

THE INFLUENCE OF SILOZI AS A MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION ON
LITERACY IN JUNIOR PRIMARY SCHOOLS: A CASE STUDY OF FOUR
SCHOOLS IN THE ZAMBEZI EDUCATION REGION

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to investigate the influence of Silozi as a medium of instruction literacy in junior primary schools through the case study of four primary schools in the Zambezi Region. Although the study was mainly qualitative, it adopted a pragmatic parallel mixed methods design employing both qualitative and quantitative research designs. The following data collection methods were used: questionnaire, observations, and semi-structured interviews. The purpose of using parallel mixed methods was to enable the researcher to collect and concurrently analyse data to gain in-depth information and perspectives on the use of Silozi as a medium of instruction. A total of 29 respondents were chosen for the study: 12 teachers, 4 principals, 1 advisory teacher and 12 parents. Data obtained through questionnaires, observations and semi-structured interviews were triangulated into themes and categories, documented, and interpreted after analysis. The study revealed that the language situation in the Zambezi Region is complex and not cognisant of the region's linguistic heterogeneity. The study further revealed several factors that influence using Silozi as a medium of instruction which included the differences in the languages spoken at home and the language of classroom instruction, lack of adequate instructional materials, inadequate Silozi reading materials within the school and home environments, lack of proficiency in Silozi for some teachers and learners, negative parental and teacher attitudes towards the use of Silozi as medium of instruction. It was therefore recommended that the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture should promote the Silozi language among communities in the Zambezi Region, strengthen Silozi as a medium of instruction through teacher training and supporting the development of instructional materials to bridge the gap between the language of classroom instruction and the home language.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

BICS	Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills
CALPS	Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency
MBESC	Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture
MOE	Ministry of Education
MoI	Medium of Instruction
NIED	National Institute for Educational Development
SACMEQ	Southern & Eastern Africa Consortium for Measuring Educational Quality

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my sons Brave and Harris Linosi, my daughter Marcia Linosi, and my wife Susan Linosi who provided me with support and inspiration to complete this course.

DECLARATION

I, Bravo Musheti Linosi, hereby declare that ‘The influence of Silozi as a medium of instruction on Literacy in Junior Primary Schools: A Case Study of Four Schools in the Zambezi Education Region’ is a true reflection of my own research, and that this work, or part thereof has not been submitted for a degree at any other institution of higher education. The sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references. No part of this thesis may be reproduced, stored in any retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by means (e.g., electronic, mechanical, photo copying, recording or otherwise) without the prior permission of the author, or The University of Namibia in that behalf. I, Bravo Musheti Linosi, grant the University of Namibia the right to reproduce this thesis in whole or in part, in any manner or format, which the University of Namibia may deem fit, for any person or institution requiring it for study and research; provided that the University of Namibia shall waive this right if the whole thesis has been or is being published in a manner satisfactory the university.

Bravo Musheti Linosi
2022

Date: October

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

This study was conducted in the Zambezi Region. The Zambezi Region was renamed in 2013 from its former colonial name Caprivi by the 4th Delimitation Commission. The study investigated the influence of Silozi as a medium of instruction on literacy in junior primary schools based on perceptions of parents, teachers, school principals and advisory teachers in the Zambezi Education Region. The study also investigated how using Silozi as a medium of instruction influences teaching and learning by determining the instructional approaches used by teachers to increase the learners' communicative proficiency in Silozi. The following subtitles are covered in Chapter One: the background of the study, statement of the problem, research objectives, significance of the study, limitations, delimitations, and definition of terms. Chapter Two covers the literature review and theoretical framework with subtitles on the language policy of Namibia, perceptions on the use of mother tongue medium of instruction, how using mother tongue as a medium of instruction influences learning, teachers' perceptions, and teaching methods/strategies to enhance learners' communicative proficiency using the mother tongue as a medium of instruction, the role of parents in early literacy and the influence of literacy on the home environment. Chapter Three covers the following subtitles: research design, population, sample and sampling techniques, research instruments, data collection procedures, data presentation and analysis, and ethical considerations. Chapter Four covers data presented and analysed according to emerging themes through critical analysis and the use of frequency tables. Chapter Five mainly consists of conclusions and recommendations for further research on the use of the mother tongue as a medium of instruction.

1.2 Background of the study

Literacy is a key foundation of any education endeavour which can only be expedited using a particular language (Baker, 2006). Literacy has not only transitioned from mere ability to read and write. It is now encompassing knowledge and skills required to cope in a rapidly changing world (UNESCO, 1997). According to Indabawa (2000), literacy is now considered an instrument for human development. Furthermore, other scholars define literacy as a social and cultural construct (Barton, 2007; Gee, 1996).

Literacy and language development are intertwined (Cummins et al., 2005). While language does not encompass the concept of education, it is essential in the delivery of education (Baker, 2011). Language is critical in the transfer of literacy skills, in communication and facilitates understanding in the classroom (Baker, 2011; Benson, 2004). Baker (2006) points out that language is at the centre of human education, culture, and identity. Baker further stresses that instead of viewing language as a problem, it is important to view it as a basic human right (Baker, 2006).

According to Clegg (2000), a learner's first language or mother tongue is a basic instrument for instruction and learning. Clegg (2007) however, notes that African learners do not ideally have solid literacy and mother tongue backgrounds. Recognising the importance of the mother tongue in education, the Ministry of Education and Culture (MEC) (1993) acknowledge that it is through the mother tongue that learners initially acquire social customs, behaviours, feelings, tastes, and other cultural norms. Article 19 of the Namibian Constitution (1990) guarantees linguistic and cultural freedom stating that all Namibians shall be entitled to enjoy, practise, profess, maintain, and promote any culture, language, tradition, or religion subject in line with the constitution as long as such rights do not impact the rights of others or national interests.

In addition, it states that:

Nothing contained in this Constitution shall prohibit the use of any other language as a medium of instruction in private schools or schools financed or subsidised by the state, subject to compliance with such requirements as may be imposed by law, to ensure proficiency in the Official Language, or for the pedagogic reasons. (Constitution: The Republic of Namibia, 1990, p. 3).

The Namibian Language Policy (MEC, 1993) states that education at lower primary level should stimulate language and cultural identity of learners using the mother tongue as medium of instruction and teaching thereof throughout the learners' education. The Language Policy for Namibian schools (MBESC, 2003, p. 14) further consolidates the teaching using the mother tongue as a medium of instruction in the lower primary grades and the retention of a mother tongue as a subject throughout the years of schooling.

In choosing an instructional language, the MEC (1993) cautions that language communities have to reconcile their language needs within the spirit of the constitution and within the realms of what is possible, workable and affordable. This meant that when the language policy was drafted and adopted, only the Silozi language, among the languages used in the Zambezi Region, had an established orthography (MEC, 1993) and nothing to this effect has changed to date. This confirms why the use of Silozi as a medium of instruction was chosen in the Zambezi Region given the perceived impracticability of developing the orthography and literature of local dialects. However, Harlech-Jones (2000, p. 32) states that despite their lack of developed orthography, "non-official languages of Namibia provide adequate and

invaluable resources for classroom discussion, debate, oral negotiation, dissemination and processing of knowledge. They are also important resources for participative, learner centred education”.

While recognising the challenges surrounding the teaching of African Namibian languages, Töttemeyer (2010) identifies the use of Silozi in the Zambezi region as a contentious issue. She states that “the majority of people in the region resent the way in which Silozi has been favoured by politicians both before and after independence” (p. 13). Research conducted in the Zambezi Region by Mbala et al. (1995) establishes that only 50% of parents wished Silozi to continue as medium of instruction in lower grades, with about 40% of parents considering Silozi a foreign language forced on them. Lack of understanding of the Silozi orthography, unavailability of teaching aids and poor instructional materials have been identified as impediments in learning and teaching using Silozi as a medium of instruction (Mbala et al., 1995; Nzwala, 2015). Complicating the debate surrounding the medium of instruction in the Zambezi Region, Kangumu (2009) found that most learners in the Zambezi Region do not speak Silozi as mother tongue. The Ministry of Education and Culture (MEC) (1993) identifies Chifwe, Chisubia, Siyeyi and Chitotela as the languages spoken in the Zambezi region while recognising Silozi, a Zambian language, as medium of instruction in schools. It further points out that though English and Silozi are the official languages of instruction in schools, local dialects dominate conversations outside the classroom depending on the location of the school (MEC, 1993). It is important to note that both Silozi and most local dialects in the Zambezi Region belong to the Bantu language group with similar morphological and phonological features, therefore varying measure of mutual intelligibility. The 2011 Population and Housing

Census refers to ‘Caprivi Languages’ in reference to languages spoken in the Zambezi Region. This categorisation of languages based on geographic criterion ignores the existence of other languages or local dialects spoken in the Zambezi Region. A similar geographic criterion in the categorisation of languages is observed in the Kavango Region (Population and Housing Census, 2011). This classification entails that only the officially recognised languages are used as a medium of instruction in schools in the Zambezi and Kavango regions.

However, Kangumu (2009) points out the mistake against the classification of people in the Zambezi Region as Lozis. Commenting on language communities within the European context, Young (2008) cautions that geographic boundaries should not define languages and languages on their own do not make communities. It is further emphasised that communities are not distinct by what common languages they speak but by how people use their languages (Young, 2008). Silozi is a lingua franca originally from Zambia and introduced in schools in the Zambezi Region due to its linguistic proximity to Sotho, meaning both teachers and instructional materials were readily available (Kangumu, 2009).

It is a commonality around the world today to find primary school learners receiving instruction in languages other than their mother tongue (Brock-Utne, 2010; Kerfoot & Simon-Vandenberg, 2015; Snow, 2014; UNESCO, 2006). According to Wolfaardt (2001), various Namibian languages were not part of the standardised curriculum meaning many learners have to go through school using a medium of instruction that is not their mother tongue. Research shows that those learners whose home language is different from that of the school show lower literacy in all countries and such literacy deficits continue in subsequent grades extending to higher education (Samuels, 2013).

Klein (1994), UNESCO (2006) and Brock-Utne (2010) point out that when the home language is different from the language of instruction in school, there can be pedagogical and cognitive problems. Learning is accelerated when the mother tongue is used and it is heightened when learners are proficient in the language of instruction (Phiri et al., 2013). Using a home language for instruction provides association between the home environment and school (Benson, 2002) ensuring that learners assimilate well emotionally and psychologically to the school environment (Awedoba, 2009).

Harlech- Jones (1998) suggests that a language policy relating to the medium of instruction should be reformed and guided by the constitution, the aim of education, the relationship between school variables and other variables impacting on education and the contribution of education towards national development.

Though the study was not focused on measuring proficiency in Silozi, it takes keen interest in understanding the parents and teachers' perspectives on learner proficiency in the first language Silozi and the implications this might have on teaching and learning using Silozi as medium of instruction. If learners whose mother tongue is not the language of instruction begin learning using another language as a medium of instruction in the junior primary phase, both their mother tongue and their language of instruction may be at the first level of what Cummins' (1979) termed the Threshold Theory where the first level represents the lowest level of competence in both the first and second languages with the third level representing high competence in both languages with positive cognitive benefits. Baker (2011) and Cummins (2000) allude to potential negative benefits resulting from bilingualism when learners' competence in both languages is limited.

The study therefore investigated the influence of Silozi as a medium of instruction on literacy in junior primary schools in the Zambezi Region through analysis of perspectives of teachers, school principals, advisory teachers, and parents.

1.3 Statement of the problem

Recognising and not delving into the lexical, orthographical and phonological similarities between Silozi, Chifwe, Chisubia and other dialects spoken in Zambezi Region, it is important to note that 88% of the learners in the Zambezi region use other home languages other than Silozi (Kangumu, 2009). Silozi has its roots in the Western Province of Zambia and was introduced to the Zambezi Region through imposition, domination, and colonisation (Kangumu, 2009).

Evidently, Silozi is not the mother tongue or home language for most learners in the Zambezi Region. The problem arises when learners who predominantly speak Chifwe, Chisubia and other dialects, with no exposure to Silozi in their communities, are expected to begin learning in the junior primary phase through the Silozi mother tongue instruction, a language they are not familiar with, depriving them of benefits derived from learning through their home languages in the early years of their education.

Research has also revealed that student teachers experience difficulties using Silozi as a medium of instruction. According to Nzwala (2015), student teachers experience difficulties understanding Silozi orthography while some parents do not support the use of Silozi as medium of instruction (Mbala et al., 1995). Baker (2006) indicates that learners who are taught in a second language fail to build up sufficient skills in the second language and thus fail to benefit from bilingual education. The lack of good

second language skills leads to failure of learners as they cannot cope with the curriculum (Baker, 2006). Many learners in the Zambezi Region encounter Silozi for the first time in preschool, and for some, only at the start of grade one.

The perceptions held by teachers, school principals, education officers and parents towards Silozi as medium of instruction may not only affect learning in the junior primary phase but may also impact instructional behaviour and practice beyond the junior primary phase. The use of Silozi as medium of instruction is therefore an issue that requires further probing and understanding especially of the perceptions of teachers, school principals, advisory teachers, and parents, thus the need for this study.

1.4 Research objectives

1.4.1 To determine the perceptions of parents, teachers, school principals and advisory teachers towards the use of Silozi as a medium of instruction in the Zambezi Education Region.

1.4.2 To investigate the influence of Silozi as medium of instruction in the junior primary phase on teaching and learning in the Zambezi Education Region.

1.4.3 To determine teaching methods/strategies used by junior primary phase schoolteachers to increase learners' communicative proficiency in Silozi.

1.5 Significance of the study

The study would generate information and knowledge on language policy (specifically on the use of Silozi as medium of instruction) and medium of instructional delivery at lower primary schools in the Zambezi Education Region where Silozi is not the mother tongue of many learners (Kangumu, 2009; Mbala, 1995). Baker (2006) indicates that

learners who are taught in a second language fail to build up sufficient skills in the second language and thus fail to benefit from bilingual education. The lack of good second language skills lead to the failure of learners as they cannot cope with the curriculum. Many learners in the Zambezi Region encounter Silozi for the first time in school and this may affect their ability to cope in the junior primary phase curriculum.

The Directorate of National Examinations and Assessment (DNEA) reports on learners' Grade 12 examination results for 2006/2016 indicates that, among the 14 regions, the Zambezi Region has been ranked fourteenth (MEAC, 2010-2016). Given the linguistic complexities in the Zambezi Region, the poor performance among learners could be due to the learners' inability to achieve Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP) in the junior primary phase. As such, this study contributes to the discourse on how to give learners a good start in the early years of their education, especially in the critical years of their junior primary education. The findings of the study were important to parents, education planners, policy formulators and learners. The study further contributes to the body of knowledge as there is limited research on the use of Silozi as medium of instruction in the junior primary phase capturing perspectives of parents, teachers, school principals and advisory teachers.

1.6 Limitations of the study

One of the limitations of this study was that respondents did not answer questions in the focus group discussions, interviews, and questionnaires truthfully. Participants were urged to be honest in answering questions and act natural during instructional delivery.

1.7 Delimitations

The study is only applicable to the Zambezi Education Region and other regions in Namibia where the mother tongue is not the medium of instruction in junior primary phase.

1.8 Definition of terms

Literacy: Refers to the ability to read and write (Baker, 2006). Other authors such as Barton (2007) and Gee (1996) view literacy as culturally and socially constructed.

Medium of instruction: The language through which a subject is taught in Namibian schools (MBESC, 2003).

First language/Mother tongue: The language (s) one identifies with or is identified with as a native speaker of by himself/herself or others which is commonly the language (s) one knows best and the language (s) one uses most (UNESCO, 2003).

Home language: This is the language which learners speak at home (UNESCO, 2003). The mother tongue and First Language/Home Language are treated and considered synonymous in this study.

Second language: A language a learner has some knowledge of and is regularly exposed to because it is among the major languages in a community (MBESC, 2003).

Medium of instruction refers to the language teachers use to teach learners. It is a means of conveying information to learners, such as the official language of the country or the native mother tongue of the learners (MBESC, 2003).

1.9 Chapter summary

This chapter provided the background to the current language policy in Namibia including the contextual application of the national language policy in the Zambezi Region with a focus on the use of Silozi as a medium of instruction in the junior primary phase. The chapter also discussed the statement of the problem, research questions, significance of the study, limitations and delimitations of the study, and the definition of terms.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the theoretical framework underpinning this study and what other local and international scholars have discussed on the use of the mother tongue as a medium of instruction, its influence on teaching and learning and the perceptions that teachers and parents have relating to the use of the mother tongue medium of instruction. It further examines the instructional teaching methods/strategies employed by educators in advancing the learners' communicative proficiency and competence in learning using the mother tongue as a medium of instruction.

Both local and international research were consulted for this study. Research on the use of Silozi as medium of instruction in Namibia and the perceptions held by parents and teachers towards the use of Silozi as medium of instruction is limited but there are studies whose findings are relevant to this study. Mbala et al. (1995) conducted a survey on Silozi looking at the attitudes of learners and parents towards the use of Silozi in schools. Sitwala (2010) conducted a study on language maintenance in the Malozi community. Simasiku (2014) conducted a study addressing the issue of English and code switching in Grade 10 classrooms of the Caprivi Education Region while Nzwala (2015) conducted a study on challenges faced by student teachers in the Zambezi region when teaching using Silozi as medium of instruction during school-based studies. Other studies minutely addressing areas related to this study are also cited in this study.

This study mainly utilised studies by Baker (2006, 2011), Benson (2002, 2004a, 2004b, 2009), Cummins (1976, 1981, 1984, 2000a, 2000b), Dickinson and Neuman

(2006), Krashen (1985, 1991, 2004) and many other scholars in demonstrating the role of language use in education and cognitive benefits of using the home language in initial literacy.

UNESCO (1953) has been a strong proponent for the use of mother tongue as medium of instruction citing cognitive benefits when the language of instruction is familiar to the child. Research has shown that when children are accorded an opportunity to learn using their mother tongue, they are more likely to stay in school and achieve better results (Baker, 2011; Kosonen, 2005) and maximise parental involvement (Ball, 2010; Benson, 2002, 2004).

Using a foreign language for instruction simply aggravates learning difficulties and hinders academic achievements (Grosjean & Li, 2013). The importance of mother tongue is further stressed by Omoniyi and Olabode (2013, p. 543) who state that:

Thought and language are together as an entity. One is dependent on the other for its existence. They grow and decay together, the child thinks and dreams in the language through which he acquires the first-hand experience of life. This naturally happens to be the mother tongue and for this reason the mother tongue becomes the first condition of schooling and for the intellectual development of children.

Given this context, the review focuses on the following:

1. Theoretical framework
2. Language policy situation in Namibia
3. Perceptions on the use of mother tongue as medium of instruction

4. How using mother tongue medium of instruction influences teaching and learning
5. Teachers' perceptions and teaching methods/strategies to enhance learners' communicative proficiency through mother tongue medium of instruction
6. The role of parents in early literacy
7. The influence of the home environment on literacy acquisition

2.2 Theoretical framework

The study was based on the Developmental Interdependence Hypothesis (DIH) derived from the Thresholds Theory. According to Cummins (2000a, 2000b), the hypothesis points out that language competence in the second language is somewhat reliant on the level of competence already attained in the first language. In other words, the language competence in the first language determines and influences the level of competence in a second language. The hypothesis demonstrates that language skills and learning are co-dependent and there is underlying common cognitive and academic adeptness across languages. Cummins (1984a, 1984b, 2000b) differentiates between Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills (BICS) and Cognitive/Academic Language Proficiency (CALP). Cummins states that BICS occur when there is contextual support for language delivery while CALP occurs in environments with limited contextual clues. Cummins advises that learners acquire BICS or context rich conversational fluency in English within two years but will need to develop knowledge of how English is used for context reduced academic purposes which he termed CALP. Dickinson and Neuman (2006) postulate that there is speedy language development in the early years of childhood, predominantly the emergence of the more advanced language abilities which play a fundamental role “in the initial organization and

subsequent functioning of varied linguistic –cognitive-affective systems that underpin literacy, as well as diverse areas of cognition and social development” (p. 13).

