

**FORMULATING EFFECTIVE POLICY: ISSUES IN
LANGUAGE AND EDUCATION IN MALAWI**

by

Cromwell Themba Moyo

BA (Malawi) Dip. Ling. (ELT) (Exeter) MA (Essex)

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SUPERVISOR : Professor L Z M Khumalo
MA (UZ) STD Ph.D. (Natal)

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Dedicated to my parents: the late Rev. William Davidson Moyo and the late
Mrs Alice NyaSingini Moyo

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ABSTRACT

The primary intention of this study is that it will contribute to the theoretical and practical body of knowledge in the development of how effective policies are formulated, implemented and evaluated. The study therefore hopes to go some way towards contributing to knowledge in adequate planning and implementation of policy statements based on procedures offered by professionals. In this light the main debate is between linguistic conservatism and linguistic pragmatism. Here the study seeks to explore how the conflicts between these two views could possibly be reduced, if planning could focus more on domains and contexts of national language use.

This process of narrower focusing, it is hoped, should be thoroughly informed by real and serious effort to integrate language policy with actual language use. This is in the hope that such an approach could lead to the identification and the addressing of language problems in Malawi- problems which are incompatible with the realisation of more substantive goals for all citizens. These include language in early education and language for access to social, economic and political development for all.

Emerging from this study is the revelation that there is the absence of congruence between what policies stipulate and the practice on the ground. This incompatibility has led to a situation where languages are used for the benefit of agendas for politicians and the elite in achieving their goals at the expense of other indigenous languages being used as instructional media and other regional and national purposes.

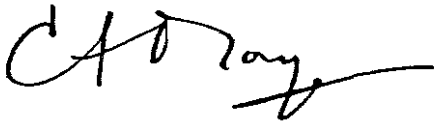
The study therefore argues that language policies should be seen in the context of the roles they serve, the interest of the state and the various ethnolinguistic groups that the country has within its structure. As a state function, language policies should act as vehicles of transforming multilingual societies, through linguistic empowerment in which other ethnolinguistic groups do not feel threatened or excluded in the socio-economic and political advancement of the national life.

The existence of the hegemony of particular chosen or selected languages, as we observe in this study, is the result of the predominance of undemocratic structures established by the status quo. The argument, therefore, is that linguistic diversity should be the norm in policy decision-making. The analysis of the current policies in Malawi reveals that a democratic commitment toward policy formulation translates into a struggle for language rights for all towards access and attainment of individual and national growth through equity in language use.

Emanating from the findings from both the field study and secondary sources, suggestions of how an effective policy should be formulated are proposed, along with suggestions for further research related to this area of study.

DECLARATION

I declare that this thesis is my original work composed by myself. Further, I have acknowledged all sources that have been used.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C T MOYO', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

C T MOYO

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Chapter one

ORIENTATION OF THE STUDY

1. Introduction

The formulation of language policies is a truly complex and contested exercise. This is not only because of the various interests involved, but also because it is set in a matrix of equally complex socio-economic policies. The main thrust of this study is the language debate between linguistic conservatism and linguistic pragmatism. The study seeks to explore how the conflicts between these two views could possibly be reduced, if planning focused more narrowly on actual domains and contexts of natural language use.

The process of narrower focusing should be informed by real and serious effort to integrate language planning with actual language use. The approach could lead to the identification and thus the addressing of language problems in Malawi, which are currently incompatible with the realisation of more substantive goals for all, - goals in such areas as early education, the attainment of national unity and in issues of modernisation.

This incompatibility has led to a situation where languages are used for the benefit of politicians and elite agendas in achieving minority goals at the expense of the use of other indigenous languages, either as instructional media or for use in various localised contexts. In this, language planning and policy decision-making would mean finding solutions to these language problems faced by the various communities or ethnic groups. This is in the overall language policy and the language policy in education. This is whether these languages are sufficiently adequate as tools for instruction in schools, for creative work and as forms of exchange of knowledge and scientific information for educational, socio-economic and political life of the citizenry.

1.1 Background to the problem

There has been no clearly defined language policy for Malawi since the attainment of independence in 1964. It could be argued then that Malawi does not have a language policy but it has a language agenda. This is attributed to the fact that for thirty years of post-colonial rule, all matters of state were singularly vested in Dr Banda's autocratic rule. The situation was such that it would not be questioned with regard to need to research and spell out language policy in documents. Policy matters emerged as incidental statements pronounced on political platforms, or from speeches delivered at different occasions or institutions, which were based on linguistic studies. In the light of this situation, therefore, there is need for the provision of a researched procedure, the formulation of an informed language policy and education language policy. Issues of status and corpus planning are complex and need to be clearly formulated, documented and made public. The situation in Malawi is that they are non-existent and whatever exists is by gleaning through haphazard political speeches summarised into official government documents.

1.2 Objectives of the study

This study has two main aims. The first is theoretical and the second methodological. Theoretically the study seeks to explore what is entailed in language planning processes and its implications, with the aim of identifying the basic tenets in policy formulation which has hitherto not been adhered to in the context Malawi.

Methodologically, the study seeks to highlight the different variables to be considered in a multilingual society before we can attempt to formulate any language policy at all. It is anticipated that the study will in some way contribute to the knowledge toward the development of a more comprehensive language policy and the language in education policy. This would be one that entrenches equity in the use of other indigenous languages and the proper use of mother tongue in education. These objectives would include the following:

- That there be the inclusion of social policy making where the elevation and use of indigenous languages is implemented.
- That there be a promotion of socio-economic and political advancement for all the citizenry. This might avoid the creation of ethnic tensions based on the exclusion of the use of some languages. For example, this is for wider communication in the media, on the radio and in some print media.

1.3 Significance of the study

The primary significance of the study is that from the overall research and findings it is hoped that politicians, language decision makers and language planners alike, would be enabled to base their policy statements on informed facts for pragmatic reasons. Attempts at such appropriate decisions would in the long run, hopefully, form a long a clear informed base, where citizens do not feel excluded or marginalised in the use of their local language in surrounding them.

The secondary significance is that this study seeks to attempt to contribute to the theoretical and practical knowledge in the development of how the concepts of 'national unity' and 'modernisation' are to be realised, by users of local languages in the debate on the project of national integration. This is linguistic development, socio-economic and political development, as all these cannot be divorced from each other in the consideration of overall issues of national development for all.

The thesis will thus attempt to argue that the contribution might enhance the effectiveness of national and educational outcomes, while at the same time this might lead to the strengthening of the integrity of the nation state itself. It is important for a study of this nature to critically evaluate current language policies in Malawi which do not serve both national and educational interests. The contribution of this study is therefore seen in the knowledge it seeks to contribute in adequate planning and implementation of policy statements.

1.4 Limitation of the study

This study, however, restricts itself to theoretical tenets in language planning processes, what studies inform us on the debate in language planning, issues of implementation as opposed to empty political rhetoric and the views and preferences of various users of local languages, English and other foreign languages in Malawi. While the sample of respondents in the study is perhaps not sufficiently representative of the entire population, it, nonetheless, hopes to raise issues where we can argue that the data gathered, although on a small scale compared with the entire population, will represent views of users of different cross sections of the population, thereby validating them in this respect.

1.5 Hypotheses

The following conditions are assumed:

- The national language policy and the language in education policy are fragmented, poorly planned and incoherent. This is in the sense that they both do not have vision, clarity and fail to accommodate sociocultural and educational interests of various speakers and users.
- The status and use of local languages in mass communication and as tools for the general upliftment of the citizenry is unclear and suffers from lack of implementation.
- The absence of implementation of the verbally pronounced policy statements has tended to create ethnic tensions with socio-economic and political implications requiring address.

1.6 Definition of concepts

It is important to signpost the reader on the frequently-used terms in this area of study to clarify matters and thus avoid misinterpretation.

1.6.1 Official language

An official language is one that is employed in documentation in government, courts of law, in wider educational contexts, in commerce and industry and also in other official business concerns. Such a language need not be indigenous to the country, but maybe a language of wider communication. In multilingual nations there maybe more than an official language, where other languages are also used in high domain functions, depending on the power of the language intranationally and internationally. For example, English is the official language and the language of power in Malawi and Chinyanja or Chichewa, the national language of power while the other five indigenous languages promoted to the official status remain official languages in name only.

1.6.2 National Language

In post-colonial Africa this refers to an indigenous lingua franca elevated to this status largely for mass communication purposes, in the media and for wider communication such as in the work place and in government. It is also used in sociocultural contexts. For example, kiSwahili in Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania, Chinyanja in Zambia and Malawi and isiZulu in South Africa. Mazrui (1967:13) calls this 'the language of the people' while in Kenya this is referred to as the language of the *wananchi*. A national language has been the reserve of an indigenous language, which is also usually viewed as official and, or co-official with another language and is used for important symbolic purposes.

From a linguistic perspective, the term essentially refers to political patriotic principles or efforts toward the project of national unity, through the adoption of common languages of wider communication and other forms of cultural expression for heritage purposes.

1.6.3 Modernisation

The term is related to national integration. It generally refers to upward social mobility. The implication is that the concept is inclusive of the upliftment of a people socially, economically and politically. This is not restricted to a selected few elite on the basis of linguistic and therefore ethnic alignment. The argument in the context of this study is that the notion of modernity in its wider understanding can only be attained through equitable use of languages along with other attendant variables. The exclusion of some viable languages in mass communication and in educational instruction implies that the excluded ethnic groups are disempowered and thus not placed on the modernisation path.

1.6.4 Language planning

This term is used to refer to a systematic attempt to solve communication problems of communities by studying the various languages or dialects used, and developing a realistic policy concerning the selection and use of different languages (Crystal, 1986: 174).

Wardhaugh (1986), on the other hand, defines this as an attempt to interfere deliberately or proceed somewhat haphazardly with a language or its varieties, focusing either on its status, or its internal condition with a view to changing that condition, resulting in intended results or unintended ones, thus in status planning or in corpus planning.

1.6.5 Status Planning

According to Wardhaugh (1986) the concept refers to a state that changes the function of a language or its variety and the rights of those who use it. For example, these would be speakers of a minority language or dialect who are denied the use of their language in educating their children, resulting in their language having no status. The concept of a status planning is relative and

actively contested, leaving strong residual feelings among users of different languages.

1.6.6 Corpus Planning

The term seeks the development of a language or its variety, usually to standardise it and provide it with all the support and means for possible function in society. It may involve the development of an orthography, as the case is with Chinyanja or Chichewa in Malawi, which has, to some considerable extent, undergone orthographical change, with new sources of vocabulary cultivation of new uses in trade, commerce and education.

1.7 Structure of the thesis

A description of the chapter of the thesis simultaneously indicates its overall scope. Altogether the thesis contains eight chapters. In chapter two the theoretical framework on language planning principles is reviewed, focusing specifically on what is entailed in language planning processes and a discussion of some of the more consistent models acceptable in sound policies. This literature review chapter concludes by proposing a framework, which, it is argued, is theoretically and pragmatically sound in the context of the area of study, Malawi.

Chapter three provides a brief history of the country from the colonial times to present, and outlines the sociolinguistic description of Malawi. The provision of this is on the understanding that the conception of an effective language policy, can best be formulated if a clear exposition of the composition of the peoples who came to inhabit what is now Malawi is given.

Chapter four attempts to discuss the question of attitudes towards languages and peoples preferences from a theoretical perspective. This is deemed to be pertinent to this study as eventually, the formulation of any effective policy is largely dependent on the attitudes, views and preferences of the users of the languages in given situations. Chapter five has

three main aims. First, it identifies the central instrument for the gathering of the primary data. Secondly it provides the rationale for the selection of the instrument through this mode. Finally, the chapter provides a justification for the selection of this instrument as its main methodological choice.

Chapter six gives the exposition, discussion and interpretation of the results of the survey conducted. Chapter seven raises pertinent issues of the role and function of local languages in national and in educational life, the issue of formulating an effective policy based on what the facts seem to lead to. The issue of implementation will be discussed and suggestions for a review of the present policy statements will be made, both national and the language in education policy. The final chapter, chapter eight, contains a summary of the more important findings in regard to the hypotheses formulated in chapter one. Following this suggestions for future research are made and outlined.

Chapter Two

A LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORIES OF LANGUAGE PLANNING

Scope of the review

2.0 Introduction

The review falls into seven parts. The first part takes a brief look at the concept of language planning and the activities involved in such planning. This is done to provide a framework within which the Malawian case can eventually be examined. The second part looks at language processes and is followed by procedures and determiners of language policies. This explains what needs to be followed before an effective policy can be formulated and implemented. The review then goes on to highlight some of the problems of language planning in post-colonial Africa. This will further enable us see and contextualise the nature of the problem with regard to language planning in the study.

Towards the end of the review two theoretical tenets are discussed as guiding principles to enable a given country to take appropriate steps in its formulation of effective language policies.

2.1 The concept of language planning

The concept of language planning variously encompasses a number of activities. According to Karam (1974), this, *inter alia*, might include the development of mother tongues into national languages, a consideration of conflicting language loyalties, systems script reforms and the development of writing systems depending on the setting. A more explicit definition of language planning sees it as a 'government authorized long-term, conscious effort to alter a language's function in society for the purpose of solving communication problems.' (Weinstein, 1980:56, in Wardhaugh, 1992, 346). Wardhaugh (1992) contends that the activity involves the assessing of resources available, the

complex problems of decision-making and the assigning of different functions to different languages or their varieties. The point, for our purposes, however, is to note that it can take a variety of forms which can, in the end, yield different kinds of results. Further to this Wardhaugh (1992) observes that almost all countries will have some form of language planning which is either directly sanctioned by government or done by default.

As a discipline a lot of effort has been expended on the construction of conceptual frameworks for thought on activities within language planning. According to Fishman (1974) 'language planning' has reference to the 'organised pursuit of solutions to language problems which are typical of most countries at the national level.' Again, what is essentially entailed here is the problem-solving character of language planning. In addition the term 'planning', by its very nature, involves taking decisions with a view to alternative strategies in attaining set goals (Rubin, 1973).

To understand the concept of language planning it is important to focus on plans dealt with in the process. Tauli's (1974) first argument is that this deals with the problem of improving language as a vehicle of communication, thus referring to criteria such as beauty, clarity and economy. Jerrud and Das Gupta (1971) reject this purity view, particularly on the criteria's reference to beauty as all languages are intrinsically beautiful.

Their main argument is that problems in language planning are inescapably political and social in character. This view is shared by Rubin (1973) and Ferguson (1985) who also suggest that language problems arise within a social and political framework, which implies that language planning has to consider the facts of languages in their contexts. This includes the socio-political motivation, which is not necessarily the technical linguistic aspect of these problems. Thus the socio-political dimension gives language planning a multi-disciplinary flavour, which raises issues such as who gets involved in languages, their scope, their activities and limitation, if any.

2.2 Language planning activities

The dichotomies involved in language planning include policy versus cultivation (Nenstupny, 1974, and Ferguson, 1985) and allocation versus planning (Gorman, 1973), and language cultivation versus language policy (Paulston, 1974). There is considerable confusion in the use of the concept of language policy in language planning. Noss (1971:25 in Bamgbose 1991) gives a distinction among the three types of language policies, which we now need to explicitly explain.

An official language policy specifies the languages which a government recognises and their high or low domain functions. In this study it is important to note that a national language is viewed as part of the official language policy as it is considered as a symbol of national identity for the bulk of its population, where it has been widely and constantly used in the national life and mass media. (See Table 4).

A further distinction is, therefore, between a national language and an official language. For example, in this study, English in Malawi is not necessarily a symbol of national identity. It is only a language that is used in education, government, administration, which includes the judiciary, commerce and industry. An additional perspective is one from which Fasold (1984) says that an official language is known and spoken by a cadre of meducated citizens. Noss's (1971) observation and categorisation is that both the national and official languages form part of the overall official language policy. A second distinction that Noss makes refers to the educational language policy which includes those languages that are recognised by the education system to be used either as languages of classroom instruction or as subjects of study. The third language policy matter relates to a government's recognition of unofficial languages or its tolerance of other languages.

We now return to the dichotomies in language planning activities. A satisfactory division is one between corpus planning and status planning defined in chapter one, where the former involves changes in the language code or structure. This may involve the elaboration on vocabulary and other structural modifications such as spelling or script.

This is the standardisation of a language which might include the development of orthographies, grammar books and dictionaries. Such standardisation involves the planning of changes in the standing of a language in a given country or community. For example, when a language is designated as an official language, it becomes raised and its functions diversified, particularly as it takes on high domain functions, such as its use in government, business, parliament, education, commerce and industry, national political, etc. Thus while corpus planning is primarily code-oriented, status planning deals with societal functions performed by a language or a variety of a language in a country or given community. What is observable here is that the two are interrelated in the sense that a change in language status invariably requires 'the engineering of changes in the language corpus' (Ferguson, 1985:25).

2.3 Language Planning Processes

Haugen (1987), Hudson (1982, 1996), Trudgill (1983 b) and Schmiedt (1991) have outlined the essential processes in language planning, which may be summarised as follows:

- a) Selection of the norm. This includes the choice of a language variety which will serve as the basis of the standard language.
- b) Codification. This is a process whereby norms of correctness and appropriacy are stabilised. Essentially this involves the production of grammars and dictionaries referred to in 2.2 above.
- c) Implementation. This is the most neglected aspect of language planning which entails the effective dissemination of codified norms.
- d) Elaboration. This is a process by which a language or its variety may be chosen as the norm and is refined to serve its new functions more effectively. Invariably this

consists of developing or refining technical lexicon for scientific and technological use.

The concern in Haugen's (1983) construct was the development of this conceptual framework within language planning, whose primary aim was to explicate the operations by which a vernacular is developed into a standard language. In addition to standardisation, Fishman (1974) has argued that this might additionally also include the development of the writing system of a language and also modernisation, which in this respect refers to the translatability into and from other languages (Fishman, 1974 in Ferguson G. 1985). Fishman (1974) also argues that the result produces a matrix which, he claims, gives a fuller picture than any based on a single individual's framework.

2.4 Language Planning Procedures

Unlike corpus planning, status planning does not display distinctive language engineering processes. What it displays are procedures. Rubin (1977) identifies four phases of this planning:

- a) a fact-finding stage;
- b) policy-determination stage;
- c) the implementation stage;
- d) evaluation and revision stages.

The above stages do not necessarily occur in a linear sequence and the literature in language planning does not make the important distinction between processes in language planning and procedures of language planning: processes like elaboration are akin to language planning while procedural phases are largely specific to types of planning other than language planning. The difference here is not so much in the presence of these stages in the planning programme as the way in which they are realised (Ferguson, 1985: 27).

From a theoretical perspective, Rubin (1977) provides a description of how these procedural phases are identified and manifested in language planning. We now describe each of the procedural phases cited above.

2.4.1 Fact-finding

Rubin (1977) characterises this stage as one where the necessary information with regard to the setting of the planning programme is gathered. The realisation of this stage within language planning may be through conducting sociolinguistic surveys. These are distinguished into micro- and macro-levels of observation at which surveys may be undertaken. This comparison of language patterns is important as it enables an assessment of the interplay of politics and language planning issues. One would argue here that surveys in language planning will be observed typically at a macro-sociolinguistic level, where they are chiefly concerned with the description of the language varieties that are understood and spoken in given speech communities. In addition they are also concerned with what attitudes are held towards these languages or their varieties.

2.4.2 Policy determination

This stage relates to the formulation of policy itself. Ideally once the priorities have been identified and evaluated, decisions are then made with regard to goals and appropriate means are selected for their attainment. Again, in normal circumstances before the determination of policy, due consideration would be given to the information given at the initial stage of fact-finding. There is considerable variation in decision-making as this is carried out by political arrangements where the planning is enacted (Ferguson, 1985)

2.4.3 The implementation stage

Karam (1974) describes the implementation stage as including all activities necessary for the execution of a plan in language planning. These plans are varied and largely depend on the type of operation which the planning is engaged in. For instance, if corpus planning has distinct aspects such as the elaboration of

vocabulary, this would mean that institutions which deal with disseminating activities such as media houses, publishing houses, creative works, etc., will clearly play a significant role, and therefore warrant some study. A useful analogy between the dissemination of language planning products and their markets has been drawn by Cooper (1979), reproduced in Ferguson (1985). Language planners study the social aspects which govern the adoption of communicative innovations in order to have their products widely accepted, similarly marketing personnel will need to study the variables that influence the market environment where their products are to be launched. This is in order to attract more customers, as it were. The argument that Cooper (1974) makes here is that a clear understanding of the adoption process and its determining variables will in effect make for more effective strategies in the process of implementation.

In educational language planning such analogies with product marketing become less appropriate. It may be argued here that the implementation largely devolves on curriculum planning, where the focus is particularly on innovation. The process of implementation is best understood if it is conceptualised within the theory and practice of curriculum innovation. Here, curriculum developers, textbook writers and teachers themselves become the main actors. In this light the study of teacher education itself has a significant role to play in the implementation of language planning decisions within the education domain.

2.4.4 Evaluation and revision stages

Rubin (1974) contends that this process entails the assessment and monitoring of developments of the different phases of the planning programme itself. This therefore means that it has a wider scope than mere summative evaluation. The process of evaluation may be understood in a variety of senses which may take different forms. However, at a theoretical level, we would identify two potential sources of input into evaluation in the language planning process. First, there is the argument of the cost-benefit analysis whose main function is to state rigorously the result of following alternative causes of action (Thornbaun, 1971,

in Ferguson, 195). We might add that this is an important factor in the implementation and evaluation of processes in language planning within the context of African states. What seems to be problematic here, for instance, is that in the evaluation of an alternative language education policy, it could be observed that whereas it may be relatively easy to state costs, the benefits that will accrue could be 'difficult to quantify and render in comparable form'. In spite of this there is room to argue that the cost-benefit analysis is of significant merit for two main reasons. Rubin (1977) observes that:

In the context of developing countries where resources are scarce and priorities pressing, it is vital that resources are judiciously allocated. Second, in the same context language planning is often integral to national development plan which economic and financial concerns are salient. With its focus on matters of resource allocation, cost-benefit analysis offers one means of establishing a link between language planning concerns and wider ones of national development, a relationship which is too often neglected in the literature.

The second input at a theoretical level in the evaluation process within language planning is to look at the objectives of the language curriculum, for example, in educational contexts. This may be referred to as the 'quality of the curricular experience' or 'the achieved' curriculum, which translates into the learning resulting from the curriculum itself. Information and judgement from these aspects have invaluable contributions to make toward determining the extent to which language education policies, for example, are working or not, and when these need revision. If, for instance, existing language examinations exert considerable constraint on policy or the reform of a curriculum, it then becomes incumbent upon authorities who are themselves examiners or testers to undertake examination reform as they now become agents in the process of reshaping a given language curriculum.

2.4.5 Determiners of language policies

In the preceding section we have presented activities and their constituent stages and procedure as forms of language planning. The basic question still arises as to who becomes involved in the language planning itself. Many observers have recognised the political dimension of what language planning entails and they concede that, while aspects of language planning such as corpus planning are specifically the province of linguists, politicians play a significant role in the overall selection and elevation of the languages or their varieties that are to undergo standardisation and elaboration. Jernudd and Gupta (1971:197) argue that the actual operations in language planning typically involve the interaction between language specialists and politicians, where the values and ideas of technical experts will be matched. Those are representatives of the community. This is at a theoretical level. In some African contexts, as this study will later show, the ultimate decision seems to rest on politicians alone, in which expertise and other specialist knowledge from linguists is entirely ignored. For this reason, there is sometimes an umbrella designation of 'language planners' to appear as if these language planners include all consultations. This is different from an acknowledged set of practitioners as in town planning, for example (Ferguson, 1985).

One other concern is that of the scope of language planning. One of the definitions of this scope includes the notion that it is characteristically pursued at the national level. Part of this study will determine whether there has been any language planning survey of any kind conducted at a macro- or micro-level in Malawi from colonial times to the present. Some scholars including Tellefson (1981) and Kennedy, (1982) are of the view that language planning may be conducted at a variety of levels. The former contends that this involves a hierarchy of decisions and levels, where those in the lower hierarchy order merely act as implementation institutions or agencies, but actual policy formulation is the prerogative of the top hierarchy. Agencies and others only come in as planners to some extent, in the reinterpretation and, where the need arises, for alternative

implementation strategies. He also makes a distinction between centralised and decentralised processes. This is essentially with regard to the arrangement of the administrative planning setting. At the decentralised level agencies may have some autonomy in engaging in their planning or adaptation of the plans according to their perceptions. On the whole, while the notion of a hierarchy may have its own conceptual problems, it has its own heuristic value in the sense that this model incorporates levels of language planning that can provide 'an overview of links in the entire chain of the organisational hierarchy' (Kennedy, 1982).

2.4.6 Language planning in educational contexts.

The traditional view is that the domains of law and commerce have tended to be household names where language planning operations have been undertaken. This is, however, only in principle as practice has tended to show that the education domain has enjoyed the largest attention owing to the crucial functions it has to serve societies. It is for this reason that this study has focused on policy matters in national and educational contexts.

Basically there are two levels of language planning for educational purposes. The first level includes the formulation of the language in education policy, while the second level is concerned with the implementation of policies in the curriculum. This realisation of language policy is invariably referred to as curriculum planning.

2.4.7 Planning the national language and the education language policy

There are principal issues to be considered in the formulation of language policies in education in African societies, most of which are multilingual. The considerations to be made include some of the following:

- i. the choice of appropriate media of instructions at primary, secondary and tertiary levels;

- ii. the choice of languages as subjects of instruction and also for national integration purposes. This is for the integration of citizens from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds into truly national citizens, linguistically and culturally;
- iii. the timing of the introduction of the various languages into the curriculum as instructional subjects and as instructional media;
- iv. the norms that will serve as teaching models in view of the educational implications of the emergence and entrenchment on non-native varieties in conflict with opposition to the norm.

