching language at school? Which language(s)?
 - If yes, were the challenges related to listening/speaking/reading/writing?
8. In your opinion, how could these language related challenges have been avoided?
9. At any phase, did your teachers forbid the use of some/all local languages in school/classroom?

d) Language of education in Zambian context

10. What are your thoughts on the current language policy in the Zambian education system?
 - Is it working/not working? Why?
11. Do you think Zambian language policy affects the quality of education and how?
12. In your opinion, how could the language policy in education be improved if it needs to be improved?