Cummins (1996) refers to CALP as higher-level linguistic skills such as the ability to remember, interpret, infer, deduct, analyse, synthesize, and evaluate meaning using language. Academic proficiency can take a minimum of five to six years to develop (Cummins, 2000). According to Datta (2007, p. 19),

To be able to move from the immediacy of conversational speech to “disembodied” use of language at an abstract level in academic contexts is a crucial cognitive leap, requiring an integrative strategy to build on learners’ experiences of using language at a personal level rather than taught as a new concept”.

Empirical evidence shows that reading and writing accelerates this process (Cummins 1996; 2000).

In support of the Interdependence Development Hypothesis, Aitchison (1992) states that knowledge in and understanding of the first language acts as a cognitive sponge for absorption and conceptualisation of the second language. According to Baker (2006), failure to achieve cognitive academic proficiency due to low levels of proficiency in a language, limits the ability to deal with the curriculum in later years. Baker’s assertions regarding cognitive academic proficiency are significant in studying the use of Silozi as medium of instruction in the Zambezi Region where the mother tongue for most learners is different to the language of instruction.

2.3 Language policy situation in Namibia

The use of any language as medium of instruction is a determination of educational policy makers and other actors within the education sector. The Constitution of the Republic of Namibia has a special section entitled “Language” Under Article 3, the Constitution guarantees linguistic freedom in education and other spheres of life for all Namibians.

Even though linguistic freedom is guaranteed in the constitution, Legère et al., (2000) cautions that a democratic language policy does not mean ultimate expansion and promotion of all languages but confers a language whichever status should be executed in a way that persuades people to voluntarily accept a language as medium of instruction and as a subject. In keeping with democratic principles of consultation and citizen participation, in July 1991, the Ministry of Education and Culture drafted a document entitled *Provisional Language Policy for Schools*. This was a draft for *discussion document* and was distributed to relevant stakeholders. All the consultations culminated in the formulation of Namibia’s language policy for schools. The MEC (1993, p. 66) acknowledges that “beginning in 1993, the home language, a local language, or English will be the medium of instruction in Grades 1-3, with English as a subject”. This is contrary to the practice before Namibia’s independence when only English and Afrikaans were used as mediums of instruction. Davids (2000) states that prior to independence, African languages were afforded low status and utilised as tools for causing ethnic divisions among Namibians.

According to Walfaardt (2005), the promotion of African Languages and designation of English as the official language for Namibia were already recognised at the 1981

conference held in Lusaka at the United Nations Institute for Namibia (UNIN). Namibia's Language policy for an independent Namibia was formulated by SWAPO during the liberation struggle; the most significant document in this respect was *Towards a Language Policy for Namibia*, published by the United Nations Institute for Namibia (UNIN, 1981). Significant in this book is Chapter Five, titled "*The rationale for English as the official language for independent Namibia*". The criteria set at the conference on which English was selected to be an official language included unity, acceptability, familiarity, feasibility, science and technology, pan Africanism, wider communication, and language of the United Nations (MEC, 1993). To fulfil policy demanding the equality of all African languages, some languages like Otjiherero and Khoekhoegowab were upgraded, 10 African languages were accorded status as medium of instruction in the lower primary Grades 1-3 (Legère, 2000).

The Namibian Language Policy (MEC, 1993) is a combination of an additive and subtractive model of language in education policy. Additive bilingualism is the process in which an additional language is acquired without experiencing a loss of proficiency in the mother tongue (Baker, 2006) and the subtractive model involves a situation where there is extensive development of language skills in one language at the expense of another (Baker, 2011). The Namibian approach to the linguistic situation with respect to the languages used for formal instruction is selective, as there are several other dialects which are excluded from the formal sphere of education (Legère et al., 2000). Currently, selected languages are not a comprehensive reflection of the linguistic setup in Namibia (Legère et al., 2000). This is supported by Töttemeyer (2009) who states that despite the 14 written languages with standardised orthographies in Namibia, there are 16 oral languages with no existing orthographies.

Additionally, Töttemeyer (2009) alludes to this multiplicity of languages and the underdevelopment of Namibian National Languages as stumbling blocks for using local languages in schools for pedagogical purposes. Pennycook (2006) emphasises how language policies have dominated language minorities and how the government can use language policy to perpetuate systems of social inequality. Politically, the choice of one language over other languages could be viewed as a strategy to disadvantage other languages (Simasiku, 2014).

At independence, the Language Policy for Schools: 1992 – 1996 and beyond (MEC 1993) was formulated and implemented. The MBESC (2003) adopted a language policy that would guide how language matters would be implemented in the Namibian education sector. In MEC (2003, p. 25) the benchmarks for the language policy were set as:

- Grade 1-3 will be taught in the mother tongue or the dominant language.
- Grade 4 will be the transitional year when the change to English as a medium of instruction must take place.
- Grade 5-7 English will be the medium of instruction. In the Upper Primary Phase, the mother tongue may only be used in a supportive role and continues to be taught as a subject.
- Grade 8-12 will be taught through the medium of English, and the mother tongue will continue to be taught as a subject.
- Examinations in grades 7, 10 and 12 will be nationally taken through the medium of English; the mother tongue will continue to be taught as a subject.
- English is a compulsory subject starting from grade 1 and continuing throughout the school system.
- All learners must study two languages as subjects at grade 1 onward.

According to Harlech-Jones (1998), the Namibian language policy was linked with nationalism, modernisation, and globalisation. Despite these positive ambitions of the language policy, Wolfaardt (2005) highlights inconsistencies in the application of the language policy from region to region with some preferring to teach through English medium in the lower primary phase instead of the mother tongue.

Menken and Garcia (2010) found that there is limited effort to understand how active language policy mediators and stakeholders interpret and apply macro level policy manuscripts. Menken and Garcia (2010) highlight that those involved in education make choices and

“though these choices may be constrained by language policies that tend to set boundaries on what is allowed and/or what is considered “normal”, the line of power does not flow linearly from pen of the policy’s signer to the choices of the teacher. The negotiation at each institutional level can create the opportunity for reinterpretations and unpredictable policy appropriation” (p. 27).

Therefore, given the discrepancies in the application of the Namibian language policy, Harlech-Jones (1997) and Legère (1996) opine that the implementation of the language policy is weak, sluggish and of low quality. Similar observations of the weak application of the language policy is evident in other African countries like Nigeria, Ghana South Africa and Uganda (Awedoba, 2009; Evans & Cleghorn, 2014; Ssentanda et al., 2016) where mother tongue instruction in junior primary school is either ignored or opposed.

2.4 Perceptions on the use of mother tongue as medium of instruction

Studies conducted around the world have generated evidence into different perceptions and resulting language policy-based practice relating to the use of mother tongue as medium of instruction in primary schools (Eisenclas et al., 2013; Abijo, 2014). In a study on attitudes towards instruction in local languages in Ghana (Awedoba, 2009) found that parents and teachers preferred that their learners be taught in English. The language choice may be deliberate, instinctive and spontaneous (Pavlenko, 2004) while attitude towards a language, desired identity and cost benefit breakdown also guide language choice (Tuominen, 1999; Evans & Cleghorn, 2014).

Though Article 19 of the Namibian Constitution (1990) guarantees linguistic freedom and liberty in selecting a medium of instruction (Constitution: Republic of Namibia: Article 3), MEC (1993) guides that this should be within what is possible and practical. The proclamation of what is possible and practical in a language policy has resulted in the use of some languages as medium of instruction at the expense of other languages not only in Namibia but also in Nigeria, South Africa and Uganda (Abijo, 2014; Evans & Cleghorn, 2014; Mulumba & Masaazi, 2012; Töttemeyer, 2010).

The multiplicity of languages is cited for the underdevelopment of some African local languages (Abijo, 2014; Töttemeyer, 2010) and thus their limited utility for pedagogical purposes (Baker, 2006). The linguistic heterogeneity of learners has resulted in the use of mother tongue instruction which is not accommodative of all learners and it is this lack of homogeneity that is used to justify the use of English as medium of instruction in some schools (Töttemeyer, 2010; Wolfaardt, 2005).

Regardless of the availability of mother tongue as medium of instruction, Harris (2011), Harlech-Jones (1998) and Wolfaardt (2005) point to a tendency of preferring

and adopting English as medium of instruction. Economic and social benefits of early education using English as a medium of instruction in the junior primary phase is the reason why some parents, teachers and schools opt not to favour education using mother tongue as a medium of instruction despite evidence of limited proficiency in English especially for those from rural areas (Davids, 2000; Harris, 2011; Wolfaardt, 2005).

The Presidential Commission on Education and Training (2000) shows that teachers and parents in Namibia preferred English as a medium of instruction citing discrepancies in the application of the language policy (schools in the south use English as medium of instruction while those in the north use local languages as medium of instruction). The commission highlighted the lack of instructional materials in local languages and delayed competence in English at learners' transition to Grade 4.

Some parents want their children to be exposed to English as early as possible. They believe that their children's opportunities are extended in English, a language of wider communication (Murray, 2007) while teachers complain of poor communicative abilities by learners when they begin learning using English as a medium of instruction in Grade 4 (Harris, 2011; Wolfaardt, 2005). These findings are consistent with Kaputu (2017) who found that despite some Otjiherero learners in the upper primary phase having the necessary reading skills, a number of them did not have the requisite reading skills and teachers attributed this to the mother tongue which led to learners mispronouncing words. Kaputu (2017) further states that phonemic awareness of learners in the junior primary phase is poor and has an impact on their reading and acquisition of literacies in subsequent years of schooling.

The Presidential Commission on Education Culture and Training (2000, p. 39) revealed the views of teachers who felt that learners in Grade 4 were unable to read and express themselves competently in English and the teachers have to resort to explaining concepts using the mother tongue. They further argued that the use of the mother tongue in the junior primary phase and the lack of competency by learners in their mother tongue means they are unable to learn in another language creating linguistic challenges among teachers and learners resulting in poor educational attainment and school dropout.

The challenges expressed by teachers in the Presidential Commission on Education Culture and Training (2000) shows the difficulties in transitioning from using the mother tongue instruction in Grades 1 to 3 to using English as a medium of instruction in Grade 4 are not only pertinent in Namibia. Brock-Utne's (2007) conducted a similar study on languages of instruction and student performance in Tanzania and South Africa. The study found that inadequate competency in English as a language of instruction at Grade 4 level is a major contributor to poor academic attainment as well as low education standards in subsequent years of schooling achievement.

Namibia is not unique in terms of general preference of English as a medium of instruction as research points to strong preference of English as medium of instruction in Africa among parents and teachers (Benson, 2004b; Bunyi, 1999; Busch, 2010; Wolfaardt, 2005). Some scholars support the idea of direct instruction in a language of wider communication from an early age (Bamgbose, 1991). Similarly, Benson (2004) highlights the difficulty of implementing bilingual education in developing countries given inequalities between rural and urban areas and power dynamics among diverse linguistic groups.

The perception held by some teachers and parents in Africa about academic benefits resulting from early instruction using English (Bunyi, 1999; Wolfaardt, 2005) is also common in Australia. Children whose mother tongue is not English are expected to swiftly transition into a language of the majority (English) with the perception that this increases their competitiveness in education and functionality in society (Eisenclas et al., 2013).

Politicians, policy makers and educators in the USA hold the view that learners' proficiency in English will eventually be followed by academic achievement (Linguanti, 2001). Language preference is not only evident among parents, teachers and other actors who elucidate language policy. In a study involving children's language preferences in Miami, USA, Oller and Eiller (2002) found that children who spoke Spanish as a home language, irrespective of school or age, mostly spoke English recognising it as a high prestige language.

Contrary to increased preference of English as medium of instruction in Africa, Evans and Cleghorn (2014) reveal a new trend in South Africa where young and educated parents encouraged by research, are recognising the importance of using mother tongue as medium of instruction and the resulting cognitive benefits of using a familiar language for initial instruction.

2.5 How using mother tongue as medium of instruction influences teaching and learning

The Namibian Language Policy (1993) stresses the importance of using the mother tongue as a medium of instruction for both affective and pedagogical reasons. Mother tongue is defined by Skutnabb-Kangas and Phillipson (1994) based on four criteria.

The first criterion relates to origin and refers to the language one initially learned. The second is identification which is divided into internal identification and external identification. Internal identification refers to a language a person identifies himself/herself while external identification refers to the language one is identified by others. The third is competence which describes the language one knows best. The fourth criterion is that of function and refers to the language one uses most. Similarly, UNESCO (2003) also describes the mother tongue as a language one identifies with, is identified by others, knows the best and uses the most.

The mother tongue is a resource for learning in the early years and learners have sentimental association with their languages which they use as basis to formulate meaning to new concepts (Baker, 2006; Skutnabb-Kangas, 2004). The Namibian Language policy was also premised on among others, the belief that the use of the mother tongue as medium of instruction in the junior primary phase is considered critical for concept formation, literacy and numeracy (Namibian Language Policy, 1993). Baker (2011) states that the use of the mother tongue for instruction eases transition from home to school, enhances achievement, and self-esteem for learning a second language. Children learn better in a familiar language (Cummins, 2006) and the acquisition of a second language is made easier if the mother tongue is developed (Skutnabb-Kangas, 2004) allowing meaningful transfer of concepts (Cummins, 2006; Malone, 2012). Supporting this notion, Browne (2007) states that if the learners' home languages are supported, they feel valued, and this gives them the confidence necessary to take risks and make slipups required in the learning process.

Drawing from theories expounded by Krashen (1985, 2004) and Cummins (1979, 1984, 1991, 2000a, 2001a, 2001b, 2000b, 2006) the following sub-sections provide

insight into their seminal studies. The discussion of the theories poised towards their implication in the use of the mother tongue as a medium of instruction.

2.5.1 Findings from Krashen

Krashen's (1985) Input Hypothesis asserts that by exposing the learner to enough input and the input is understood, there will be automatic comprehension. The hypothesis stresses the importance of meaningful input as a critical component. It further emphasises that second language acquisition occurs when input is above a learner's level and it is within this premise that teachers should provide meaningful input to their learners who are presumably able to construct meaning on their own. Dean (2010) supports this notion by stating that teachers need to create a classroom atmosphere based on mutual respect and one which is supportive, encouraging, unthreatening and sensitive to learners allowing them to risk getting things wrong but objective enough to support their learning needs. Thus, by integrating real world aspects in language teaching, educators create spaces for language growth (Menken & Garcia, 2010).

Krashen (2004) states that it is very challenging for learners to participate in class and for a teacher to successfully teach a language if there are language deficiencies among learners and the teacher in the language of instruction. Considering that most grade 1 – 3 learners and teachers in the Zambezi Region do not speak Silozi as mother tongue, classroom interaction and participation maybe hindered by language deficiencies.

2.5.2 Findings from Cummins

This study drew literature related to Cummins theories of *Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS)* and *Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency Skills*

(CALPS), *Linguistic Interdependence Hypothesis* and the *Linguistic Threshold* to contextualise on how language used in school affects literacy and learning.

Cummins (1979) introduced the acronym Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS) and Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency Skills (CALPS) to distinguish between the two types of skills. The distinction was meant to draw attention to the periods typically required by immigrant children to acquire conversational fluency in their second language as compared to grade-appropriate academic proficiency in that language. According to Baker (2006) BICS, which is considered as conversational fluency, is often acquired to a functional level within about two years of a child's first initial exposure to the language the child speaks with parents; whereas at least five years is usually required for the child to attain academic language proficiency of the second language represented by CALPS (Cummins, 1981, 2001). Furthermore, Skutnabb-Kangas and Toukoma (1976) established a difference between surface fluency and academic fluency. They note that surface fluency relates to capacity to engage in simple conversations while academic related skills of language competence are associated with high order language skills which are critical in coping with the demands of the curriculum.

Furthermore, the BICS and CALP dichotomy which was mainly based on first language speakers does not clearly explain how long the transition from BICS to CALP would take for second language speakers considering that they spend three to four years in the junior primary phase before transitioning to grade four where they are expected to have achieved academic proficiency in the second language which is the medium of instruction (Sibanda, 2017). Despite this criticism, researchers agree

with Cummins (1981, 2000, 2006) that once students achieve basic literacy skills in the home language and have developed communicative abilities in the majority language, they will be able to transfer the literacy skills acquired in the familiar language into the new language (Aitchison, 1992; Baker, 2011; Data, 2007).

The purported linguistic transfer of skills between a home language and the second language is based on Cummins' (1976, 1979) Interdependence Theory and the concept of Common Underlying Proficiency which postulate that knowledge of a home language and a second language are interdependent rather than separate. Therefore, literacy and language skills learned in the home language can be retrieved and used in the second language once the second language skills are developed (Cummins, 1981). Hence, Cummins (1976, p. 229) states that "the levels of competence bilingual children achieve in their two languages acts as an intervening variable in mediating the effects of their bilingual learning experiences".

According to Cummins (1976), there is a condition that children must achieve adequate levels of proficiency in both languages for this transfer to happen. Cummins (1976) termed this notion the *Threshold Hypothesis*. The hypothesis suggests that an adequate level of proficiency in the home language is a prerequisite to achieving positive cognitive and academic outcomes for bilingual learners. This means there is a relationship between bilingualism and cognitive/academic outcomes facilitated by the level of language proficiency which in turn is affected by attainment of literacy skills (Baker, 2011; Cummins, 2001).

The threshold hypothesis assumes the idea of two thresholds with each representing a level of language competence (Baker, 2006). Portrayed using a house with three floors,

the model has two ladders on each side representing two languages indicating the potential upward progression by bilinguals (Baker, 2006). At the bottom floor are those with lacking age-appropriate linguistic competence in both languages and in the middle are those with age-appropriate competence in only one of their languages. On the third floor, are children with age-appropriate competence in both their languages. Children on the third floor are considered 'balanced bilinguals' with an ability to cope academically in both languages. It is at that level that positive cognitive advantages may emerge (Baker, 2011).

The lack of competence in both languages described by Cummins (1979) as semilingualism or double semilingualism can result in negative cognitive outcomes. Semilingualism and double semilingualism are at the lowest level of the threshold where children's level of bilingual competence is deemed weak and may impede communicative interface with the learning environment through that language (Cummins, 1979).

In a study relating to cognition and language competence, Dawe (1983) demonstrates that as competence in the first language and the second language increased, deductive reasoning skills in mathematics increased as well. Inadequate competence in both languages resulted in negative cognitive outcomes. Research arguments on the advantages and challenges emerging from the use of mother tongue as medium of instruction are presented below.

2.5.3 Advantage of using mother tongue as medium of instruction

Numerous studies have been undertaken demonstrating both pedagogical and affective benefits of learning using mother tongue as medium of instruction (Abijo, 2014; Benson, 2005; Bunyi, 1999, 1997; Burchinal et al., 2012; Clyne, 2005; Heugh et al., 2006). Mother tongue can be taught as a subject or used as a medium of instructional delivery (Benson, 2005). Regardless of whether a language is taught as a subject or as a medium of instruction, “Fluency and literacy in the mother tongue lay a cognitive and linguistic foundation for learning additional languages” (UNESCO, 2011, p. 6). In an earlier paper, UNESCO (1953) found that using a local language increased learner performance, self-confidence and increases retention of culture. Concurring, Cummins (2000) and Benson (2005) state that early literacy and concept formation are best imparted in a child’s mother tongue. Datta (2007) also emphasises that by eliminating the learners’ languages from classroom learning, we are missing out on advancing young learners’ thinking skills. Therefore, it is important to note that learning all forms of literacies in the early years depends on oral language skills already acquired in the home language (Baker, 2006; Cummins, 1979).