Whatever policy is to be embarked upon, it has to be recognised that there are constraints that could stem from prior political decisions on the role ascribed to the various languages, whether they are official or national languages or mere languages of tribal deliberations and identity at very local levels within a country or specific community. This is what has been referred to by Ohanessian and Ansre (1975) as 'the pattern of language complementation'. These patterns of language complementation can significantly influence the shape of a national language policy. A significant factor here is the colonial legacy that a country has, in terms of its language history and the notion of whether this is associated with what has generally been referred to as the 'Great Tradition' in literary considerations. Other factors refer to the linguistic demographics: the number of speakers of each language and their geographic situation. In Africa this is a problematic factor in view of the different political and social policies prescribed by individual countries.

For this study, as Matiki (1998:01) warns, 'language statistics on Malawi are hard to come by...Wherever figures are quoted they should be treated with caution as they may not be as representative of the situation as their sources may claim.'

This study is therefore more qualitative than quantitative. What Matiki (1998) points out here about Malawi and by the same extension elsewhere in Africa, perhaps, is that statistics are invariably used to salvage set political agendas by decision-makers who are almost always politicians rather than figures used to support genuine situations. One potential source of statistical data is census figures. 'Unfortunately, census figures in Africa are notoriously unreliable. Furthermore, those who blithely cite the number of non-native speakers do not identify the minimum level of proficiency for one to be counted as a user' (Makoni, 1993:29). A configuration of the statistical factor will have different outcomes in a country's decision on the official and national language, and the education language policy, whether it follows an exoglossic solution or opt for an endoglossic solution (Kloss, 1986).

Fishman (1968) and Kelman (1971) both argue that the choices to be made in the determination of a national language policy can be explicated further in terms of the ideological constructs derived from a consideration of the notions of state and nation and their source of legitimacy. Thus the question of a national language policy may be viewed as an effort to accommodate what are potentially conflicting aspirations. Chapter three of this study attempts to illustrate this ideological stance. A possible conflict here is between nationalism and nationism, which Fishman (1968) sees a consideration of what is seen as authentic and in whose view. Other sources of potential conflict are in the values cherished by individuals. These are values between diversity and uniformity and what is equitable and efficient. These become problematic areas in reconciling all the values at the same time.

The implication here is that the choices to be made might be at the expense of a diversified policy and one that is efficient or vice versa. The stress, however, seems to be on values of what seems to be authentic or pragmatic and the notion of diversity, but the notion of identity also raises a subsequent issue of whose identity. This could be regional identity under national identity. In considering

the language policy in education, there seems to be an increasing use of indigenous African languages initially and the circumscription of international languages such as English and French, for example, in the African context. What is not clear again is whether this view makes for the efficiency of local languages.

2.4.8 The choice of a medium of instruction

The critical issue in the formulation of a policy on language in education is the selection of a medium or media of instruction. Most educational systems have a three-tier system: the primary, secondary and tertiary levels. Decisions to be taken at each level will need to relate to other levels as well. The usual tendency is for the higher levels to exert considerable influence over the lower curricular structure. The argument here is that, for example, the choice and use of a world language such as English at tertiary level will give pressure for its continued use. This is for the reason that learners' proceeding to higher education will need a sound grounding in that language, hence the language demand for the study of English at lower levels. This is regardless of the number of learners who proceed to higher institutions. It has also become practically difficult to deny parents and learners' aspirations in the wider community, because they believe, from their experience, that lower levels of education are preparatory grounds for higher education. Thus both parents and learners would demand that this situation be reflected in the structure of the language curriculum.

This tendency serves to illustrate that the choices to be made at one level will normally influence those at other levels, but it is not an argument for or against a world lingua franca such as English. Fishman, Cooper and Conrad (1978) observe that practice has shown that it becomes difficult at tertiary level to displace a world lingua franca in favour of an indigenous or local national language. Part of the reason for this stems from equipping indigenous languages with the necessary linguistic resources, which would enable them to serve effectively as media for initial and advanced studies at higher levels of education.

Another major constraint is the dominance of world lingua francas, such as English and French which feature quite strongly in academic writing, text books and other teaching materials in general. The effect is that indigenous languages suffer the danger of exclusion and isolation from the available wider academic community for all purposes of learning and use.

2.4.9 The role of indigenous languages in early education

The merits and disadvantages of the choice of an indigenous language or world language needs assessment and consideration of whether the choice made is eventually for intranational or international service and communication. The factors to be considered here are the wider socio-political implications of the options taken and whether the choice meets the prerequisite educational resources with regard to the development of the corpus language. This should be considered in terms of elaboration and vocabulary development to serve wider educational functions. This also depends on the availability of texts and other learning materials. One other important consideration is the pedagogical and educational principles of whether those to carry out instructions have the proficiency, training and expertise in the instructional languages.

In the formulation of most policies it has been argued that the linguistic relationship between the learners and the learners' mother tongues still makes it easier for the adoption of the mother tongue as a medium, on the grounds that it will facilitate learning and teaching across the curriculum, particularly at initial level. From a socio-political perspective, the argument for mother tongue instruction is that it becomes more acceptable culturally as learners associate their language and culture with their identity and this becomes less disruptive in learning and teaching. A further argument is that this provides social integration and gives popular access to institutions and instruments of power (Ferguson, 1985). The availability of an indigenous

medium has to be weighed against the educational resources and the choice of an indigenous language or languages as neutral and acceptable to all as educational media nationally.

Ohanessian and Ansre (1978) have provided three options for identifying media of learning in initial education. The first is the child's mother tongue. The second is an African national or regional lingua franca and the third is a world language such as English or French. Depending on the choice or choices a country wishes to make, selections or a combination of these seem operational but considerable literature has given focus and priority on the role of the mother tongue.

In UNESCO's (1953) terms the recommendation of the mother tongue has the cultural, psychological argument and what has been deemed as the 'educational desirability of initial education' through this medium. In this stress the focus has been on language as a vehicle for conveying cultural values that are more familiar to the learner. The second has been on the home-school link without the loss of the learner's identity. The third has emphasised the linguistic and cognitive development of the individual learner. It has been pointed out that where the school language is different from the home language, the gulf between the two has tended to widen with the result of possible adverse psychological effects. In addition, the demand for the use of the mother tongue at school has often implied a negative evaluation of the language and its values of the home. The effect of this is that it could be detrimental not only to the community but also to the development of the child's self-concept, in that the child might grow up looking at his or her mother tongue as a secondary language of little respect, if any.

Other applied linguists, such as Ure (1981) have argued that the mother tongue facilitates the notion of transfer from the home language to a subsequent school language which could be English, for example, in higher education. Thus Ure (1981) also tends to maintain a positive evaluation language community as this

helps in maintaining a sense of the learner's cultural identity and continuity. With regard to the aspect of the development and acquisition it has been suggested that it becomes difficult to separate the two. The suggestion therefore is that the use of a second language for instruction may lead to adverse educational consequences for the learner leading to poor scholastic achievement (Ferguson, 1985). Davies (1985), however, has pointed out that there is not sufficient research to show that instruction in a second language necessarily leads to the learner's retarded academic achievement.

These arguments raise questions on bilingual education, its literature and its attendant concepts of additive versus subtractive bilingualism, transitional versus maintenance, immersion versus submersion. This is, however, not the focus of this study, since these studies have more relevance to USA, Canada and are also largely Eurocentric, with references to minority and migrant groups, a comparatively rare phenomenon in Africa. Of relevance to this study and to the general African context is the psycholinguistic level support for the increased role of an indigenous medium in terms of the Cummins' (1976, 1986) threshold level hypothesis. The argument in this hypothesis is that the development of the mother tongue is functionally significant in the learning of a second language in that there is need for a level of competence which becomes necessary in the mother tongue for successful learning of the second language.

Given the truth value of such a hypothesis, there might be need for 'language shelter' programmes which in effect delay the instruction of a second language until the learner has attained sufficient proficiency, competence and skill in the mother tongue for consolidation purposes. At a theoretical level the choice of media will also depend on the practicability of the choice of a single mother tongue in most multilingual contexts. As Ferguson (1985:43) puts it,

the degree of linguistic heterogeneity in particular communities depends on the distribution of speakers of the various languages in towns and rural

areas, on the state of the linguistic development (standardization, graphization) of these languages and on the relationships of the dialects spoken by children to the standardized varieties proposed for use as media.

A further constraint in the greater use of mother tongue vernaculars in early education has implications for diversified curricular and further cost implications referred to earlier on in the production of diversified materials. Besides, the more diversification there is in media for instruction, the less the availability of trained personnel to develop the required materials and the more costly it becomes, as publishing houses cannot maximise their revenues on small markets in view of the principle of economies of scale. Other attendant problems might include the deployment of trained personnel for adequate planning purposes.

2.5 Research into language planning : the neoclassical approach

We have discussed the literature surrounding language planning with regard to the formulation of national and education language policies. We now turn to the actual theories of language planning. In this study we shall consider two theories. The first is the neoclassical approach. Language planning research has in the last few years incorporated considerable theoretical statements on Second Language Acquisition (SLA). These have included Krashen's (1981) Monitor Model, which claims that comprehensible input is determined by the learner's affective filter. In other words, the learner should be 'open' to input, which is subsequently dependent upon low anxiety, high self-confidence and positive feelings about speakers of the target language.

Canadian studies including the role of motivation from Gardner and Lambert (1972) have also tended to influence language planning research. They argue that different types of motivation seem related to different forms of motivation. For example, in instrumental motivation, a learner or user of a language may learn a language in order to pass a degree or secure employment. In integrative motivation, they argue that this involves a feeling

of personal identity tied to the target language community or that the desire on the part of learner is to 'gain membership in the new community.'

One could argue that this could be the case where the research was based in Canada which has largely French-speaking people in Quebec and the rest are English-speaking. The idea here could well be that an English speaker might wish to learn French in order to be accepted and thus gain membership in Quebec among the French, and vice versa.

The circumstances in Africa are entirely different. It would appear a little ludicrous in post-colonial Africa, for example, that an African could learn either English or French in order to identify himself with either of the cultures. Even learning isiZulu, Sotho or as in this study, Chinyanja or Chitumbuka, would be for purposes of sociocultural communication and for national integration, in the absence of a common language between different interlocutors from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds. That is the case of the use of English in the Southern African Development Community (SADC) community. It would not necessarily mean that post-colonial Africans learn those different European languages in order to be members of those linguistic or cultural groups. This distinction therefore fails to explain the reasons why particular communities are required to learn new languages or why the impact of historical and structural factors on how individuals learn languages.

Some could fail to learn a language that would enable them to graduate; others succeed. This model would explain the case of those who succeed as a result of being highly motivated while those who fail as due to a lack of motivation. Tollefson (1986) has also added the notion of cultural adaptation and employment as the case is with immigrants' attitudes being changed to American values and life styles as a motivation for learning the target language. Although this research is largely North American, what it points to is the primary causal variables that are inherently within the individual. This is what is referred to as the neoclassical approach. Within this approach, each language choice in terms of planning and policy decisions taken is seen as an individual event.

But man is not an island; he lives in the wider society with different languages and their varieties. An all-encompassing approach rather than an individualistic one will therefore need to be considered. However, a dominant component of the neoclassical model is the assumption that it has to assist linguistic minorities to acquire dominant languages and not to negotiate for the recognition and legitimising of their own language rights. Language policy thus becomes a form of disciplinary power which depends on the ability of the state to structure its institutions of society, and the categorisation of individuals into 'insiders' and 'outsiders' (Giddens, 1982). This is the association between language and nationalism, where language policy controls access to employment, particularly by minorities, and this establishes limitations in education, employment and political participation. Here language becomes the ideological control mechanism. Language policy therefore establishes state hegemony where dominant groups exercise an unquestioned 'national' or ideological monopoly of language use. This study exemplifies the overuse of one indigenous language at the expense of the development of other indigenous languages. As Tollefson (1991:27) observes,

Essentially, what the neoclassical theory claims is that the rational calculus of the individuals is considered to be the proper focus of research. Factors affecting language learning and language use are presumed to be those that vary from individual to individual.

This theory has been extended although not to include social sciences. Its characteristic primary assumptions are that in order to understand social systems the key is first to understand the individual. The differences that arise in socio-political systems are essentially a result of the cumulative effect of individual decisions. The theory claims that these decisions are predictable but 'free' and that the proper focus of social research should be the analysis of individual decisions. In chapter three of this study we shall examine this tenet in the light of the individual ideology that influenced and resulted in a fragmented and incoherent national and education language policy in Malawi for over thirty years.

One of the premises of the neoclassical approach is an ideology which is not subject to empirical verification. Tollefson (1991) argues that ideology and articles of faith have a tendency to insulate language planners from any evaluation that is outside the planning process. These planners could also be individual decision-makers of policies with powers invested in themselves. This is not unusual in despotic countries in Africa. This is the view that the researcher is viewed as an observer on the periphery and not as part of the historical context where he/she has the responsibility of analysing the planning process. It is assumed that the researcher is not to 'interfere' in the process but only evaluate whether the stated language policy goals have been achieved or not, and not to ask whether such policies have at all been appropriate. It seems this explains the concern with research methodology as the neoclassical model presents a theoretical obstacle within the language planning process.

Apart from this, the neo-classical model renders the language planning process 'ineffective'. The fault is that it does not consider or include the forces that contribute to the adoption of language planning approach. In particular it fails to look at historical and structural factors that are crucial in determining the evaluative criteria. These are important in judging plans as ineffective, or in the political and economic interests which benefit from the perceived failure of such planning (Tollefson, 1991). Proponents of planning approach argue that future decisions can only be made on accurate information, but how this information is attained is not made clear. A major flaw of this model is that it does not explain how the perceived failure can cushion, protect and preserve the dominant economic interests as it can be argued that all language planning has vested socio-economic and political benefits that accrue to interested parties.

2.5.1 A critique of the model

We now turn to how the neo-classical model becomes particularly unsuitable to face central linguistic issues.

- a) The theory does not explain how language communities form and how they can come to invest their languages with different degrees of value. This is a

socio-cultural aspect of language according to Kelman (1971) and Fishman (1971). Further the theory fails to explain not only how communities form, but how they develop and their range of linguistic variability, as it tends to focus centrally on individual decisions leaving out history and society.

- b) The theory does not account for the fact that some societies are prepared to go to war, as exemplified in recent years in the name of 'ethnic cleansing', which is largely on account of language issues. Others give in and accept language loss while others follow language patterns wherever the 'wind blows'.
- c) In addition this model is limited in that it does not see the correlation between planning decisions on the one hand, and changes within the structure of language and its use, on the other. Furthermore, it does not explain the conditions or mechanisms that lead to linguistic change in planning decisions, and how the language planning process affects these in mechanisms.

It should be observed, however, that despite these contrasts the neo-classical model has remained dominant, with many scholars, such as Das Gupta (1970, 1971), arguing that the issues raised here fall outside the scope of language planning as an area of applied studies.

2.5.2 Research in the historical-structural approach to language planning research

Research in the historical-structural approach basically rejects the assumption that the proper focus of research should be on the individual. This model attempts to look at the origins of constraints on planning, the sources of the costs and benefits of the choices that individuals make. In addition to this, it also seeks to consider the social, political and economic factors that result in constraining or forcing changes in language structure and language use. This is what has been referred to as the historical-structural approach (Wood, 1982).

2.5.3 The neo-classical approach versus the historical-structural approach

If we consider the two frameworks, their conceptual differences reflect fundamental differences between them. Specifically, the fundamental differences are in the ideological teachings of the protagonists of the two models. There are also different views held between the relative importance of individual choices and the collective behaviour in social science research. In broader terms these differences include:

- a) the unit of analysis;
- b) the role of the historical perspective;
- c) criteria for evaluating plans and policies;
- d) the role of the scientist.

We now look at each of the above. The unit of analysis exemplifies striking differences between two models. The emphasis in the neo-classical approach is on the individuals' rational decisions. The historical-structural approach places emphasis on the origins of the costs and benefits that confront individuals and their respective groups. The argument is that if one wants to learn a new language, costs in terms of the time spent and fees must be accommodated in order for one to secure a job or obtain the desired qualification. In the neoclassical approach the decision for one to learn a language is explained by arguing that it is a result of the cost-benefit analysis. The historical-structural approach places emphasis on the sources of costs within the choice, and what these costs are to others in the larger community. Language planning is here seen as a mechanism through which a particular status quo sets up for transformation and development. Tellefson (1991) contends that policy research should intervene and make explicit mechanisms which determine whether policy decisions are there to serve or undermine certain political and economic interests through language planning.

Forester (1985) contends that in this regard language planning borrows from the critical theory which argues that it should not be viewed as divorced from other class-based structures and the political economy. The dominance of the neoclassical model with its emphasis on the individual has largely led to the failure in attempts to develop a more comprehensive theory of language planning. In this light it seems prudent to view the historical structural model with its emphasis on collective behaviour as more comprehensive toward advancing a theory of language planning which should be able to relate broader issues that hinge on cultural, socio-political change and the economic development of communities through language use and empowerment.

Further to this, the historical-structural approach makes the assumption that a major objective of research and analysis is to find out the historical-structural pressures which lead to particular policies to be formulated the way they are which are a constraint to individual choice. These structural factors have an impact on planning bodies, economic bodies and socio-political aims to which these bodies are committed.

In this light then language planning is viewed as the process of planning at macro-level and not at micro-level alone (Tollefson, 1981a). Its conceptualisation is rooted in the historical process which cannot be separated from considerations of societal structure. In considering the unit of analysis, one also has to consider the historical process and not as in the neo-classical model which views language planning as a mere sum of individual choices. The question of how particular policy decisions are made and planned has links to historical and structural considerations which would include, for example, a country's links with its colonial master(s) and language or the other world economic forces, its level of socio-economic development, the international labour market and the role that major languages have in broader social policy (Tollefson, 1986, Forester, 1985).

Critics of the neoclassical theory argue against its stance that decision makers make their plans on the basis of their analysis of costs and benefits, to a large extent, on the grounds that this ignores issues of political organisation which can help to explain the interests, goals and the composition of planning bodies. Besides, they argue that costs and benefits are not equitably distributed among the affected population and that these are invariably determined by the status quo that controls the political and economic structure, where planning bodies are only a small part of their appointment.

Variables such as motivation and attitudes are explained differently by the historical-structural model. Its basic argument is that these are not 'learner' variables. The view is that motivation is related and determined by broader socio-political factors associated with different languages and their varieties, the ideology of language learning and access to quantify education. Ultimately, the underlying explanation for motivation, it is argued, is fundamentally a result of historical-structural factors and not essentially a cause for language learning. What is observed from this model is that language planning is viewed as reflecting the interest of political groups that are dominant; and what the neoclassical model demonstrates is that it gives a theoretical basis for the maintenance of these dominant interests.

The danger of the neoclassical model then is in its ahistorical and amoral nature because of its focus on particular individuals in planning, executing and evaluating language policies. A case in point that Ferguson (1985) cites is one of Germany's attempt to eliminate the Serbo-Croatian and Slovenian languages from particular areas of Southern Austria during the First World War (1930-1940) through coercion and violence. This is an example of a direct result of a particular ethnic group's interest in language matters that ought to have considered the social history of a people and their values.

Similarly, in the Malawian case, the Banda regime virtually eliminated all other indigenous languages from use as classroom instructional languages, and then in media (both on radio and print), and every citizen had to comply, just as the case cited above in Europe. In the Malawian case, all other local languages were banned and their speakers forced to use Chichewa. Proponents of the neo-classical model would see this as benefits, as other language groups avoided dissent, which would have resulted in imprisonment. Speakers of other languages apart from Chichewa, had simply no choice but to conform and learn to speak Chichewa, as they were losers in either case. These proponents would thus claim that its applicability to such a broad range of situations is one of its strengths. On the other hand, critics of this theory would argue that the model fails to consider the impact of coercion and the morality basis of its policies imposed forcefully on other language groups.

Language choices cannot be predictable as this model assumes with its cost-benefit analysis and claims that the choices that citizens make are 'free'. It has to be recognised that the citizenry do not have the alternative when they are coercively told to 'rationally' make choices from those costs and benefits, by accepting the only language and possibly another. The significant issue in this model is one of not adequately accommodating coercion. Giersbers (1985) argues that the decisions that policy makers make and the populations that are affected are in fact 'manifestations of the historical-structural factors that determine which alternatives are available as well as their relative costs' (Tollefson, 1991). These alternatives of whether a population should learn and use a particular language or not and the costs and benefits that might accrue from such enactments, are in effect the result of historical and structural variables which are held constant and totally ignored by the neo-classical model. The unit of analysis should thus largely adopt a macro-perspective for the benefit of the bulk of its population.

2.5.4 Summary

In this chapter, a number of issues dealing with the concept and processes of language planning have been raised. In section 2.1 we have attempted to define and clarify what the concept of language planning entails. This encompasses a number of activities which largely depend on the analyst. These include the development of the mother tongues into national languages. Among others, they also include a consideration of conflicting language loyalties, system scripts reforms and also the development of writing systems, depending on the setting. Following this we have clarified what is involved in language planning activities, which have dichotomies. Here, we have explained the difference between corpus planning and status planning. The former involves changes in the language code or structure, which may include the elaboration of vocabulary and structural modifications. Status planning involves the planning of changes of a given language, either in a country or in a community. Section 2.4 has detailed the various processes that are stipulated before language planners and decision-makers can effectively come to formulate policies at different levels.

These processes include (i) selection of a language or languages, (ii) codification, (iii) implementation and (iv) elaboration. This is Haugen's (1983) construct that provides a conceptual framework which explicates the operation within language planning before a language can be said to be standardised. In section 2.5 we have outlined four procedures that are followed in language planning: (i) the fact-finding stage, (ii) the policy-determination stage, (iii) the implementation stage and (iv) the evaluation and revision stage. It has been pointed out that there is an overlap between processes and procedures, how they are identified and manifested. The major difference is in the way in which they are realised.

In 2.5.7 we have further discussed, from a theoretical perspective, the steps that are followed in planning a national language policy and an education language policy, before these policies can be formulated.

Section 2.5.8 has specifically examined the choice of a medium of instruction and it has been argued that whatever media are chosen, there is the need for the consideration of the relatedness of the common three-tier education system. This means that the language(s) of instruction chosen for the primary level of education will need to relate to other levels, the secondary or high school and tertiary level, to ensure continuity. An important aspect here is also to accommodate the aspirations and views of the stakeholders, who are parents, and the learners themselves. This relates to the language(s) that they both wish to adopt as media for instruction and as subjects. This is an equitable and democratic process.

In section 2.5.9 we have advanced the psycholinguistic reasons for the choice of the mother tongue in early education. Following on UNESCO's (1953) recommendation, most societies view this as crucial for cultural, psychological and educational development of the learner. The home language is important as the learner comes to associate himself or herself with these cultural values and thus establishes identity with them. There is also the linguistic-cognitive development argument, which postulates that the acquisition of concepts in early education is better internalised if the learner acquires them in the home language that he or she is familiar with than in a second language. In addition, this also facilitates the transition from the mother tongue to subsequent classes in higher education where the medium is invariably a second language which the learner is not familiar with.

The last part has mainly focused on two theories of language planning which are relevant to this study: the neo-classical approach and the historical-structural approach.

The neo-classical model only views language as a resource like any other, with its premise that language learning or its change results from individual cost-benefit analyses. The historical-structural model looks at language as involving both the

code and its use, thus involving people living in history in their groups with particular symbols, roles and ideologies which may not necessarily relate to the economic logic of cost and benefit analysis. Here, language is not viewed as an individual resource but a social phenomenon. The issue is that policy decisions need to be fundamentally based and located in the organisational structures of these groups and not on the individual cost benefit analysis.

The historical-structural approach is succinctly captured in the view in which the central tenet of the approach is in the sociological premise, that the action of groups is fundamentally different from the sum of individual actions of its members. Thus the action of planning bodies as well as the population they affect are viewed as products of history and the social relationships which organise groups. Those planning processes should therefore interact with other historical-structural forces that form language communities and determine patterns of language structure and use. Emphasis on individual decisions by planners and policy makers cannot fulfil this need (Tollefson 1991:36)

From the foregoing, a more logical way of understanding the interaction between society and language policies that populations have to live with begins to emerge. A comprehensive theory therefore is one that has a historical basis embedded in its socio-political structure, as language planning affects language change (Fasold, 1984). In addition, it seems that a comprehensive language planning theory will need to synthesise the historical and structural contexts in its planning approach, if it is to benefit its masses in its decision-making process. It also needs to consider the causes and effects of the overall planning, at macro- and micro-levels and the broad socio-political communities where this occurs. In spite of this, linguists such as Williams (1986) still view the neoclassical model as the dominant paradigm and the benevolent arm of the state serving 'national' interests. However, Giddens (1982) still argues that it misses altogether the role that language policy plays in the exploitation of masses where it is used as a powerful tool for exclusion or where, in many states, language policy becomes fundamental

to exploitation. Policies are made by, and reflect the interests of, those who dominate the state policy-making apparatus. We would, in this case, posit that there ought to be a bottom-up approach which takes into account the views and aspirations of the masses on the ground rather than the interests of a select few, who represent a top-bottom approach.

Chapter Three

A BRIEF HISTORY AND A SOCIOLINGUISTIC DESCRIPTION OF MALAWI

3.0 Introduction

This chapter provides a brief history of Malawi. In particular we aim at presenting a sociolinguistic description of the major early migration movements of the people now known as Malawians from other parts of Africa. Of importance here is the emergence of languages that still exist now. We shall then go on to give the colonial language policy, which in a way could be viewed as the embryonic stage of some form of language planning. The chapter will then examine the Banda ideology with regard to language policy in his thirty years of rule in post-colonial Malawi. Along with this, we shall then discuss the fragmented, sometimes contradictory and incoherent policy statements that were pronounced from political platforms during his reign. The section also traces earlier efforts by Christian missionaries at language planning in the colonial era.

3.1 A brief history from colonial times to independence: 1891-1964

Nyasaland, today known as Malawi, became known as British Protectorate in 1891, following Scottish and British traders' enterprises as forerunners of British administration. The country came to be known as Nyasaland in 1907. It was thus named after Portuguese explorers had learnt from the people who inhabited the area close to the lake, or Shire river widely referred to as 'Nyanja' (Alpers, 1968). The word 'Nyanja' was a reference to the lake which runs through most of the entire country in the east. The people who inhabited the shores of the lake were the Maravi people, commonly known as the Anyanja or Amang'anja, meaning people of the lake. The

Chewa belong to Achipeta group from the hinterland of what is now Kasungu and their language is a dialect of Chinyanja.

In 1953 Nyasaland formed part of the federation of Central Africa which included Northern Rhodesia, (now Zambia) and Southern Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe). Salisbury, commonly known as Harare to most blacks, even in colonial times, was the seat of the federation of the two Rhodesias and Nyasaland. This was largely an economic union, in which Northern Rhodesia's wealth and Nyasaland's labour were seen as necessary for southern Rhodesia's economic growth. The whites in the Northern Rhodesia wanted protection from the rising African aspirations, which this union with Southern Rhodesia would afford. Each of the governors in the territories shared common European sentiments, while the official London view saw such a scheme as economically sensible. It was felt that a united British Central Africa would attract the needed capital for economic growth more readily than would the three separate territories (Vail,1983:249).

With the rise of African nationalist movements led by such elite leaders as Dr.Hastings Kamuzu Banda and Northern Rhodesia's Harry Nkumbula and Kenneth Kaunda, the Central African federation came to be dismantled in the years to follow. On 6 July 1964, Nyasaland became the independent nation of Malawi, with Dr Banda as its first president. Zambia attained her independence on 24 October 1964 with Kaunda as its first president.

Malawi's political history, and particularly for our concern, its language allocation policy, can only be seen through the political ideology from which we can glean Banda's policy statements, as we shall see in this chapter and subsequent ones.

3.2 The indigenous people and their languages

The present state of Malawi is composed of people of different ethnic groups, a considerable number of whom migrated into Malawi in the 19th Century from other parts

of Africa. In this section we trace four major migration movements that have been well documented. What is also observable here is a situation of multi-ethnic assimilation that has occurred amongst these groups resulting in language change.

First of all a point of clarification. Throughout this study, the prefix *chi_* will be used to refer to the language used by that group, whose name follows the prefix. This is for two reasons: first, the people who use the language call it by the name Chitumbuka and the people themselves are called BaTumbuka (plural) or MuTumbuka, (singular). This is in accordance with the characteristic Bantu classification system. For instance, the Nyanja people speak Chinyanja and the Yao speak Chiyao, etc. Second, the usual practice in orthography of ignoring the prefix *chi-* has a tendency of creating confusion as the stem Tumbuka is then assumed by the native speakers of the language as referring to the people, and not the language.

3.2.1 The Nkhonde, Nyakyusa and Lambya migration

Apart from the very early Maravi people who were found in what is now Malawi, there were various groups that invaded the country in the 18th Century. In the extreme north a group of people arrived from the east. These were composed of the Ngonde and their relatives, the Nyakyusa, along with their lesser related group of the Balambya. Those also included in smaller numbers were the Bisa from what is today northeastern Zambia. These groups of people formed themselves on cultural lines of languages or religion or economic foundations, such as trade in ivory (Pachai, 1973).

They were also thrust together by geography and the political acumen of a worthy leader such as Syora, who became the first Ngonde to eventually settle on the Mbande hill, near the present Karonga district headquarters. Syora as the first Kyungu became a powerful ruler who with wealth came to extend religious and economic dominance through the ivory trade with Arabs who came from Zanzibar through Tanganyika, now Tanzania. Kyungu's relations, the Nyakyusa, settled in the hinterland and traded in ivory as middlemen with Arabs, while the lesser

Lambya, also referred to as the Nthali, went and settled in what is today called Chitipa district, which in colonial times was known as Fort Hill; on the border with the Bisa country in the present northeastern Zambia.

The point here for our interest is that from a linguistic perspective, Chinkhonde, Chinyakyusa and Chilambya are all dialects of the main language Chinkhonde. There is mutual intelligibility among the three which are sometimes loosely referred to as languages in their own right for political reasons.

3.2.2 The Tumbuka migration

Another migration in the 19th Century settled among the Phoka, a lesser group who lived between Rumphu and Chitimba Rivers (Pachai 1973:11). The Tumbuka have been referred to as the Balowoka, which in Chitumbuka means 'those who have crossed'. These were peaceful pastoral clans who came from across the lake, hence the reference to Balowoka. Mlowoka, their leader, was a shrewd businessman who entrenched his commercial activities through the trade in carrying hoes. He was constantly referred to as 'Chikuwa majembe', a kiSwahili word for 'to carry hoes'. With time he assumed the name of Chikulamayembe and established his political power in the Nkhamanga land near Njakwa. Later he came to control the Nkhamanga, the Henga and the Phoka in the entire Rumphu area. In sociolinguistic terms, Nkhamanga, Henga and Phoka are all dialects of Chitumbuka, which has now emerged as the powerful lingua franca in the northern region. There is clear mutual intelligibility among the three dialects.

3.2.3 The Tonga migration

This was a relatively small group which migrated into the mountainous Tongaland along the lake. Karonga, from the north east, is believed to have sent his son, Kanyenda, and his nephew, Kabunduli, to reconnoiter new lands for settlement. Administratively, these settled at Chintheche and formed boundaries with Tumbukaland to the north, and Chewaland to the south. Chitonga, the

language of the Tonga, up to today, and the rest of the languages in the northern region are not mutually intelligible. However, though the Tonga do not understand or speak Chinkhonde, Chinyakyusa or Chilambya, they speak and/or comprehend Chitumbuka. For a close analogy, Chitumbuka in northern Malawi is like isiZulu in South Africa. A Tonga will speak or comprehend Chitumbuka whereas a Tumbuka may not necessarily speak Chitonga, just as a Sotho will speak isiZulu and or comprehend it fully, but a Zulu may not speak seSotho. This reinforces the position of Chitumbuka as the regional language of wider communication in northern Malawi.

3.2.4 The Maravi migration

These were comprised of large groups of people who settled in the present central and northern regions of Malawi between the 13th and the 16th centuries. They settled in vast geographical areas taking different migrations northwards, eastwards and north southwards. There are historical links between the Tumbuka, who have remained in the northern region, and the Chewa or Nyanja, who moved in the central and southern regions. What started as Maravi, then, ended as Chewa, Nyanja, Mang'anja, Chipeta, Nsenga,, Chikunda, Zimba, etc. This came as a result of dispersions and decentralisation. The various clan names - for example, Phiri, Banda, Mwale - are no more than cultural and language groups (Pachai, 1973:06) (see Map 1 showing nineteenth century migration arrivals)

However, the main language of the Maravi was that of the predominant Chinyanja, which has different dialects. In mixing with a considerable number of groups, Matiki (1998) has pointed out that the Maravi lacked security and easily succumbed to invasions by other groups, resulting in the loss of their languages. Shifts were numerous as summarised by the following:

People think about languages in "all or nothing" terms, as is sometimes suggested by anthropologists who claim that "premodial" attachments, such attachments to mother tongues, are not subject to 'civil' politics.

People seem willing, at least on question of small shifts in their language repertoires, to think of language shift in terms of the costs and benefits involved (Laitin and Mensar (1991:151) in Matiki (1998:07).

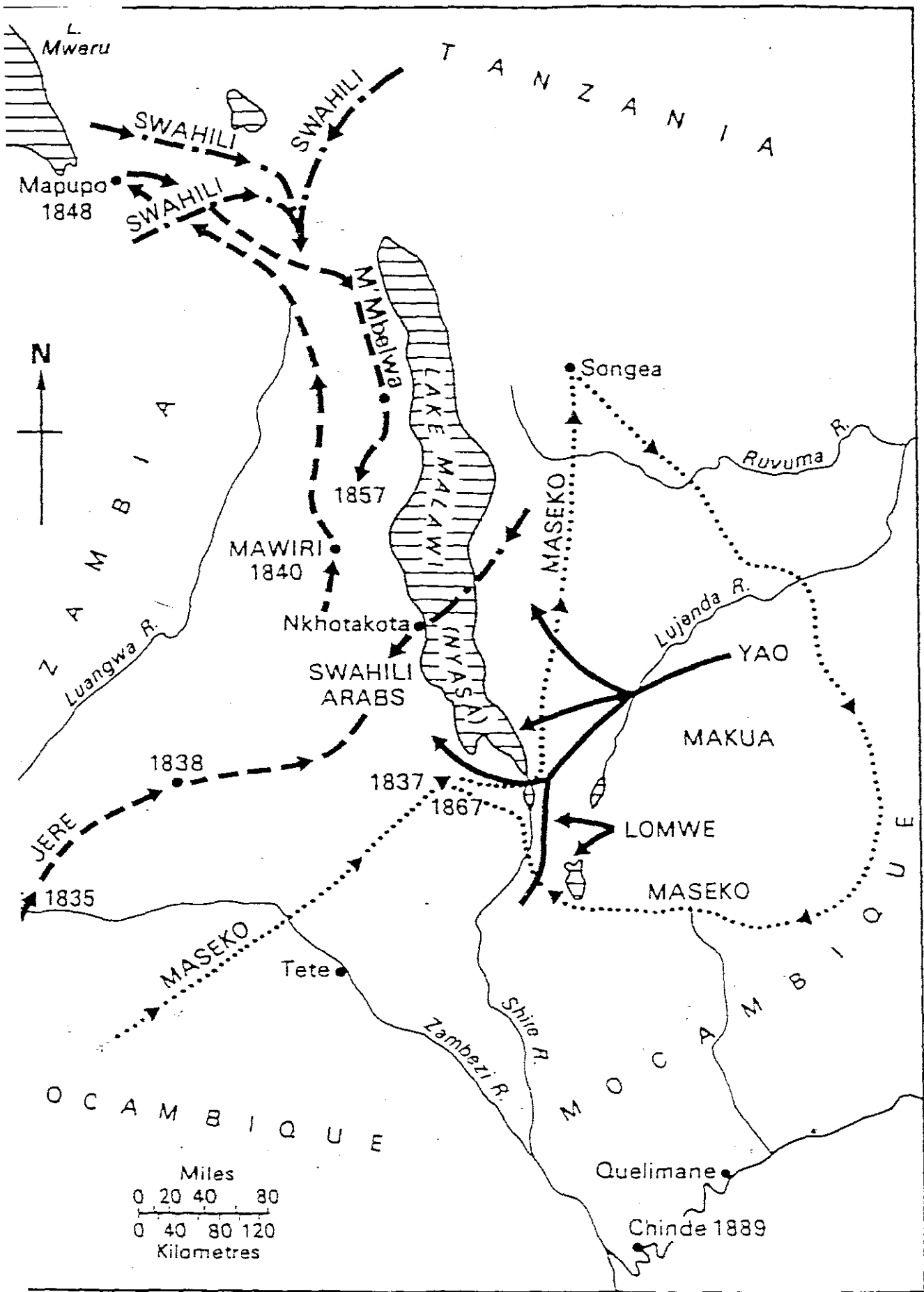
Following from these shifts, Chichewa or Chinyanja has experienced a number of regional varieties. One of these is spoken primarily in the inland central part of the country generally called Chichewa (Mchombo, 1998). Mchombo (1998) has also pointed out that the literature of the colonial period and on the local languages almost exclusively referred to the language as Chinyanja or simply Nyanja (see: Thomson (1947, 1955) in Mchombo (forthcoming). Chichewa as such was regarded (and is still is) as a minority dialectal variant of Chinyanja (Mchombo, forthcoming).

We would therefore consider, from a linguistic perspective, Chinyanja as the language and Chichewa only as dialect of the same language with mutual intelligibility among them, as well as the Nsenga and Ngoni dialects of Chinyanja in Zambia. Apart from the dialect that Mchombo has referred to as spoken in central Malawi, there are other central region dialects. In the southern region, there is the Ntcheu dialect, the Blantyre rural-Mwanza dialect and the Thyolo-Mulanje dialect characterised by short forms. All these are mutually intelligible.

3.2.5 The Ngoni migration

As a result of the social and political upheaval in Natal in the 1820s, the crushing of the people known as *Mfecane* or *difaqane* resulted in groups of refugees. These were variously known as Gaza and the Nguni, referred to as Kalolo. More specifically, they were comprised of the Ndebele, Zulu and Swazi, who fled north-eastwards. (Vail, 1983:20). The Ngoni, possibly a corruption of Nguni (Mphande, 1993), came into Malawi in the middle of the nineteenth century.

There were two main groups. The northern Nguni were led by the paramount chief Zwangendaba, and afterwards by M'belwa, and the southern Ngoni by



Mputa and afterwards by Chidyaonga and Chikusi. The two are referred to as the Jere and Maseko Ngoni respectively. A number of them from these two offshoots have settled in different places in the north and central region of Malawi largely. Through warfare, the original group, trekked as far north as southern Tanganyika, but the main group retreated to Malawi after the death of their leader Zwangendaba. These finally settled in the Mzimba district of northern Malawi among the Tumbuka people. Some splinter groups settled around the Dedza district in the central region and some in Chipata district in Eastern Zambia.

In their classifications of the Bantu languages, Doke (1967a:74) and (Cole 1969:88) list Zulu, Xhosa and Swazi as distinct language clusters in the Nguni group. From a study of Ngoni varieties, Zambian, Tanzanian and Malawian Ngoni stemming from these Nguni cluster of languages, 'only Malawian Ngoni maybe subgrouped together with Zulu and Swati as dialects of the same language on the basis of their shared retention of basic vocabulary items' (Miti, 1996:87). What was known as Chingoni is thus put under the Nguni group of languages which consists of isiZulu, isiXhosa, and siSwati. Thus in its most original form Chingoni was a language spoken largely by Zulu and Swazi groups of immigrants who settled in the area described above, having broken loose from Shaka's reign in Natal.

Chitumbuka spoken in the Mzimba in Malawi, and Lundazi district in Eastern Zambia, is essentially the product of a merger between two original languages, Chitumbuka and Chingoni (Mphande, 1979:03). These immigrants largely settled among the Tumbuka and Tonga whom they subjugated. According to Fraser (1914) in Matiki (1998: 05) their intention was to suppress the local languages they found and make Zulu or its modification, which they considered a stately ceremonial language, as the one to be spoken and adopted. They succeeded to some extent as it became the official language of the courts in the entire Ngoniland.

The use of the language was further enhanced by the arrival of the missionaries who collaborated with the Nguni because of their military prowess over the subjugated Tumbuka. The puritanical Scottish missionaries further suspected the indigenous Tumbuka culture of being a more destructive rival to their Christian preachings. Furthermore, Chingoni was a dialect of isiZulu and there was already a Zulu Bible whose language the missionaries adopted as the language of Christianisation. This was further enhanced by the work of William Mthusane Koyi, a Xhosa missionary student from Lovedale mission, who spoke isiZulu besides his own language. He assisted the white missionaries in starting their mission at Bandawe in Nkhata Bay, and also in starting mission work in Mzimba among the Zulu-speaking Ngoni. There is still great remembrance of Koyi, through many noble families where male children are being named Mthusane. Koyi was warmly welcomed by the people as a 'brother' as he did not have to learn new languages, Chitumbuka and Chitonga.

As time went by, the Ngoni lost their grip on whom they had subjugated as a result of their dwindling numbers. The Ngoni, like the Tumbuka, are both patrilineal. Intermarriages followed which resulted in their offspring acquiring Chitumbuka more than Chingoni and this therefore led to Chingoni being submerged in the wider use of language in everyday life, as we note in the following:

Since the Nguni were the masters, it is likely that intermarriages were mostly one-way, with Ngoni men marrying Tumbuka women while Tumbuka men could not easily marry Ngoni women. The children born out of these marriages grew up with very dismal knowledge of Chingoni. By the time Fraser (1914) visited the Ngoni, only few villages used Chingoni as the common speech. In many of the former Ngoni-controlled

villages, it was very uncommon to find old Ngoni, let alone a young person, who could speak good Ngoni. The Ngoni used in village lawsuits had a lot of marked influences from Chitumbuka. For instance, the pronoun forms in the verbs were altered to those of Chitumbuka (Fraser, 1914). They used *ni* instead of *ngi* for the first person singular form; *mu* instead of *ni* for the second person plural. A great number of Chitumbuka words were also borrowed.

The notion of borrowing is a common phenomenon in all living languages which can be explained by the substratum theory. The theory is that when a conquered people or immigrants have to adopt the master's language the tendency is to learn it rather imperfectly. This is through socialisation passed on to their offspring with the result that the language is ultimately altered (Aitchson, 1981).

Chingoni as a separate language is now virtually 'dead'. We would consider this linguistic borrowing as cultural, in the sense that the Ngoni were a distinct ruling class, who imposed their political, cultural and social systems on the Tumbuka. Now, however, through a multitude of factors such as Christianity and colonialism and through recent political and economic changes in the region and Tumbuka structures, the Ngoni have lost their language. They have, however, still retained the traditional song and dance as well as much of their culture.

The Tumbuka, on the other hand, have also lost their original culture, but have kept most of their language with massive borrowing from Chingoni, particularly at the lexical level, with its resultant modifications at the phonological level. Culturally the two peoples have integrated to the point of being indistinguishable, although the senior chiefs in Mzimba district where they first arrived and assumed dominance, over the Tumbuka, are all Ngoni descendants with a paramount chief.

Other groups that migrated into the Tumbuka area, such as the politically powerful Nkhonde, have also come to adopt the Tumbuka language while

maintaining their Nkhonde language of wider communication. However, the Maseko Ngoni who settled in central Malawi did not impose their language on the Chewa; they instead adopted both the Chewa language and its customs. The Chewa too adopted some of the Ngoni customs. Apart from the Tonga, the Nkhonde and the Tumbuka, other groups that moved into Malawi such as the Yao and Sena, did not lose their languages.

3.2.6 The Lomwe migration

According to Boeder (1984), the movement of the Lomwe into Malawi in the 1880s has marked one of the greatest population movements in the southern African history. They initially migrated into Malawi to seek employment on the slopes of Mount Mulanje in southern Malawi. Both the indigenous people and the whites saw them as an unwelcome group. This resulted in them taking on menial jobs for very little pay indeed.

When the Lomwe moved into southern Malawi they settled among the Yao and the Nyanja. Boeder (1984) points out that they have a long relationship with the group they found at a linguistic, cultural and socio-economic level. For example, this is in the sense that both the Ngoni and the Tumbuka were and are still patrilineal groups. The Lomwe, like the Yao and the Nyanja, were and are also still matrilineal. This made it easier for the groups to inter-marry and in the course of time some form of language change occurred. Since the Lomwe, in comparison with the Nyanja and Yao, were in the minority, what followed was that they eventually ended up being assimilated by the two cultures and thus adopting Yao and Nyanja languages as well. This linguistic and cultural diffusion can sometimes make it difficult to trace one's roots. Boeder (1984) in Matiki (1998:05) advances a different argument for the loss of their language. He argues that they were viewed as invaders by the Yao and Nyanja. Besides, the Lomwe language was ridiculed by the Nyanja and Lomwe as it sounded very strange and was thus likened to the mutterings of a drunk. The white colonialists as well as

the tea estate owners equally held a negative attitude toward the speakers of the languages as they felt they were

naturally a wild and low-caste race, whose ignorance makes them at once savage and timid. (They) are represented as among the idle and criminal classes to a disproportionate extent (Murray 1910, in Matiki 1998:05).

Both the Yao and the Nyanja disliked the Lomwe and Chilomwe and therefore demonstrated their linguacentrism at every opportunity that arose. According to Kachru (1980) a linguistic explanation for this is that the Yao and the Nyanja were being protective of their respective languages for fear of the disintegration of their languages in the face of the immigrants, as it were. The result of this was that the Lomwe feared identifying themselves and refused to speak their language for fear of being ridiculed. The loss of the use of the language in early education among the Lomwe has all along meant that the language could only have been acquired in the home. This stigma had been around up to the post-1994 period when the language came to be elevated to an official status and was then, for the first time, used on radio. Kishindo (1994) in Matiki (1998:05), has argued all along, that the Lomwe, neither projected their ethnic ideology, nor their ethnic identity which could have earned them popular appeal as the language was never used in politics or as a symbol of their ethnic identity except among the old generation and in their home only. For our purposes here a considerable number of the Yao and Lomwe speak Chinyanja which was proved to be a language of value and of wider communication in comparison with their own. This is to the extent that most Yao and Lomwe speak and understand Yao fluently, although none of these languages are intelligible among them. It is not common, however, for a Nyanja speaker to speak or understand Chiyao or Chilomwe. Chinyanja has, therefore, emerged as the lingua franca in both central and southern Malawi.

3.3 Colonial language policy (Missionary contacts and their influences)

Although the former colonial languages such as French and English are a permanent feature of Africa from a sociolinguistic perspective, they differ in the status which they occupy. The disparity can be traced back to differences between British and French colonial policies. The French pursued a policy of direct rule in which French was regarded as the language of 'high culture'. Wardhaugh (1989) has contended that local languages, on the other hand, were treated with contempt. The attitudes of the French colonial policy originated from, and were reinforced by, French educational policy and the Napoleonic code.

The French policy was, however, not consistently implemented as has been pointed at by Phillipson (1991). Elsewhere in Africa such as in Mali, the French promoted the use and development of African languages, which was a departure from their complete policy of assimilation, linguistically and culturally. We might note therefore that this encouragement for use of African languages was an exception and not the rule. The British as a rule encouraged the development of African languages in early education and in literary activities. In 1950 there were ten vernacular literature bureaux or committees in British Africa. These were meant for the production of teaching and reading materials. The British also officially encouraged their colonial officers to learn at least one African language in the country where they were posted. The recognition of local languages in British colonial Africa developed into a triaglossic situation in which standard English was more prestigious than indigenous languages respectively.

At the time Nyasaland became a British Protectorate in 1891, Lord Lugard's policy of 'divide and rule' was adopted for purposes of colonial administration (Lugard, 1997). Native authorities were established for effective administration and control. For the colonialists in Malawi and elsewhere in British colonial Africa, English became the main language of colonial administration, but following

Lugard's principle of divide and rule, indigenous languages were also used as pointed out above as part of the colonial policy. These became viable languages of administration, particularly among the local people, for example, in chiefs' courts.

3.4 Missionary contacts and their influences

In Malawi early efforts in language planning can be traced back to the role that missionaries and the colonial government played. Missionaries in particular were in favour of using local languages for evangelisation. Three different types of schools were run by missionaries: the vernacular, central and normal schools were organised at village level and thus tended to be small and monolingual as lessons were taught in chosen indigenous languages. Those who successfully completed the vernacular classes then proceeded to follow central and normal schools.

In Malawi we can refer to two particular mission schools as an example that were established under the auspices of the Blantyre and Livingstonia missions in the south and north respectively. The Dutch Reformed Church Mission (DRCM) was established in the centre at Mvera. Both the Blantyre and Livingstonia mission establishments recognised and employed the identified local languages for evangelisation and in early education. Learners who were promoted into central and normal schools, after two or three years of vernacular instruction, were exposed to bilingual education. Apart from the local languages, English was the other language of evangelisation and education. This was an attractive feature in missionary enterprises as learners were desirous of joining the rank of health assistants, clerks, interpreters in colonial administration, storekeepers and elementary bookkeepers in trading establishments such as the African Lakes Corporation (ALC) commonly known as Mandala. English thus became the key to acquiring white-collar jobs. (Kishindo, 1994).

We have noted earlier in the section on Ngoni migrations, that the missionaries adopted Chingoni in preaching to their missionary converts. Essentially they adopted

Chingoni because there was already considerable Christian literature in Zulu of which Chingoni was a dialect. Chingoni was also used in early education. However, when the Chingoni lost its power, Chitumbuka reasserted itself and the missionaries used this language for evangelisation and education.

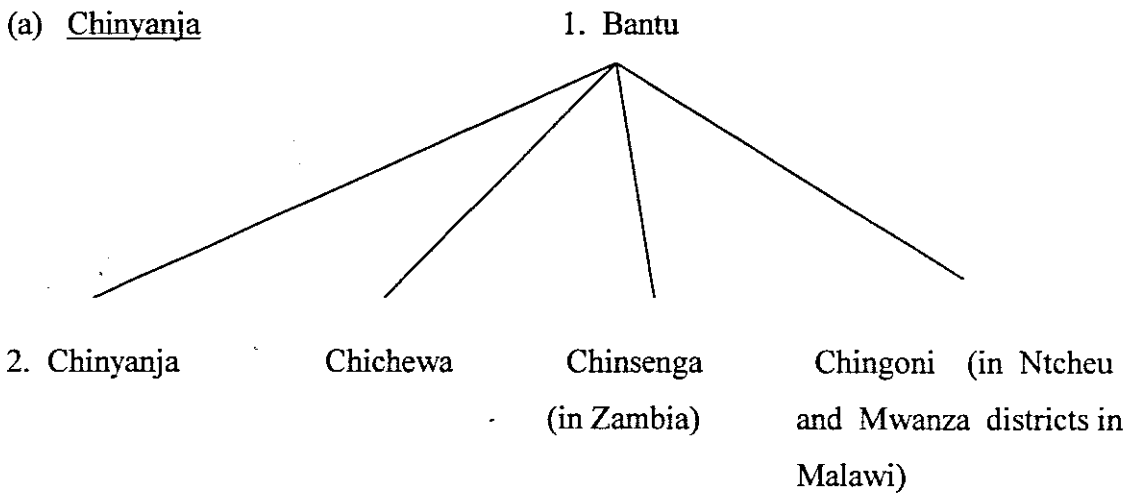
In both Scottish and Dutch missionary establishments, the Bible was printed in English, Chinyanja and in Chitumbuka by the Hetherwick Press in Blantyre. The publications were made available to the converts who attained sufficient literacy in the vernaculars and also in English. Thus apart from emphasis on the use of the two indigenous languages, Chinyanja and Chitumbuka, converts were also encouraged to use English to complement their mother tongues.