In a study on mother tongue instruction for indigenous Kuku children in Southern Sudan, it was found that using the mother tongue for instruction improved instructional delivery and increased performance (Laguarda & Woodward, 2013). The study revealed that mother tongue instruction did not only increase potential for community involvement in education but also realisation of social and economic development. Benson (2002) notes that parental involvement and support for literacy and learning can be increased if the mother tongue is used for instruction. In Nigeria, the use of mother tongue instruction was observed to increase performance in

mathematics (Omoniyi & Olabode, 2013). Similarly, the increase in mathematical performance was also observed by Gerber (2005) who found significant differences among South African Afrikaans speakers' attainment in mathematics when Afrikaans was used as a medium of instruction and when the instructional language shifted to English. In 2002, the use of mother tongue instruction in Zambia as part of the Literacy Project which used mother tongue instruction resulted in an improvement in English exam results (Sampa, 2003). The World Bank (2007) presented evidence of how using the mother tongue enhanced learners' performance in Mali between the years 1994 to 2000. The findings showed that learners instructed using their home language mastered the second language better compared to those taught through another language. It was shown that learners initially instructed in the home language performed 32% higher when examined for proficiency in the national language French at the end of primary school compared to children in French only programmes.

In a study comparing academic achievement in America, Thomas and Collier (1997, 2002) found that learners taught in their mother tongue for one to three years in the early years of their education performed above normal compared to those with no mother tongue educational support. They further found that those in mixed classrooms with native speakers of English with continued educational support in their mother tongue performed very well averaging 70th percentile.

Similar observations were made in Hong Kong by YiP et al., (2003) in which learners taught through the Chinese medium performed better on tests compared to those taught through the English medium. Those taught using the Chinese medium were able to understand theoretical concepts, differentiate scientific concepts and apply them to new situations. In New Zealand, the promotion of the Māori language in schools resulted in better academic outcomes (Jacques & Hamlin, 1992). Thus, it is evident

from research that the mother tongue instruction aids in the acquisition of literacies and concepts that transcend linguistic competence and proficiency across languages (Atchison, 1992; Malone, 2012).

Using the mother tongue is not only important for language maintenance (Baker, 2006) but is also instrumental for identity creation. Given this view, eliminating the mother tongue may damage children's self-perception, self-identity, self-concept, and cultural and ethnic association (Bialystock, 2009). Bunyi (1997) also states that education in the mother tongue benefits children psychologically and socially. Literacy in the home language enables learners to access, reproduce, and transmit their culture and traditions (Baker, 2011; Fishman, 1991; Oriyama, 2011).

Learning to read or write and construct meaning in a language a learner does not speak is a challenge. Browne (2007, p. 6) states that "learning to read and write are founded upon learners' oral language competence, their unconscious expectation that written language, like oral language, contains meaning, follows a particular structure and comprises sentences, words and part of words "now their home languages in order to facilitate the cross-linguistic transfer from what is already known of the home language to the second language (Cummins, 2000).

Additive bilingualism, if well managed, increases potential to reach the highest threshold in age-appropriate language competence required for positive academic outcomes in both languages (Grosjean & Li, 2013; Cummins, 1979).

2.5.4 Challenges of using mother tongue as medium of instruction

Not all scholars are supportive of learning using the mother tongue as a medium of instruction. Issues have been raised pertaining to the instructional appropriateness of using mother tongue for teaching and learning especially that it may be an impediment

to teaching and learning English later (Mokgabo & Modise, 2020). The use of mother tongue as a medium of instruction brings competition between languages (Leseman, 2000) mainly in terms of time and resources required for learning two languages thus resulting in less input and time per language (Scheele et al., 2010). Phillipson (1992, p. 120) points out that "an apparent sound focus on the mother tongue as medium of education does not in itself provide a guarantee of enlightened education". This is contrary to the additive point of view from scholars like Cummins (1991, 2000) and research by Baker (2000) and Thomas and Collier (2002) indicating the benefits derived from learning using the mother tongue or learning in settings where there is educational support in the home language.

It is important to note that most studies did not analyse advantages derived from using mother tongue especially for those learning in languages assigned mother tongue status but are naturally not learners' mother tongue or home languages. Benson and Walter (2012) state that about 40 percent, or 2.3 billion people in the world still lack access to instruction in a language they speak or understand. This means that many children around the world are learning using a medium of instruction which is not their mother tongue or home language. UNESCO (2006) suggests that in the case where a language of instruction is not a child's mother tongue, transition to a language of instruction should not happen before learners are aged 6 to 8 years. In the context of Namibia, many learners begin schooling around the same ages in the junior primary phase and in the case of the Zambezi Region where the majority of learners have a mother tongue other than Silozi (Kangumu, 2009), learners are expected to begin learning using Silozi as a medium of instruction. Due to Namibia's linguistic diversity, many local languages do not have developed orthographies and are therefore not ideal as instructional languages in schools (Töttemeyer, 2010; Totemeyer, 2009). Mackey

(2005) states that when a language does not have a conventional orthography, it cannot be enriched thus lessening the potential stature of a language.

Recognising the linguistic and cultural heterogeneity of some countries around the world, UNESCO (1953) cautioned that the use of mother tongue as medium of instruction might be a challenge to educationists who have to examine historic, geographical, sociological, political, religious, cultural and linguistic factors distinctive to a given community before trying to formulate an appropriate language policy in education. The linguistic diversity in Africa varies from country to country with countries like Somalia having few languages, Namibia having 16 languages with many unrecognised linguistic varieties (Töttemeyer, 2010) to about 286 in Cameroon and 400 in Nigeria (Mkandawire, 2005). Whilst Kenya has 40 languages, Zambia has over 70 languages (Mbaabu, 1996).

The language heterogeneity of classrooms in Ghana, Nigeria, Namibia and Kenya has led to learners whose mother tongue is not offered as medium of instruction having no option than to learn in languages other than their mother tongue (Abijo, 2014; Awedoba, 2009; Bunyi, 2005; Wolfaardt, 2005). Similarly, in Australia, investment in the development of literacy programmes in minority languages is lacking and not pursued given the limited functionality of minority languages (Eisenclas et al., 2013). The choice of mother tongue different from some learners causes feelings of lack of self-worth, ethnic and cultural detachment among those learners whose language is not used for instruction (Baker, 2011; Oriyama, 2011). Similarly, instruction in a language which is not a mother tongue for some learners, the language itself becomes the obstacle to teaching and learning (Brock-Utne, 2010). Attempting

to speak a language which is not yet automated leads to division of attention between content and the language used for communication. Mkandawire (2017) proclaims that an unfamiliar language of instruction in the classroom affects the pupil's initial literacy development as lack of proficiency in the language of instruction becomes a barrier for pupils to demonstrate literacy in the target language.

In the African context, using English as a medium of instruction is deemed by many as a way of bringing equilibrium among competing languages (Benson, 2005). Irrespective of whether English or the dominant local language is used for instruction, learners taught in classrooms where the mother tongue used for instruction is not familiar to them are disadvantaged (Bialystock, 2009). Furthermore, UNESCO (2003) stresses that it is a challenge for those learners to formulate concepts in two diverse languages. This means that learning in a language which is not a learner's mother tongue may lead to some form of linguistic deficit and academic challenges. Lewis and Lockheed (2006) assert that learners who speak a language different from the language used for instruction in school are likely to drop out of school and often face discrimination and learning difficulties. Similarly, Lindsay, Dockrel and Strand (2007) state that when the learners' language development is advanced, they settle better in school and classroom habits, are fonder of school, interact positively with their peers and communicate better in problem solving situations.

Even where African languages or the mother tongues are available as medium of instruction, teachers are often not well trained to effectively deliver instruction using mother tongue instruction (Benson, 2004). In the Namibian context, research has demonstrated that teachers in the lower primary phase have very limited knowledge

of their own languages (MBEC, 1996) while others are tasked to teach in the lower primary phase simply that they speak the language of instruction without consideration of their academic specialisation (Legère et al., 2000). When educators are not native speakers of the child's home language and are not trained on using mother tongue - based instruction, they resort to archaic forms of teacher centred instruction (Gacheche, 2010). Questions can therefore be asked of how these teachers can competently teach using the mother tongue medium of instruction.

Furthermore, Gacheche (2010, p. 19) indicates that,

most education systems that attempt to institute systems that encourage learning through a child's home language suffer from an acute shortage of teachers who speak and have access to these home languages, yet one of the criteria for effective usage of local languages for instruction is that there must be enough teachers to teach in it.

To add to this, Khejeri (2014) establishes that a small number of teachers in Kenya preferred instruction using mother tongue and among teachers, mother tongue holds very little value in comparison to English.

The preference for an English medium of instruction is not only common among teachers (Brock-Utne, 2010). According to Phillipson (1999) and Bunyi (1999) English is regarded by parents and learners as global and universal and is viewed as the only vehicle to development. Many teachers and parents believe that "Knowledge of English opens up the opportunities of getting good jobs, a competitive edge in the global market economy and the recognition by the elite group" (Phillipson, 1999, p.199). it does not just

A study in the South of Namibia by Haacke (1989) revealed the negative attitudes that parents had towards the use of Khoekhoegowab as a medium of instruction. Parents preferred that their children be taught in Dutch instead of their mother tongue which they relegated to use at social events like funerals and church (Haacke, 1989). These findings are consistent with Brock-Utne (2000) who found that proficiency in the English language is seen as a sign of education as one of the participants stated that, “if you know English well, you are considered educated. If you just know Namibian languages, even though you may know several of them and speak them well, you are considered dumb and uneducated” (Brock-Utne, 2000, p. 185). Similarly, the use of the local language for instruction has been opposed by parents in Rwanda and Kenya (Tabaro, 2014; Bunyi, 2008).

Furthermore, Legère et al. (2000) found that teachers at lower primary teaching using mother tongue as medium of instruction do not only have limited knowledge of their languages but are accorded low status and underrated due to their low proficiency in English.

Another issue hampering instruction using the mother tongue is the lack of instructional materials in the diverse home languages of learners (Benson, 2005). The deficiency of reading materials in most African languages has been observed by other language scholars (Bunyi, 1997, 1999; Broke-Utne, 2001). Demonstrating the influence of reading on other language skills, Drew (2009) conducted a small-scale control study on the effectiveness of the Early Years Literacy Programme (EYLP) with third and fourth grade EFL pupils in Norway. The EYLP was originally developed in Australia for English as a first language. The program involved extensive reading taught by a well-trained teacher with parental involvement in monitoring

learners' work. Reading is organised in learning centres with groups of learners rotating between centres every 10-15 minutes. The rate of reading, speaking and writing was higher in intervention schools compared to control schools providing evidence to support the view that exposure to reading materials accompanied by extensive reading in a second language can lead to increased proficiency in other language skills of listening, speaking and writing.

According to Gacheche (2010), lack of instructional materials hinders the transfer of subject matter in local languages. In Namibia, there is not only a poor reading culture but a general lack of mother tongue reading materials for learners and for classroom instruction (Harris, 2011; Totemeyer, 2013). General publication of books in Namibian languages has decreased as African publishers do not see the economic viability of investing in the publishing books in local languages citing language policy preference of the English language (Totemeyer et al., 2015). Research has demonstrated that access and exposure to learning materials and books in particular has potential to increase language proficiency (Neuman, 1999; Worthy & Roser, 2004) and expand the vocabulary of learners (Silverman, 2007).

2.6 Teachers' perceptions and teaching methods/strategies to enhance literacy instruction

2.6.1 Teacher perceptions towards mother tongue instruction

Baker (1992) states that the significance and importance bestowed in a language can be determined by attitude towards that language. Teachers are instructional designers tasked with implementation of best practices appropriate and meaningful to their learners. The perceptions teachers have towards mother tongue instruction can potentially influence classroom practices (Baker, 1992). Fang (1996) asserts that the

teachers' beliefs or philosophy affect teaching and learning. Similarly, Erdiller (2013) points out that views held by teachers commonly shape teacher learning and classroom practice in pre-service and in-service years. Teacher's pedagogical beliefs are notions of instruction, characterised by numerous intentions and teaching methods/strategies (Erdiller, 2013). Similarly, Hoffer and Pintrich (1997) deems teacher beliefs as a good foundation for inquiry into teaching practice.

A teacher's expertise is a critical variable in the classroom and so is their perception and value they place towards the language of instruction (Baker, 2011). Irrespective of teacher beliefs and attitudes, Whitehead (2004, p. 100) cautions that "a professional approach to educating and caring requires us to ensure that young learners are not subjected to aftereffects of our personal gains and prejudices."

A language policy is among numerous instruments that guide instructional practices by teachers. Language policy is context specific and expounded by school actors, such as teachers, as they participate in policy production through their classroom practices (Menken & Garcia, 2010). It is therefore critical that their belief and attitudes towards language dictates of the language policy are positive for effective instruction as Khejeri (2014), in a study on attitudes towards the use of mother tongue instruction found that teachers' views pertaining languages in the school has a bearing on how they utilise these languages in the classroom and also influence how their learners use the languages.

Research on the use of mother tongue instruction in Africa and Namibia in particular show that despite language policy guidance as contained in the language policies, practitioners such as teachers often have different perspectives. Studies by Awedoba (2009) and Abijo (2014) show that teachers in Nigeria did not fully accept the use of mother tongue as medium of instruction and instead preferred that mother tongue be

allocated limited time on the timetable. Preferring an English medium of instruction, teachers viewed the use of mother tongue as medium of instruction as 'counterproductive' ignoring the impact the use of an English medium had on learners' lack of classroom participation (Awedoba, 2009). Similar reservations on the use of mother tongue as medium of instruction in primary school were expressed by teachers in Kenya (Bunyi, 2009) although some teachers recognise the ease of learning when mother tongue was used as a medium for instruction (Khejeri, 2014). In Namibia, teachers in the Junior Primary phase have negative attitudes towards instruction using mother tongue (Harris, 2011). Most of the teachers teaching in the Junior Primary phase are often overlooked and accorded less status (Legère, Trewby & Van Graan, 2000) and are often less qualified (MBEC, 1996).

Contrary to the findings above, Mostert et al. (2012) conducted a study in Khomas region exploring views and preferences of teachers, parents and principals on the implementation of the language policy in which they found that both teachers and principals were generally in favour of using mother tongue instruction in the Junior Primary phase although some had concerns relating to the level of teacher training, expertise of teachers to effectively deliver instruction using mother tongue as medium of instruction and the challenge posed by the multilingual nature of classrooms.

Inadequate teacher training, linguistic proficiency, lack of instructional resources and ineffective instructional delivery have also been cited in cases where English is a medium of instruction in Namibian schools (Harris, 2011; Harlech-Jones, 1995, 1997; MBEC, 1996; Wolfaardt, 2001, 2005) while the same situation has been observed in South Africa (Nqoma, Abongdia, & Foncha, 2017). In a study on African languages, the Ministry of Basic Education and Culture (1996, p. 269) reports that, "teachers were

concerned about the Silozi orthography, and that in all the schools that were visited; teachers had no knowledge of the Silozi orthography”.

Given the challenges in using mother tongue instruction, the use of a language which is not the child’s mother tongue for instruction can lead to semilingualism. Moyo (2008) cautions that when teachers are unable to deliver instruction using mother tongue as medium of instruction and when using the second language, English, the school system produces average language users who Baker (2011, 2006) refers to as semilinguals with no linguistic proficiency in either of their spoken languages.

2.6.2 Teaching methods/strategies to enhance learners’ communicative proficiency in primary school

The junior primary syllabus encourages a learner centred approach where learners’ pre-existing knowledge is cherished through the cultivation of a communicative culture (MOE, 2014).

The approach to teaching and learning in the junior primary phase in Namibia is clearly built on the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) which was developed as a way of addressing the need to use language as a communicative medium globally. Nunan (1991) outlines the following five features as characteristics of CLT: (1) a focus on communication through interaction; (2) the use of authentic materials; (3) a focus on the learning process as well as the language itself; (4) a belief that learners’ own experiences can contribute to learning; and (5) a linkage between language learning in the classroom and real-life activities. At the centre of the communicative approach is the use of language rather than the concentration on form (Harmer, 2007).

The teacher in a communicative classroom plays three core tasks, which are that of facilitator of the communicative process, a participant in the process, and an observer and learner (Breen & Candlin, 1980). According to Hay and Fielding-Barnsley (2011), to raise learners' enthusiasm and confidence to engage with written texts, they should be presented with opportunities to interact with words and play with words in activities focused on pleasure and social interaction. The curriculum for the junior primary phase places greater emphasis on active involvement by learners in the learning process, application of varied teaching methods/strategies, integration of content, co-operative and collaborative learning and the use of play in the learning process (MOE, 2005, 2014). It outlines that:

In the Junior Primary Phase in particular, it is important to build on what the learners already know and can say, and to be supportive of their attempts to express themselves, to find new words, or new ways of saying things. Varied teaching methods should be used to create a language- rich oral environment by facilitating the learners in sharing ideas, thinking aloud, suggesting hypotheses, guessing, explaining, asking different types of questions, talking to each other to solve problems, using rhymes, poems and nonsense verse, jokes and anecdotes, storytelling, reading aloud, and presenting their work to the class. The classroom should be a print-rich environment with annotated charts and posters and the learner's own work, and easy access to a wide range of readers and other reading material. When starting writing, the emphasis should be on encouraging the learners to write and making them eager writers, rather than over-emphasising correctness in spelling or grammar. Greater demands on correctness can be introduced later if and when needed, if exposure to correct examples and self. (MOE, 2014, p. 7)

Harmer (2007) argues that if learners are involved in meaning-focused communicative tasks, then, “language learning will take care of itself” (p. 69). Learning settings where collaborative learning is dominant have shown to result in increased academic achievement, more constructive social, inspirational, and attitudinal outcomes for learners irrespective of background (Slavian, 1990).

Furthermore, Gambrell et al. (2007, p. 245) state that “young children learn to write and how to read as a result of social interaction that is part of the language experience approach.” Teachers ought to understand that language learning is an intercultural experience and learning can be enhanced “in an environment of ‘intercultural literate community of learners’ where meaning is negotiated and renegotiated collaboratively between peers, and teachers” (Datta, 2007, p. 48) understanding that language proficiency is context dependent and depends on the frequency of language use (Baker, 2006) and wealth of comprehensible meaningful input (Krashen, 1985).

Dickinson and Neuman (2006) state that the relationship between teacher and learner and among learners enhances literacy growth and development of the foundation for motivation, for communication and providing an explicit relationship between written and spoken language. Vygotsky (1978) views the teacher not as an instructor providing knowledge but rather as an enabler or scaffolder who facilitates learning by encouraging and supporting learners to construct meaning and become active seekers of understanding. The teachers’ role is to identify age-appropriate activities with potential to advance learning through self-discovery.

According to Browne (2007) teachers understand that learners’ first languages or mother tongues are repositories of their experiences and part of their identities through which they construct meaning, learn different literacies and forge relationships in their homes and communities. “Effective teachers actively build bridges between home and

school rather than keeping away from parents and community and criticizing them” (Chantry-Komarek, 2003, p. 169). It is against this background that Benson (2004) cautions that in advancing bilingual and multilingual education, teachers should not hold monolingual views. Cunningham et al. (2009, pp. 490-491) supports this by arguing that:

there is need for teachers to understand that early oral language development is the main precursor of reading development, and that it transpires with steady growth of vocabulary, deepening awareness of syntax, maturing grasp of pragmatics and ability to hear, combine, segment and use phonemes in words and sentences.

Statistics from MoE (2012) show that almost a third of primary school teachers in Namibia are not qualified to teach the languages they teach, a situation common in other African countries (Benson, 2005; Bunyi, 1999). Allington (2010) argues that many teachers in the United States of America are oblivious of what constitutes effective instruction of literacy to young learners while also estimating that as few as 25 percent of teachers are effective teachers of literacy and have adequate knowledge of promoting literacy in young learners. For the context of this study, research points to institutional challenges teachers face in teaching using Silozi as medium of instruction. Nzwala (2015) discovered that student teachers of Silozi in the Zambezi Region struggled using Silozi for instructional purposes given the difference between Silozi and their dialects. It is however important to note that there are few studies examining teachers’ instructional teaching methods/strategies using Silozi as medium of instruction or proficiency in Silozi could not be found.