One of the leading converts at the Scottish mission at Livingstonia, Charles Chidongo Chinula, among others, was encouraged to write stories about the joys of conversion in his indigenous language, Chitumbuka. This is also where some of the Christian nativity plays and morality tales were translated into African languages (Mphande, 1996:93). Later on Charles Chidongo Chinula translated the classic Pilgrim's Progress by John Bunyan. Following this, the Livingstonia mission press subsequently published it in 1932. Along with this and despite the fact that the missions 'exorcised' native pagan rites, they, nonetheless, appropriated many local Ingoma songs of the Ngoni cultural forms of expression, which they reissued in church hymnals (Mphande, 1996). In the south similar activities were encouraged for Africans to use indigenous languages alongside English in their religious, cultural and work experiences.

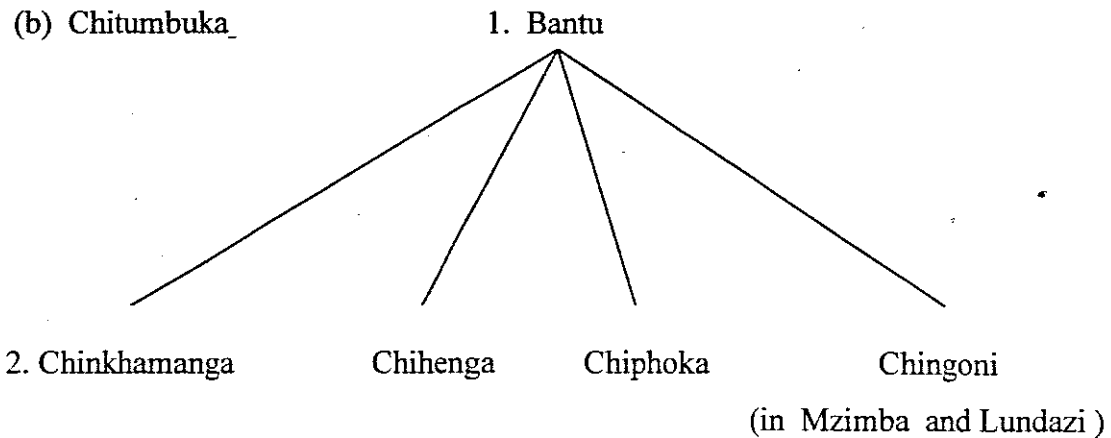
From the discussion above we can observe that the colonial language policy did not want to adopt a multiplicity of languages for their administration. In Malawi's three regions they adopted Chitumbuka in early education and for colonial administration in the north. This is because they observed that the language emerged as a regional lingua franca among all linguistic groups: the Nkhonde, Nyakyusa, Lambya, Tonga and Tumbuka. For the central and southern regions, both missionaries

and the government chose and largely employed Chinyanja, which emerged equally as the lingua franca in the two regions among the following ethnic groups: Chewa-Nyanja, Lomwe, Sena, Yao. In all, two indigenous languages emerged as powerful official languages in early education and in colonial administration throughout the country, along with English. We can observe here that since missionary enterprises both Chinyanja and Chitumbuka have had long literary traditions and were both used in early education and in the media - on radio and in print. The reason for paucity of literature in these two languages, unlike in some, is that they did not operate as viable languages in all spheres of life in solving problems of communication. At the local level they both had different dialects but all the dialects are mutually intelligible as seen in the illustrations below:

(a) Chinyanja



(b) Chitumbuka



The illustrations in (a) and (b) show that Bantu is not a specific language, but a superordinate term for a group of African languages that share certain common lexical, morphological and phonological features. In (a) Chinyanja is a Bantu language which has the following dialects: Chinyanja, Chichewa, Chinsenga (as the one spoken in Chipata in Zambia), and Chingoni, the version spoken in Ntcheu and Mwanza districts in Malawi because of the Maseko Ngoni influence. All these are, however, intelligible dialects of Chinyanja. Similarly in (b) Chitumbuka is a Bantu language with the following dialects: Chinkhamanga Chihenga, Chiphoka and also Chingoni, which the Tonga still refer to the Mzimba and Lundazi dialects. All these are mutually intelligible dialects of Chitumbuka.

One other observation is that the colonial government's language policy seemed rather incoherent. While the colonial powers believed that they could administer Malawi if they ruled indirectly through the local native authorities employing the chosen indigenous languages in early education and in administration, they still felt it imperative that a class of the natives they ruled be literate in English, arguing that this was for ease of administration. What is observable is clearly that they developed and deliberately adopted a mixed exploitative policy that worked to their advantage. As we have noted earlier, the missionary forerunners of the British administration switched from using Chingoni to Chitumbuka, with the demise of Chingoni among the subjugated peoples. In educational contexts, indigenous languages served well as media of instruction in early education but the supremacy of English reigned from secondary school education to the tertiary level. It also meant prestige for the colonial master's language. In British colonial Kenya, for example, kiSwahili, Kikuyu, Luo and Luhya were also recognised as languages in initial education, along with English in higher education (Kimani wa Njoroge, 1985).

3.5 Language patterns in post-colonial Malawi

Following missionary establishments and the pre-colonial government policy, independent Malawi made a wholesale adoption of its predecessor's language policy where English assumed the prestigious official position as the language of government, education, diplomacy, the courts, commerce and industry and of all documentation. Chinyanja and Chitumbuka were adopted as the two indigenous languages to be used in early education and for mass communication on the radio and in the print media.

One of the problems in the reconstruction of the history of Malawi's language policy is the lack of statistical data. As we mentioned in chapter two, this seems to be a general problem in Africa: statistical data is scanty and inconsistent, making it very difficult for language planners and sociolinguists to make any informed conclusions and valid predictions. In the case of Malawi, the last census count which had questions on language use was in 1966, thirty-four years ago. Whatever insights can be drawn from them, if any, remain only suggestive. The lack of statistical data may also be a political ploy. As noted above, statistics in Africa are not used to support the available facts but to salvage set political agendas. Malawi has not had a distinct language policy, but rather a political agenda in this respect.

Some scholars have suggested the use of language patterns as a measure of cultural pluralism. They first use linguistic homogeneity. Those who speak a common language and who constitute 85% of the adult population are coded as ethnically homogenous. The second measure is the use of the dominant language as a percentage of the total population (Banks and Textor, 1963 in Matiki 1993). There is also the suggestion of the use of language diversity as a major indicator of national integration.

In the case of Malawi it is easy to understand why the 1966 census count included a question on the use of a home language: the language that one speaks is a reliable indicator of what one is attached to in terms of one's cultural identity. (See statistical Table 1 showing the literacy rate of indigenous Malawian languages, and statistical Table 2 showing indigenous Malawian languages in percentage form).

TABLE 1**SHOWING THE LITERACY RATE OF INDIGENOUS MALAWIAN LANGUAGES**

Literacy rate : 22%

English	(no figures given)
Lambya	18,648 (1966 census)
Lomwe	476,306 (1966 census)
Nkonde	34,075 (1966 census)
ChiChewa	1,644,916 (1966 census)
Sena	115,055 (1966 census)
Tonga	62,213 (1966 census)
Chitumbuka	298,881 (1966 census)
Yao	452,305 (1966 census)
Ngoni / Zulu	37,480 (1966 census)

*Grimes, B.F. (1978)(ed) Ethnologue.***TABLE 2 :****SHOWING INDIGENOUS MALAWIAN LANGUAGES IN PERCENTAGE FORM**

LANGUAGES	NORTHERN REGION	CENTRAL REGION	SOUTHERN REGION	ENTIRE COUNTRY
ChiNyanja	0.3	33.1	16.8	50.2
ChiLomwe	-	-	14.5	14.5
ChiYao	-	1.2	12.6	13.8
ChiTumbuka	7.9	1.1	0.1	9.1
ChiSena	-	-	3.5	3.5
ChiKhokhola	-	-	2.2	2.2
ChiTonga	1.5	0.3	0.1	1.9
ChiNgoni	0.1	0.1	0.9	1.1
Other	1.5	0.4	0.6	2.5
TOTAL	12.2	36.2	51.3	99.7

Malawi Statistical Yearbook, 1972:7

We should note from the table on the statistics here and in the juxtaposed table that these were based on a population census count rather than on a sociolinguistic count.

The purpose of this count was to establish the size of an ethnic group in terms of speakers in the country and not the number of speakers of each language (Matiki, 1998:10). The Chewa or Nyanja are presented as the predominant ethnic group, which is perhaps the case (see Kishindo, 1994, Matiki, 1997, Mchombo, 1998).

The two Tables (Tables 1 and 2) above, provide an important argument for saying that these statistics are merely suggestive and that they should be treated with caution. In linguistic terms Chilomwe and Chikhokhola are directly related, in that Chikhokhola is a dialect of Chilomwe. Similarly the Chingoni that we talk of today is loosely the Mzimba dialect of Chitumbuka. Thus the Ngoni/Zulu statistics in both Table 1 and 2 should be included in Chitumbuka. In the same vein Lambya and Nkhonde figures should be added as one, as Chilambya is in fact a dialect of Chinkhonde.

A comparison of Tables 1 and 2 clearly shows that they are both absurdly skewed and therefore misleading. They could have been so skewed to support a designed political agenda leading to a governmental policy statement on language policy matters. Besides, census count in this case does not identify or take into account the minimum level of proficiency for one to be counted as a user in any one language for adequate planning purposes. Malawi's population is now only estimated at between 9-10 million (Hutchinson, 1996). Again, language planners, policy makers and decision makers do not know how many languages an individual is able to use in view of social and economic mobility, transportation and other factors that affect one's ability to use languages.

In addition this 1.1 % of the population is claimed to speak Chingoni which was only used in lawsuits at the time the Nguni or Ngoni arrived in Mzimba. It cannot be the case that there were these speakers in 1966 as we have noted earlier in this chapter on migrations that the language is now almost obsolete. It is only heard in song and dance

and in royal praises in the form of *izibongo*, which are still very much cherished, particularly in Mzimba district. We might take Carol Eastman's (1990) argument that when a first language functions socially it tends to become part of one's ethnic identity regardless of whether it is used at all, or only used in particular domains. It is possible from this that some Ngoni by origin may have claimed to use Chingoni as a way of identifying themselves socially, when in fact they may not speak the original Ngoni or Zulu language at all. It is not uncommon for those who hail from Mzimba district to recite their *zithakazelo* particularly on social occasions, despite the fact that their original Ngoni or Zulu has now been absorbed by the use of Chitumbuka.

3.6 The Banda ideology vis-à-vis language policies

In this section, we briefly discuss the ideology of Banda, Malawi's first president. We hope that from a discussion of his political ideology some insight can be gained and some light shed on his thirty years' rule that affected the national and language-in-education policies. The following quasi-satiric extract sheds some light on the man's constitution:

Banda's aesthetics were fundamentally European, and this was perhaps best exemplified by his trademark three-piece Harrods of London suit, his Homburg hat, the English cane in his right hand, and in his left hand the famous fly whisk given him by Jomo Kenyatta. To crown it all Banda was always attired as though in response to, or in anticipation of weather, for he always wore a coat even when the tropical sun was dazzling hot. Philip Short reports that even in England Banda was so fastidious and obsessive of "correct attire" that when a man appeared "without shoes and socks...while Banda was present, he rushed out of the room and could talk of nothing for weeks afterwards but 'that revolving man'. In the same way he would never receive friends unless he was correctly attired. While Banda indeed must cut quite a confusing figure to the observant eye, nevertheless, his costume cultivates a silent dialogue, and raises the question: what could the image of this "Englishman's attire", complete with a black

Homburg hat, walking stick, and an African medicineman's fly whisk, communicate to an audience?

(Mphande, 1996:81)

From the above picture, Banda is introduced as an enigma whose origins are shrouded in mystery, and his personality fraught with contradictions that arise from conflict within himself. And this mirrors his contradictory statements pertaining to language policy statements, which he invariably, almost unilaterally whimsically decided upon and executed. In Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, Caliban makes a claim to patrimony that 'This island is mine Sycurax my mother.' Banda would claim no less a line of succession, as he chose for expropriation aspects of the Chewa matrilineal social structure that were crucial for the control of land inheritance and language statements that he enforced. His nation state thus provided a platform from which to appropriate useable features of the national cultural landscape. For him the country was like his own estate, synonymous with himself. Banda was Malawi and Malawi could not be without him. Mchombo (forthcoming:08) makes this observation of the man: 'A very nationalistic Chewa, this is Kamuzu Banda who became the first president of independent Malawi and an autocratic ruler at that.'

With Mphande (1996) above, we see that Banda passionately adored everything English and European. His thirty-year rule of Malawi, 1964-1994, forged an African autocracy, shaped along the lines typical of Hitler, Mussolini and Generals Franco of Spain and de Gaulle of France. He created an oppressive regime of institutional structures which ensured a strict enforcement of Chewa culture. On 21 September 1968, Banda changed the country's national policy, making English the official language and Chinyanja, the national language. A presidential decree at the Annual Convention of the Malawi Congress Party, which was then the only political party, resolved that:

- i. Malawi adopt Chinyanja as the National language
- ii. The name Chinyanja henceforth be known as Chichewa

- iii. Chichewa and English be the official languages of the state of Malawi and all other languages should continue to be used in everyday private life and in their respective areas.

We have observed in chapter two that the purpose of language planning with its by-product of formulating language policies is essentially a conscious effort aimed at solving communication problems. Ostensibly, it was not intended to relegate other ethnic groups with their languages and their cultures into lower statuses where their languages only become village languages of tribal identity. As in all African states, the selection or elevation of indigenous languages in Malawi has become a thorny and contentious issue.

In changing the name of the proclaimed national language from Chinyanja to Chichewa, Banda claimed that the word was introduced by Europeans in the country. Obviously this was inaccurate. In the first place, *Nyanja* is not a European word and the early Portuguese explorers knew very little of local languages, if any. Earlier in this chapter we explained that the word *Nyanja* is a Chinyanja word for lake, and that the people were so named because they were largely lakeshore people.

The linguistic society of America published a supplement to the journal *Language*, which contained a monograph entitled *A Grammar of Chichewa, A Bantu Language Spoken in British Central Africa*. The author was an African-American anthropologist, Mark Hanna Watkins. In this publication, Watkins notes that Chichewa is only a variant of Chinyanja and this was not an accident as 'All the information was obtained from Kamuzu Banda, a native Chewa, while in attendance at the University of Chicago, from 1930 to 1932' (Watkins, 1937:7 in Mchombo forthcoming: 08).

What we can discern from this is that, as a student research assistant in linguistics, Banda had some knowledge of languages, their dialects patterns, but when he came to power he decided to elevate his own dialect to become the standard dialect and a national language. It is interesting, therefore, in this light that he opportunistically chose the Chewa dialect with its culture, refused to speak Chinyanja, which he renamed Chichewa during his rule,

and publicly maintained that his speeches be translated from English to Chichewa through a public interpreter at all functions.

The presidential decree on the promotion of Chichewa to the status of a national and official language resulted in Chitumbuka losing its official status as it was no longer used in the print press and on the radio. On attainment of independence, Banda inherited the colonial policy with English as the main official language along with the two indigenous languages of wider communication, Chinyanja and Chitumbuka. Naturally, it was not surprising that the people in the northern region with five languages lost Chitumbuka, a regional lingua franca which they saw as symbolising their region. A Malawian sociolinguist and scholar, Matiki (1998:02), has observed that:

Changing the name from Chinyanja to Chichewa also angered some people because there was no apparent justification in changing the name other than the fact that President Banda was an ethnic Chewa and wanted the language to be named after his ethnic group. The renaming also confirmed most peoples' doubts about the choice of Chichewa as a national language. It was widely believed that Chichewa was chosen as the national language because it was the President's mother tongue.

Some arguments could be advanced in support of the arguments put forward in the above quote. First, Banda's pronounced new policy failed to conform to the accepted language planning procedures as we have observed in chapter two. Matters of language planning should be systematic along the lines proposed by Rubin (1971), Rufai (1977) and others. In the Malawian case, apart from the 1966 census count, no fact finding was carried out before formulating a policy, which we have observed is itself skewed and therefore suspect. A country can therefore not base its language policy on such questionable statistical data. Secondly, contrary to accepted language planning procedures, Malawians were never consulted and their attitudes towards Chichewa's choice were not determined. Even if we take the census figures suggesting that a considerable number of people understand Chichewa, people's aspirations, preferences and feelings about their own

languages ought to be considered in such studies. Proficiency in languages other than one's own cannot supercede the feelings attached to one's language. This only shows that any effort in language planning and policy formulation should first find out about issues of attitudes.

While the issue of national identity and the project of nation building could be invoked to justify the elevation and adoption of a language to the status of a national language, the strategy that Banda adopted amounted to nothing less than an imposition of a language on the people. Sentimental linguists like Timpunza-Mvula (1992:43) who supported the imposition of Chichewa as a national language argued that ' a common language is conducive to a unified and stable political order.' However, it is clearly not democratic to deny speakers of eight other indigenous languages- Chilomwe, Chitumbuka, Chiyao, Chitonga, Chinkhonde, Chilambya, Chinyakyusa and Chisena, to use them in early education, on the radio, in the newspapers and in other publications. The toleration of other languages that the Convention decree refers to was only their oral use as village languages in their speech communities. Subsequently, little attention other than this came to be paid to them. Timpunza-Mvula's argument is now regarded erroneous, inconsiderate and therefore discarded. With regard to Chitumbuka, all teaching materials and textbooks in the language were withdrawn from use in early education and it was banned in the media. What remains are hymns and Bibles printed by Hetherwick Press. Children whose first language is not Chichewa have not seen their mother tongues in print since this promulgation in 1968. Another immediate result of the banning of Chitumbuka in early education and the media was that it 'led to the violent destruction of a radio post in the North' (Foster, 1991:23), as people saw their common language sunk into oblivion, where the government chose not to communicate to them on the radio or in the print media particularly. This was truly a cause of major human rights abuse, in which the Tumbuka speaking peoples.'

linguistic and cultural values suffered a major onslaught of Chewa imperialism. This was more so since the Tumbuka had well established dynasties and they had

developed their language, culture, as well as political and economic struggles with the Ngoni.

(Mchombo, forthcoming:09)

3.7 The concepts of national identity and national integration

Makoni (1993:27) points out that in a bid to manufacture feelings of national identity African governments have frequently been forced to invent national symbols. These symbols have included new anthems, new flags and national languages. This has become an exercise in creating a sense of nationhood with new cultures and new traditions rather than a rich diversity of a country with the promotion of different languages and cultural expressions in different domains. Malawi has been no exception in this exercise and the imposition of Chichewa as the sole national language on the entire population with eight other languages was part of the project of creating national symbols.

In forging new nation-states, Vail (1997) points out that a general paradigm of 'modernisation' appealed to every political viewpoint in post-colonial Africa. To every observer, the concept of nation-building and the project of national integration seemed progressive and laudable, while ethnicity, or, as it was usually called, 'tribalism' was deemed retrogressive and divisive. Under the guise of nation-building and national integration through a single national language as the 'unifying' factor, Banda exploited the situation to exalt Chichewa, its culture and tradition as supreme over the cultures and traditions of other ethnic groups.

It is important to further note here that ethnicity in this context is the result of a history of divide-and-rule tactics which colonial governments cannily employed (Vail, 1997:55). In Africa, the example of South African Bantustan policies and their stress on the uniqueness of the 'tribal' culture to promote political divisions was fundamental in promoting regionalism, ethnicity and tribalism. The Malawian extreme was that instead of allowing the development of all languages with their cultural heritages, Banda allowed

Chichewa and its culture to develop at the expense of all other languages, particularly in mass media and other publications. The other eight languages became village or community languages for the upkeep of ethnic identity only. They had no official recognition as languages of functional value even at regional level. Chichewa thus came to be employed as a tool for 'transforming' all other cultures into a single national identity through a process of political mobilisation by a repressive one-party government.

Foster (1991:23) notes that in exalting one language and one ethnic group above all others it becomes easy for cultural nationalism to degenerate into tribal particularism; this is what happened in Malawi under Banda's rule. Vail and White (1989) similarly argue that what Banda really emphasised in language use were Chewa values. Thus in emphasising his own Chichewa identity he always denounced tribalism in others, as his speeches were frequently concerned to depict a glorious Chewa past. Furthermore, they argue that the Chewa-oriented policy of Banda equated Malawian-ness with Chichewa, often going as far as claiming that many Yao and Lomwe were actually Chewa people who did not realise it (Vail and White 1989:182). Through this Chewa imperialistic manoeuvring, Banda embarked on a social engineering policy transforming tribes which had their own distinct identity, such as Lomwe and Nyanja, to identify themselves as Chewa.

The modernisation theory based on the exaltation of only one culture rested on these strategies of the theory which are essentially egoistic, ethnocentric and imperialistic in nature. These are the values of the state that Banda set and those who questioned or dissented them were marginalised socially, economically and politically.

The other form of social engineering was Banda's constant reference to figures, stating that the Chewa constituted the majority in Malawi. While this fact could be true, the figures seem to have been somewhat exaggerated. Wardaugh (1992) has observed that the notion of making a nation synonymous with a language is a fairly common trend in language planning programmes that are aimed at projects of nation-building and national integration, but the boosting or exaggeration of figures to achieve the same is a little out

of procedural practice. During Banda's rule the government made numerous attempts to encourage people as much as possible to understand both Chichewa and English through formal education and broadcasting services (Matiki 1998:13)

The following figures are quoted by various scholars for Malawians who understood, but could not necessarily speak Chichewa.

Figure 3.

ESTIMATES ON THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE WHO UNDERSTAND CHICHEWA IN MALAWI

Author	Speakers of Chichewa
Knappert (1989)	83%
Morrison et al (1989)	60%
Katzer (1986)	> 36%
In Tadadjen (1977)	77%

adapted from Matiki (1998)

If we consider the statistics above there does not seem to be any agreement among scholars in the cited figures as to the number of people who understand Chichewa. The differences are wide, and despite the differences in the approaches and in the dates of their research, they appear obviously skewed, with no pattern appearing. Given all the political support in terms of language engineering, Knappert's (1989) figures and Morrison et al's (1989) both carried out in the same year show a difference of 23% (83%-60%). Those of Morrison et al also ignore the dynamics of language change and shift that could have occurred.

While exaggerating the Chichewa speaking figure to boost its image and therefore its role, Banda's denunciation of 'tribalism' in his speeches among Malawians, as Vail and White (1989) note, in fact promoted tribalism and a Chewa imperialism. This typified the president's contradictory statements in policy matters on political platforms while

concealing his ulterior motives of Chewa imperialism. Significantly, his pronouncements on language matters were either in English or in Chichewa, but as we have observed, he hardly spoke the latter language himself with any respectable degree of fluency. In one of his speeches he claimed that the word for 'son in-law' in standard Chichewa was 'mkhwenyana', which is now a word nativised in Chitumbuka in the entire northern region. Through contact with the Ngoni or Zulu, the Tumbuka as a subjugated group borrowed this word from their Zulu masters where the actual word is 'umkhwenyana.' While borrowing is a free phenomenon in all living languages, Chichewa, also a Bantu language with common lexical items, still has its variants within its different dialects. In central Malawi the word for 'son in-law' is 'mkomwini' and 'mkamwini' as in all southern region dialects.

With regard to the use of English in other aspects of national life, Banda argued that 'our missionaries spoke English. Our colonial administrators spoke English' (1968 closing address of the MCP Convention in Lilongwe, Zomba, Ministry of Education). He did not refer to the international value of English but purely to his adoration of its culture and values. For him the adoption of English would entrench its culture locally and ensure an effective transition in government. English thus continued as the most powerful functional language in high domains, with a prestigious position that was not rivalled by any other indigenous language, while Chichewa played the symbolic national language role, even though some ethnic groups neither comprehend nor have a smattering of the language. The tolerance of other languages referred to in Malawi Congress Party's resolution of 1968 was a mere lip service. Hardly was any tolerance made of Chiyao, Chilomwe, Chitumbuka and other languages in public life. It was pure ethnocentrism and linguacentrism. English was used in all high domains for documentation where no African language, not even Chichewa was considered suitable. Malawi has always made English the language of the legislature, the judiciary and diplomacy. In parliament no African language is used in deliberations. The constitution clearly stipulates that candidates shall 'be able to speak and read the English language well enough to take an active part in the proceedings of parliament'(Malawi Constitution, Chapter VI, Section 51).

The constitution also demands language proficiency for those aspiring to positions of deputy minister, minister, the vice presidency and the presidency.

3.8 Language-in-education policy : English-Chichewa diglossia

In Malawi the use of English and Chichewa fits into Ferguson's (1985) 'diglossia'. Theoretically, Banda wanted the two to coexist as constitutional languages from 1968. In practice, however, English has always played the official role in almost all official documentation and was therefore accorded higher domain functions. Besides, English has always enjoyed and still enjoys more social esteem and prestige, while Chichewa enjoyed 'national' communication roles at grassroots level.