Literacy instruction must extend beyond teaching of content but should interrogate the standards of texts and language multiplicities (Ioannidou, 2014). Vygotsky (1978)

argues that learners learn because of access and mediation. Teachers therefore need to understand what it takes to mediate learners' learning given the learners' diverse social, cultural and linguistic backgrounds in the junior primary phase. There should be space for individualised learning that accommodates the diversity of learners' learning needs and linguistic backgrounds. As such, Levine (2002) warns teachers to avoid assuming that all learners are the same when it comes to learning.

Language skills such as vocabulary, syntax, discourse, and phonemic awareness are vital for initial literacy and language and mother tongue in particular plays an important role in the development of social and emotional competence (Dickinson & Neuman, 2006). Scrivener (2005, p. 27) holds the view that the subject matter of language instruction mainly consists of two major elements: "language systems and language skills". This study focuses on examining instructional teaching methods/strategies relating to language systems, which Scrivener explains as relating to the sound of words (phonology), the meaning of the individual words or groups of words (lexis or vocabulary), how the words interact with each other within the sentence (grammar), the use to which the words are put in particular situations (function), and the way that communication makes sense beyond the individual phrase or sentence, analysing how the sentences relate to each other (known as discourse).

In Namibia, language teaching in the junior primary phase is focused on five competency areas of listening and responding, speaking, and communicating, reading, and viewing, writing language structure and grammar (MOE, 2014). This study therefore examined teacher perceptions towards the use of Silozi as medium of instruction and instructional methods used in the junior primary phase to enhance learners' communicative proficiency in Silozi as a medium of instruction.

2.7 Role of parents and family in early literacy

Several studies have been conducted in both rural and urban schools in Namibia on parental involvement (Hamunyela, 2008; Kaperu, 2004) and specifically on parental involvement in the development of their children's literacy (Siririka, 2010). Research has shown that education is a joint responsibility between parents, families and teachers. Though teachers can make pedagogical changes at classroom level, they need support from parents if they are to introduce pioneering and comprehensive teaching and learning approaches required for learners to acquire literacies in the early years (Chatry-Komarek, 2003). Epstein refers to this joint undertaking as “*overlapping spheres of influence*” (Epstein, 2002, p. 9).

In discussing parental involvement, it is no longer relevant to refer exclusively to biological parents. Browne (2006) states that the term ‘parent’ broadly refers to people who have parental responsibility or care for a child and all those who have unpretentious and due interest in learners’ educational growth and are in a position to make a meaningful contribution such as grandparents, relatives and siblings. Dickinson and Neuman (2006) also refer to parents as any other significant adults who interact with a child and provide input for literacy and language development. Meaningful involvement of family members and significant others in a child’s education has been recognised as a vital element for effective schooling (Mascarenhas et al., 2016). This study’s reference to parents also transcends beyond the biological parent and considers any other person resuming responsibility for learners as parents.

Based on the Sociocultural Theory developed by Vygotsky (1978), learning is viewed as a result of a maturing brain function, meaningful input from family members, teachers and communities in social interactions and as a result of the use of tools and

signs present within the environment. The Sociocultural Theory postulates that knowledge is constructed within situated dialogue. In Vygotsky's view, it is through engagement that a child is exposed to cultural signs and through such signs that a child can engage with others, mediate, and negotiate meaning. Similar to the sociocultural theory, the Long's Interactional Hypothesis views language as a result of interaction between the learner and someone with higher proficiency in the second language demonstrating the importance of linguistically proficient others in aiding learners' learning of a second language (Mitchell & Myles, 1998). Furthermore, Peregoy and Boyle (2008) state that learners develop their understanding of language systems through experience, by using language in interactions with others within cultural contexts. They emphasise that initial exposure to reading and writing begins in learners' homes and communities through observation and participation in culturally situated literacy practices. Educators in emergent literacy should encourage parents to keenly involve children in naturally occurring literacy events at home such as story reading, making grocery lists, highlighting the importance of home and school associations in early years of schooling (Peregoy & Boyle, 2008).

Parents whose interaction is centred around active participatory reading foster better language and literacy skills (Mascarenhas et al., 2016). Parental culture, involvement and support are critical in learning. It is imperative that parents know the significance of home literacy practices and begin exposing, modelling literacy practices such as reading and writing during literacy events (Heath, 1982). Heath further emphasises that teachers should identify and acknowledge a family's prior and current literacy practices and then work in partnership with the parents to support the child's literacy development by discussing and adopting a variety of effective teaching methods/strategies. According to Munn, 1993 (p. 1), "the parent's role is to reinforce

school values and support the school if there are problems with their learners”. Chatry-Komarek (2003) encourages teachers to avoid contacting parents to address bad behaviour and poor results. Teachers are instead encouraged to be closer to the community, cultivate an understanding of the education system among parents, create synergy between teachers and parents and understand parent’s culture and values.

Parental involvement in supporting learners encountering a new language is very important as parents must be part of the child’s entire learning experience to support and provide guidance and input necessary for learning in a new language. Piller (2002) found that parents choose family language based on preferred language with influences from their culture and societal context. Bilingual parents make language choices for their learners based on context or based on a language they desire which may influence learners’ language choice (Baker, 2006).

Lindholm-Leary (2001) asserts that the use of mother tongue does not only have academic advantages but also increases parents’ attitudes towards the learning process, a notion supported by Benson (2002). Despite this, it is evident from research that African parents do not support the use of mother tongue as medium of instruction (Harris, 2011) a factor that might influence their level of support and involvement in their learners’ education. Dean (2000) also stresses the importance of parental involvement in enhancing school achievement by saying “parental attitudes to school influence learners’ attitudes to school and learning” (p.141), a notion that may have implications on language use and preferences.

2.8 Influence of the home environment on literacy acquisition

The home is where a child receives initial literacy instruction. Heath (1986) stresses that the home environment goes beyond the household and includes literacy interactions a child has within their community. It is within homes and communities that learners are exposed to rich language input situated within their interaction with other humans and the physical environment (Barton, 2007) and the home languages are the medium through which such literacies are acquired. Literacy in the home language “encourages group affiliation, positive self-esteem, the vision and world view of one’s heritage culture, self-identity, and intellectual empathy” (Eisenclas et al., 2013, p. 5). They further highlight the learning difficulties learners whose home language is different from that of the school may experience.

In this study, the focus is on the importance of home literacies as they facilitate learning beyond the home environment. The parents and other family members within a home are the first teachers and lay the groundwork for future literacy learning (Barton, 2007).

A growing body of evidence from research shows that home literacy activities tremendously influence learners’ academic success (Bus et al., 1995; Eisenclas et al., 2013). When learners acquire literacies in their home language and are able to communicate in the language of instruction, they are able to transfer literacy skills acquired in their home language into a new language (Savage & Pace, 2017). According to Dickinson and Neuman (2006) the home environment is instrumental in vocabulary growth in children by the second grade and no similar evidence has been demonstrated of school dynamics that affect vocabulary size in a similar way. It is evident from research that learners from families riddled with high stress levels, poor

emotional environments and are economically stressed have poor academic outcomes. Mascarenhas (et al., 2016) highlight the significance of a stable, conducive, and enabling home environment in language development and acquisition of literacy.

It is also evident that the level of literacy exposure is not the same for most learners. According to Whitehead (2007), there are huge differences in literacy skills among groups and individuals in a society. Dickinson and Neuman (2006) state that, compared to middle class families, poor families are likely to lack a resource which is associated with poor knowledge acquisition. Thus, Dickinson and Neuman (2006) state that,

One pathway by which poverty affects learners is through its impact on the family's ability to invest in resources related to learners' development. Income enables families to purchase lessons, summer camps, stimulating learning materials and activities, and better-quality early childhood care. p. 30).

Poverty also takes an emotional toll on parents affecting child and parent interaction and responsive parenting. Studies have found that learners from middle class families were exposed to print rich environments while those from poor families had little opportunity to observe, have contact and use literacy enhancing print materials (Dickinson & Neuman, 2006). The characteristics of the home and family, such as income, parents' literacy levels and literacy habits, and parent–children engagement in literacy activities and literacy events have been found to be linked with learners' literacy and language skills (Heath, 1983; Snow, 1991; Dickinson & Neuman, 2006). Other studies have also shown evidence of learners from middle class families having access to reading materials and were able to read and write before school (Heath, 1983; Whitehead, 2002) demonstrating evidence of the advantage middle class learners have

over learners from poor families and the importance of home literacies and their association to formal education in schools. Lareau (2002) found that middle class parents viewed their role as transmitters of skills and information to their children. They were able to explain terminology and convey meaning to their learners, engage in age specific activities that enhanced their learners' talent and interests.

Drawing from Colemans' (1988) theory of family capital, there is evidence that when learners have access to family capital, they are exposed to early literacy and demonstrate improved reading achievement (Mascarenhas et al., 2016). Family capital is subdivided into human capital (which relates to parental education attainment, knowledge and skills), social capital (referring to social networks in and inter family interactions) and financial capital (which refers to family earnings and assets) (Ren & Hu, 2011).

Duke and Steward (1997) proposed a model that specified pathways that are part of four key components of the home literacy environment and learners' oral language skills. Their model contends that the parents' literacy habits as well as the social-demographic characteristics of the home are directly associated with the types of beliefs and attitudes parents hold about learners' literacy and language development (Duke & Steward, 1997).

Duke and Steward's model further shows that although there might be variations in home environments, access and mediation provided by families to their learners, it may not necessarily be due to their socioeconomic status. There might be homes that are littered with materials for writing and reading but have parents that are disengaged and unsupportive to their learners optimally utilising these resources. On the other

hand, we can have materially under resourced homes with rich language interactions with parents fully engaged in supporting their learners' understanding of literacy (Nicholson, 1999). It is apparent that family capital does not guarantee automatic transfer and acquisition of literacy in learners. Dyk and Wilson (1999) indicate that possession of family capital does not necessarily result in advancing child development and literacy learning. Benefits can only be derived from possession of family capital if it is activated and pathways for capitalisation of having such family capital are established (Ren & Hu, 2011).

Another home literacy model developed by Sénéchal (2012) elucidates that “informal literacy activities promote the development of language skills while formal literacy activities promote the acquisition of early literacy skills” (p. 176). The model shows that learners' literacy acquisition is enhanced through parental involvement, support, having high expectations and responsiveness through formal and informal opportunities within the home environment. In a study by Dickie and MacDonald (2011) involving literacy practices by 14 year 7 and 8 Samoan learners in New Zealand, it was observed that older siblings modelled school habits of learning to younger family members and church literacies also resembled methods for comprehension and assessment similar to those of the school.

Despite the benefits of parental involvement, family capital and a quality home environment, Lareau (2000) found that not all parents wanted to be involved in their children's' learning at home. Some low-income families considered teachers to be competent enough to teach their learners with some feeling that is capable of helping their children with learning.

Despite differential challenges in parental support and nature of home environments, it is evident that both the availability of resources and the quality of interactions within the home environment are essential for literacy acquisition. These factors form a foundation for contextual knowledge, and perceptions, terminology and acquaintance with syntactic and semantic sentences and verbal cognitive abilities (Dickinson & Neuman, 2006).

This study solicited parental perspectives, how the home environment supports the use of Silozi as medium of instruction and teaching methods/strategies parents use to support literacy acquisition in their homes.

2.9 Chapter summary

This chapter provided the theoretical framework and some literature on studies which examined Namibia's language policy, perceptions on the use of mother tongue as medium of instruction, how mother tongue instruction influences teaching and learning, teachers' perceptions and teaching methods/strategies to enhance teaching and learning using mother tongue as medium of instruction and the role of parents and the home environments in facilitating learning using mother tongue as medium of instruction.

Foreign and local studies were cited in the literature review and included studies from Australia, New Zealand, USA, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, Cameroon, Zambia among others. The studies revealed the complexity of language policy implementation and show how language perception by teachers and parents can influence language policy adaptation and implementation. The studies further showed how a solid foundation in the use of mother tongue language as medium of instruction in the formative years of schooling had a positive effect on learning. Some studies done in Nigeria, Ghana,

Namibia and Kenya revealed inadequate reading and instructional materials in local languages, persistent negative attitudes by teachers and parents to the use of mother tongue as medium of instructions, lack of mother tongue proficiency for both teachers and parents, which was in some instances as a result of differences between the home language and the school language of classroom instruction.

None of the studies reviewed provide perspectives on the influence of Silozi as a medium of instruction on literacy in junior primary schools in the Zambezi Region. The study investigated the perceptions of teachers and parents on the use of Silozi as a medium of instruction and aimed at finding whether this has an influence on literacy acquisition in junior primary phase.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The previous chapter discussed the theoretical framework that informed this study, as well as relevant literature review. This chapter presents the methodology used for this study. Kothari (2004, p. 8) defines methodology as “a way to solve the research problem systematically or a science of studying how research is done systematically”.

The focus of this study was on the influence of Silozi as a medium of instruction in the junior primary schools on literacy and learning based on perspectives of parents, teachers, school principals and advisory teachers. The study used a pragmatic parallel mixed method employing mainly a qualitative case study design focusing on four schools in the Zambezi Region.

The chapter gives an overview of the research design. It describes the population, sample, research instruments, data collection techniques, data analysis procedures and finally highlights issues regarding ethical considerations.

3.2 Research design

Kothari (2004, p. 31) defines research design as the “arrangement of conditions for collection and analysis of data in a manner that aims to combine relevance to the research purpose.” Similarly, Kumar (2011) supported by Savin-Baden and Major (2013) reason that a research design is a blueprint, strategy and structure of investigation created to find answers to the research questions.

A pragmatic parallel mixed methods design employing both qualitative and quantitative research approaches were used for this study although the study is mostly

qualitative. Mertens (2015, p. 37) states that in the pragmatic approach, there is “no problem with asserting that there is a single real world and that all individuals have their own unique interpretation of that world. Rather than treating incommensurability as an all or nothing barrier to mutual understanding, pragmatists treat issues of intersubjectivity as a key element.” Merriam (1998) states that the pragmatic qualitative research draws on the most sensible and practical research methods to understand a phenomenon of study from the perspective and worldview of those involved in the study. The design characteristically allows for collection of data independently at the same time or with a short time lag (Creswell, 2013).

Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009) state that parallel mixed methods allow for data collection with minimal time lapse or concurrently while elements of qualitative and quantitative data are analysed and interpreted after distinct analysis. Mixed methods research combines both qualitative and quantitative approaches “for the broad purposes of breadth and depth of understanding and corroboration” of the phenomenon under study (Johnson et al., 2007, p. 123). According to Savin-Baden and Major (2013), the qualitative approach allows a researcher to comprehensively understand the problem under study.

The rationale for using both the quantitative and qualitative approach is that, combined, they collectively provide a better understanding of one’s research problem (Creswell, 2013). Creswell and Plano Clark (2011, p. 184) state that “quantitative data collection aims toward making generalisations to a population while qualitative data collection seeks to develop an in-depth understanding from a few people”.

Though using a mixed methods approach, the study was largely a case study. Case studies are concerned with a rich and clear description of events relevant to the case

(Gay et al., 2009). A case study is an investigation of a phenomenon that occurs within a specific context and involves few respondents with the intention to understand, describe and deduce human experiences from their point of view (Booyse, 2002). Airasian et al. (2009) emphasise that a case study is more concrete and the knowledge it yields resonates within the reader's experience because such knowledge is distinctive. The case in this study is a group of teachers, parents, school principals and advisory teacher for African languages in all inspection circuits in the Zambezi Region.

Maree (2013, p. 75) states that "case studies offer a multi perspective analysis in which the researcher considers not just the voice and perspective of one or two participants in a situation but also the views of other relevant groups of actors and the interaction between them".

The position by Maree (2013) on case studies is congruent with the perspective on pragmatism as described by Mertens (2015). The study, therefore, was concerned with capturing in-depth information and capturing views of teachers, school principals, parents and advisory teachers on the influence of using Silozi as a medium of instruction on literacy and learning.

Utilising the pragmatic parallel mixed methods design through a case study approach helped the researcher understand the views and perceptions of participants in relation to the topic of the study. It also provided an opportunity to cross check information between participants through collection, interpretation and documentation of data obtained through different methods within a short lag of time.

The use of the mixed methods approach is supported by Airasian et al. (2009) who assert that the utilisation of two or more methods can ensure that the strength of

one method compensates for the weakness of another. Case studies permit the use of numerous sources and techniques in the process of data collection and analysis (Mertens, 2015).

Understanding social phenomenon is context bound and the context of this study is junior primary schools in the Zambezi Region. Evidence from a study by Kangumu (2009) shows that 88% of the learners in the Zambezi Region speak a mother tongue other than Silozi; therefore, all schools purposively selected for this study make practical sense in answering the research objectives of this study. The study aimed at determining the perceptions of parents, teachers, school principals and advisory teachers towards the use of the Silozi medium of instruction in the Zambezi Education Region, investigate the influence of Silozi as medium of instruction in the junior primary phase on teaching and learning in the Zambezi Education Region, and determining the teaching methods/strategies used by junior primary phase schoolteachers to increase learners' communicative proficiency in Silozi.

3.3 Population

Creswell (2013, p. 142) defines the population of a study as “a group of individuals who have the same characteristics” while Gay et al. (2009) refer to it as a group of individuals to which the results of the study can be generalised. The population for this study comprised of all junior primary school teachers, school principals and advisory teachers in all inspection circuits of the Zambezi Region. Some available parents were also part of the study. A total of 29 participants formed part of this study.

3.4 Sample and sampling procedures

Creswell (2013) refers to a sample as a subgroup of the total group that the researcher plans to study and to which the results of the study can be generalised. The study

focused on purposively selected rural and urban schools in the Zambezi Education Region.

Two rural and two urban schools were purposefully selected bringing a total of four schools that were part of this study. The reason for focusing on rural and urban schools was to enable the case study to yield more results, increase the scope of the study and allow the researcher to analyse the phenomenon under study in schools with different demographics and circumstances.

The four purposefully selected schools were selected using the following criterion:

- a) Schools should have three junior primary classes not taught through multi grade teaching. Collection of data in classrooms not taught through multi grade teaching allowed for collaboration of information obtained from teachers through questionnaires and independent observations of instructional processes in their respective classrooms. Multi grade classrooms were deemed not suitable for the collection of information to address the research aims of this study.
- b) Must be a junior primary school with Silozi as medium of instruction. In all government junior primary schools in the Zambezi Region, learners are taught through Silozi as a medium of instruction and therefore no private schools formed part of the study.
- c) Schools should not be from the same education circuit or linguistic/dialectal background. This was to allow for collection of data from schools with linguistic diversity. The researcher purposively selected schools with linguistic/dialectal variations and selecting schools from different circuits was helpful in meeting this criterion.

Purposeful sampling is widely applied in qualitative research for identification and selection of information rich cases for the most effective use of limited resources (Patton, 2002).

A total of 29 participants comprising firstly of 12 purposively selected teachers, 3 from each of the 4 selected schools, 4 principals from the 4 selected schools and 1 advisory teacher formed part of this study. Purposeful sampling involves classifying and selecting individuals or groups that are well-informed about or experienced with a phenomenon of concern (Cresswell & Plano Clark, 2011) and the teachers, school principals, and advisory teachers are viewed as a homogenous group with expertise on the phenomenon of study. This notion is supported by Merterns (2015) who postulates that purposeful sampling involves strategically selecting small groups or persons who are prospectively well-informed and enlightened about the phenomenon under study.

Secondly, twelve parents of children from the four selected schools, three from each school and one from each junior primary grade, were randomly selected from the four sampled schools through their children. Simple random sampling was used to select parents of learners in the junior primary phase of the selected schools to ensure the generalisability of findings by minimising the potential for bias in selection. Gay et al. (2009) refer to simple random sampling as a process which allows all individuals of the defined population an equal chance to be selected. The researcher had no control, and the probability of selection is the same for each individual (Gay et al., 2009). The names of learners in each grade were put in a hat and a name was randomly picked. The parents whose children's names were picked formed part of the study if they were available.

3.5 Research instruments

Multiple methods were used to collect research data for this study namely questionnaires, observation and semi structured interviews. The technique in realising research goals hinges on how the information used in the study is generated. According to Miles (2006) approaches to collection of qualitative data are much less structured and formal than techniques used for gathering quantitative data.

In line with the research design, the researcher ensured a parallel occurrence of data collection, analysis, identification of emerging themes and interpretation thereof within the same and short span of time using multiple data collection instruments. Maree (2013) affirms that qualitative studies treat data collection and data analysis as an enduring, cyclical and repetitive (non-linear) process. The parallel use of research instruments in the collection of data is further illustrated by how the instruments were used in the data collection process.

3.5.1 Questionnaires

Questionnaires with closed and open-ended questions were used to collect data from teachers, school principals and the advisory teacher. Johnson and Christensen (2008, p. 170) define a questionnaire as a “self-report data collection instrument that each research participant fills out as part of a research study”. Questionnaires, if well structured, are useful in collecting detailed and structured data (Airasian et al., 2009).

Questionnaires allowed participants to express their views regarding the influence of the use of Silozi as a medium of instruction in the junior primary phase on literacy and learning. The questionnaires had content validity as the questions contained therein were relevant to the study and in line with the research questions. Questionnaires allow

respondents to complete questions without intimidation resulting from the presence of the researcher (Zimba, 2012).

Teachers, school principals and the advisory teacher completed questionnaires within the same time frame coinciding with data collection from parents with limited interaction with the researcher. This instrument was out to collect data on the perceptions of parents, teachers, school principals and advisory teachers on the use of Silozi as a medium of instruction and the teaching methods/strategies they employ in advancing teaching and learning using Silozi as a medium of instruction.

3.5.2 Observations

None-participatory observations were conducted during classroom sessions in each grade of the selected junior primary schools. According to Gay et al. (2009) a non-participant observer is not involved but records behaviours of participants without interacting with them. It is a less intrusive form of observation (Maree, 2013). Observation checklists were used to collect information on the classroom environment and instructional processes. Apart from checklists, observation notes with the researcher's reflections were used during the observation period.

Johnson and Christensen (2008) define observation as watching of behavioural patterns of people in certain circumstances to gain insight about the phenomenon of interest. Observation permits for the researcher to have an insider perspective of group dynamics and behaviours in dissimilar settings (Maree, 2013). Observations allow for outlining the multifaceted issues that confront practitioners (Good, 1988).

Similarly, De Vos (2002, p. 287) identified the following advantages of using observation checklists:

By only observing, especially in an unobtrusive manner, the researcher well achieves the most objective experience of the community. It gives a comprehensive perspective on the problem under investigation. It aims at in-depth investigation of a problem and is of a qualitative nature. Data are gathered directly and are never of a retrospective nature. It is not dependent on the ability or willingness of respondents to take part in the investigation.

On the contrary, De Vos (2012) cautions the presence of the researcher might result in participants not acting naturally while information obtained can rarely be quantified.

The researcher observed one lesson per grade in each of the junior primary schools resulting in three lessons been observed for each of the four schools. In total, 12 lessons were observed as part of this study. The timetable subject period was not a factor during classroom observations. The data obtained from classroom observations answered question two and three of the study by providing insight into teaching methods/strategies used by junior primary phase schoolteachers to increase learners' communicative proficiency in Silozi and it also provided the researcher with insight into the use of code switching and code-mixing during classroom sessions.

3.5.3 Semi-structured interviews

Semi-structured interviews were used to collect data from selected parents of learners in grades one, two and three. The interviews were conducted with twelve parents, three from each of the four schools that were part of the study. According to Berg (2007) and Creswell (2009) semi-structured interviews are more flexible and allow realisation of depth by according an opportunity to the interviewer to probe and expand on the interviewee's responses.

The face-to-face interviews were conducted with parents in their own homes and at their own convenience at a time. Interviews were preceded by classroom observations and the completion of questionnaires by teachers, school principals and the advisory teacher. This was to allow the researcher to develop critical understanding of the topic of study to ensure development of meaningful and relevant probing using semi structured questions to parents based on perspectives from teachers, school principals and the advisory teacher.

3.6 Data collection procedures

In conducting this study, the researcher sought permission from the Ministry of Education Arts and Culture through the Permanent Secretary to conduct research in the Zambezi Education Region. Permission was granted and the letter of permission was presented to the Regional Director and school principals of selected schools. The research was conducted with outmost consideration to ensure no interruptions to school activities. Gay et al. (2009) state that research usually involves the researcher spending considerable time within the setting of the study and the researcher must be as unobtrusive as possible.

Appointments were arranged with respective schools and the researcher administered questionnaires to teachers and school principals. A questionnaire was also administered to the advisory teacher at the same time, and it was agreed that the questionnaire be completed within the agreed timeframe as those for teachers and school principals.

Teachers and school principals agreed that the questionnaires be completed within one to two working days and classroom observations be conducted one day after each participant's questionnaire was received by the researcher. This was to allow the

researcher time to analyse the questionnaire responses and identify emerging themes before conducting classroom observations.

The completion of questionnaires and classroom observations took place within a short timeframe in schools that were part of this study. This arrangement allowed flexibility and simultaneous collection of data from teachers, school principals and advisory teacher.

Semi structured interviews were conducted with parents in their homes, schools or alternative venues as agreed with the selected parents. Parents who were selected through their children in schools were telephoned by the researcher to establish rapport, brief them about the study, ethical issues such as anonymity and confidentiality and agreed on the date, venue and time for interviews. Semi structured interviews with selected parents were based on semi structured questionnaires which were further consolidated by additional probing questions based on areas of the study requiring further investigation. The probing questions emerged from the analysis of questionnaire responses and salient sticking points from classroom observations. Semi structured interviews are often used to corroborate data emerging from other data sources (Maree, 2013).

An audio tape recorder was used to record interviews with participating parents for reference in case anything was missed during note taking. Field notes were used to compliment the audio taped interviews and allow for documentation of non-verbal cues, behaviours, and environmental context.

Classroom observations were used to gain insight into classroom literacy events and confirm or dispel information contained in the questionnaires. Observations were conducted after questionnaires were completed providing the researcher an

opportunity to analyse responses by teachers, assess if the questions in the observation checklist were fully aligned to those in the questionnaires and identify areas that needed critical observation.

Schostak and Schostak (2008) and Creswell (2013) point to the importance of appropriately capturing data, emphasising collected data is not fixed, but subject to reconfiguration and thus other ways of seeing and finding answers to questions the researcher aspires to answer. Classroom observation allowed the researcher to examine the learning environment and establish teaching methods/strategies teachers utilise in teaching using Silozi as a medium of instruction to increase literacy and learning.

Information gathered through semi structured interviews provided detailed insight from parents on their perspectives regarding the use of Silozi as a medium of instruction in the junior primary phase. Interviews also provided information on language use at home, in the community, literacy events and practices learners are exposed to within their home environment and communities in order to enhance their communicative competencies in Silozi and help them learn using Silozi as a medium of instruction. The interviews were further used to establish the relationship between information obtained from questionnaires completed by teachers, school principals and the advisory teacher on the relationship between the home environment and the school in relation to advancing literacy and learning using Silozi as a medium of instruction.

The researcher was aware of the importance of establishing rapport and employing critical skills such as probing, listening, and appropriate body language during interviews. Creswell (2013) and Savin-Baden and Major (2013) state that it is critical

for the interviewer to demonstrate understanding of the interview schedule and elucidate interpersonal skills such as listening and questioning so that the interview appears natural, and the interviewee is put at ease.

3.7 Data analysis

According to Savin-Baden and Major (2013) qualitative data analysis as an enduring process where data is divided down into meaningful segments for the purpose of examination. Data were analysed using emerging themes and trends from questions in the questionnaires, semi structured interviews and classroom observations. The analysis of the data was done in accordance with research questions and systematically analysed, described and interpreted using emerging themes and trends. Maree (2013) states that qualitative data is summarised in line with what the researcher has seen or heard in terms of common words, phrases, themes or patterns that would support the researcher's understanding and interpretation of that which is emerging.

Qualitative data were therefore analysed using content analysis. Maree (2013, p. 101) describes content analysis as "a process of looking at data from different angles with a view to identifying keys in the text that will help us to understand and interpret the raw data." Data collected were organised into distinct files and analysed using inductive and interpretive data analysis approaches.

Qualitative data analysis involves numerous levels of data analysis (Creswell, 2009) which involves a spiral image where the researcher moves in analytical cycles instead of retaining a fixed linear approach (Creswell, 2013).

This study was informed by qualitative content analysis of qualitative data from semi structured interviews (Savin-Baden & Major, 2013), observations and questionnaires which integrate Creswell's (2013) analytical spiral as described by Watling and James

(2007) and Maree (2013) using guidelines and tactics from Miles and Huberman (1994) and Gay, Mills and Airasian (2009). The following procedures were followed during the process of data analysis.

- Recording of data – Through content analysis, data from semi structured interviews, questionnaires, classroom observations and notes were read to gain insight of the body and context of the data gathered.
- Transcriptions of data – Field notes were transcribed using transcription notations.
- Coding of data from field notes and transcripts – Elements and segments of data were coded in accordance with research questions and literature review. Maree (2013, p. 105) defines coding as “marking segments of data with symbols, descriptive words or unique identifying names.” Coding is about unearthing and linking ideas to an idea and then to other ideas (Richards & Morse, 2007).
- All meaningful units and segments were used as primary qualitative indicators which were further evaluated to make inferences, establish coherence and relevance before compiling the final list of codes. Creswell (2013) asserts that these data categories and networks create the likelihood to point out different relationships, similarities, and differences in transcribed data.
- After assignment of data to different categories and themes, a brief introduction of each component was followed by a discussion utilising precise responses where appropriate and applicable to enhance substantive views of respondents. Initial discussions described the prevalence of prominent

responses and continued to evaluation, synthesis and interpretation of data themes, categories, and components in line with research objectives. Qualitative data analysis involves review of qualitative data into convenient categories, patterns, themes, and relationships in harmony with the research objectives (Maree, 2013).

By organising, reducing and description of data into manageable categories and themes, the researcher was able to interpret and make meaning of data from parents, teachers, advisory teacher and classroom observations relating to perceptions on the use and influence of Silozi as medium of instruction on literacy and learning corresponding with the research questions and literature reviewed as part of this study and revealing practical approaches applied in teaching through Silozi as a medium of instruction in the junior primary phase. Quantitative data from questionnaires were analysed using Microsoft excel, presented in table format followed by critical analysis in line with research questions.

Data from the three data collection tools were triangulated and emerging themes documented and interpreted after critical analysis. Information gathered through semi structured interviews, questionnaires was analysed and interpreted corroboratively with that as contained in the observation checklist. The three data collection tools were all designed to gather information pragmatically and parallel to each other. This increased validity and reliability of the information gathered as the tools collected information though different in structure and form but able to elucidate thematic commonalities and differences in information collected for this study.

3.8 Research ethics

Best and Kahn (2006, p. 47) state that “in planning a research project involving human subjects, it is important to consider the ethical guidelines designed to protect your subjects”. Similarly, MacMillan and Schumacher (1997, p. 419) state that “most ethical situations require researchers to determine situational priorities, which frequently involve discussion with participants”. Stake (1995) emphasises that data gathering often involves certain invasion of privacy; therefore, techniques for gaining access are based on enduring expectations that permissions are needed. The researcher should plan to enter the research field with minimal disruption (Mertens, 2015).

Clearance was obtained from the UNAM Postgraduate Research Committee, the Ministry of Basic Education, the Zambezi Education Directorate, and school principals. The researcher sought participants’ consent and permission. Respondents’ identities were kept anonymous to ensure confidentiality and privacy. Assurance was given to participants that information obtained would be treated confidential and would not be used in any harmful way or divulged to third parties. This study was gender sensitive and no violations of participants’ rights occurred at any stage of this study. The information obtained as part of this study will be kept safe and be destroyed after one year from the publication of this study. Participants were informed that participation is voluntary, and participants could withdraw anytime.

3.9 Chapter summary

This chapter explained the type of this research, the design, population, sample and sampling techniques, research instruments used, reasons for piloting the study, data collection procedures, data presentation and analysis procedures. The study adopted a pragmatic parallel mixed methods design and employed case study design in the analysis of data. The chapter illustrated how data were analysed, triangulated, and

presented in a parallel way to show associations in the data collected using different instruments and the ethical principles followed in the collection and analysis of data.

The next chapter discusses the findings of this study after analysing data collected using research instruments.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

Chapter Three discussed the methodology and research techniques used in collecting and analysing data to realise the purpose of the study. This chapter presents the major study findings in accordance with the research objectives. This chapter focuses on presenting the perspective of teachers, school principals and parents on the use of Silozi as a medium of instruction in the junior primary phase. The findings of the study were generated from interviews with parents, through questionnaires completed by teachers and school principals and through classroom observations. Emerging themes and categories are used in the presentation and analysis of data with evidence from existing literature occasionally used to support research findings.

The findings of the study are presented in four sections. The first section presents verbatim critical themes emerging from interviews with parents relating to the use of Silozi as a medium of instruction in the junior primary phase. In the second section, demographics of teachers, advisory teacher and school principals and their perceptions on the use of Silozi as a medium of instruction are presented and discussed using identified themes and categories. Discussions of the findings answered research questions relating to perceptions of parents, teachers, school principals and advisory teachers towards the use of Silozi as a medium of instruction in the Zambezi Education Region and the influence of Silozi as a medium of instruction in the junior primary phase on teaching and learning in the Zambezi Education Region.

Instructional teaching methods/strategies used by junior primary phase schoolteachers to increase learners' communicative proficiency in Silozi are also discussed under this

section. The third section presents findings emanating from classroom observations conducted in the four schools that formed part of this study.

This chapter ends with the conclusion summarising the perspectives from parents, teachers and school principals, observations from classroom practice and a synopsis of instructional teaching methods/strategies used by teachers in the junior primary phase.

4.2 Section 1

4.2.1 Themes and categories emerging from interviews with parents of junior primary learners

Through analysis of interviews with parents, the following themes and categories emerged. The themes and categories are used in expounding explicitly on findings emerging from interviews with parents of learners in the junior primary phase.

Table 1: Themes and categories deduced from interviews with parents

Theme 1: Biographical information of parents	Category 1: Gender, Home Language, Level of Education, Age Group and School Setting (Rural/Urban)
Theme 2: Medium of Instruction	Category 1: Preferred Medium of Instruction Category 2: Length of time spent learning through Silozi as a medium of instruction

4.2.2 Theme 1: Demographics of parents of learners in the junior primary phase

Table 4.1 above provides demographic information of parents who were part of this study. As reflected in the methodology, twelve parents formed part of this study. The

parents were randomly selected through their children from their respective schools. Furthermore, Table 4.1 shows that parents from different age groups and gender were drawn from both rural and urban schools with varying degrees of education ranging from primary education to degree level. Although this study was not focussed to finding how parents' educational qualifications influence perceptions regarding the use of Silozi as a medium of instruction in the junior primary phase, information on parents' educational backgrounds was included to better contextualise their responses to interview questions.

Urban schools are characterised by multilingualism and are largely heterogeneous. Rural schools on the other hand are predominantly comprised of one homogeneous linguistic group. Rural schools were largely under resourced and characterised by overcrowded classrooms. Urban schools on the other hand were less crowded and albeit also under resourced given budgetary cuts within the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture and across government ministries.

The linguistic background of parents was a mixture of different dialects spoken in the Zambezi Region with those from the cluster of Mafwe languages (Sifwe, Mbukushu, Mbalangwe and Totela) been the majority participants in this study. Dialectal clustering is done away with in this study and individual languages are used for analysis and to ensure representation of what the participants consider to be their home/mother tongue languages.

Table 2: Parents' biographical information

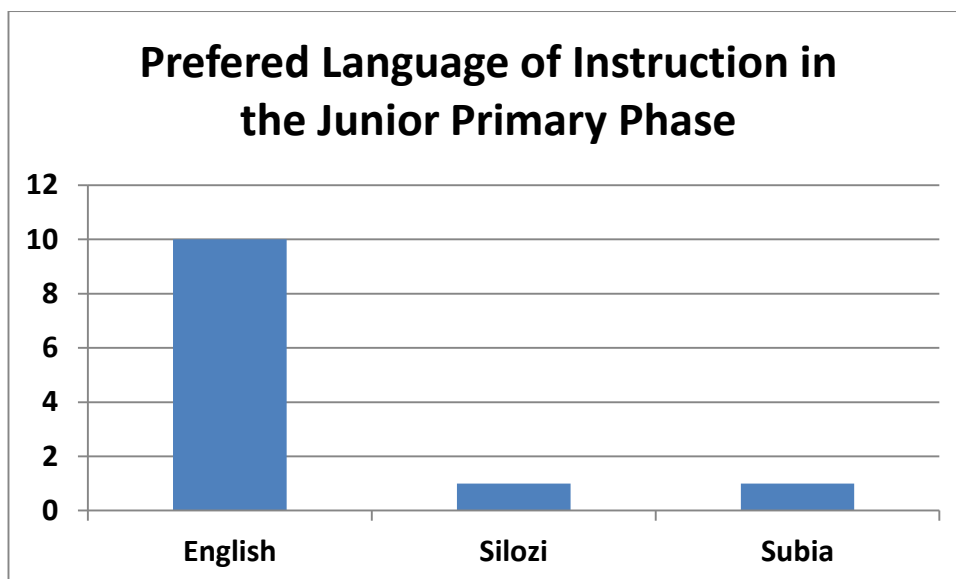
Parent Code (N12)	Gender	Home Language/ Mother tongue	Level of Education	Age Group	School Setting	Preferred Language of Instruction in
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						the Junior Primary Phase
A	M	Subia	Degree	44-49	Urban	Subia
B	F	Mbalangwe	Diploma	32-37	Urban	English
C	F	Subia	Honour's Degree	49 and above	Rural	English
D	F	Sifwe	Diploma	49 and above	Rural	English
E	M	Totela	Secondary School	44-49	Urban	English
F	F	Sifwe	Primary School	49 and above	Rural	English
G	M	Silozi	Degree	38-43	Urban	Silozi
H	M	Yeyi	Diploma	44-49	Urban	English
I	F	Subia	Secondary School	44-49	Rural	English
J	F	Sifwe	Certificate	49 and above	Rural	English
K	M	Mbukushu	Secondary School	50-55	Rural	English
L	F	Subia	Diploma	50-55	Urban	English

As illustrated in Table 4.2, different parents, except one, identify languages other than Silozi as their mother tongue or home language. One parent remarked that: *“Attempts by policy makers to designate people in the Zambezi region as ‘Lozi’ is unfortunate and meant to deny us our linguistic rights. Some of us may speak or understand Silozi but it is in no way our mother tongue.”* Another parent remarked that *“Because of tribalism in the Zambezi region and the colonial history of the region, we are wrongly referred to as Lozis when we have our languages which we must be identified with”*. This varied linguistic self-descriptor is common among parents irrespective of geography (rural/urban) and educational background.