The language policy in education, with effect from the 1969/70 school year, stipulated the following:

- i. **Primary School:** That English would be taught as a subject from standard one to eight, in which Chichewa would serve as a medium of instruction for the first five years. Thereafter, English would become the medium of instruction and Chichewa would remain a subject of study. The Ministry of Education's policy also stipulated that the award of the Primary School Learning Certificate (PLC) would be on condition that a pupil passed English in addition to other subjects.
- ii. **Secondary School:** Here English would remain the medium of instruction and Chichewa would only be taught as a subject. In both Junior Certificate (JC) and the Malawi School Certificate of Education (MSCE) examinations, English would remain the key subject determining the award of certificates.
- iii. **Tertiary Education:** At all tertiary institutions, including at the university level, English would remain the medium of instruction. At the University of Malawi, English is a compulsory subject to all first year students. Currently the

Department of Language and Communication Studies (DLCS) has the mandate to offer English for Specific Purposes (ESP) to all faculties of the institution to cater for students' specific needs (Kamwendo, 1997:04).

Concern has been expressed about the declining levels of English by external examiners. The Department of Language and Communication Studies was intended to improve the falling standards in students' competence in English. However, in a recent shift in the university policy, English will no longer be a university entrance requirement (Kamwendo 1997:04).

Students will still be admitted to university if they obtain higher grades in the subjects they wish to specialise in. Some academics argue that this new policy will further lead to a lowering of standards in English. Others argue that failure in English for students who would use it only as a medium of instruction should not preclude learners from obtaining university education.

During the Banda regime (1964-1994), English received considerable support from the presidency. As we have observed in Mpande's (1996) description, the man loved and adored everything English and European. His language policy particularly favoured English above Chichewa in education and in the national life.

When the University of Malawi was established in 1965 Banda expressed his dissatisfaction with the way English was being taught, and this dissatisfaction resurfaced in 1972 at a conference which aimed at reviewing Malawi's education system. At this conference Banda expressed his dismay at the quality of English used by secondary school pupils, some of whom he said wrote letters to him (Kamwendo, 1997:04). He lamented:

This is simply because there is no teaching, no grammar, no composition. Boys and girls are not taught what is a word; what is a phrase; what is a clause....they are not taught to punctuate.

(Banda, 1972:05)

He argued that being the head of state did not mean that he should have confined himself to politics and matters of state alone. He contended that he was also interested in issues such as language:

I am not just a Head of State...I consider myself more than that. This is why I am concerned about Chichewa, how it is spoken by my people; English; how it is spoken by my people.

(Banda 1975:01)

His view was that:

A person must have basic principles of grammar taught to him....I was taught grammar and I want to see that ... grammar must be taught properly.

(Banda, 1975:06-07)

We have mentioned earlier that through-out his presidency Banda spoke in English whether it was at a gathering of international delegates or at a political mass rally at grassroots level. When he returned to Malawi after a reported absence of some 45 years, he was fluent in Latin but had forgotten his native Chichewa (McGreal, 1993:24-25 in Mphande, 1996:86). Here an interpreter was always at hand. We have also mentioned that he often took it upon himself to school his audiences in what he considered to be correct English. At one occasion, he said 'In the United States, you hear people say, 'them things us doing'. But even there, it is not acceptable English' (Banda, 1975:16).

In his student days as a research assistant for Watkins, Banda developed an interest in historical linguistics. It is perhaps this experience that led him to know that English extensively borrowed form Latin and Greek. He believed that knowledge of these two classical languages was crucial to one's acquisition of a good command of English. He maintained that 'no one is truly educated without knowledge of Latin and Greek, without the knowledge of the classical world' (Banda, 1975:11)

It is perhaps this love for the classical languages and knowledge that made him set up a grammar school, the Kamuzu Academy, which has been referred to as the Eaton of Africa. When he set up the academy Banda insisted that it was designed to demonstrate the overarching importance of classical education to the Malawian youth. During his presidency this institution spent about five million dollars (US) a year, an average of \$12000 per pupil per year. This represented 50 per cent of the national education budget. In the rest of the country an average of \$14 was spent on a pupil per year. Banda's idea was that the academy was built with the expressed intention of furthering European classical education, and he decreed that anyone who did not know Latin, Greek and ancient History could not teach at the school. Besides, not a single indigenous language, including Chichewa, the national language, was taught at the school. Malawians were essentially 'denied the opportunity to teach at the academy, being defined as not qualified in light of the deficiency in Latin and Greek.' (Matiki 1998:19). At that time the school had over thirty European teachers most of whom were British. This was in spite of the fact that Malawians particularly university staff were more qualified than the staff at the academy.

In expounding his love for classical languages and ancient history, Banda, as Chancellor of the University, exerted pressure on the university to establish a Classics Department. He rebuked: 'How can you people call yourselves a real university if you don't have a Department of Classics?' (Alexandra, 1951:58). The Department of Classics was thus formed for political, rather than academic, reasons.

The British principal of the academy, Anthony Cooke, referred to Banda in flatteringly reverential terms - " H.E. (His Excellency) and 'founder'- and described him 'as a total protagonist of Western culture' who believed that a small African country such as Malawi could only acquire respect if it related to Western countries (McGeal 1993 in Mphande, 1996). One is bound to ask, 'Why respect for an African country with its own indigenous languages and cultures be earned by that country only through the acquisition of classical values rather than its own, even if it adopted a colonial language as one of its official languages?' A fair account of

evidence suggests that students resented this skewed education. In order to avoid the ordeal of taking Latin, Greek and Ancient History throughout their school life at the academy, and to ensure that they learnt something closer to their realities, they resorted to obtaining a 'C' and not a 'B' grade at the Ordinary Level examinations. This meant that they could not be forced to take that subject at 'A' Level. There is also evidence to suggest that learners did not 'know much of Malawi history. They keep Africa away from us'. (Mphande, 1996:87)

Apart from the emphasis on Greek, Latin and Ancient History learners were taught translation styles in their most archaic form, a range of classical literary texts which included Oxid's *Ars Amatoria* and *Metamorphoses*, and also the articulations about Greco-Roman civilisation from Plutarch. The issue here is that instead of allowing learners to identify themselves with their indigenous languages by studying them, even as subjects in secondary school, along with their cultures, they were made to further alienate them from their own local world. What was inculcated was the view that the attainment of order and unity in the world could come only through the imperial agency of Rome. To this end, the emphasis on Greece and Rome was, in effect, a canonical act of retreat into the past. This is because even if we consider the Western culture that is so greatly admired and advocated, the texts that were offered in this school did not include enlightened writers such as Bertolt Brecht or Leo Tolstoy. Banda's zeal and love for these languages is a little perplexing. It could not be understood why one would spend so much time learning to speak a dead language, at least in speech, such as Latin, which he was reported to have spoken fluently. The French ambassador reported thus of him: 'His Excellency, Ngwazi Dr H. Kamuzu Banda was a leading advocate of French as a modern language, as well as Greek and Latin from which French is derived.' (*Daily Times*, 1 May 1990).

With regard to the language-in-education policy, where Malawi inherited the English tradition in schools and in higher education, apart from the president's respect for the classical languages it is clear that English now enjoys a higher status in

Malawi than all other languages. It performs all other functions that Bernstein (1971) contends a language should perform, viz, the instrumental, regulative, interpersonal and imaginative or innovative. Ngugi (1986) has referred to the role and function of English in the British colonial world as 'the official vehicle and the magic formula to colonial elitedom'. This has continued in post-colonial Malawi, and practically in all other British colonies. For his native land, Kenya, Ngugi observes the following attitude toward English in colonial times which hardly makes a difference when applied to Malawi with regard to education language policy that Banda implemented:

Any achievement in spoken or written English was highly rewarded: prizes, prestige, applause; the ticket to higher realms. English became the measure of intelligence and ability in the arts, sciences and all other branches of learning. English became the main determinant of a child's progress up to the ladder of formal education.

(Ngugi, 1986:12)

Ngugi (1986:190) again describes such an attitude to a colonial language, English and others added to it, as a 'more telling example of hatred of what is national and a servile worship of what is foreign even though dead.'

Banda's attitude to what is national can be seen through the difference in the amounts of money he spent on the academy as opposed to what was spent in the ordinary schools quoted above. While the academy has grand facilities, the national schools receive poor facilities: poor infrastructure, lack of textbooks and unqualified or ill-qualified teachers. Learners at the academy sit for the British 'O' and 'A' level examinations, while those in the national school sit for the local Malawi School Certificate Examination (MSCE). Learners from these two examining bodies are easily admitted into British universities, although the academy has erroneously argued that their learners would easily be admitted in the UK with British qualifications.

This illustrates that Banda's language policy, his attitude and the legacy of the education policies the country has inherited have all been grossly ill-conceived. It is an accepted observation that the establishments of mission schools such as the Livingstonia and Blantyre missions, among others, which allowed their educated converts to develop and write in their indigenous languages resulted in some scholarly works of note. However, since higher education thwarted the development of indigenous languages and largely promoted English and others, the scholarly nature of literature, for example, was essentially an imitation of English literary traditions that seemed calculated to transform educated Malawians into Black Wordsworths, black Shakespeares or black Elliots. Ken Lipenga (in Lindfors 1989) has pointed out that the English Department at Chancellor College, University of Malawi, had a 'compulsory reading list' which was calculated to ensure that 'Even after political independence, a certain cultural dependence continues, perpetuating colonialism.' He also refers to the impact of 'Shakespeare and the English masters' as being very tremendous on the Malawian literature:

Previously many of us tended to look at literature as something exotic because it was associated with archaic languages and expressions that made no sense at all but which you had to memorize anyway. What happened was that literature, because the way it was presented, it tended to emphasize those foreign elements, was really an oddity that appealed to only a small minority of the students.

(interview with Ken Lipenga in Lindfors, 1989)

3.9 The 1996 post-Banda education language policy

On 28 March 1996, a somewhat new language policy was issued from the Ministry of Education in the form of a directive (Letter from Secretary for Education, Ref. IN/2/14 28 March, 1996). The policy advocated mother tongue instruction from standard one to four. It stipulated that English would become the medium of instruction from standard five.

The language-in-education policy has not followed language planning procedures. It is largely a copy of what pertains in most so-called Anglophone states in Africa. Schools are encouraged to use the home language as a medium of instruction, but in all classes, English remains the compulsory subject, and an additional indigenous language has to be taken. In Malawi, this is a false start. Despite the cited 1996 'new' education policy, in effect, the additional indigenous language still remains Chichewa which has now reverted to its original name Chinyanja. This is for the simple functional reason that there are no textbooks or other learning and teaching materials in any of the other local languages elevated to the status of instructional media in early education.

The present situation is that there is no evidence that the policy pronounced in 1996 is being implemented. Some problems inherent in the policy include the following:

- i. There is a lack of clear objectives and the *modus operandi* for the implementation of the objectives.
- ii. There is an absence of research findings within the country to indicate the country's readiness in implementing the policy. For instance, the other indigenous languages lack standardisation in terms of their acceptable or agreed-upon orthographies. Besides, they lack grammar books, dictionaries and teachers' and learners' textbooks and other materials.
- iii. There is a total absence of programmes for the training of teachers in the various vernacular languages. Native speakership is not synonymous with expertise to effectively and competently teach a language or use it as an instructional medium (Rampton, 1990).
- iv. Malawi's populace has largely been indoctrinated into thinking that English is the language for learners. This is perhaps only natural given the impact of Banda's language policies for over thirty years. There is therefore inadequate policy awareness in the sense that little has been done to sensitise and conscientise the

general public on the psycholinguistic advantages of classroom instruction in mother tongues. The result of this is that the public generally question the rationale for developing literacies in indigenous languages which they see as of little economic cachet for their children's future careers. By comparison, the acquisition of a thorough knowledge of English helps an individual's upward mobility in social, economic and political life.

It is important to mention, however, that in learning and teaching, particularly in early education, the development of linguistic and cognitive skills in the first language is crucial for the competence in a second language. Learners ought to be first taught and allowed to develop sufficient proficiency and skills in their mother tongues (MacDonald, (1993) in South Africa and Williams (1996) in Malawi). In both studies we find that learners have not acquired enough of the target language to learn in it at the time of transition from their own languages. In the Malawian case there are cases in early education where pupils learn in a language that is not only their mother tongue, but one which is not even their best language, in terms of their proficiency and competence in it. With such poor linguistic formulation, they switch to English as a medium of instruction in standard five.

3.10 Summary

This chapter has sought to briefly describe the history of the country and provide the sociolinguistic situation of Malawi. The main point is that the country is divided into three regions. The north has six districts with five languages but Chitumbuka has emerged as the sole regional language of wider communication. The central region has nine districts with Chichewa, now Chinyanja, as the sole regional language but with many dialects which are all mutually intelligible. The south has ten districts with four distinct languages: Chiyao, Chilomwe, Chinyanja and Chisena. Nonetheless, Chinyanja is the regional language of wider communication, understood and spoken by speakers of the other three languages. There is, however, no mutual intelligibility among these four languages.

The chapter has highlighted the problem that we would have expected that policy decisions should have considered the ethnolinguistic composition of the country, so that other indigenous languages could have served as functional languages in the media - in print and on the radio - at some level. However, they were denied this right and relegated to the lowest status of village languages of tribal or ethnic identity only within their speech communities.

The presidential decree at the Malawi Congress Party annual convention in 1968 imposed Chichewa as the sole official national unity. The argument was that this was in the interest of national unity to minimise linguistic diversity which the government viewed as an aspect that reinforced ethnolinguistic loyalties. Thus English and Chichewa became official languages. The chapter has shown that the former assumed high domain functions in all government documentation, commerce, industry and parliament. Chichewa became a symbolic language of national integration, unity and of communication with the masses in the media, regardless of whether others understood it or not. No other indigenous language was allowed this role.

A developmental aspect of this policy pronouncement is that in education, Chichewa became the sole indigenous medium of instruction up to standard four and was taught in secondary school as a subject. In 1972 it was introduced at the university as the only vernacular subject for linguistic studies. A Chichewa Board was formed in the same year. It was charged with the responsibility of writing grammar books, dictionaries and developing teaching and learning materials related to the language. Along with this, a weekly programme was aired on the national radio that discussed matters related to Chichewa. With regard to orthography the spelling changed. Previously 'Chichewa' was spelt without an 'h' (i.e 'Cicewa' or 'Cinyanja' as Zambian Cinyanja). A presidential decree changed the spelling to 'Chichewa' or 'Chinyanja', and all such lexical items had to have an 'h' inserted. This was said to be the president's own dialect.

It is also noted that apart from the superiority of English the promotion of Chichewa was synonymous with a strong Chewa identity from the centre, which ostensibly constituted the majority of the country's population. This is a claim which is considered rather exaggerated and inaccurate in serious academic circles (Africa Watch 1990:57). This was through a process of what was dubbed 'Chewaisation' (Kishindo, 1990:21-24 in Chirwa 1994/95-61). The ethnolinguistic groups from the north were marginalised largely through the demise of their regional language, Chitumbuka, as an official language in the media, on the radio and in initial education as an instructional language. Other ethnolinguistic groups which fell victim to the new language policy were those from the southern region. These included Chiyao, Chilomwe and Chisena, which were all lumped together as Chichewa, and Banda constantly argued that speakers of these languages were unaware of this act. Similarly, their historical and cultural traditions were subtly but systematically subordinated to those of the Chewa. (Chirwa, 1994/5:61).

The implication was that Banda wanted these linguistic groups to rally behind him and the centre and alienate the northerners socially, economically, politically, and linguistically, as there is no mutual intelligibility between the five languages in the north and Chichewa. Thus both groups from the north and the south which had developed strong linguistic and cultural traditions of their own were marginalised as a result of the new national and educational language policy. A detailed description of the Banda ideology and the man has demonstrated the man's inherent leanings to the West more than to his own country. This affected policy statements for thirty years (1964 to 1994) and even beyond the first democratic elections in May 1994. The chapter has also shown the then Head of State's preference for English and his love for Greek, Latin and the Classical world, as evidenced by the establishment of the academy.

Chapter Four

LANGUAGE ATTITUDES, PREFERENCES AND USAGE

4.0 Introduction

In chapter two we outlined and discussed two theories relevant to this study: the neo-classical approach and the historical-structural approach. We need to point out, however, that the two are by no means exhaustive in language planning and formulation of anyone language planning policy. Besides, that language planning at state level alone and subsequently the formulation of language policies is in itself inconclusive. It needs to incorporate language attitudes and preferences of all its citizenry for policies to be viewed as democratic and thus attain credibility (Eastman, 1990)

It is mainly for this reason that we consider attitudes and preferences as major factors in policy formulation. They need to be adequately and equitably accommodated to show the link between language rights and democracy (Beukes, 1991). Individuals' linguistic human rights need to be reflected in policies that ought to show a profound awareness of the intrinsic value of languages and the diversity of their cultural traditions. Language attitudes, which also include language learning attitudes and preferences, are therefore central elements in policy decision.

The aim of this chapter therefore is to consider an established body of literature on attitude theory which is of relevance to language planning and policy formulation in this study as theory has to inform what goes on in practice. Unless a foundation perspective has been taken, it becomes difficult to comprehensively discuss issues about attitudes and language as they tend to be rendered naïve.

It is important therefore that a study of this nature that focuses on policy formulation matters should consider the notion of attitudes so that language planners either conform to the expressed attitudes of the concerned individuals or persuade those who express

negative attitudes, particularly on the use of other indigenous languages in the national life and in early education. This relates to their importance in terms of their appropriacy in these two domains. Research in this area should therefore be employed as a tool to change static perceptions held by those in power which could have led a country to misguided policies in this regard. The inherent tenets of language attitudes in relation to actual behaviour in policy formulation would include a bottom-up approach which incorporates views held by communities and not only those that serve elite interests in policy formulation.

We start our discussion from more general observations on attitudes and then move on to more specific ones on the definition and nature of attitudes. Finally we shall make a statement on methodological aspects for research purposes.

4.1 Relevance and importance of attitudes

A community's attitudes to a language, languages or varieties of these are pertinent for 'language restoration, preservation, decay or death' (Baker, 1992:02). If a community dislikes a particular language or the imposition of a 'common' national language, as has been observed in this study, with Chichewa/Chinyanja from 1968-1994 and thereafter, the effecting or implementation of language policies in that context becomes blurred and thus unlikely to be successful.

Second, in sociolinguistic surveys attitudes become indicators of current community thoughts, beliefs, preferences and desires of users of those languages. They subsequently become indicators of beliefs which could well have changed over time and therefore provide policy planners with ample success in policy planning and implementation. For minority languages which face possible extinction as a result of impositions which could be in place, attitudes provide a measure of health.

Studies on attitudes which have been conducted worldwide, particularly in the USA and Canada, have revealed possibilities and problems of second languages:

Any policy for language, especially in the system of education, has to take account of the attitude of those likely to be affected. In the long run the policy will succeed which does not do one of three things: conform to the expressed attitudes of those involved; persuade those who express negative attitudes about the rightness of policy; or seek to remove the cause of disagreement. In any case knowledge about attitudes is fundamental to the formation of a policy as well as to the success of its implementation.

(Lewis, 1981;262 in Baker, 1992)

The above underscores the immense value of attitudes in determining the status, value and importance of given languages to language planners and policy makers. Such information is important in expressing democratically the 'views of the people.' Because language cannot be separated from society. Webb (1979, in Roos, 1990) remarks that a person usually transfers his attitude to a group to that group's dialect or language. Thus a complex set of attitudes could be formed, which could affect policy formulation and also have influence on the teaching of a given language in classroom situations.

Thirdly, attitudes are of importance for their continued utility value. For a long time the concept of language attitudes has proved itself as a valuable construct both in theory and research and in policy and practice. Various topics ranging from religion to race, sport to languages have all used attitudes as an important explanatory variable. The basic reason for this is that they have a direct link to individual construct systems, as they are of value as indicators of different views in a community or on a larger scale in a country. Their centrality in all these aspects, therefore, attests to their positions as they can be adequately defined, theoretically explicated and reliably and validly measured.

4.2 Attitudes and their nature

Baker (1992) contends that the notion of attitudes is a hypothetical construct whose purpose is to explain human behaviour in terms of its direction and persistence. Attitudes therefore relate to people's dispositions which cannot be directly observed and accurately

measured because what people think and feel is largely hidden. While attitudes are latent, they nonetheless, are a convenient and efficient way of explaining patterns of behaviour in that they are fairly consistent.

4.3 The conceptualisation and definition of attitudes.

The term 'attitude' has its origins in the Italian 'atto' (Latin = 'actus') where its roots point to meaning an 'aptitude for action'. We would interpret this as a tendency toward some mode of actions.

The modern definition of the concept attitude is one that few authorities agree on, but a common conceptualisation tends to encompass the most agreed upon meaning that it is a disposition to react favourably or unfavourably to a class of objects (Sarnoff, 1970: 279 in Edwards, 1982). The predisposition takes the affective, cognitive and behavioural elements. There is a fair amount of inconsistency between assessed attitudes and their actions and particularly between belief and attitude especially in the domain of language attitudes. The gauging of individuals' or community's attitudes therefore entails inquiring into the respondents' feelings about their expressed belief.

In language policy matters, this becomes pertinent as people's reactions to languages or their varieties tend to reveal the actual perceptions of the users.

4.4 A mentalist definition of attitudes

A mentalist definition of attitudes shows that the concept of 'attitudes' relates to the 'mental and neutral state of readiness, organised through experience, exerting a directive or dynamic influence upon individual's response to all objects and situations with which it is related' (Allport 1954:45 in Agheyisi and Fishman, 1971). Since attitudes are not directly observable and have thus to be inferred from the subjects' introspection, they pose methodological problems: first what would be the right data from which attitudes would be inferred; and second how we would in physical terms measure them through

observation, inquiries or some form of quantifiable measure, whereas they have no overt substance. Theorists have therefore come to characterise them as a mediating concept or a hypothetical construct' which relates directly to overt behaviour or verbal responses. Our concern in this discussion is not just with people's dispositions; it has to do with people's attitudes towards a language or languages.

4.5 A behaviourist definition of attitudes

The behaviourist definition locates attitudes in actual overt behaviour or responses. For analysis this view has little or no problems as attitudes are defined entirely in terms of observable data where the only way to determine them is by observation and statistical analysis in given social situations. The only criticism of this approach is on its theoretical implications which make attitude a dependent variable (Agheyisi and Fishman, 1971).

In both the mentalist and behaviourist approaches, there is no difference between what is actually measured as they invariably base their approaches on the 'consistency' of the responses. We would thus construe these variations in the definition of attitude as semantic disagreements among authorities like Ajzen (1988) and McGuire (1985), where for the former, an attitude refers to 'a disposition to respond favourably or unfavourably to an object, person, institution, or event' (Ajzen 1988:04). For the latter the notion of attitude locates objects of thought on dimensions of judgement. This would, for example, consider a language as an object which is viewed as favourable or unfavourable.

Another aspect of attitudes is whether they are seen to have a unitary or multiple structure. Again, there are different viewpoints here between mentalists and behaviourists. Those who see an attitude as a latent psychological variable also usually view it as having a multiple component structure. There are also those who identify it just with responses as such. These view it as a unitary component. The multiple component definition posits the following:

- i. cognitive or knowledge;

- ii. affective or evaluative;
- iii. conative or action.

Others like Rockeach (1968) (in Fishman, 1971) ascribe a complex structure. They define them as being primarily composed of beliefs, as observed above, with each belief, in turn, composed of cognitive, affective and behavioural components. Others still make a distinction stating that attitudes comprise an affective component only, but have both cognitive and conative components.

A major criticism of this view is that it is impossible to determine for every individual 'the actual interrelatedness and organisation of attitude components with respect to anyone object' (Agheyisi and Fishman 1971: 139). The result of such kind of multi-dimensional concepts is that they are problematic not only theoretically but also in practical terms when it comes to translating theory into research as Fishbein (1966:108, in Agheyisi and Fishman (1971) observed. Therefore, the three major areas that have typified language attitudes in particular are:

- i. those concerned with evaluating languages as classical, standard, official as against what is today commonly referred to as non-standard and vernacular varieties;
- ii. those concerned with the social significance of languages or their varieties and the attitudes towards speakers of different languages in multilingual contexts; and
- iii. those concerned with language choice and usage, which is essentially language behaviour, language reinforcement and planning, language learning, and the different views towards dialects and their intelligibility.

Although these categories outlined here have different emphasis, they are not mutually exclusive as some attitudes could indicate or imply an extension of these attitudes to their speakers.

An integrated approach to language attitudes has recently categorised standardisation and vitality and the conception of status and in-group solidarity (Ryan and Giles, 1982). These two are viewed as determinants influencing the development and expression of status and in-group solidarity as the two main evaluative dimensions of language attitudes.

Fishman (1971) posits that research in language attitudes is impossible without considering the element of vitality. He observes that the status of any language will rise and fall depending on the importance of the symbolic functions that a given language serves. The rise of Chichewa in this study is a case in point: it was elevated from its humble status as a dialect of Chinyanja, the language, to a full-fledged symbolic status language, and therefore to the prominence of the sole indigenous national language. Fishman also notes that while standardisation is a contributory factor to a dialect's vitality, its strong vitality is enhanced by achieving standardisation. For our purposes, the prominence and elevation of English as the official language of power during and after the colonial period was unquestioned as it had long been standardised with a long literary history behind it. The weight of institutional support accorded to English made it acquire a social significance which the two other indigenous official languages, Chinyanja and Chitumbuka, lacked from the colonial era to the post-colonial period. This led to a situation whereby the use of English or an indigenous language in a particular situation is usually associated with value connotations of status or in-group identity. As a result of this history many have since looked at English as the most viable way of acquiring an education and subsequently white-collar employment (see Siachitema, 1985 in view of the Zambian situation).