4.2.3. Theme 2: Parents’ preferred medium of instruction

Figure 1: Parents’ preferred language for medium of instruction in the junior primary phase



As illustrated in Figure 4.1. above, most parents interviewed generally prefer English as medium of instruction in the junior primary phase although two of the parents who formed part of this study preferred a Silozi and Subia as medium of instruction in the junior primary phase. The parent who preferred Silozi as medium of instruction (Parent G) identified it as their home language and this was also true for the parent preferring Subia as a medium of instruction (Parent C). The parent preferring Silozi as a medium of instruction cited availability of Silozi teachers and reading materials for their choice. The parent also noted that *“Local languages which do not have standard forms have mutual intelligibility with Silozi and Silozi is a lingua franca in the region so teaching and learning in Silozi will allow learners to make a connection between school and community.”* The parent further indicated that *“Silozi is a unifying language. Instead of investing in many local languages spoken in the Zambezi region, it is better to invest in Silozi as it is already well developed and does not belong any of the tribes in the Zambezi region.”* It is interesting to note that the same parent, like all of those who were part of the study, lamented the poor Silozi communicative abilities for non-Silozi speaking children and widespread tendency for families to prioritise communicating with their children in English when the medium of

instruction at school is Silozi. All parents, except for one, indicated that they primarily communicate with their children using their home language/mother tongue (Mafwe languages and Subia) and to an extent English. All non-Silozi speaking parents do not communicate to their children using Silozi despite knowing that Silozi is the medium of instruction in the junior primary phase. Poor communicative ability in Silozi by junior primary school children was highlighted by all parents who formed part of this study. Coincidentally, parents also indicated that they were not fully proficient and competent in speaking or writing Silozi although this was not measured as part of this study.

Despite their language preferences and background, most parents agree that using English as medium of instruction in the junior primary phase was the best for their children. Parental preference for language used as medium of instruction is similar irrespective of school setting and similar across all language groups. The following is a summary of reasons given by parents for their preference of an English medium in the junior primary phase:

- *“In the absence of local languages been available as medium of instruction, their children struggle to speak and understand Silozi.”* (Parent A).
- *There is need for early introduction of English and its use as medium of instruction so children can cope with the curriculum from an early age before transitioning into higher grades and universities where English, not Silozi is the dominant language of the curriculum. Early learning using English as medium of instruction will result in the mastery of English, a language used for instruction in subsequent years of schooling.”* (Parent H).
- *“Learning materials are not available in local languages and even those available in Silozi, are limited and outdated.”* (Parent K).

- *“Silози terminology is limited for today’s technological and scientific education.”* (Parent L).

Furthermore, parents argued that they would prefer that their children are taught in an English medium from primary school to avoid confusion of cross concept reference between Silози and their children’s mother tongue. They alluded to cross transfer taking place between a language with an established orthography (Silози) and another with no standard orthography (local dialect) which they say causes confusion among learners who must map concepts in two languages with limited intelligibility.

The parents say this place unnecessary pressure on learners' learning resources given that learners have no solid foundation in Silози and are unlikely to achieve native competence in the language given their attitude which romanticise the use of the English language.

Parent F who speaks Sifwe as a home language remarked that *“Our children have limited access to Silози at home and in the community. They only encounter Silози at school. Even us as their parents are unable to fluently communicate in Silози. It is better if they commence learning in English.”* Interestingly, despite the parent’s concerns about communicative proficiency of children in Silози, there is no apparent advocacy for adoption of their home language as medium of instruction but there is a clear instinctive predisposition towards an English medium of instruction in the junior primary phase.

Two of the parents who formed part of the study preferred Subia and Silози as medium of instruction (Parent A and G) in the junior primary phase. These parents centred their preference of the two languages based on the following reasons:

- *“Using Subia as medium of instruction in the early years of schooling will ensure language maintenance.”* (Parent A).
- *“The Subia orthography is been developed in Botswana so Namibia can adopt it and provide an option for Chisubia medium of instruction in schools in the Zambezi region.”*
- *“Silozi is spoken by many people in the communities in the Zambezi region and could thus be used to reduce tribal tensions among people from different tribal groups in the region.”* (Parent A).
- *“Silozi is the language used for radio broadcasting in the Zambezi region. It unites all the various tribes and most households listen to it over the radio compared to any English radio station.”* (Parent G).

4.2.4 Length of time spent learning through Silozi medium of instruction

During interviews with parents, the length of time a learner is expected to learn using Silozi as a medium of instruction and grasp literacy concepts was a recurring theme. Most parents feel that three years of learning using Silozi as a medium of instruction is not sufficient to allow for both communicative competence and let alone academic competence for learners in the junior primary phase. However, despite this reservation, none of the parents argued for its extension rather preferring an English as a medium of instruction from the onset of junior primary school.

Four of the parents remarked that:

- *“Imagine a 7-year-old who went through kindergarten and pre-primary learning English basics, communicating in Subia at home and expected to begin school through a Silozi medium of instruction! It is confusing to the*

child, delays assimilation to school and impacts on the learning process.”

(Parent C)

- *“Silozi is not our mother tongue ; it is imposed on us by government. It is better our children speak our languages at home and learn in English at school. That will make them competitive in this age of science and technology.”* (Parent E)
- *“The use of Silozi as medium of instruction in the Junior Primary phase in the Zambezi region is a tactic to hold our children back. It is not their mother tongue , so children are left to struggle with the language and the concepts taught in school leaving them with no foundational language for learning a second language.”* (Parent J)
- *“It will take up to 10 years for children to master Silozi from the start of school so instead, given the few years they spend in the Junior Primary grades, it is better they begin learning in English, a language in which most subjects are taught throughout the child’s school years.”*(Parent K)

It is imperative to state that the first two remarks are from parents whose children are in School A and D while the last two are from parents in School B and C as reflected in table 4. This demonstrates the commonality of perspectives held towards the use of Silozi as a medium of instruction irrespective of school setting. Parents doubt whether instruction using Silozi as a medium of instruction for three years is sufficient for mastery of Silozi. They argue that this inadequacy casts doubt on whether Silozi can be a linguistic tool for future learning of an additional language, in this case English, which becomes a medium of instruction from Grade 4 onwards. All parents who indicated that their child’s home language is not Silozi point out that their children finish primary school without knowing how to fluently speak neither Silozi nor English and they therefore feel that time and resources are unnecessarily exhausted on

teaching and learning using Silozi as a medium of instruction in the junior primary phase, worse off, it is not their children's mother tongue. These findings are consistent with Makgabo and Modise (2020) whose study in South Africa found that learners who are not native speakers to the two languages of instruction (English or Setswana) had to master two languages leading to difficulties in learning. The parents who formed part of this study therefore feel that given the unavailability of local languages, effort invested in learning Silozi and utilising it as a medium of instruction could better be utilised learning and mastering the English language, a language that becomes more educationally significant as learners progress into higher education and into sectors of employment.

The parents feel Silozi helps little in easing learning and in acquisition of an additional language and they cite how their children struggle to cope with transition to an English medium in Grade 4. One parent remarked that, *“By the time our children complete Grade 4, they are neither proficient in Silozi nor in English and they tend to struggle with the curriculum in Grade 4 leading to failure and grade repetition in subsequent years of schooling.”* It is drawing from similar evidence that Heugh (2006) recommends at least six years of first language/mother tongue instruction for second language instruction to be effective. Nevertheless, it is evident that parents in the Zambezi Region do not prefer any extension of Silozi as a medium of instruction but rather prefer English as a medium of instruction from learners' inception of junior primary school.

The perspectives gathered from interviews with parents demonstrate that they have a problem with the duration of learning using Silozi as a medium of instruction, the mastery of the Silozi language in the junior primary phase for concept formation and its utility as a resource for learning an additional language, English.

4.3 Section 2

4.3.1 Themes and categories emerging from teacher and school principal questionnaires

Through data analysis of questionnaires from teachers, advisory teacher and school principals, the following themes and categories were construed. Similar to the first section, the themes and categories explicate demographic information of teachers, advisory teacher and school principals and their perspectives on the use of Silozi as a medium of instruction.

Table 3: Themes and categories deduced from interviews with school principals

<p>Theme 1: Teachers' biographical information</p>	<p>Category: 1 Gender, Home Language, Level of Education, Age Group and School Setting (Rural/Urban)</p>
<p>Theme 2: Teachers and school principals' perceptions on the use of Silozi as a medium of instruction in the junior primary phase</p>	<p>Category 1: Home language not the same as the language of instruction thus preference for English as MoI</p> <p>Category 2: Learners are unable to communicate using Silozi as a medium of instruction</p> <p>Category 5: Preferred medium of instruction</p>
<p>Theme 3: Instructional teaching methods/strategies used by junior primary teachers to increase communicative proficiency in Silozi</p>	<p>Category 1: Instructional teaching methods/strategies (Phonemic method, whole word method, using songs and rhymes, cooperative learning and group work)</p>

Findings from the teacher questionnaires and classroom observations are presented and discussed simultaneously to reflect on both teachers' views on the use of Silozi as a medium of instruction and to confirm, support or dispel information obtained through the two instruments. Through triangulation, the discussion involves analysis and comparative discussions of data collected from interviews with parents for cross reference and for greater consolidation of research findings.

4.3.2 Theme 1: Backgrounds of teachers and school principals in the junior primary phase

As indicated in Chapter 3 of this study, the schools that formed part of this study were purposively selected from both rural and urban educational circuits of the Zambezi Region. The biographical information of teachers and principals who formed part of this study is presented and discussed below.

Table 4: Background of teachers and principals from selected junior primary schools

Background of teachers in School A

Teacher Code	Gender	Home Language/ Mother tongue	Level of Education	Age Group	School Setting
A	M	Mbalangwe/Subia	Degree	32- 37	Urban
B	F	Subia	Degree	38-43	Urban
C	F	Sifwe/Totela	Diploma	38-43	Urban
Principal Code	Gender	Home Language/ Mother tongue	Level of Education	Age Group	School Setting
W	M	Subia	Degree	44-49	Urban

Background of teachers in School B

Teacher Code	Gender	Home Language/ Mother tongue	Level of Education	Age Group	School Setting
D	F	Subia	Degree	20-25	Urban
E	M	Silozi	Degree	56 and Above	Urban
F	F	Sifwe/Totela	Diploma	44-49	Urban

Principal Code	Gender	Home Language/ Mother tongue	Level of Education	Age Group	School Setting
X	M	Silozi	Degree	56 and Above	Urban

Background of Teachers in School C

Teacher Code	Gender	Home Language/ Mother tongue	Level of Education	Age Group	School Setting
I	M	Sifwe	Diploma	44-49	Rural
K	F	Sifwe	Diploma	50-56	Rural
L	M	Mbalangwe	Degree	55	Rural
Principal Code	Gender	Home Language/ Mother tongue	Level of Education	Age Group	School Setting
Y	F	Sifwe	Degree	44-49	Rural

Background of teachers and principal in School D

Teacher Code	Gender	Home Language/ Mother tongue	Level of Education	Age Group	School Setting
I	F	Subia	Degree	44-49	Rural
J	F	Subia	Diploma	50-56	Rural
K	F	Subia	Degree	50-56	Rural
Principal Code	Gender	Home Language/ Mother tongue	Level of Education	Age Group	School Setting
Z	M	Subia	Degree	50-56	Urban
Advisory Teacher Code	Gender	Home Language/ Mother tongue	Level of Education	Age Group	School Setting
M	F	Silozi	Hon Degree	44-49	Urban

Biographical information on teachers clearly shows that junior primary school teachers who formed part of this study in the Zambezi Region is mainly female, in possession of qualifications ranging from diploma to honours degree and are from diverse linguistic backgrounds. Few identify Silozi as a mother tongue. The same information is true for all principals of schools that formed part of this study. It is however worth noting that the advisory teacher, who by function provides

instructional support to teachers in the junior primary phase in the Zambezi Region, identifies Silozi as a mother tongue.

The junior primary principals and teachers' educational backgrounds were slightly better than those of parents. Both teachers and principals self-identify with a variety of dialects as home language/mother tongue. This information mirrors that of parents presented in Table 2 where there is a mixture of languages identified as home languages/mother tongue. This confirms the inconsistency between the language policy (MEC, 1993; MBESC, 2003) which designates Silozi as a mother tongue for those in the Zambezi Region and what many parents and educators in the region consider to be their mother tongue. This incongruity corresponds with findings from Kangumu (2009) and Mbala et al. (1995) who demonstrated through studies that the majority of those in the region identify a language other than Silozi as their mother tongue irrespective of geography. Perspectives, attitudes on language utility for education and preference maybe shaped by these linguistic self-identity makers rather than policy prescriptions.

4.3.3 Theme 2: Teachers, advisory teacher and school principals' perceptions on the use of Silozi as a medium of instruction in the junior primary phase

Table 5: Language preferences among teachers, advisory teacher and school principals

	Preferred language of instruction		
	English as a medium of instruction	Silozi as a medium of instruction	Other (Local Languages/Dialects)
Teachers	9	2	1
Advisory Teacher	0	1	0
School Principals	4	0	0

Data analysis of questionnaires show that the majority of teachers and school principals who formed part of this study (nine out of twelve) did not only prefer English as a medium of instruction but also feel Silozi should not continue being the medium of instruction in the junior primary phase. Most of the teachers indicated that the difference between home language and the medium of instruction is a stumbling block to effective teaching and learning in the junior primary phase. The teachers' views were consistent with those of parents of learners in the junior primary phase. Despite many of the teachers recognising that instruction using mother tongue allows learners to settle better and perform well in school, they opposed continued instruction using Silozi as a medium of instruction indicating that Silozi is not the mother tongue of many of the teachers and their learners and, therefore does not guarantee benefits derived from learning using the mother tongue in the formative years of schooling.

Many of the teachers pointed out that due to differences in the language of instruction and learners' home languages, many learners are not able to communicate in Silozi and are often withdrawn and only participative when engaged in instructional activities involving recitation, repetition and singing. Responses below from teachers, like those of some of the parents, highlighted the perception of teachers towards Silozi as a medium of instruction.

“Imagine a child coming from a home where Silozi is only listened too on the radio begins schooling in Grade 1 and is expected to start learning using Silozi. The difference in the languages is confusing for learners and makes instruction processes cumbersome for teachers”. (Teacher B).

“Our learners are put in a difficult situation of starting to learn a new language (Silozi) while also been expected to meet the demands of schooling. This creates a strain some learners who are not in this situation do not experience.” (Teacher L).

“Learners spend the first two years of their Junior Primary years learning Silozi and trying to achieve communicative proficiency in the language with very limited learning taking place. By the time they reach Grade 3, their communicative proficiency improves but then the circle of disruption continues when English is introduced at Grade 4.” (Teacher K)

All school principals, from both rural and urban schools, expressed similar sentiments indicating that the difference between language of instruction and home language has resulted in many learners having low self-esteem and indifference towards school especially in grades one and two. The principals however acknowledged improved Silozi communicative abilities of learners in Grade 3 with learners identifying and assimilating well to demands of schooling. The principals bemoaned the fact that many junior primary school learners who are not able to communicate using Silozi are often viewed by teachers as having learning difficulties without consideration of their background and level of exposure to Silozi in their communities. These findings are consistent with Adger et al. (2007) who state that children presenting to school speaking vernacular languages are perceived as though they have language and cognitive shortfalls rather than having language differences.

Contrary to the advisory teacher who preferred continued instruction in Silozi for pedagogical reasons, junior primary school teachers who formed part of this study indicated that despite learners ‘communicative difficulties in Silozi, there is no room for compensatory teaching and are often given very limited capacity building and

pedagogical support in teaching using Silozi as medium of instruction. Three teachers who formed part of this study also indicated that despite being trained to teach the upper primary phase, they are now assigned to teach in the junior primary phase with overcrowded classrooms and limited support from principals and advisory teachers. Most teachers cited lack of clarity in interpreting the junior primary syllabus in a complex linguistic environment like the Zambezi Region.

Elaborating on their choice of Silozi as a medium of instruction, principals from schools A and D indicated that they had applied through the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture's regional offices for their schools to be permitted to change their medium of instruction from Silozi to English. The applications were motivated by negative experiences of using Silozi as medium of instruction, lack of Silozi instructional materials and demand from parents who expect schools to teach their children using English as medium of instruction.

Many of the teachers pointed out that due to differences in the language of instruction and learners' home languages, many learners are not able to communicate in Silozi and are often withdrawn and only participative when engaged in instructional activities involving recitation, repetition and singing. Responses below from teachers, like those of some of the parents, highlighted the perception of teachers towards Silozi as medium of instruction.

Apart from the linguistic mismatch between learners' mother tongue and language of instruction, teachers, of who the majority do not have Silozi as mother tongue indicated that they also struggle to deliver instruction using Silozi as medium of instruction as they do not have comprehensive terminology in Silozi as a language. It is important to note that most teachers did their lesson planning in English and most

teachers indicated that this affected translation of content and to an extent affected knowledge transfer to learners. This may present a mismatch between intended education outcomes and what goes on in the classroom.

Only Teacher E identified Silozi as their medium of instruction among those who formed part of this study. Teacher E remarked that *“Some topics are very hard to translate into Silozi”* thus their recommendation that the *“syllabus, which is currently written in English be written in Silozi and more written materials in Silozi should be published.”* Most teachers cited the difficulty of teaching science and mathematics concepts using Silozi as medium of instruction. One teacher remarked that:

“I speak Sifwe at home and have spoken Sifwe most of my life. I consider Silozi a Zambian Language and I have had difficulties teaching my learners concepts in social studies because even myself I cannot speak Silozi very well and I feel I do not have all vocabulary to be able to teach my subject. Instead, I translate/switch between Silozi and English when teaching” (Teacher K)

The teachers, advisory teacher and school principals indicated that there is a general lack of parental support for learners learning using Silozi as a medium of instruction thus the lack of stimulation at home for learners to learn how to speak Silozi. Teachers and principals indicated that there was lack of communication between teachers and parents of learners in the junior primary phase, no shared reading, writing and limited Silozi speech input between parents and their children. They however acknowledged that there are enriching literacies and literacy events between parents and their children mediated mainly in their home languages. Except for those who identify Silozi as their mother tongue /home language, responses from all parents, teachers, school principals

were similar in their pursuit for a diminished role of Silozi in the junior primary phase and preference for English as a medium of instruction.

Support for use of local languages as medium of instruction was muted with occasional reference to their lack of orthography, potential cost of developing them, complex linguistic situation in the region, the cost of training teachers and the lack of instructional materials.

4.4 Instructional methods/strategies used by junior primary phase

schoolteachers to increase learners' communicative proficiency in Silozi:

Analysis of data from questionnaires and classroom observations

The study examined the instructional teaching methods/strategies used by junior primary school teachers to increase learners' communicative proficiency in Silozi using questionnaires. Data in the questionnaires were cross checked and confirmed or dispelled during analysis data from classroom observations. Therefore, the analysis of instructional teaching methods/strategies used by teachers present information obtained from questionnaires completed by teachers and this information is validated in the next section by examining data extracted during classroom observations.

Analysis of data from questionnaires on teaching methods/strategies identified by teachers in the junior primary phase reveal that teachers use multiple teaching methods varying across grades, subject and responsive to different learning styles and needs of learners. It is evident from research that teachers adopt different pedagogical approaches based on numerous factors influenced by their experience and beliefs (Erdiller, 2013).

However, most teachers and principals who formed part of this study were unequivocal in their responses on the importance of promoting active learning,

enhancing collaboration among learners. They also indicated how these allow rich social interactions leading to cognitive, social, interpersonal communicative intelligence among learners using Silozi as a medium of instruction. Responding to questions on the teaching methods they use in schools, teachers identified the following as teaching methods they employ in the junior primary phase.

Table 6: Instructional methods/strategies used by junior primary phase schoolteachers

Teaching methods/strategies	Number of teachers who identified teaching strategy/method
1. Lecture method	5
2. Cooperative learning	12
3. Visualisation	3
4. Inquiry based instruction	4
5. Role plays/songs/poems	12
6. Phonics	12
7. Demonstration	12

4.5 Section 3

4.5.1 Findings from classroom observations

The researcher conducted classroom observations in the junior primary phase in all four selected junior primary schools in the Zambezi Region. In total, twelve classroom observations, three observations per grade in each of the four junior primary schools, were conducted. Data from classroom observations were classified into themes as reflected in the table below:

Table 7: Emerging themes and categories from classroom observations

Theme 1: Teaching methods/strategies used in junior primary classrooms	Category1:Instructional teaching methods/strategies used by junior primary teachers to increase communicative proficiency in Silozi
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Congruent with findings from teachers' questionnaires, most teachers observed during this study used multiple teaching methods/strategies to enhance learners' communicative abilities in Silozi. It is important to note that the teaching methods and teaching methods/strategies employed extend beyond enhancing medium of instruction communicative abilities of learners with a goal of providing education to learners in the junior primary phase. Moreover, this study intended to explore teaching methods/strategies teachers use to enhance communicative abilities of learners in Silozi within the context of classroom-based instruction of all junior primary school subjects including Silozi.

Most teachers who formed part of the study reflected being learner centred in their approach to teaching and learning. However, during classroom observations, the lecture method or direct instruction characterised all classrooms. In most cases, teachers stood in front of the class giving instructions with learners passively listening and absorbing content through listening and watching what the teacher was saying with minimal involvement.

For example, a Grade 2 teacher in School C, ignoring the importance of interaction, engagement with text and play (Hay & Fielding-Barnsley, 2011), began the lesson by telling learners a short story during an environmental studies class. Though the

learners looked engaged and enthusiastic, they could not later respond to questions posed by the teacher. The teacher ignored research indicating that learning is cumulative (Fox, 2013) and did not establish learners' already existing knowledge relating to the story. Therefore, learners were not able to communicate as they could not relate and were not given an opportunity to interact with the text and with each other.

Despite most teachers using the lecture method, five teachers observed from schools A, B and D used teaching methods/strategies that enhanced learner collaboration through group work and visualisation. For instance, a Grade 3 teacher in School A during a Silozi period asked learners to name animals they know about and the sounds they make. After an interactive session in which learners seemed to be engaged and having fun, the teacher grouped learners in groups of five. Each group was presented with pictures of animals (Donkeys, Dogs, Cats, Elephants, and Lions and so forth). For each group, they were to write the name of the animal, colour the animal and write a sentence about the animal based on their experiences. Learners played different roles during the group work and each part of the work was presented by a different learner in Silozi. The teacher moved between groups and continuously guided the learners during their group work allowing learners to interact with text, visual materials and with language (Silozi). Interestingly, learners in the group whispered in fear of reprisal from the teacher and talked to each other in their own languages (Mbalangwe, Subia and Sifwe).

In all schools that formed part of this study, learners had numerous communicative opportunities with the teachers and among themselves strictly in Silozi. The use of any language other than Silozi was discouraged contrary to evidence from research (Aitchison, 1992; Brock-Utne, 2010; Browne, 2007) which shows that learners'

languages are critical in the acquisition literacy. It was evident that learners' languages were not used as resources in the learning process. The researcher therefore observed that learners in all junior primary school classrooms did not have sufficient vocabulary in Silozi and were at times mostly unable to respond to questions or express themselves in Silozi. Teachers would provide cues in form of sounds, incomplete words, or sentences to enable learners to complete what they were saying or writing. These findings are consistent with Mokiwa (2020) who asserts that teaching in an unfamiliar language leads to sheer obedience and nonparticipation.

For example, a Grade 3 teacher from School C used flash cards in a Silozi lesson with focus on phonological awareness. The teacher pasted the flash cards on the board and told learners a story using the words on the cards. Learners listened and were later asked to retell the story using the flash cards. This strategy allowed learners to construct sentences in Silozi. Focus was not on grammar or stricter use of Silozi but on learners' communicative abilities.

It was evident that learners struggled with concept formation in Silozi and would code mix (Silozi and English) to communicate complete messages. Although teachers discouraged the use of the vernacular languages in the classroom, they allowed learners to express concepts in English and at times they also used English words with Silozi words during instruction. The example below show code mixing by a teacher and a learner in Grade 2 at School D.

Teacher; John ubuha Television nibo mahe.

Learner; Mate u matela kwa bus.

In all these instances, English words are used (Television and Bus) by both the teacher and the learner. In this case, the use of the English language during a Silozi period is disregarded and the teacher did not provide any alternative Silozi vocabulary for the word 'bus' to the learner. This linguistic choice by the teacher reflects on their linguistic preferences and further reflects on their beliefs and views and how it translates into their classroom practices (Erdiller, 2013; Fang, 1996) consequently subjecting learners to prejudices held by educators (Whitehead, 2004).

Classroom observations further showed how teachers and learners do not have the requisite learning materials. Most learners shared learning materials in pairs or in groups. Teachers struggled to translate content from English to Silozi much to the disadvantage of the learners.

4.6 Chapter summary

This chapter presented the findings of the study which revealed that majority of parents, teachers and school principals in the selected schools do not prefer the use of Silozi as a medium of instruction. The study established that majority of parents prefer English as a medium of instruction and their communication with their children at home is mainly Sifwe, Subia, Yeyi and Mbukushu, languages that are not used as medium of instruction in school. The study further showed that teachers and school principals who formed part of this study did not also prefer Silozi as a medium of instruction referring instead the use of English as a medium of classroom instruction. The lack of proficiency in Silozi for both teachers and learners as expressed by teachers in their questionnaires and as observed during classroom observations shows that the language of instruction has potential to be an impediment to teaching and learning.

CHAPTER FIVE

RESULTS DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

The previous chapter presented the findings of the study. This chapter presents the analysis of the findings of the study. The discussion of the findings would be based on the following objectives: perceptions of parents, teachers, school principals and advisory teachers towards the use of Silozi as a medium of instruction: influence of Silozi as a medium of instruction in the junior primary phase on teaching and learning in the Zambezi Region: teaching methods/strategies used by junior primary phase teachers to increase learners' communicative proficiency in Silozi. In discussing the findings, reference is made to contrasting viewpoints from other studies reviewed and cited in this study. Further reference is made to how theories underpinning this study resonate with the findings of the study.

5.2 Perceptions of parents, teachers, school principals and advisory teachers towards the use of Silozi as a medium of instruction

The study objective was meant to establish parents, teachers, school principals and advisory teacher's perceptions towards the use of Silozi as a medium of instruction in the four selected schools in Zambezi region.

The findings of the study discovered that teachers, school principals and parents who formed part of the study do not support the current language policy designating Silozi as a medium of instruction in the Zambezi Region. Among the 12 interviewed parents, 10 preferred English as a medium of instruction, 1 preferred Silozi and another 1

preferred Subia as a medium of instruction. The findings of this study on the preference of English as a medium of instruction in the Zambezi Region is consistent with findings other studies conducted on the African continent (Awedoba, 2009; Töttemeyer, 2010; Wolfaardt, 2005). The parents' education was not a factor in their preference for language of instruction. Most parents indicated preference for English as a medium of instruction as it is a language of wider communication and language of instruction 'grades that will matter most for their children's academic progression'. A total of 10 of the parents who preferred English as a medium of instruction indicated that there is a mismatch between home languages and Silozi and using Silozi as a medium of instruction does not in any way benefit their children. Additionally, 7 of the parents revealed that their children were confused by Silozi and mostly grasped the use of the language only in Grade 3 when they were to transition to Grade 4 where English is the medium of instruction. Even at Grade 4, some parents indicated that their children had not yet mastered Silozi but rather spoke and wrote English better than Silozi. This was also used as an argument to advocate for English as a medium of instruction. Although this study did not do a comparison between learners in the junior primary phase being instructed using Silozi and English as medium languages of instruction, the assertions from parents were also supported by some teachers in the four schools based on feedback they received from teachers in the upper primary phase.

Among teachers, school principals and advisory teacher, most of them supported the use of English rather than Silozi as a medium of instruction. A significant number, 9 teachers preferred English as a medium of instruction, 2 preferred Silozi and 1 preferred Subia as medium of instruction in the junior primary phase. All 4 principals from the four primary schools expressed preference for English as a medium of

instruction while the advisory teacher, whose home language is Silozi, preferred Silozi as a medium of instruction. In responding to the questionnaire, the 9 teachers strongly disagreed that they are fluent in Silozi, disagreed that Silozi prepares learners well in the early years of schooling and strongly agreed to parents having negative attitudes towards Silozi and not supporting their children with homework. The results of this study showing a limited number of teachers preferring Silozi as medium of instruction in Zambezi Region is consistent with findings from Kenya where of Khejeri (2014) established that only a small number of teachers preferred in instruction in the mother tongue.

5.3. Influence of Silozi as a medium of instruction in the junior primary phase on teaching and learning in the Zambezi Region

Learners in the Zambezi region are learning using Silozi as medium of instruction in school, a language designated as ‘Mother tongue’ as per Namibia’s language policy (MBEC, 1993). The objective examined the influence of Silozi as medium of instruction in the Junior Primary phase on teaching and learning in the Zambezi region.

Analysis of data from interviews, questionnaires and classroom observation demonstrate that there are linguistic differences between school, home, and the community. Findings from this study shows that Silozi is not identified as a mother tongue /home language of most teachers, school principals, parents (and by extension their children). Parents, teachers and school principals’ perspectives analysed together with data from classroom observations showed that learners attain basic interpersonal communicative skills in Silozi and have to use their home languages as springboards to learn using Silozi as a medium of instruction, a language through which they are expected to learn new concepts. It is evident that there is limited exposure to Silozi within the community. Most teachers, school principals and parents’ responses show

strong persuasion that Silozi is somewhat a second language presenting limited pedagogical advantage to learners in the junior primary phase.

Responses from teachers, parents, and school principals point to a gap between the language of instruction and learner's mother tongue /home languages in the Zambezi Region which they feel has potential to delay the learning process with adverse cognitive consequences. This conviction brings the concept of 'sudden language transition', prominent in the most responses from teachers and parents, astoundingly within the junior primary phase instead of the common discourse discussing the concept in perspective of learners' transition from the junior primary phase to the upper primary phase in Grade 4. Concerns raised by teachers, school principals and parents relating to the sudden transition of learners from their mother tongue to learning using Silozi as medium of instruction at the start of the junior primary phase are pointed out by UNESCO (2011, p. 6) which states that "sudden switch or transition from mother tongue to learning in a second language may stagnate first language acquisition or even lead to its loss leading to adverse consequences for acquisition of literacies and impacting on learners' affective state."

The gap between the language of instruction and learners home languages was also highlighted in South Africa by O'Carrol and Hickman (2012), Makgabo and Modise (2020) and Wolfaardt (2001) who highlight the uneven opportunities for learners' epistemological access to learning, especially in learning situations where children begin reading and writing in a language other than their mother tongue or home language. Most learners in the Zambezi region begin learning in a language other than their mother tongue.

It is evident from the findings of this study that both parents, teachers and learners have serious communication difficulties in Silozi and do not use the language at home. It was evident from questionnaires and classroom observation that teachers and learners code mixed between English and Silozi to facilitate teaching and learning. The challenges and concerns highlighted by teachers, parents, school principals in the Zambezi region pertaining to the difference between language of instruction and what they consider to be learners' mother tongue /home languages was also noted by Bialystock (2009) who states that in the case where both the home language and the second language (Silozi) are not sufficiently developed, reference to concepts and objects occurs between two languages with each language's terminology used sporadically leading to verbal insufficiency, difficult monolinguals learners do not have.

The language environment in the Zambezi Region might affect teaching and learning in the junior primary phase as language proficiency and competence of the learners and teachers in Silozi may impede pedagogical delivery, transfer and retention of information and knowledge due to semilingualism or double semilingualism. Based on findings from teachers, school principals and parents, the duration for mastering communicative basics and what Cummins (2000) refers to as 'Academic Language Use' of Silozi in the junior primary phase for learners in the Zambezi Region might be delayed given their developmental status at junior primary, length of time within which they are expected to learn Silozi and be instructed in it, complexity of the language environment between school, home and the community versus educational expectations.

Research shows that learners learn best when they attain proficiency in the language which is their mother tongue (Baker, 2006; Cummins, 2001; Phiri et al., 2013;

Krashen, 2004). The findings of this study indicate that many learners in the Zambezi Region are not learning using their mother tongue as medium of instruction.

The potential negative consequences of teaching and learning using English as medium of instruction in the Junior Primary phase are ignored by both teachers, school principals and parents in the Zambezi region on the premise that nothing justifies the use of Silozi as mother tongue when in actual essence majority of learners have a mother tongue other than Silozi.

Among numerous other challenges, the preferences of an English medium in the junior primary phase expressed by both teachers and parents in this study ignore findings pointed out by Wolfaardt (2001) who through her investigation of language policy in Namibian schools found numerous inhibitions in using English as a medium of instruction. Responses from teachers, parents and school principals downplay research findings indicating that teachers are not confident to teach in English with negative implications for learners' performance (Simasiku et al., 2015; Wolfaardt & Schier, 2011) but rather assume teaching using the English medium in the junior primary phase would be more beneficial to learners in the long run compared to instruction in Silozi.

5.4 Teaching methods/strategies used by junior primary phase teachers to increase learner's communicative proficiency in Silozi

The findings of this study showed that majority of teachers recognise that the junior primary syllabus encourages the learner centred approach and that teaching and learning in that phase of schooling is built on Communicative Language Teaching. Responses from teachers in the questionnaires and observation of classroom sessions revealed a mixture of teaching methods and the use of strategies such as storytelling,

singing and repetition. Code mixing was used frequently to compensate for lack of Silozi vocabulary. Teachers employed various teaching aids such as flashcards and posters during classroom instruction.

5.5 Conclusions

The perspectives of most teachers, parents and school principals who formed part of this study confirm findings by Kangumu (2009) and Mbala et al. (1995) which consider the designation of Silozi as mother tongue as presumptuous given that the majority of people in the Zambezi Region, do not support Silozi as a medium of instruction and neither is it the majority language of communication. A study conducted in the Zambezi Region by Maemeko et al. (2017) on teachers' perceptions of the causes of poor performance in Grade 12 also shows that educators prefer the use of English as a medium of instruction from grade one in hope this would remedy the poor communicative abilities of learners by the time they are in Grade 12.

All teachers, principals and parents' responses show that learners' inability to communicate in Silozi impedes school progression and has negative consequences for learning in the junior primary phase with negative implications in the upper primary phase. Results from the 2010 SAQMEG study show that 38.7 percent of Namibian Grade 6 learners could not read for meaning in English (IIEP, 2010) while the National Standardised Achievement Tests (SATS) revealed that 45% of Grade 5 learners have an English second language proficiency lower the basic achievement level (Mupupa, 2014). The lower levels of achievement on standardised tests for primary school learners in English could be, among other reasons, due to poorly developed first languages which are a foundation for learning new languages (Aitchison, 1992; Baker, 2006).

However, it is important for the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture to note that, in the Zambezi Region, Silozi is used as medium of instruction in schools although it is not the home language for most learners (Kangumu, 2009). Learning in an unfamiliar school language has adverse negative consequences on current and future learning (Mkandawire, 2017; Malone, 2012).

There is a profound connection between language and concepts of culture and identity and the language used for instruction can reflect or manifest wider societal inequalities (Skutnabb-Kangas, 2000). The use of a language other than a child's mother tongue creates inequalities in education. When combined with other factors such as poverty, lack of access to stimulating educational materials, instruction in a language other than mother tongue may impede school progression and retention or as Baker (2006) states, the language of instruction itself, becomes a barrier to learning.

The education system in the junior primary phase in the Zambezi is a fertile breeding ground for semilinguals with no clear mastery of any of their languages. It is evident that parents have noted difficulties in communication among their junior primary school children in Silozi thus their advocacy for schools to adopt an English medium. The surface fluency learners might achieve learning using Silozi as a medium of instruction might only lead to attainment of Basic Communication Skills without attainment of Academic Language Communicative Proficiency in Silozi. This is some form of submersion programme with negative consequences for learners who are denied a solid foundation in their mother tongue as observed by Wolfaardt (2005).

The language environment in the Zambezi Region might affect teaching and learning in the junior primary phase as language proficiency and competence of the learners and teachers in Silozi may impede pedagogical delivery, transfer and retention of

information and knowledge due to semilingualism or double semilingualism. Based on findings from the teachers, school principals and parents, the duration for mastering communicative basics and what Cummins (2000) refers to as ‘Academic Language Use’ of Silozi in the Junior Primary phase for learners in the Zambezi Region might be delayed given their developmental status at junior primary, length of time within which they are expected to learn Silozi and be instructed in it, complexity of the language environment between school, home and the community versus educational expectations.

It was also evident that classrooms in the Zambezi Region are multilingual and teachers are not trained in utilising languages as resources for learning. Translanguaging, a pedagogical approach that accepts the dynamic use of resources from multiple languages for multilinguals is not encouraged despite parents and teachers acknowledging communicative challenges among children in junior primary schools in the region. According to Jha (2021, p. 9) “Multilingual classrooms are unique and “the use of language needs to be different in a multilingual classroom”.

It is evident when examining the medium of instruction conundrum in the Zambezi region based on perspectives from teachers and parents that most learners begin learning in Silozi as a second language. If language skills and learning are indeed co-dependent as postulated by the Developmental Interdependence Hypothesis (DIH) (Cummins, 2000a, 2000b), learners in the Zambezi region do not benefit from competence in their mother tongue as a resource for learning and are investing resources in learning Silozi while also grasping subject content. Most learners in the Zambezi region encounter Silozi medium of instruction for the first time in grade one and based on Cummins theory, they are likely to leave the Junior Primary phase

without knowing how Silozi can be used in context reduced academic situations as assumed by Cummins (2000a, 2000b).

Research shows that learners learn best when they attain proficiency in the language which is their mother tongue (Baker, 2006; Cummins, 2001; Phiri et al., 2013; Krashen, 2004). Wolff (2017, p. 16) asserts that “speakers who have learned a language as ‘additional’ to their first and mother tongue language will, unless in very favourable environments, hardly ever be able to fully compete with native speakers of this language” as situation relatively similar to what junior primary school learners in the Zambezi Region are confronted with.

Despite concerns relating to the use of Silozi as a medium of instruction in the Zambezi Region, any shift to using local languages as medium of instruction may present other challenges as many of the languages do not have standardised orthography. Cummins (2000b) asserts that by using a language which is not well developed for writing, speaking, reading, or listening activities hinders effective performance of children’s cognitive system. Cummins’ findings demonstrate, presently, the unsustainability of using local languages for instruction in the Zambezi Region, a challenge parents, teachers and schools’ principals who formed part of this study recognised resulting in subdued advocacy for the use of local languages as medium of instruction. It was evident from classroom observations and responses from the teachers that local languages are not used as resource for learning and teachers are not encouraged and trained to use the linguistic diversity in their classrooms to improve learning outcomes. Jha (2021) postulates that using more than one language in a multilingual classroom requires extensive teacher training and optimal use of available resources.

5.6 Recommendations

- There is need for the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture to invest in local language orthography. Development of standard orthography and instructional materials in local languages for instruction will therefore fulfil the educational promise of a mother tongue based medium of instruction in the junior primary phase in the Zambezi Region.
- There is further need for the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture to put in place parental engagement and teaching methods/strategies to increase parent, teacher and child interactive communication in Silozi and ensure availability of Silozi learning materials and resources within schools and communities in the Zambezi Region if Silozi is to continue as medium of instruction on the junior primary phase.