The other is the situation of Chichewa and the attitude with which others, particularly those who did not and do not belong to the ethnic group associated with the language,

viewed it. For the ordinary masses, including the civil servants, the statutory bodies and the private sector, its social significance was heightened through its intimate associations with these institutions and what it expressed and meant. It became a symbol of power and prestige to belong to or be associated with its ethnolinguistic group, which in turn meant and gave power, prestige and honour to those who spoke it, particularly its central region dialect. Thus for the majority it would appear that they succumbed to the use of Chichewa on account of the socio-economic and political pressure that it exerted on the nation. Those who expressed dissent of any form would lose their employment and their immediate relations as well with a strong likelihood of political detention. The option was therefore to comply and use the language even with the most bizarre pronunciation and praise of the government and its leader.

Finally on the question of attitudes, there also appears to be some consensus that attitudes, as in the case of Chichewa, are a result of what has been learnt from the previous experience. Such attitudes are not momentary; they are quite enduring. Today, Chinyanja (formerly Chichewa) is still accorded social significance in the media and in early education, even with the elevation of other local languages to the official status. There is also agreement among theorists that attitudes bear some positive relation to action or behaviour either as a special aspect of behaviour itself or as a 'predisposition to behaviour'. It is also suggested that it is not always the case that all components of an attitude will imply behaviour (Ehrlich, 1969 in Agheyisi and Fishman, 1971).

The argument that attitudes could be viewed as a 'predisposition to behaviour' is rejected by theorists like Rokeach (1968) on the grounds that a predisposition that does not lead to a response cannot be detected. Rokeach maintains that all attitudes must be viewed as 'agendas to action' along with other determinants such as 'wants' and 'situational conditions'. The relevance of this argument is the low level of correlation between attitude and actual behaviour, although it must be mentioned that the fact that the two correlate in some way does not mean that one causes the other.

It is also important to distinguish between an attitude and an opinion: the former constitutes part of the subconscious and would usually not be revealed by direct questions; the latter, on the other hand, is the conscious expression of what an individual believes and is often not a genuine reflection of the individual's attitude, since the opinion will usually be influenced by a number of situational factors.(Webb, 1979, in Roos, 1990). It is this fact that makes attitude measuring a difficult exercise because indirect questions have to be devised in order to reveal attitudes, not opinions.

4.6 Language-oriented attitudes on methodological preferences.

We now turn to how attitudes can be measured most reliably and validly. Different types of data-gathering techniques could be employed to arrive at the social significance of languages or their varieties, language choice and usage.

4.7 The Commitment measure

A considerable number of studies have been made of scaled and weighted measures of different types such as the Commitment Measures used in Fishman's study (1968). Others have included the Matched Guise, widely used by Lambert and his colleagues. The Commitment Measure is designed to measure the 'action' or 'conative' component of attitude, where they measure the respondents' willingness or commitment to perform a particular type of behaviour without actually performing it. A follow-up can be made on the performance of particular tasks related to the object of commitment items. This follow-up represents the overt behaviour against which the scores of the Commitment Measure may be validated.

The value of the Commitment Measure as a data-gathering technique is that it is more useful than traditional attitude questionnaires for measures which are designed to be validated against overt behaviour. This is because they directly tap the respondents' behaviour rather than their cognitive or evaluative response. The second important factor is that its scores vary significantly relative to the questionnaire which suggests that the

subjects' responses may be influenced by the way they perceive or define the research or measuring situation. It thus becomes a useful predictor of overt behaviour if the research setting is not influenced by previous acts unrelated to overt behaviour, where the respondents are forced to be consistent.

The usefulness of the Commitment Measure as a measuring instrument could be for studies dealing with the implementation of attitudes related to different forms of language planning and maintenance.

4.8 The Matched Guise technique

The Matched Guise Technique devised by Lambert and his colleagues at McGill University is used to measure group evaluation reactions to particular languages or language varieties and their representative speakers. Here a group of judges evaluate the personality traits of speakers whose tape-recorded voices are played to them. These tape-recorded voices are of individuals with translated versions of the same text by the same speaker in two varieties. The judges believe that each language or variety is spoken by a different speaker. Other variables include prejudice, personal attitude, group preference - all of which are examined for correlation with evaluation measures derived by the use of matched guises. The major principle in this technique is in that there should be adequate control of every other variable in the experimental situation. This would include the quality of the speaker's voice, context of text and the speaker's personality.

If there is significant uniformity in the evaluation reactions of any group of judges, such reactions are said to represent the stereotyped impressions of that group toward speakers of a particular language or its variety. The problem with this technique is that each population or its sub-group is not necessarily characterised or identified by a single language variety (Agheyisi and Fishman, 1971). In bilingual or multilingual countries, which are widespread in Africa, there is a lot of switching among individuals' repertoires - from standard to non-standard varieties, or even from one language to another as this is dependent upon such factors as domain, topic, location, role and interlocutor type.

Questions of speech repertoire and functional allocation of codes are important and need to be included, but the Matched Guise technique rules them out. The judges' evaluation will thus result in congruity or lack of it, between topic, speaker and a particular language or its dialect. This congruity or lack of it is therefore obscured, resulting in imprecise judgements in the end. For this study and its relevance this technique would be viewed as inappropriate and cumbersome.

4.9 The Questionnaire

The questionnaire, as a data-gathering instrument, has attained a high level of sophistication and formal development and it has been extensively used by social scientists apart from sociolinguistic attitude studies. Here most survey questionnaires include such items as: 'What do you think of the use of the vernacular as a medium of instruction?' or 'How would you react if more books were written in your vernacular for use in learning and teaching?'

The point here is that such questions encourage the subjects to express themselves freely, thus giving their views about the focal object, which in this case could be their vernacular or English in early education as a medium of instruction. The only disadvantage is that open questions in the questionnaire technique are less successful than interview where respondents can talk endlessly without worrying about being recorded. In the questionnaire technique, the effort needed to write down the response may actually make the respondents refrain from answering the questions as fully as they would otherwise do. They may also fail to focus on the dimension of a question.

In attitude studies the interpretation and validation becomes problematic because of the very nature of attitude as properties of the psychological or mental process. A suitable criterion for validating attitude studies is difficult. That explains why studies that have used the Commitment Measure, which taps directly on the action component of attitudes, have been found to be useful predictors of overt behaviour (Fishman 1968, Fendrich

1967). Such studies are therefore tested for validity by comparing their results with actual behaviour in circumstances which are similar to the research situation. However, studies that focus on either cognitive or affective components of attitudes or those which only define attitude as consisting of an effective dimension need subjective criteria. In actual research, practices which in most cases simplify conceptual operational definitions, seem to overlook the problem of validity. This therefore tends to perpetuate the low degree of consistency between attitude measures and overt behaviour (Agheyisi and Fishman, 1971:150). The implication here is that studies which are designed to measure the cognitive or effective views alone seem inefficient for predicting behaviour or affective views alone are not sufficient as predictors of behaviour. There is need for additional measures of behaviour tendency, which should take into account the relevant sociological, ideological and psychological factors within the context of a given study.

4.10 A possible model of language attitudes

We now turn to a possible model of language attitudes that we would need to investigate and measure. Some key variables in a model of language attitude research would need to be considered. This would naturally depend on the aspect of language attitude being investigated in a particular situation.

In this study some specific variables that we would identify would include the following:

- i. initial attitudes to languages of initial instruction;
- ii. attitudes to language groups, communities and minorities;
- iii. attitudes to uses of specific languages;
- iv. attitudes of parents to language learning;
- v. attitudes to language preferences in media, etc.

A 'market research' has shown that a measure of language attitudes may indicate the viability of that language or those languages in a society. The extent of goodwill might affect eventual decisions in language planning and language policy (Baker, 1992).

An additional argument for research in identified variables such as the ones discussed here is that this would assist in throwing light on differences between ethnolinguistic groups regarding specific languages and individuals preferences. Eventually this would assist language planning and policy formulation so that no group is marginalised.

One of the questions to be considered in constructing a model from a theoretical perspective is whether the attitude to a language or some languages is unidimensional or multidimensional. For example, we would need to consider whether the attitude to Chinyanja or Chitumbuka is one unitary construct in the way a chosen group of respondents conceptualise it, or whether the attitude to the language does at all exist as a substructure or on a discrete number of items (Baker, 1992). Although this has received particular attention in research, one wonders whether individual attitudes are unidimensional or multidimensional, given the masses of respondents' being investigated for purposes of policy formulation. Investigators would be more interested in general perceptions.

There is also the variable of the utilitarian attitude that is deemed stronger as learners approach school-leaving and face a career line. Other variables include attitudes to the national character of, and proficiency in, a particular language (Jones, 1966 in Baker, 1992). For all practical purposes, an appropriate model for investigation is the general dimensions of the study of a people's attitudes within an explored sample that is required. When these are replicated over time, context and sample, they assist in the understanding of the psychological processes in people. While the replication of these dimensions of attitudes to a language or languages have not been without debate, researchers have found that attitudes to a language are mainly composed of points which are not exclusive: instrumental and integrative attitudes.

4.9.1 Instrumental attitudes

Attitudes that are instrumentally motivated reflect pragmatic and utilitarian motives. Gardner and Lambert (1972:44) contend that these are characterised by

individuals' desire to gain social recognition or economic benefits through knowledge of a non-indigenous language such as English in most post-colonial African contexts. Individuals would wish to learn English because it is important and useful for employment purposes in the future, or that it is important in the acquisition of more knowledge. Instrumental attitude to a language is thus largely self-oriented and individualistic and has conceptual links with the need for affiliation (Baker, 1976, 1992).

4.9.2 Integrative attitudes

On the other hand, an integrative attitude to a language is largely social and interpersonal in orientation and the attitude has conceptual links with affiliation which has been defined as a desire to be like representative members of the other language community' (Gardner and Lambert, 1972:14). As observed in chapter two, this sounds rather a generally misplaced definition when applied to the African context. Africans learning English, French or Portuguese do not necessarily wish to be affiliated to the community of the target language. If any, there are very few 'evolues' or 'assimilados' in post-colonial Africa. We would argue that they do so purely for communication among themselves as there may not be a common language among different ethnolinguistic groups. One might therefore study isiZulu to meet and converse with more people from Southern Africa (from south of Zimbabwe among the Ndebele downwards, where isiZulu is a common lingua franca among Southern African languages). An integrative attitude may lead one to learn more of the target group's cultural activities and not necessarily because one would want to identify oneself with the group. Matters of representation and affiliation will be considered in gauging people's attitudes generally as to whether they would want to acquire another language for social communication purposes or not.

However, the distinction between instrumental and integrative attitudes is more conceptual than empirical. Research has established that integrativeness is an identifiable factor; it is analysed in terms of ability, achievement and general

variables. Instrumentality, on the other hand, has not shown itself as a distinct entity (Gardner and Smythe 1981 in Baker, 1972).

4.9.3 Language attitudes in educational contexts

In educational contexts one of the areas that has contributed to language loss and language retention is the consideration of factors that play such as a role (Baker, 1992). Gardner, et al (1985) observe that where learners have positive attitudes to a language, it is rarely the case that they lose their competence in that language. Similar language characteristics were also found to be a major factor in the retention of second language skills. It is perhaps the case that all learners would have a high motivation and positive attitude to learning through their own indigenous languages in early education. In Malawi a considerable number of learners have since 1968 been forced to be instructed through a local language that is not theirs and in which they have no proficiency. It would thus be interesting to explore if those who have been forcibly instructed through Chichewa have had a positive attitude to the language of instruction. The question of learning it for integrative reasons would equally be an interesting area worth exploring.

With regard to teachers, Edwards (1982) asserts that they will show that other languages and their varieties are less than favourable to their own regardless of overtly expressed attitudes. Trudgill (1985a) contends that teachers will usually condemn their learners' attitudes as 'careless' 'bad' 'wrong' and even 'gibberish'. His argument is that this is an influence of Bernstein's (1971) views on his conception of 'elaborated' and 'restricted' codes. What this refers to is the standard and non-standard varieties respectively, where the commonly held view is that the latter are inferior variants. In Labov's (1973) view non-standard forms are not inferior, although in western eyes Bernstein's view still seems to hold. The question is whether this can be applied generally to African languages and their varieties.

It is observable here that a stereotype is actually part of the cognitive component of an attitude that is formed by one's personal experience and emotional needs and also by what one learns from others. While stereotypes are based on overgeneralised, or on false beliefs, they nonetheless have an influence on the way one decodes and interprets information about other linguistic groups. Information that tends to be consistent with stereotypes tends to become more readily accepted than information which questions their validity. In education, and particularly in the choice of indigenous languages as media for instruction, stereotypes could become obstacles in language learning as learners might tend to become influenced by other groups. Sometimes people also tend to categorise persons according to their accent, pronunciation even before they have consciously associated them with certain ethnolinguistic groups.

We also observe here that teachers of second languages or other indigenous languages need to guard against the treatment of learning other languages as involving identification with one group only. If a student observes the learning of a target language as a threat to his ethnolinguistic or cultural identity, he could feel aversion toward the entire learning situation and thus toward the target language itself. The formal or 'standard' dialect that is taught could become a symbol of social values that are diametrically opposed to the values of the learner. The obvious result here would be to resist the social values that are associated with the target language, which would eventually lead to the impairment of learning the target language. Stereotypes therefore need to be avoided by teachers on this account.

Thus contact with mother tongue speakers in a relaxed, amicable, social and friendly atmosphere would lead to a positive change in language attitude and the diminished anxiety of one language group toward another. There is also the suggestion that much as attitudes and motivation influence learners in second or third language learning, the converse could also be true: that second or third

language learning could influence attitudes and motivation. Gardner, (1988:13) in Roos, (1990) suggests that,

individuals' attitudes toward the other language community and the language learning situation, and their level of motivation, among other things, will influence their relative degree of success in learning the other language. It is equally reasonable, however, that happy experiences in language learning situations and success in learning the language will foster positive attitudes and enhance motivation, while negative experiences and/or failure to do well could engender negative attitudes and loss of motivation.

(Gardner, 1988: 137, in Roos, 1990)

Krashen's ' Monitor Model' makes the suggestion that attitudes and motivation make up a learner's 'affective filter'. This could influence the extent to which the learning material given to the learner as exposure or 'comprehensible input' may contribute to the learner's learning process. Besides, both attitudes and motivation have influenced retention of second or third language material since they affect the extent to which learners make use of the given language after the learning process. It is important then to recognise the fact that second or third language learning is a dynamic process in which all the various causal variables need to be taken into account.

Brown (1987) notes that teachers would go a long way in dispelling what are invariably seen as myths with regard to other cultures. These myths then could be replaced by a more realistic understanding of other languages and their cultures in a given context. This understanding could be different from one's own, but it has to be respected and valued on equal footing. In this way, he suggests that learners could move through a 'hierarchy of affectivity' where they become aware, understand and appreciate other cultures and the multilingual nature of their communities.

Whatever Malawian teachers' views are, their evaluations may be inaccurate and influenced by the marker of power and dominance because of the imposition of the Chewa dialect or variety in Chichewa.

In essence, because of the power and dominance of an indigenous language and its dialect used in educational instruction, other varieties of Chichewa and other languages would obviously be viewed less favourably from the official perspective. This was to be expected. Varieties of Chinyanja, along with other indigenous languages, were declared non-standard, unusable and therefore diverging from Chichewa, which was the norm. On the other hand, regional dialects of Chichewa (particularly the Chinyanja dialects in the southern region) have always reflected more friendliness and warmth among its speakers including teachers who were forced to use Chichewa officially.

The issue here is that from a methodological perspective, language attitudes do not emerge in a sociocultural vacuum. This demonstrates that there are sociohistorical, demographic, and institutional support factors. In this study the symbolic role of Chichewa as the national language has tended to affect language attitudes in a range of communities. The sociocultural context will therefore inevitably have much influence on attitudes.

4.9.4 Observations on attitudes

As we have observed in the discussion this far, it is difficult to explain the conceptual differences between the various types of attitudes that people might hold toward a given language or its varieties. However, language stereotypes are more deep seated, subconscious and affective (Schmied, 1991). Rational explanations for individuals' attitudes seem unclear and therefore based on idealised abstractions. Others still are based on sheer beliefs which are manifested in practical issues.

The other aspect of attitude is related to language varieties. This is also problematic as it relates to people's norms about the concept of 'language', which is further divided into levels of vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation. People can be prejudiced in favour of particular varieties on this basis. A further problem with regard to attitudes relates to the actual research on attitudes as they touch on what could be described as personal, sensitive and sometimes emotive issues. This might involve heightened political matters where there is usually a marked difference between what is said in public and utterances expressed privately or in interviews. There must be mutual understanding and shared knowledge of the intentions and goodwill between the interviewer and the interviewee, as well as the wider speech community if opinions are to be freely expressed.

While attitudes are personal, they do reflect the sociolinguistic phenomena of a given speech community and will vary with individuals' sociolinguistic backgrounds. For example, individuals attitudes will vary on EFL and ESL situations: in the former they may tend to be generally not accommodating except for visiting tourists or foreigners. In the ESL context, the language will largely be used as part of the daily discourse (Schmied, 1991).

There is also the question of stereotypes. Positive and negative attitudes reflect impressions of one's ease or difficulty in learning a target language. These impressions will also indicate the status of a language in the community. We would give the examples of kiSwahili in Tanzania, Kenya and Uganda, of Shona and isiNdebele in Zimbabwe, of isiZulu and isiXhosa in South Africa and of Chitumbuka and Chinyanja in this study.

At times it is difficult to explain attitudes towards a language or languages rationally as they are largely subconscious. For example, English has been described as 'beautiful', 'rich', 'logical', 'precise', 'sophisticated', even 'pleasing to the ear' (Schmied, 1991:165). All languages are surely beautiful. We could argue

that English has earned all these epithets because it is an idealised world language which enjoys this international prestige. But beauty is an aesthetic quality, often quite subjective - and most people see their languages in the same light. However, stereotyped notions could also be based on linguistic facts about a language with regard to its functional viability. Schmied (1991) claims that English is 'rich' in vocabulary, which could be true, as it has borrowed widely from languages whose speakers use it on practically every continent, and a majority of the world's countries. The notion of being 'precise' only refers largely to its lexicon, particularly in teaching, science and technological information. Given the time, attention and dominance and power and equal development other languages would also be as precise.

Attitudes based on language beliefs seem to be supported by the communicative, rational, personal, educational and perhaps cognitive arguments. This is in the case of the use of languages of wider communication. Examples are indigenous languages used by governments with their people in Africa. Here, despite the dominance of English over African languages, it could be rendered less effective and inappropriate. The communicative aspect is also expressed by some elite as a result of developing a particular register in academic situations, for example in the use of concepts which are viewed as complex. This is particularly the case in the world of science and technology. National arguments are used where people choose a language as symbol of national identity, as in the case of kiSwahili, in East Africa, the eleven official languages in South Africa, and the imposition of Chichewa in Malawi. Among different local ethnolinguistic groups, English has been used as a language of official national communication, particularly among the emerging elite.

Proponents of indigenous national languages advance arguments that ostensibly favour these languages. However, in practice, they favour English at the expense of non-development of indigenous languages and the aspect of national identity, on which they stress (Schmied, 1991:169). This is basically a cultural argument

which further argues that the use of English promotes the creation of class differences in the nation and therefore fails to allow the democratic participation of all social groups in the process. While this may be the case, others may argue that English does not create class; that it is only an indicator, and that the notion of an Africa identity can still be expressed in English. The argument that a decline in English standard results in a strengthened national unity would be disputed in countries such as Botswana and Kenya as simplistic. In typical multilingual states such as Zambia, South Africa and Malawi, the belief is that the concept of a nation-state would be achieved if all Africans would learn another indigenous language of wider communication, particularly in schools.

There seems to be largely a misconception of parental attitudes and views in Africa. The cognitive aspect of attitudes is the belief that knowing an African language only, for example, means being less educated. Some parents therefore widely argue that their children be taught English from early education because of its perceived career opportunities at the end of their children's education. They also believe those who do not know 'good' English generally lack cognitive concepts. This is possibly a remnant of the myth of relegating African languages to the category of 'primitive' languages.

This belief in language attitudes equates language choice with mental complexity. The converse of the argument also is difficult to prove. Proponents of this view argue that since English is a foreign language, it is not suitable for the foreign mind. They further argue that English indoctrinates the African, and makes him English-minded or European-minded, which results in cultural imperialism (Ngugi, 1986). In this sense the acquisition of English is equated to 'thinking European'.

The most subscribed vision of most stakeholders in language policy matters in Africa is that English is not to replace African languages, and will most probably never do so in the foreseeable future. It is only an additional language 'for the

wider domains beyond those for which the mother tongue is habitually used' (Schmied, 1991:171). Thus Chitumbuka, Chinyanja and other indigenous Malawian languages remain languages for essentially sociocultural activities, but are also to be used in a variety of situations including the workplace.

A reduced form of such 'extremist' attitudes is the consideration and recognition of nativised forms of English as pedagogical and particularly as sociolinguistic models. Whether these need to be institutionalised or not is a matter of choice for individual nation-states, but they do exist in practice as in the case of the South African Black English (SABE) (see Buthelezi, 1995). The adoption of such varieties as norms and their codification is still controversial. Some would believe that what is 'correct' is 'what the native speaker says'. The school of thought that advocates a strong attitude towards nativised forms of English argues that this form in a given country will have the distinct phonetic, phonological, lexical and syntactic characteristics that are fairly stable. It further argues that these cannot, therefore, be regarded as deviations from a native norm and that users of this form may not aspire to achieve the native form in the use of their variety. However, a distinct variety of English has not emerged in Malawi or in other postcolonial African countries generally for groups of people to have particularly strong attitudes toward them, apart from pidgins and creoles in West Africa and to some extent the South African Black English (SABE). In sociocultural contexts the acceptability of nativised forms or variants needs to be welcomed.

An important aspect to recognise in attitudes are the changes in the sociopolitical matrix of a nation which can result in changes in the national and individual language choice. With the imposition of an indigenous language as a symbolic national language in Malawi, a considerable number of people were 'persuaded' to follow the lumping together of linguistic groups as we observed in chapter three and claimed that they were Chewa when in fact they were of Yao, Lomwe, Mang'anja and Nyanja ethnolinguistically. Their attitudes were thus inclined to favour Chichewa as their new language with a view to benefiting materially from

this choice or alignment. In the previous chapter we observed how this was used to draw demarcations between northerners, on the one hand, and those from the centre and southern regions as a single linguistic group. This was a way of marking difference so that people would begin to think in terms of 'us' and 'them', the familiar and the stranger (Chirwa, 1994/5:60). The emphasis on regional identities based on sociocultural linguistic groupings has been used in Malawi as a product of the attempt to mark the difference and inclusion or exclusion from some category. In the final analysis, people of entirely different socio-cultural origins and of different languages ended up aligning themselves and choosing Chichewa as their new-found language and haven.

4.10 Summary

This chapter has outlined and discussed the theoretical and methodological formulations about attitudes. This is in relation to how attitudes affect language planning and policy formulation as a central concern in behavioural sciences and therefore make up a major part of the sociological and psychological literature that all language planners and decision makers need to be aware of in language choice in multilingual communities.

The purpose of looking at attitudes is to prompt sociolinguists, and those who formulate policy statements to become familiar with the literature which most of them have so far overlooked. A discussion of this nature serves as a guideline in the selection of the appropriate instruments for data gathering.

We have attempted to identify two major trends - the mentalist and behavioural notions of attitudes. The former treats attitudes as a mediating concept, while the latter defines attitudes in operational terms as a probability concept. There is lack of congruence between what people say their attitudes are toward a language and their overt language behaviour. However, in research both derive their attitude measure from response covariation. The chapter has also identified three varying components of an attitude: a

cognitive component comprising beliefs, an affective component comprising emotions, and a connotative component that is behavioural.

On methodological procedure the chapter has attempted to discuss the direct and indirect measures of different types: the Commitment Measure (Fishman, 1968) and the Matched Guise (Lambert, 1972). We note that the Matched Guise has gained considerable popularity in North America, where it has been extensively used in studies of social significance relating to a language and its variations. Instruments such as the Fishman's Commitment Measure have also been used in studies which have been shown to be effective for normative views concerning the situational use of languages and their varieties.

For this study, we have found the questionnaire and the observational method to be of relevance and ease. This is not only in operational terms but also as effective instruments where data can be more operationalised and formally processed, not only using the often criticised subjective approach. Useful assessment is perhaps one that is based on some eclectic approach. A general observation, however, is that *ceteris paribus*, positive attitudes will tend to facilitate the learning of another language.

The social nature of how languages are evaluated has also been considered. Edward (1982) contends that the evaluation of languages or their varieties will invariably reflect two basic aspects:

- i. intrinsic linguistic inferiorities/superiorities;
- ii. intrinsic aesthetic differences or social convention and preference.

The first set is somewhat hypothetical, since languages cannot be simply described as intrinsically inferior or superior, as each language serves its speech community functionally in all respects. It is therefore refuted on account of lack of empirical evidence that all languages and their varieties are competent for the functions they handle. Further, there is no proof to support the notion of greater aesthetic beauty in

anyone specific language. We therefore cannot describe particular languages as 'better' or 'worse', 'correct' or 'incorrect', 'logical' or 'illogical', 'pleasant' or 'unpleasant'. Such aesthetic judgements are more often than not based on social connotations which individuals possess about what they know of them (Trudgill, 1975, in Edwards, 1982). Languages or their varieties will therefore reflect their speech communities' awareness of the status and prestige, which are ascribed to the speakers of these languages and their varieties.

Chapter Five

METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

5.0 Introduction

In the last chapter on language attitudes, preferences and usage, the theoretical perspective of how the question of attitudes relates to the choice of methods or techniques that have to be adopted in the gathering of data was raised.

One such input is that studies on language attitudes have generally provided insight into how languages are considered in policy formulation. There is the need to recognise the importance of language as a symbol of membership of a particular cultural or ethnic group. Trudgill (1993) points out that language is significantly a crucial factor in the determination of group identification and solidarity and that this leads to greater emphasis between two or more languages, when one language group is threatened by another. This knowledge becomes important and relevant in the choice of appropriate measures or methods that will be employed to solicit a linguistic group's choice and preference of languages to be used for different functions.

This chapter then provides a description of elicitation instruments which are used in data elicitation. We shall first define the term 'research methodology.' The chapter will then go on to explain the aims of methodological considerations, which will be followed by an outline of the objectives of the study and the assumptions that are to be tested by the measures chosen. The main focus of the discussion will be on the rationale behind the choice of each of the techniques that this study has selected to gather data. Finally, problems that were encountered in this study will be briefly outlined, followed by the attempt made to resolve them.

5.1 The concept of 'research methodology'

'Research methodology' merely refers to an operational framework within which the facts are placed so that their meaning may be seen and explained more clearly. Most of the standard literature on research methodology reveals a broad spectrum of methodological terminology that is employed. This discussion will not go into a little more detail on this. First, 'methodology' would be defined as the logic of scientific procedure. Bailey (1987) defines research methodology as a philosophy of the research process. The definition also refers to techniques and procedures for carrying out an investigation or inquiry in a particular study. This definition includes the assumptions and values that serve as a rationale for research and standard or criteria that researchers use for collecting, interpreting data and arriving at conclusions. The definition also refers to techniques and procedures for carrying out an investigation or inquiry in a particular study.

The aim of such methodological considerations therefore would include,

- i. the selection of appropriate research methods and technologies to be employed in a study;
- ii. studying to research procedures, and
- iii. the facilitation of the task of the research with regard to sampling, definition of concepts, explication of procedures and the systematisation of such findings, and then the eventual writing up of the results of the findings.

Applied to the present study, in all the above, the starting point is a theoretical framework in which specific phenomena of language policies are explained. These include what is entailed in language planning and policy formulation. Once a theory has been discussed and formulated, the researcher tests it by postulating hypotheses. The assessment of the validity of these hypotheses is checked by developing measures of the consistent concepts. The concepts are then translated into variables or attitudes and preferences for uses that different linguistic groups make of a language or languages. In this study this would be towards individuals'

choice of languages of wider communication, languages to be used as media of instruction and in wider communication and for use in different functions. Thereafter, a research design based on a survey is set, followed by data collection, analysis and interpretation.

5.2 Aims of the study.

Methodologically, the study seeks to highlight pertinent variables that are usually empirically tested in policy studies in order to enable language planners and decision makers make informed policy statements.

The specific objectives of the present study, therefore, can be restated as follows:

- i. to explore the possibility of learners receiving initial formal education in their mother tongue, or in a language in which they have competence to enable them learn effectively;
- ii. if and how language planners and policy makers, who are usually politicians, may begin to promote education as a collective social effort which seeks to promote social benefits, and how the wider national language policy and the language-in-education policy should reflect these priorities;
- iii. whether and how the rights of the existence of minority languages should be included and safeguarded, where policy statements should favour indigenous languages of wider communication becoming equally useable nationally alongside English;
- iv. the question of elevation and use of indigenous languages; and
- v. the possibility of the promotion of socio-economic and political advancement for all the citizenry, to avoid the creation of ethnic tensions based on the

exclusion of the use of some languages, for example, for wider communication in the mass media.

5.3 Assumptions of the Study

Having restated the general objectives of the study we need to make the hypotheses that will need to be investigated. For the current language situation in the present study, the following conditions are assumed:

- i. The national language policy and the language in education policy are fragmented, poorly planned and incoherent. They both lack vision, clarity and fail to accommodate sociocultural and educated interests of the various learners, speakers and users of different languages.
- ii. The status and the use of local languages in mass communication and as tools for the general upliftment of the citizenry is unclear and suffers from a lack of implementation.
- iii. The absence of the implementation of the verbally pronounced policies has tended to create ethnolinguistic tensions with socio-economic and political implications requiring address.

5.4 Choice of instruments

The choice of an instrument in any research study is complex since it underpins content and context, the integrity and validity of the research data. It was largely felt that a single instrument would not yield much data in a study of this nature. The popularised technique of the so-called 'Matched Guise' discussed in chapter four for the assessment of language attitudes, was not found adequate to handle this study. The following explains why this widely-used instrument was not

chosen. In Africa, and particularly among Bantu languages, there does not appear to be much scope in finding out respondents' preferences of languages on the basis of their dialects. In fact, the Matched Guise seems to focus more on respondents' voices, which are somewhat 'disfigured', than about their choice of languages and their preferences of languages for different functions. This instrument would thus appear not to be appropriate for finding out a people's choice and which language(s) they prefer for purposes of formulating effective policy. What the judges evaluate here are the personalities of speakers whose tape-recorded voices are played. While there is adequate control of every variable in the experiment, a significant uniformity in the evaluation means that such reaction represents stereotyped impressions (Agheyisi and Fishman, 1971). This means that the people's attitudes are based on the criterion of notions of accents or dialect. It therefore seems of little value whether respondents speak or favour the Ingwavuma dialect of isiZulu, the New Castle, the Durban urban dialect or the one from Shepstone. In the same vein, we would argue that it is immaterial for respondents to choose the Chinyanja dialect from the southern region or the Chewa dialect from the central region. What matters is which languages they choose: Chiyao, Chitumbuka or Chinyanja for regional and wider communication and for instruction in early education. This measure, therefore, though popular in America and elsewhere, is deemed inappropriate for this study and would possibly be also inapplicable elsewhere in Africa.

In this regard then we settled on four basic measures to which we now turn to discuss, in turn. These are:

- 5.4.1 the questionnaire;
- 5.4.2 the consultation measure;
- 5.4.3 the observation measure (analytic technique);
- 5.4.4 rating scales.

5.4.1. The live questionnaire

The in-depth structured questionnaire was chosen as it was thought to be an appropriate measure that would give respondents enough time to think over the questions and allow them enough time to supplement their responses with additional comment. The questionnaire constitutes a valid measure of theoretical concepts in this study after thorough information gathering from various other sources. This was in an effort to find common ground that would give an overall picture of what issues to be considered with regard to language policy formulation, particularly for under communication and in the choice of media for effective classroom instruction.

It was also envisaged that the questionnaire would be based on issues or possible factors regarded as pertinent to the study as supported and directed by the literature reviews in chapters two (on the theories of language planning) and chapter four (on attitudes in language choice, preference and usage). The literature study and the consultations with the various bodies prior to the construction of the questionnaire made the task a little more comfortable. The quality of the questionnaire was further improved through circulation for comment among colleagues, educationists and others in relevant organisations in language use, language learning and teaching at both regional and national levels.

To ensure an acceptable level of validity, the following steps were taken:

- i. The literature review was used to consolidate and integrate ideas and issues presented by a variety of authorities into a questionnaire that could not only be applied in the context of this study, but one which could also be an approach that is pragmatic enough for application elsewhere. For example, while being specific to this study, the questionnaire that was finally designed considered and incorporated some of the questions in studies carried out in South Africa and

Zimbabwe among black communities. These questions were largely related to the issue of language choice and preference.

- ii. The draft questionnaire was rigorously checked for interpretation by experienced colleagues, language practitioners, educationists and the supervisor to synthesise the draft prior to the writing up of the final one.

The consideration of the live questionnaire as one measure to be employed had to take into account the understanding that any one instrument of gathering data through interaction with human beings has been found to be fraught with problems. This was because human nature and behaviour are at times unreliable, and often, at variance with each other.

The inherent weakness of the questionnaire must also be acknowledged. There are often two methods of collecting data through the questionnaire. First, there is the mailed questionnaire which is self-administered. This was not used in this study for logistical reasons but particularly as it is time-consuming. It all depends on when the respondents feel they should mail back the questionnaires to the researcher. Second, there is the combination of scheduled interviews supplemented with the questionnaire. This measure is specifically selected where, for example, not much terrain is covered and where the size of the sample can be relatively managed. This was chosen where both the interviewer and interviewee talk through the questionnaire. Besides, this approach enhances the quality of feedback from the interviewees which is beneficial to the study as the response is almost spontaneous. Here questions can immediately be expanded upon or verified by the interviewer where responses seem somewhat doubtful or in event of misunderstandings or lack of clarity between the interviewer and interviewee.

In addition to this technique being time-consuming, it has other shortcomings. These include the suspicions the respondents might have and the overall relationship between the interviewer and the respondent. In spite of this, it seemed an efficient way of gathering data for this study, and hence its choice.

With the assistance from the information obtained from other reference groups as well as from issues emanating from the literature review, the measuring instrument was developed to ensure the quality of content, context and its overall coherence. The instrument was constructed with the research objectives in mind as it is a scientific instrument for the measurement of a population sample. Thus in the construction of the questionnaire, consideration was given to the following specific issues:

- the type of information sought;
- the type of questionnaire to be used;
- the administration of the instrument;
- the content of individual questionnaire;
- the number of questions to be asked;
- the manner in which the questions had to be sequenced, and finally
- the revisions required.

Before the face-to-face administration of the questionnaire, respondents were given the questionnaire well in advance. The purpose was to enable them to think about appropriate answers to the questions. Besides, this put them at ease and thus possibly dispelled feelings of being unduly overworked and taken unaware by the interviewer. This strategy ensured quality of the responses through inclusivity rather than exclusivity. This is in view of the fact that the present study affected not only the lives of the selected respondents, but also their countrymen; it also touched on the larger use of indigenous languages particularly at regional and national levels.

5.4.2 The consultation measure

One other measure that is open to socio-psychologists and applied sociolinguists is the consultation measure. Before designing and administering the questionnaire on the respondents, wide consultations are held with selected members of the public, both professionals and the ordinary citizens. In this study consultations included discussions held with senior officials in the Ministry of Education. The purpose of consulting them was to find out what education policy is in place, how it is implemented and how effective it is from their perspective. It was also to establish opinions for and against the language policy. In essence, this was to establish whether language learning and teaching materials in the respective indigenous languages were being carried out effectively in each of the three regions, given the availability of appropriate learning and teaching materials. Consultations were also held with academics, particularly those involved in materials production and those in developing orthographies. This was to find out if the development of dictionaries, grammar books and orthographies was in all languages or just one of the selected three or four. Again, it was to find out whether indeed this was being carried out or it was mere political rhetoric.

Views were also sought from language practitioners in publishing houses on issues such as the quality, quantities and varieties of texts and other learning and teaching materials available in indigenous languages. Officials in the print media were also consulted to establish the number of indigenous languages that are used in newspapers for mass communication at regional and national levels, and how frequently these indigenous languages appear in print media, in comparison with English dailies as well as weekend papers. In addition to the informal consultations interviews were held with members of the general public, especially parents from different ethnolinguistic backgrounds, on what they felt should be the language(s) of instruction for

their children both in early education and in institutions of higher learning, as well as their choice of languages for mass communication. Learners at different levels - primary, secondary and tertiary - were also consulted on the same issues.

These consultations came first and the outcome formed the foundation on which the questionnaire content would be based.

Central to this approach of wide, informal and diverse consultations was the realisation that the research was being conducted at a critical stage, four years after the country's first ever democratic election, since it attained independence. This election was held in May, 1994. Between 1964 -1994, people would not be interviewed or consulted on indigenous languages as one language had already been decreed as the sole national language for mass communication. At the time these consultations were made there was thus considerable amount of freedom from people of different ethnolinguistic backgrounds to express their feelings about the status and choice of languages for different purposes regionally and nationally. A lot of care and diligence had to be taken into account to decipher respondents' preferences as others tended to be somewhat emotional and biased. Some attempt therefore had to be made to maintain a factual balance that gave the study the opportunity to explore options from a neutral perspective, thereby enhancing the content of the data gathered.

A common problem with wide consultation is that it is very time-consuming and this study was a victim in this regard. In spite of this, it cannot be overemphasized that the diverse consultations that were carried out both formally and informally with a broad spectrum of respondents eventually added a considerable measure of confidence in the objectivity of consultation and of the results.

5.4.3 The observation measure (Analytic Technique)

The observation instrument is used where a researcher observes and interacts in the field setting for the duration of the study. Others have referred to this as the participative technique (Neuman, 1997). Here the researcher gets to know the people being studied and may conduct informal interviews, but he/she largely observes their attitudes to individuals of different ethnolinguistic backgrounds as well as one group's attitude toward another language and culture. This can be informative as such observation results in detailed notes being made. It also results in more focused ideas about the significance of such attitudes to a group's language, people and their culture.

In this study the application of this technique was not at individual level, which would have been a case study, but specifically at different linguistic and cultural groups in the form of mass observation.

The observation method has the following important functions:

- goal achievement;
- adaptation;
- integration, and
- pattern maintenance.

Furthermore, the rationale for the employment of this measure was that it facilitates the description, explanation, prediction and at times the maintenance of a people's behaviour toward a given language or languages depending on the variable(s) that influence this (Van der Westhuizen, 1977: 10).

It thus gives the researcher more insight into individual groups' behaviour; the researcher becomes part of the speech community being observed, and therefore learns much more than from mere formal or informal interviews.

This was the utility value that led to its adoption as an additional technique to compliment other measures.

5.4.4 Rating Scales

To a lesser extent rating scales were also used in the questionnaire measure where respondents were asked to rate languages in order of how they wanted them to be used as media of instruction in specific regional areas, and also which languages they wanted to be used in the sound and print media. It was felt this could be a useful indicator not only of their language choices as such' but also of their languages at both regional and national levels.

We have so far discussed measures that were used by the researcher to enable him to obtain and observe phenomena that could not be extracted or observed satisfactorily by senses alone. This was the fundamental reason for the use of different measures to maximise the collection of data.

5.5 Problems envisaged in conducting research in the area of study.

This area of study is obviously not an isolated area where a study on individuals' attitudes have been carried out. What was initially envisaged to be problematic was the historical experiences of citizens subjected to the use of one indigenous language for thirty years while the other eight were marginalised. As language is a complex phenomenon and an emotive issue, the socio-economic and political repercussions that people went through as a result of linguistic differences was feared that these would be an impediment to the whole exercise of finding out how different linguistic groups exactly felt in the now fledgling democratic dispensation. The new order still has remnants of the former regime. This was not the problem but methodological, conceptual, political and psychological ones surfaced.

5.5.1 Methodological Problems

Our reviews of results attained by employing particular measures in finding out individuals' attitudes in chapter five showed a very high rating in countries like the USA and the UK. These high standards in sociolinguistic research can only be attributed to both these countries' technological advancement and of their psychological openness. Besides, in Malawi, and perhaps in other African countries which have gone through similar repressive regimes, the general populace is not used to questionnaires, particularly those on matters relating to emotive issues like language. Second, as mentioned in chapter two, statistical data could not be relied upon to show demographic figures of how many people, for example, speak Chinyanja, Chitumbuka, or Chiyao. There are strong possibilities that such figures have been manipulated. The figures that were given to the researcher are from the 1966 census, which are now thirty four years old. They could thus not be relied upon for purposes of policy studies now. In any case, numbers do not guarantee objectivity. It was therefore felt that there was not a need for obsession with the quantitative data. This is why this study is qualitative and not quantitative.

It has also been observed that there are 'few reliable statistical data in Africa and that the techniques need to be as direct, flexible and simple as possible' (Schmied, 1991: 163). A similar observation was made in the current study.

5.5.2. Conceptual Problems

We have discussed at length (in chapter four) the problem of the wide range of views about attitudes ranging from extreme behaviourist to extreme mentalist ones. It was found that the basic problem was one of lack of congruence between what respondents say and how they behave, with regard to their attitudes. For purposes of this study the researcher had to arrive at a general consistent pattern between what was stated and the actual pattern of

respondents' behaviour. This was not easy but the observational measure assisted considerably.

It was also felt it would be appropriate to distinguish between respondents' choice in general towards particular languages or their stereotypes and what they actually believed and felt was good for the country's general populace. These methodological and conceptual issues posed problems which had to be handled carefully in arriving at particular linguistic patterns.

5.5.3 Psychological Problems.

One of the problems that the researcher encountered in this study was in the employment of the consultation measure, particularly by government officials and also with some officials in statutory and private organisations. The researcher was viewed with suspicion particularly by government officials. They were not at first sure of the true intention of the research. Reading between the lines, the common view expressed was that the research aimed at 'attacking' government policies and discrediting government actions even after the democratic elections in 1994. These fears and suspicious can only be attributed to some strange insecurity even where prior introduction and permission was granted with regard to the purpose of the research by higher authorities. An element of trust had therefore to be constantly created and developed.

In view of this psychological problem the researcher had to be constantly aware of the reliability and validity of the data gathered. This meant that there had to be as much consultation as possible. The researcher had to guard against what would be deemed as 'corrupt tendencies' which would make government data dubious and suspect, resulting in the incomprehensibility of such data.

One way of ascertaining correct data and thus improving the reliability and validity of the gathered data was the employment of triangulation. Singleton, Straits and Straits (1993) (in Kimaru 1997) define this as the addressing of social research questions with multiple methods or measures, that do not share the same methodological weakness. Thus, for example, when two different pieces of research employing different measures produce similar findings, confidence in the results increases. This research attempted to do this in the form of replication, which involved multiple tests of hypotheses stated in this chapter. Here each test used a separate sample of subjects and different measure of variables. Multiple tests here refer to the research strategy or a combinations of strategies, e.g., where observation, the questionnaire, consultation, rating scales and documentary evidence collected would all complement each other towards a general or specific picture that would emerge on a group's choice of language(s) and their preferences. The employment of triangulation was therefore seen to enhance findings considerably in gaining insight and thus understanding the situation or phenomena more clearly.

5.6 Summary

This chapter has discussed the various methodological considerations that went into the study before particular measures were chosen for the study. We have made an attempt at examining the merits and demerits of each measure in a given study. Our choice of the measures adopted - the questionnaire, consultation, observation, and rating scales - has largely been guided by their appropriates in this study, in the hope of attaining reliable and valid results from the study. In the end it would be argued that a single measure cannot, by itself, generate the desired results in a study. It seems worthwhile then for a researcher to consider and employ triangulation or adopt an eclectic approach in the evaluation of a study such as how an ethnolinguistic group chooses and views other languages in the broader

national picture. There are a number of measures that will need to be used for best results.

Finally it has been necessary to highlight some of the problems encountered in carrying out a study of this nature. These were largely methodological, conceptual and what we have termed psychological ones. An attempt has also been made at how there were contained.

Chapter Six

EXPOSITION OF DATA, INTERPRETATION AND ANALYSIS

Language makes people and a people without pride in its language is dispossessed of its national pride. Preserving one's language is preserving one's culture. (Shona-speaking teacher-trainee, in Hofman, 1977).

6.0 Introduction

In this chapter the focus is on the presentation, interpretation and analysis of the data gathered from the respondents, using the measures discussed in chapter five. This presentation includes quantitative data that have been statistically computer-analysed, and qualitative data that have been analysed and interpreted descriptively.

We need to stress that this is largely a qualitative research that emphasises the importance of the social context to enable us understand the social world. The view held is that the meaning of a social action or statement depends largely on the context in which it appears (Neuman, 1997). The removal of the context results in the distortion of its meaning and thus its significance. This implies that a group's behaviour, as in this study, could have different meanings in a different culture or different historical eras. For example, much of the respondents' language choices could not have been given to the interviewer in the 1964-1994 period, as this would be treasonable; in fact such a research would not have been carried out in the first place. Qualitative research, therefore, places social interaction and social life into the larger whole.

6.1 Sampling Techniques

Babbie (1990) contends that it is necessary that a sample be selected if the population from which a study is drawn is large. This saves time and money. A properly selected sample theoretically represents the population from which it is drawn. While the sample in this study could not necessarily be fully representative of the country's population of

12 million, it, nonetheless, reasonably reflects the nature of the responses that could be expected. In this sense then the results can be relied on to have a significant measure of reliability and validity.

6.2 Procedure

Three questionnaires were administered through a selected random sample of a population in Lilongwe, the capital city of Malawi. Three different neighbourhoods were chosen representing different groupings of people, and their respective residents- socially, educationally, and largely economically. Area 18 was chosen as it normally houses civil servants largely comprising drivers, clerks, senior clerks and senior administrative clerks. These would generally be described as ranging from low to lower middle class income groups. Area 47 has residents who include professionals in the civil service, non-government organisations, self-employed businesspersons and others. It could be described as a bustling middle-class residential area. The third housing location was Area 15, largely comprised of government professionals and others from statutory bodies and the private sector.

Apart from the sample representing different socio-economic groups, the choice of locations also took into account the linguistic groups of four viable indigenous languages that are all found in these housing areas. These languages are (a) Chichewa (now re-named Chinyanja: Chichewa and Chinyanja are different labels for what is essentially the same language) (Kashoki, 1978a: 45, Kishindo, 1990:59), (b) Chitumbuka, (c) Chiyao and (d) Chilomwe. These housing areas also include speakers of minority languages such as Chisena, Chinkhonde, Chilambya, Chinyakyusa, and Chitonga.

From the 1966 population census, the following linguistic profile is given: Chinyanja (Chichewa) (50.2 percent), was followed by Chilomwe (14.5 percent), Chiyao (13.8 percent), Chitumbuka (9.1 per cent), Chisena (3.5 per cent). Chikhokhola (2.3 percent), Chitonga (1.9 percent), and Chingoni (1.1 percent). Stubbs (1972) claims that 71.7 percent understood English in addition to their home language, while the 1966 census gives no figures for those who spoke English as their home language. On this basis, the

selection therefore represents a highly multilingual composition of subjects from different parts of the country and of different ethnolinguistic backgrounds.

Three different questionnaires were all initially designed in English and administered on three separate subsets of a total sample of 1200. Their composition was as follows: 250 primary school pupils between standards 5 and 8, 250 secondary school pupils between form one and four (grades 6-12), 200 teachers - 100 from the primary school level and 100 from secondary school level. In addition to this 500 comprised subjects from parents randomly selected from three housing areas. Each questionnaire was completed in the respondent's choice of language. The responses were returned a day or two after they were personally distributed. They were completed with the assistance of the researcher, who clarified points where necessary. In addition to the questionnaires, twenty-six interviews were formally conducted with officials from the Ministry of Education, non-governmental organisations and from private firms and other agencies such as publishing houses. Responses to all items were anonymous.

The following broad classes of information were obtained: (i) the respondents' mother tongue, (ii) language choice for early classroom instruction between standards one to four and for higher education, and (iii) respondents' proficiency in another indigenous language apart from their mother tongue. Information was also sought with regard to their proficiency in English, their preference for indigenous language(s) for use on the radio, TV and in print media, and their attitude toward different languages apart from their mother tongues, their speakers and toward English. In addition to this classification, other questions were asked to gain more insight into respondents' attitudes in general both at primary and secondary school levels (see appendices for questionnaires).

In all the three groups time constraints meant that the entire testing had to be done in six weeks. The schools chosen were urban and peri-urban for a fair representation of learners' proficiency, particularly in English (as it was perceived that those in urban schools had more exposure to the language through facilities such as libraries and other forms of printed materials such as newspapers). One cannot be exactly certain of the

direct evidence of the sample's ability to represent the population. Following Kamil, et al (1985) in Williams (1996), the researcher therefore attempts to use logic or intuition to support the generalisations of the evidence collected from the sample. Logical generalisations are invariably arrived at on the basis of cost which had to be taken into account in the present study.

The questionnaire administered to learners, both at the primary and secondary school levels, can be characterised in Cooper's (1980) terms to be at macro level of observation and being concerned with aspects of language proficiency and language usage in and out of classroom contexts. The first part of this questionnaire related to the learner's demographical statistics: age, sex, ethnic affiliation, place of birth (urban or rural), which languages they knew, and which they regarded as their first. These were designed to elicit some measure of proficiency in each language they claimed to know well.

6.3 Research Findings

One striking fact that emerged from the present study is the degree of mobility of the learners and the people surveyed in Lilongwe. Many of the learners and their parents were not in Lilongwe at the time of their birth, giving the possibility that they spoke a different language at birth than the one(s) they speak now. This again points to the multilingual nature of the Malawian population exemplified by this survey. Many of the learners already claimed to be bilingual or trilingual from childhood. Their parents, as civil servants or employees in statutory and non-governmental organisations, could have been transferred more than four times within and between different regions in different ethnolinguistic areas. This appeared to be a very common trend not only in Lilongwe, but in much of the country. For those claiming a knowledge of a number of languages, the commonly mentioned combination was English, Chinyanja, Chiyao and Chitumbuka. This was regardless of what the respondents claimed to have been their mother tongues or the first language they acquired. This accounted for a considerable percentage of the cohort.

It was interesting to note that Chitumbuka-speaking respondents claimed to know Chinyanja proficiently. Most of these were learners in primary and secondary schools but they also included parents as well as the general public. This was not surprising as they were living in the Chewa heartland where the lingua franca is largely of Chewa dialect of Chinyanja, and used among the local people in the market, shops, etc. Second, this was a result of the previous government's policy, particularly among learners, who had to be taught through the medium of Chichewa from standard one to four, followed by a policy where English became the medium from standard five throughout higher education. Almost all speakers of Chiyao and Chilomwe as their first languages claimed to know Chinyanja proficiently for similar reasons: their home languages had never been used as instructional classroom languages. Parents from these two ethnolinguistic groups also claimed to know Chinyanja. However, less than 20% of the speakers of Chinyanja as first language claimed to have some knowledge of Chitumbuka or Chiyao, except those who had previously lived in areas where these languages are spoken. Again, this could only be explained in terms of the prevailing policy which stipulated that all learners be taught through Chichewa in early education. Outside the classroom situations Chichewa was also the symbolic national language of sociocultural communication.