5.7 Chapter summary

This chapter discussed the findings of the study based on the following objectives: perceptions of parents, teachers, school principals and advisory teachers towards the use of Silozi as a medium of instruction: influence of Silozi as a medium of instruction in the junior primary phase on teaching and learning in the Zambezi Region: teaching methods/strategies used by junior primary phase teachers to increase learner's communicative proficiency in Silozi. The data revealed perceptions held by parents, teachers, school principals on the use of Silozi as medium of instruction, how the use of Silozi as medium of instruction influences teaching and learning and the instructional strategies used by teachers to increase the learners' communicative proficiency in Silozi. The chapter concludes with a summary of key interpretations by

way of conclusion and recommendations within the realm of the current Namibian Language Policy Framework.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A. Ethical Clearance Certificate

 **UNAM**
UNIVERSITY OF NAMIBIA

ETHICAL CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

Ethical Clearance Reference Number: FOE /268/2017 Date: 18 October, 2017

This Ethical Clearance Certificate is issued by the University of Namibia Research Ethics Committee (UREC) in accordance with the University of Namibia's Research Ethics Policy and Guidelines. Ethical approval is given in respect of undertakings contained in the Research Project outlined below. This Certificate is issued on the recommendations of the ethical evaluation done by the Faculty/Centre/Campus Research & Publications Committee sitting with the Postgraduate Studies Committee.

Title of Project: The Influence Of Silozi As Medium Of Instruction On Literacy In Junior Primary Schools: A Case Study Of Four Schools In The Zambezi Education Region

Researcher: Bravoh Linosi

Student Number :200033808

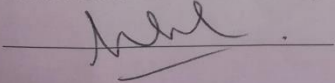
Faculty: Faculty of Education

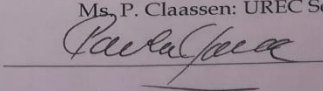
Supervisors: Dr. D. Wolfaardt (Main) (Co) Dr. L. Simasiku

Take note of the following:

- (a) Any significant changes in the conditions or undertakings outlined in the approved Proposal must be communicated to the UREC. An application to make amendments may be necessary.
- (b) Any breaches of ethical undertakings or practices that have an impact on ethical conduct of the research must be reported to the UREC.
- (c) The Principal Researcher must report issues of ethical compliance to the UREC (through the Chairperson of the Faculty/Centre/Campus Research & Publications Committee) at the end of the Project or as may be requested by UREC.
- (d) The UREC retains the right to:
 - (i) Withdraw or amend this Ethical Clearance if any unethical practices (as outlined in the Research Ethics Policy) have been detected or suspected,
 - (ii) Request for an ethical compliance report at any point during the course of the research.

UREC wishes you the best in your research.

Prof. P. Odonkor: UREC Chairperson


Ms. P. Claassen: UREC Secretary


Appendix B. Letter Requesting Permission from the Permanent Secretary



REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, ARTS AND CULTURE

Tel: +264 61 -2933200/86
Fax: +264 61- 2933922
Enquiries: C. Muchila/G Munene
Email: Cavin.Muchila@moe.gov.na/gm12munene@yahoo.co.uk

Luther Street, Govt. Office Park
Private Bag 13186
Windhoek
Namibia

File no: 11/1/1

Mr. Bravoh Linosi
Private Bag 10936
Khomasdal, Windhoek
Cell: 081 474 4025
Email: bravolinosi@gmail.com

Dear Mr. Linosi

SUBJECT: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN ZAMBEZI REGION

Kindly be informed that permission to conduct research for your Master's Degree in "The Influence of Silozi Mother Tongue Instruction on Literacy in Junior Primary Schools; A Case Study in Zambezi Education Region" is herewith granted. You are further requested to present the letter of approval to the Regional Director to ensure that research ethics are adhered to and disruption of curriculum delivery is avoided.

Furthermore, we humbly request you to share your research findings with the ministry. You may contact Mr C. Muchila/ Mr. G. Munene at the Directorate: Programmes and Quality Assurance (PQA) for provision of summary of your research findings.

I wish you the best in conducting your research and I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely yours


SANET L. STEENKAMP
PERMANENT SECRETARY
Private Bag 13188
Windhoek, Namibia

25/10/17
Date

Appendix C. Letter Requesting Permission from the Regional Director

Private Bag 10936
Khomasdal
Namibia

26 January 2018

The Regional Director
Zambezi Education Region

Dear Sir

RE: REQUEST TO A CONDUCT A RESEARCH STUDY IN THE ZAMBEZI EDUCATION REGION

I hereby write to ask for permission to conduct a study at four selected primary schools (in your education region). I am a final year student doing a Master of Education at the University of Namibia. The study will be in partial fulfillment of my Master of Education degree (M Ed) which should be completed in the academic year 2018.

Attached is a letter from the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture granting permission to conduct this study. The title of my research is; **Influence of Silozi as a medium of instruction (MoI) on Literacy in Junior Primary schools; A Case Study of four schools in the Zambezi Education Region.** The purpose of the study will be to investigate perceptions of teachers, school principals, parents and advisory teachers on the influence of using Silozi as Medium of Instruction (MoI) on literacy in the Junior Primary schools. The researcher will administer questionnaires to the advisory teacher for African Languages, school principals and teachers while semi structured interviews will be conducted with 3 parents from each of the four selected schools. Classroom observations will be conducted to gather information on the classroom environment, language usage, code switching, Mother tongue Instruction (MTI) teaching and learning strategies used by teachers.

The four selected schools that will form part of this study are **Sibbinda Primary School, Mavuluma Primary School, Greenwell Matongo Primary School and Bukalo Primary School.** I provide assurance that the researcher will not interfere/disrupt curricula activities in schools during the process of data collection. Participation in this study will be voluntary and participants can withdraw at any time. Participants will not be paid for their participation in this study.

I can be contacted on the following number if further clarification is required in this regard. 0814744025/0811421897

The response could be emailed to bravolinosi@gmail.com

Thank you in advance,
Yours Faithfully,
Bravo Linosi

Appendix D. Semi Structured Interview Questions for Parents

Date of Interview.....

Venue.....

Introductory Statement.

My name is Bravoh Linosi, a student doing a Master of Education at the University of Namibia. I am conducting research on the Influence of Silozi as Medium of Instruction (MoI) on Literacy in Junior Primary schools. A Case Study of Four Schools in the Zambezi region.

The interview will be guided by a series of prepared questions.

1. Indicate which age group are you:

Under 20	
20- 25	
26– 31	
32– 37	
38– 43	
44– 49 +	

2. What is your level of Education?
3. What is your home language(s)?
4. What language would you prefer to be the medium of instruction in the junior primary phase?
5. What is the language used for communication in your household?
6. Do you support the use of Silozi as a Medium of Instruction?
7. Do your children use Silozi at home?
8. How would you describe the language capabilities of your children in Silozi when they start the Junior Primary Phase?
9. Do your children have Silozi reading materials at home?

10. What do you think of using Silozi as MoI in the Junior Primary Phase?
11. What do you consider as advantages for teaching using Silozi as MoI in the Junior Primary Phase?
12. What are the disadvantages for teaching using Silozi as MoI in the Junior Primary Phase?
13. What can be done by parents to enhance learners' proficiency in Silozi?

Thank you for sparing some of your time to participate in this discussion.

Appendix E. Teachers' Questionnaire

School Code	
Teacher No	

Dear Teacher

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for completion of the Master of Education Degree at the University of Namibia, I am required to conduct research and collect data relating to the subject of my study. This questionnaire seeks information from junior primary school teachers on the influence of using Silozi as Medium of Instruction (MoI) on Literacy in the Junior Primary Phase in the Zambezi Region.

Instructions

- You are kindly requested to assist me by completing the questionnaire.
- Please answer all the questions as honestly as possible.
- Return completed questionnaire to the school principal after 1 day from date of issue
- Do not write your name on the questionnaires.
- All information given in this study will be treated confidentially and data collected for the research will be kept in a safe and retained for a year. The information obtained will not be used in any way that impacts on your personal and professional career.

SECTION A; PERSONAL INFORMATION

Mark your choices with X

1. Indicate whether you are:

Male	
Female	

2. Indicate which age group are you:

Under 20	
20 – 25	
26 – 31	
32 – 37	
38 – 43	
44 – 49	
50 – 55	
56 and above	

3. Please indicate which one is your Home Language

Chifwe	
Chisubia	
Yeyi	
Mbalangwe	
Totela	
Other (Please specify)	

4. Please indicate which language you mostly use at home

English	
Cifwe	
Cisubia	
Yeyi	
Mbalangwe	
Totela	
Other (Please specify)	

5. Please indicate the highest academic qualification you hold

Qualification	
Diploma	
Higher Diploma	
Degree	
Honours' Degree	
Master's degree	
PhD	

6. How many years of Junior Primary Phase teaching experience do you have after completion of your professional qualification?

Years of Experience	
0 – 5	
6 – 10	
11 – 16	
17 - 22	
23 and above	

7. What is the position you occupy in your school?

Head of Department	
Teacher	

8. What is the average class size of the class (es) you teach?

Less than 20 learners	
20 – 25 learners	
26 – 31 learners	
32 – 37 learners	
38 – 43 learners	
44 learners and above	

SECTION B; INFLUENCE OF USING SILOZI AS MOTHER TONGUE INSTRUCTION IN THE JUNIOR PRIMARY PHASE.

The following statements are about the influence of using Silozi MoI in the Junior Primary Phase. Please indicate the extent to which you agree with each statement by choosing one of the following with an (X): Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD).

1-Strongly Agree 2- Agree 3- Disagree 4- Strongly Disagree 5-Neutral

Perspectives	SA	A	D	SD	N
---------------------	-----------	----------	----------	-----------	----------

1. I am fluent in Silozi					
2. I speak Silozi in the school and at home					
3. My learners understand me when I speak Silozi					
4. I believe using Silozi as MoI prepares learners well in their early years of schooling					
5. When teaching, I use both Silozi and local dialects to make my learners understand (Code Switching)					
6. I prepare my lessons in Silozi					
7. I have received training in teaching the Junior Primary Phase using Silozi MoI					
8. I have received continuous capacity development training in teaching through Silozi MoI					
9. Parents have positive attitudes towards Silozi and Silozi MoI					
10. Parents have negative attitudes towards Silozi					
11. Parents support learners with homework in Silozi					
12. Parents support learners with homework in Silozi					
13. The school has sufficient Silozi reading materials (books, newspapers etc.)					

14. Classrooms are not too crowded to allow teachers to assist learners					
15. The school timetable provides time for compensatory teaching for learners who struggle in Silozi					
16. The school Language Policy and the environment encourages the use of Silozi					
17. The school principal and head of department monitor and reinforce the use of Silozi as MoI					
18. The Silozi Syllabus for Junior Primary is appropriate for learning and teaching					
19. The curriculum allows for explanation of Silozi concepts in learners' local dialects					
20. There is sufficient support from subject advisors for Junior Primary Teachers teaching using Silozi MoI					

21. What instructional method (s) do you use in the classroom when teaching using Silozi MoI?

Lecture Method	
Collaborative	
Demonstrator	
Facilitator	
Delegator or group style	
Hybrid or blended style	

Other (Please Specify)	
------------------------	--

22. What are the challenges you experience when teaching using Silozi MoI?

I have difficulties understanding Silozi Orthography	
My learners have limited proficiency in Silozi	
There is limited professional support for Silozi MoI teachers	
Interest in learning in Silozi is low among learners	

23. Should Silozi as Medium of Instruction continue as a in the Junior Primary Phase?

Yes	
No	

Give reason(s) for your answer.....

.....

24. How can teaching using Silozi MoI at Junior Primary Phase be improved?

.....

Thank you for sparing some of your time to complete this questionnaire.

Appendix F. Principal’s Questionnaire

Circuit Code	
Respondent Code	

Dear School Principal

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for completion of the Master of Education Degree at the University of Namibia, I am required to conduct research and collect data relating to the subject of my study. This questionnaire seeks information from school principals on the influence of using Silozi as MoI in the Junior Primary Phase in the Zambezi Region.

Instructions

- You are kindly requested to assist me by completing the questionnaire.
- Please answer all the questions as honestly as possible.
- Return completed questionnaire to me after 1 day from date of issue
- Do not write your name on the questionnaires.
- All information given in this study will be treated confidentially and data collected for the research will be kept in a safe and retained for a year. The information obtained will not be used in any way that impacts on your personal and professional career.

SECTION A; PERSONAL INFORMATION

Mark your choices with X

1. Indicate whether you are;

Male	
Female	

2. What is your Home Language?

English	
Chifwe	
Chisubia	
Yeyi	
Mbalangwe	
Totela	
Other (Please specify)	

4. Please indicate your highest qualification

Qualification	
Diploma	
Higher Diploma	
Degree	
Honours' Degree	
Master's degree	
PhD	

3. How many Junior Primary classes do you have in your school?

.....

SECTION B; INFLUENCE OF USING SILOZI AS MOTHER TONGUE INSTRUCTION IN THE JUNIOR PRIMARY PHASE.

The following statements are about the influence of using Silozi as Mother tongue Instruction in the Junior Primary Phase. Please indicate the extent to which you agree with each statement by choosing one of the following with an (X): Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD).

1-strongly Agree 2- Agree 3- Disagree 4- Strongly Disagree 5-Neutral

Perspectives	SA	A	D	SD	N
1. I support the use of Silozi as Medium of Instruction (MoI)					
2. I have received training as a school principal in teaching using Silozi as MoI					
3. There are opportunities for capacity development for teachers in the Junior Primary Phase					
4. I am fluent in speaking Silozi					
5. I speak Silozi at home					
6. Teachers support the use of Silozi as MoI in the Junior Primary Phase					
7. I believe using Silozi as MoI prepares learners well in their early years of schooling					
8. I supervise and observe instructional delivery in of teachers in the Junior Primary Phase					
9. Teachers are fluent in Silozi and able to teach using Silozi as MoI					
10. Parents support learners who are learning Silozi as a MoI					
11. Parents have negative attitudes towards Silozi					

12. Parents have negative attitudes towards Silozi					
13. Parents provide materials such as Silozi newspapers, books and magazines to help learners learn in Silozi					
14. Parents support learners with homework in Silozi					
15. The school language policy and environment encourage the use of Silozi					
16. I monitor teachers and the head of department to ensure use of Silozi MoI in the Junior Primary Phase					
17. The school has sufficient Silozi reading materials (books, newspapers etc.)					
18. Classrooms are not too crowded to allow teachers to assist learners					
19. The Silozi Syllabus for Junior Primary is appropriate for learning and teaching					
20. The curriculum allows for explanation of Silozi concepts in learners' local dialects					
21. The school timetable provides time for compensatory teaching for learners who have learning difficulties in Silozi					
22. There is sufficient support from subject advisors for junior primary teachers teaching using Silozi as MoI					

3. Based on your supervision of teaching and learning in your school, do you support continued use of Silozi as MoI in the Junior Primary schools in the Zambezi region?

.....
.....
.....

4. What are the challenges on the use of Silozi as MoI in the Junior Primary Phase?

.....
.....
.....

5. What strategies can teachers and schools employ to overcome the challenges above?

.....
.....
.....

Thank you for sparing some of your time to complete this questionnaire

Appendix G. Advisory Teacher’s Questionnaire
Advisory Teacher

Respondent Code	
------------------------	--

Dear Advisory Teacher

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for completion of the Master of Education Degree at the University of Namibia, I am required to conduct research and collect data relating to the subject of my study. This questionnaire seeks information from advisory teachers on the influence of using Silozi as a medium of instruction(MoI) in the Junior Primary Phase in the Zambezi Region.

Instructions

- You are kindly requested to assist me by completing the questionnaire.
- Please answer all the questions as honestly as possible.
- Return completed questionnaire to me after 1 day.
- Do not write your name on the questionnaire.
- All information given in this study will be treated confidentially and data collected for the research will be kept in a safe and retained for a year. The information obtained will not be used in any way that impacts on your personal and professional career.

SECTION A; PERSONAL INFORMATION

Mark your choices with X

1. Indicate whether you are;

Male	
Female	

2. How many schools do you oversee?

5– 10 Schools	
11–16	
17– 22	
23 – 28	
29–34	
35 and above	

3. What is your Home Language?

Chifwe	
Chisubia	
Yeyi	
Mbalangwe	
Totela	
Other (Please specify)	

4. Please indicate your highest qualification

Qualification	
Diploma	
Higher Diploma	
Degree	
Honours' Degree	
Master's degree	
PhD	

SECTION B: INFLUENCE OF USING SILOZI AS MOTHER TONGUE INSTRUCTION IN THE JUNIOR PRIMARY PHASE

The following statements are about the influence of using Silozi as Medium of Instruction in the Junior Primary Phase. Please indicate the extent to which you agree with each statement by choosing one of the following with an (X): Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD).

1-Strongly Agree 2- Agree 3- Disagree 4- Strongly Disagree 5-Neutral

Perspectives	SA	A	D	SD	N
1. I support the use of Silozi as Medium of Instruction (MoI)					
2. I have expertise to provide advisory support to teachers teaching through Silozi MoI					
3. There are opportunities for capacity development for teachers in the Junior Primary Phase					
4. I am fluent in speaking Silozi					
5. I speak Silozi at home					
6. Teachers support the use of Silozi as MoI in the Junior Primary Phase					
7. I believe using Silozi MoI prepares learners well in their early years of schooling					
8. I supervise and observe subject matter delivery in Junior Primary Schools					
9. Teachers are fluent in Silozi and able to teach using Silozi MoI					

10. Parents support learners who are learning through Silozi MoI					
11. Parents have negative attitudes towards Silozi					
12. Parents have positive attitudes towards Silozi					
13. Parents provide materials such as Silozi newspapers, books and magazines to help learners learn in Silozi					
14. Parents support learners with homework in Silozi					
15. The school language policy and environment encourages the use of Silozi					
16. The school principal and head of department monitor and reinforce the use of Silozi MoI					
17. The school has sufficient Silozi reading materials (books, newspapers etc.)					
18. Classrooms are not too crowded to allow teachers to assist learners					
19. Learners have access to electronic and visual aids to help them learn using Silozi MoI					
20. The Silozi Syllabus for junior primary is appropriate for learning and teaching					

21. The curriculum allows for explanation of Silozi concepts in learners' local dialects					
22. The school timetable provides time for compensatory teaching for learners who have learning difficulties in Silozi					
23. There is sufficient support from subject advisors, principals and other teachers for Junior Primary teachers teaching using Silozi MoI					

3. Please describe the type of support you give to teachers, school principals and schools in order to ensure effective instruction using Silozi MoI.

.....

4. What are the challenges of using Silozi MoI in the Junior Primary Phase?

.....

5. How can learning and teaching of using Silozi as a Medium of Instruction be improved?

.....

Thank you for sparing some of your time to complete this questionnaire.

Appendix H: Observation Checklist

Date of Observation.....

Number of Learners.....

Subject.....

Teacher Code.....

Home Languages/First Languages spoken by learners

LANGUAGE	NUMBER OF SPEAKERS
English	
Cifwe	
Cisubia	
Yeyi	
Mbalangwe	
Totela	
Other (Please specify)	

Classroom Observation	Yes	No	Comments												
1. Teaching Methods															
1.1.Lesson preparation done in Silozi/English															
1.2.Lesson conducted in Silozi using MTI															
1.3.Teacher code switches between languages during class															
1.4.Learners' use of home languages for concepts they do not know or understand in Silozi															
1.5.Learners participate in the class using only Silozi															
1.6.Learners have good command of Silozi															
1.7.There is sufficient reading materials in Silozi in the class															
1.8.Teacher employs different teaching methods to enhance learning using Silozi as MoI															
<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Lecture Method</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Collaborative</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Demonstrator</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Facilitator</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Delegator or group style</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Hybrid or blended style</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	Lecture Method		Collaborative		Demonstrator		Facilitator		Delegator or group style		Hybrid or blended style				
Lecture Method															
Collaborative															
Demonstrator															
Facilitator															
Delegator or group style															
Hybrid or blended style															

2. Classroom Environment			
2.1. Classroom size conducive for teaching and learning			
2.2. There are materials that advance literacy through Silozi			
2.3. Learners' informal conversations in the classroom are in Silozi			
2.4. Teachers' conversations are in Silozi			