It would appear then that Chinyanja (Chichewa) had made great gains at the expense of the other indigenous languages. Speakers of minority languages such as Chisena, Chitonga, Chinkhonde and others also claimed to have a proficient knowledge of Chinyanja.

The other interesting observation is that those who claimed to be proficient in Chiyao, Chitumbuka and Chilomwe as the other three prominent local languages added that much as they would fluently read Chinyanja, they had never seen their first languages in print. This was particularly those who were born after the 1968 decree which promulgated the use of Chichewa as the sole national language. There is no evidence of any literacy works in these languages on the market as they had all been banned, with the exception of a few hymns and Bibles but these largely remained with the old folks in rural areas, not in urban areas such as Blantyre, Mzuzu and Lilongwe. This was because none of the

other local languages was formally taught in schools, used as media for instruction. The high literacy levels in Chinyanja and English could thus only be expected since the two languages co-existed as official languages of instruction, and as subjects and with Chichewa as the language for mass communication.

6.4 Respondents' proficiency in mother tongues or first languages

RESPONDENTS	NYANJA	YAO	TUMBUKA	LOMWE	OTHER
Learners	80%	95%	90%	3%	Negligible
Teachers	95%	negligible	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible
Parents/public	68%	96%	95%	7%	Negligible

From the figures given above it is clear that almost all respondents - learners, teachers and parents - claimed to be very proficient in their respective mother tongues. Observation and informal discussions with all groups indicated that a considerable number of them are also fairly proficient in Chinyanja, both spoken and written. Only 7% of parents of Lomwe origin claimed to be proficient in Chilomwe.; and only 3% of the learners claimed to speak it. This is because a considerable number of speakers of Lomwe origin do not speak the language, either in the work place or in the home with their families. Only the old folks in rural areas speak it very rarely among themselves. Neither has it been seen anywhere in print. These results were thus expected as Lilongwe is the heartland of Chewa speaking people. Added to other Nyanja speakers of Mang'anja origin from the south and from other ethnic groups, the numbers are likely to be boosted. As a corollary, the percentage of Nyanja speakers is similarly higher, almost twice that of Yao and Tumbuka speakers and almost six times that of speakers of minority languages.

With regard to teachers, 95% of them claimed to be proficient in Chinyanja. Again, this is well in line with the previous government's policy. In one of Banda's contradictory policy statements of non-regionalism and non-tribalism, all teachers were repatriated to their respective home regions in 1989 (Chirwa, 1994). Before this, teachers would teach in any region they chose. This was in itself contradictory to the former president's claim

to build 'one nation' when in practice people were polarised on ethnolinguistic basis. This explains why almost all teachers in the schools where the survey was conducted claim to speak Chinyanja only. There is a strong possibility that they could be Nyanja speakers of the Chewa dialect as a result of Lilongwe being in Chewa land.

6.5 Use of mother tongue as ideal and beneficial to all as an instructional language(s) in standards 1 – 4

RESPONDENTS	YES	NO	TOTAL
Learners	165 (33%)	335 (67%)	500
Teachers	120 (60%)	80 (40%)	200
Parents	150 (30%)	350 (70%)	500

The respondents were asked if they would like their mother tongues to be the media of instruction from standards one to four. There is a statistical difference between the responses given by learners, teachers and parents. Comparing the three results, the learners' views seem to tally with those of parents in regard to the use of mother tongues as instructional languages. Both parents and learners expressed the wish to use another language as a medium of instruction and not an indigenous language.

Teachers, on the other hand, felt that learners were normally psychologically more at ease in learning through their home language. In discussions with them they expressed the views that this gave learners more insight and application of what they learnt, thus making the learning more effective than through the use of another language. These were the views of teachers who had attained some professional training as teachers. There are considerable teachers referred to as 'pupil teachers' in lower primary schools. These lack informed psycholinguistic knowledge and could thus well have been the bulk of those advocating the use of a language other than the mother tongue as an instructional language.

6.6 Respondents' preference for English as an instructional language from standards one to four.

RESPONDENTS	YES	NO	TOTAL
Learners	340 (68%)	160 (32%)	500
Teachers	106 (53%)	94 (47%)	200
Parents	330 (66%)	200 (34%)	500

There is a general similarity in the responses given by all three groups of respondents: learners, teachers and parents. The responses given by learners were (68%) and (66%) for parents. These seem very close indeed, with regard to the choice of English as an instructional language in early education. This indicates that both parents and learners want English as a medium of instruction from an early age to foster proficiency, and therefore effective learning in the language of power from an early age.

Rather surprising are the teachers' responses. To the previous question in (6.5) above, 60% of teachers preferred the use of a local language and 40% opposed. The responses under 6.5 above show an increase (40% to 60%) of those who prefer English as an instructional language for early education. Discussions with them also revealed their view that learners acquire concepts better in their home language and understand the subject content better in the language familiar to them. While the difference is significant, and seems to indicate here that learners are best instructed in English than in an indigenous language, it is difficult to give a plausible reason for this ambivalent position. We can only hazard the guess. A considerable number of pupil teachers were employed to meet the demand resulting from the introduction of free primary education in Malawi after the 1994 democratic elections. These are generally untrained and therefore not conversant with psycholinguistic advantages of initial instruction through the mother tongue. Some might possibly not have clearly understood the difference in the questions.

6.7 The choice of instructional language(s) from standard five into higher education up to tertiary level.

RESPONDENTS	INDIGENOUS LANGUAGE	ENGLISH	TOTAL
Learners	170 (34%)	330 (66%)	500
Teachers	50 (12.5%)	150 (87.5%)	200
Parents	140 (28%)	360 (72%)	500

The results in the choice for a medium of instruction from standard five onwards seems to indicate an overwhelming preference for English. No follow-up question was asked for the explanation for learners', teachers' and parents' reasons for their preferences. We can only conjecture this as the respondents' belief that the acquisition of education through English is deemed superior and efficient to one through an indigenous language.

6.8 Respondents' proficiency in another indigenous language

RESPONDENTS	IN CHINYANJA	IN CHIYAO	IN CHITUMBUKA	IN CHILOMWE	OTHER
Learners	12%	40%	38%	25%	2.5
Teachers	85%	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible
Parents	45%	65%	60%	12%	3%

The respondents were asked to indicate their proficiency in another indigenous language. It is interesting to observe that only 12% of learners of Nyanja origin expressed knowledge of another indigenous language. This is, however, to be expected, in view of the previous policy where their language (Chichewa) was the sole national language used both in early education and for mass communication at national level. There was thus no need for L1 speakers of this language to learn another language for purposes of communication, as they could, after all, function fully without the knowledge of other local languages. Results also show that 40% of L1 Yao speakers and 38% of Chitumbuka speakers have proficiency in another language, while 25% of Lomwe

speakers know another language. This presupposes that given the position of Chinyanja from the previous policy view-point which is still largely operational, and the locality of the study being in Chewa land, the bulk of the speakers of other languages from different linguistic backgrounds must have attained some fair proficiency of Chinyanja, which is still the language of instruction in early education and also of communication.

The teachers' response indicates that an overwhelming majority are conversant in Chinyanja but could not state their proficiency in another indigenous language. This can only indicate that almost all of the teachers in this study are from central Lilongwe or from the surrounding area, which strongly suggests some element of linguacentrism. The parents' responses, on the other hand, indicate some fair amount of proficiency in other indigenous languages, thus: Chinyanja (45%), Chiyao (65%), Chitumbuka (60%), Chilomwe (3%) and other (2.5%). With Lilongwe as the capital, this indicates the varied ethnolinguistic composition of its residents, while the teachers are largely of Nyanja origin, and mostly native speakers of the Chewa dialect.

6.9.1 Respondents' choices of another indigenous language for use on the radio/TV and in print media and their attitude toward different languages and their speakers.

RESPONDENTS	POSITIVE ATTITUDE	NEGATIVE ATTITUDE	INDIFFERENT
Learners	72%	28%	
Teachers	40%	60%	
Parents/Public	67%	33%	

From the results here, there is a statistical difference in the positive attitude towards speakers of other Malawian languages in respect of the learners and their parents, on the one hand, and responses from teachers, on the other. This is a little interesting, considering that teachers are expected to be more enlightened than ordinary parents about the value of appreciating other languages and their speakers' culture. Given the recent

past history, the explanation for teachers negative attitude for the use of other languages on the radio and TV could most probably stem from their ethnocentric views.

With the 1989 purge (Chirwa, 1989) all teachers were required to go and teach in their respective regions. There is a possibility then that teachers, who are almost entirely of Chewa origin, would not want another language used in mass communication. The reason for this is that the previous government, whose president was of Chewa origin, inculcated the idea that Chichewa and its values were superior to others in the country. The parents working in Lilongwe, on the other hand, come from different ethnolinguistic groups. Naturally, they too would now like to see their respective languages used in the media, as discussions with them revealed. Learners generally have no inhibitions and fixed ideas, for the use of other languages in the media, particularly in early education.

6.9.2 Attitudes toward English

RESPONDENTS	POSITIVE ATTITUDE	NEGATIVE ATTITUDE
Learners	78%	22%
Teachers	60%	40%
Parents	76%	24%

Responses to this question indicate an overwhelming positive attitude towards English and its speakers. It can well be argued that despite some negative attitude from some learners, some teachers and parents, this is a result again of the influence of the previous government policy generally towards English and its speakers. In particular, the former president's policy favoured English more than Chichewa. This is also an observation that Matiki (1998:21) has made.

There is a significant difference (between 16-18%) between teachers' attitudes towards English, on the one hand, and parents' and learners', on the other. One possibility is that teachers could well be aware of the need of striking a balance between one's knowledge of an indigenous language and English, the language of power. Trained teachers could possibly have affected this result in this way. With regard to learners' and teachers'

attitudes, there is the belief in Malawi, generally, among most learners and parents that knowledge of English is the gateway to success in life, and that one therefore does not need to have much value for an indigenous language. Whether this is indeed the case or not is difficult to tell.

Interpretation of the responses: Suggestions given by teachers for the use of indigenous languages in early education.

It becomes difficult to explain the discrepancy in the responses that teachers gave for the choice of an indigenous language as a medium of instruction (60% in favour of mother tongue education versus 40% in disfavour), in early education. With regard to the use of English as an instructional language, 53% were in favour, 47% were not. Discussions held with them gave interesting views which they hold.

During the discussions teachers clearly expressed the feelings that high priority should be placed on the development of both mother tongues and English, despite differences in the statistics presented in this study. They felt this should be done at the pre-school level for a good foundation. They also called for the development of teachers' linguistic and teaching skills in both mother tongues and English, which many admitted they largely lacked.

A further suggestion which they made was related to the improvement of curricula. They suggested an improvement of the status of languages and their roles in learning and teaching, in line with the new democratic demands. In particular they said the focus should be on the development of teaching and learning materials in indigenous languages so that learners, and the public in general, could be empowered through the use of local languages. They further called for the production of materials jointly with neighbouring countries which shared common languages such as Chinyanja in Malawi, Zambia and in parts of Mozambique, and English with most of the Southern African Development (SADC) countries at different levels. In the long run this would cut down the cost of text production at international level. At regional and national levels, the feeling was that the Ministry of Education and Culture should constantly organise programmes in the form of

seminars and workshops to convince communities on the importance of indigenous languages as languages of learning and teaching, and as media for communication in the respective regions.

In line with this, they also felt that performances in drama in indigenous languages should be promoted and organised. This would be for the social and intellectual development of both learners and parents in the appreciation of the value of local languages as a form of empowerment. They argued that this is important for the fading cultural values, a very essential process in the interpretation of new cultural values. They also expressed the view that these performances would enhance the position of cultural arts as a way of projecting the self-image of communities and thus promoting the socio-economic development of communities. Strong feelings were expressed for liaison between the Ministry of Education and Culture, language bodies and other expert bodies to urgently develop appropriate technical terminology in such resources as dictionaries and other related materials to facilitate learning and communication through indigenous languages.

The teachers suggested that parents should be given assurance by the government and the Ministry of Education that the indigenous languages, which they said should also be taught as subjects, should be chosen with equal status among all viable languages. They expressed the view that learners should attain high competence in the use of these additional indigenous languages.

Teachers also observed that the acquisition of an education through the medium of English and one's ability to speak English is not necessarily a guarantee for economic development of communities and the country at large or including the emancipation of individuals' minds. For development of African languages, they called for this view to be made known among both parents and learners. The point they made was that the development and use of indigenous languages will not in any way take away the learners' knowledge of English as an international language. If anything, this will create conditions for their improved proficiency and competence in the second language.

6.9.3 Discussion of respondents' proficiency in mother tongues.

Almost all respondents' - learners, teachers and parents - indicated that they are fully proficient in their respective mother tongues. The only exception was with Lomwe speakers whose knowledge of their mother tongue was negligible. As explained in the presentation of the respondents' responses, this is a result of the language not having been seen in print for a considerable number of years. Besides, it is hardly spoken among the new generation of those who claim to be of Lomwe origin. There was, however, a small number of respondents in each ethnolinguistic groups that claimed to be unsure of their proficiency in their own language. We did not proceed to find out the reasons for this but it may be the case that by 'proficiency' some respondents meant their ability to read in their own language. Then the reasons would be similar to Lomwe speakers'. This could apply among many speakers of Chiyao and Chitumbuka, whose mother tongues have not commonly appeared in print for well over thirty years.

6.9.4 Use of mother tongues as instructional languages: Standards 1-4

The result indicates that only a small number of learners (33%) and parents (30%) preferred the use of the mother tongue as an instructional language in early education, while 60% of teachers preferred it. Informal discussions with teachers and parents indicated that they preferred to be taught through their mother tongues first so that learners could identify themselves with their language and culture before learning English. One such respondent said:

I was taught English and Chichewa throughout my education, while I speak Chitumbuka, which is my mother tongue at home. English and Chinyanja are normally used at my workplace. I have never seen or read Chitumbuka in print in other forms of literature such as in newspapers and in literary works. I have read good poems in Chichewa but I just wonder whether Chiyao, my language, or Chinkhonde do not have similar poetry or indeed any other Malawian language that would contribute to the beauty of poetry, which we would all share. What I have seen and read in my language is only the Bible that my grandfather left behind for us. I would therefore want my children to be taught through their mother

tongue first for them to gain pride in and identity with their language and its culture. I have nothing against other Malawian languages or English as such. Most of us who were 'born free' never saw other Malawian local languages in print, except Chichewa.

This was an interesting response in view of the observation that many parents did not prefer the use of mother tongue in early education. The response also expresses the sentiment shared by some parents and some learners. There was a widely-held view among respondents that full language symmetry should obtain among all population groups. Other discussions indicated that individual indigenous languages should be made compulsory in education.

One other respondent echoed this view quoted above saying that:

Chiyao, like any other Malawian language, should be taught in schools, just as Chichewa was taught nationally in the last thirty years or so. I would therefore like the government to regard Chiyao or Chitumbuka as no less important languages than Chinyanja or for that matter, English. This is for the cultural heritage of these local languages.

From such responses and comments emerge a growing awareness that indigenous languages play an important role in the individual's life and in the national project of integration and unity. This is the view that ethnic and linguistic diversity are factors that could lead to respect for individual languages only if they are effectively institutionalised. A precondition for the realisation of such dreams before they can be brought into reality is the development of indigenous languages as expressing individual communities' culture and eventually technical and scientific concepts. Some expressed the view that while these developments are currently inadequate, if a start was made, this would not preclude their eventual adaptation to any use in the broader life.

6.9.5 Preference for English as an instructional language: Standards 1-4

The response to the use of English as an instructional medium in both early education and in higher education up to tertiary level abundantly showed a high preference for its choice among all respondents (see statistical results in 5.6 and 5.7 above). The similarity of the response from both parents and learners may be attributed to parental influences on the value of English in higher education and subsequent career prospects. These may in turn be explained by the legacy of the former president who passionately adored the English language, Romance languages, such as French, and classical languages, such as Latin and Greek. Thus a considerable number of Malawians grew up imbued with such feelings and attitudes toward English and other European languages.

In a similar study on learners' attitudes towards English, Mawasha (1996) sought the views of 50 post-graduate students at the University of the North in South Africa. His results showed that most of the students even at this level were of the opinion that English should not only be taught as a language from grade one, but should also be preferred as the main medium of instruction for African children from the outset of schooling. In his study 68% of these postgraduate students expressed this opinion while 32% preferred a variety of other opinions. The 32% accepted a variability of African languages as media. If this response in favour of English as the instructional medium can be taken as a valid indicator, it could explain why the demise of apartheid education was immediately followed by a surge of African learners to traditionally English medium schools. This is despite the high costs involved in placement in such schools.

It must be remembered, however, that in the South African context in general, and in education, in particular, English has all along been equated with liberation, while the use of African languages has been equated with an inferior Bantu education. In the same vein, the use of Afrikaans in Black education has been stigmatised because of its association with oppression, when it was imposed on Black education as a language of the master and of power. However, the similarity in the choice of English as a medium of instruction among primary school, high school learners, teachers and parents in the present study and the choice of the same language among post-graduate students in

Mawasha's (1996) study cannot be just coincidental. It reflects a much deep-seated belief among many parents and learners that English is a global language of power.

In another study, Chick (1996) sought to find out from undergraduate students at the University of Natal, Durban a number of options that students would prefer for tuition. This would be a healthy way of ensuring that for language policies to succeed, they need to enjoy the support of those who are affected by them. The first responses showed that out of 23% of the subjects who generally opted for isiZulu, 10.3% preferred to write their examinations in the language and 13.1% preferred to write their examination papers that were translated in isiZulu. A total of 73% indicated that they would prefer the present status quo, to write them in English.

We could interpret these views to be influenced by their experiences or by their peers' and parents' beliefs that 'the pay-off for proficiency in English is greater than that for proficiency in isiZulu' (Chick, 1996:378). Chick observed, however, that whereas this might be the case, in that life experiences are sometimes difficult to be changed, efforts could still be made to change people's thinking in the sociolinguistic order if the notion of social order is seriously considered. The diglossic choice between English and isiZulu in the use of languages in KwaZulu-Natal is dictated by a situation where people who are not proficient in English have problems in securing access to educational, social and economic facilities. A similar situation obtains in the present study in the entire Malawi. In this multilingual country, effort would equally need to be made for learners to attain proficiency and competence in their mother tongues first to conform with the UNESCO (1953) declaration document, which stipulates before transferring to a second language of instruction. In addition, sociocultural contexts demand a similar practice which is desirable for the multiple use of viable languages, depending on areas or regions as each situation obtains.

The advantage of such sociolinguistic studies involving the analysis of interactional data depict rich sociolinguistic diversities that exist in various communities. It is unfortunate that language planners and policy makers seem to ignore these revelations. In public

domains they reveal a wider range of languages and their varieties in use, and their diversity is a valuable communicative response to utilise for its users (Chick,1996). This way they legitimise the use of marginalised and stigmatised varieties of languages. Above all, they highlight the potential change.

Chick's view is that this practice should not to be hidden from educational authorities, but should rather become a subject for pedagogical debate. With regard to the use of such stigmatised varieties of languages in high domains such as in the workplace, his argument is that such varieties, styles and modes of discourses are of the sociocultural circumstances. These circumstances constrain their use, and struggle that they should receive legitimacy and be employed. If they are evaluated favourably, this would enable them gain access eventually. The argument, again, is that this would contribute to what he refers to as the 'social order'.

In the interpretation of these results in the present study we need not ignore the fact that a contributory factor to such a response, among teachers, is the practical teaching experience in African education. This may influence the opinion on the status and role of indigenous languages versus English in classroom situations. In this study it seems that those teachers who particularly opted for African languages as media for instruction (40%) seem to be aware that, in practice, many teachers switch codes routinely between English and African languages in their presentation of content subjects. They do this to facilitate comprehension and to speed up progress through the syllabus.

In addition, as mentioned earlier, in Malawi, the introduction of free primary school education after the 1994 democratic elections has meant an influx of 'pupil teachers' who are themselves either not trained or ill-trained. A number of them have not obtained a standard ten Malawi School Certificate of Education (MSCE) and can therefore not be considered as professional teachers. They thus find it necessary to resort to an African language where their personal facility in English as a classroom language for instruction falters. In addition to this, there is also the belief among teachers that in content subject

presentation, the use of an African language has the tendency to lower the standard of African education. The reason for code-switching therefore is to deal with what the teacher considers to be a practical educational problem with regard to subject content or concept, as a matter of need. Whether learners with adequate proficiency in English and their parents who support English medium accept this strategy as viable or not is a subject matter that posterity will tell.

However, what is significant about this interpretation for language educationists is that multilingualism and its attendant code-switching and code mixing occurring routinely as a means of facilitating comprehension unofficially, may soon render the situation *de jure* from what is now unofficial or *de facto* (Mawasha, 1996). The 'straight for English' attitude (i.e. that children should be introduced to English as the language of wider communication from the onset, because they are going to progress and achieve a lot more in content subjects if they use it from their early education) is not grounded in sound pedagogy. Apart from this, it remains to be seen whether the socio-political transformation of Malawi will lead to African languages and their cultures in Malawi being seen as an important component of education and training, or the acquisition of knowledge as such will be equated with English language proficiency.

We would therefore argue from a psycholinguistic and pedagogic viewpoint that the confidence both learners and parents insist on in the central role of English as a medium of classroom instruction is not supported by the poor Malawi School Certificate of Education (MSCE) results, including the results in English as a subject. The results in the past few years show a disastrous failure rate. The high failure rate annually is a result of candidates' low level of English, which can, in turn, be blamed on the lack of a sound grounding in their mother tongue as media for instruction in early education. This should support the academics at the University of Malawi who argue that learners should not be precluded from enrolling for university education on account of their poor results in English (see Kamwendo, 1997). English is acknowledged as a language of power and social mobility, but condoning learners' proficiency in it sounds a little contradictory if progress in their acquisition of higher education will depend on their proficiency in it.

Mere condoning it at this level may not, in the end, be helpful to the learners. The remedy is to treat the problem in early education where a sound grounding in their mother tongues will lead to their proficiency and competence in the second language, English, which will lead to an increase in their hopes for the completion of their higher educational studies.

Learners' inadequacy in English can therefore be blamed on a number of factors apart from the one just mentioned here. The lack of proficiency and competence in English among teachers is therefore a serious matter. This can be highlighted by researches carried out by Skutnabb-Kangas (1984), Cummins (1979) and Akkinaso (1993) which indicate that there is a direct relationship between first language acquisition and second language learning. The 'English straight' policy from standard one as parents advocate makes learners unable to transfer literacy skills in the second language because these skills have not been allowed to develop fully in their first languages first.

Summary on the choice of instructional languages in the classroom.

The present research on attitudes and choice of language for classroom instruction, whether indigenous languages or English, has its own shortcomings. The sample drawn is not nationally represented. It is therefore not easy to draw firm conclusions and make broad generalisations on account of one survey alone. A further limitation to this present study is that the number of schools tested was small, making it unlikely that statistical accuracy in the urban-rural comparison could be achieved. Time and monetary constraints did not give this study this chance. However, the study has, in the present form, made the best of the respondents' views and therefore the results should throw useful light on some realistic approaches to language policy planning for education.

Thus while English has emerged as the preferred language of instruction among both learners and parents, in spite of learners' inadequate knowledge of it, indigenous languages in wider communication seem to be favoured by the majority; it should not be a single dominant language, as in the previous era. These unequal power relations need to be seriously considered in issues of language planning and policy formulation by the

concerned authorities. The challenge to educators, policy makers and the government is therefore not to waste both positive attitudes. There needs to be an upgraded and a vastly improved curriculum development in the national policy. This, however, should not occur at the expense of first giving children a firm grounding in their home languages to ensure development of their primary literacy (Dyers, 1997). Besides, there were two studies of text readability: one in Zambia in an 'English straight' policy from standard one (Williams 1996) and one in Malawi where the local language Chichewa was used from standards one to four. Malawian children were reported to have 'had a higher proficiency in reading the local language than did Zambian children, (Williams, 1996:193). It shows that instruction through an indigenous language leads to improved results with no retardation in reading in second language such as English. The texts that the subjects read from were modified versions of *Werenga Cinyanja*, which are Zambian texts. They were modified because of the differences in lexis, spelling and morphology between Malawian Chinyanja and Zambian Cinyanja.

Finally, we observe from the preceding paragraphs that the provision of teaching materials and methods that originate from outside a country does not necessarily guarantee success, as attested by Sarvi, Hamaimbo and Kunda (1992) in Williams (1996).

Apart from the issues discussed above what seems to be needed is a teaching approach where teachers can contribute rather than one that is imposed. This will go some way towards assuring that what is expected of teachers and learners in classroom is consistent with the local socio-cultural norms; that is the case for the development of local languages first as viable medium for early instruction. What is ultimately required then is confidence and the will on the part of the government, particularly the Ministry of Education for the reinvention approach to language learning and teaching.

6.9.6 Attitudes towards other Malawian languages, their speakers and the use of language on the radio, TV and in print media for mass communication

Respondents' attitudes towards other Malawian languages and their speakers were generally highly favourable, but more so toward English. They rated English highest and thought it more suitable for use than the inclusion of other indigenous languages on the radio, TV and in print media. They generally supported the inclusion of local languages which they felt represented their populations more and communicated with a wider local audience than English did. Discussions with respondents showed that these views were largely a result of subjective evaluations. Their responses showed that they considered English important as a means toward valued goals, whereas they saw the use of Malawian languages only for integrative reasons, such as socialisation with their peers and for cultural affiliation reasons. However, learners particularly exhibited very positive attitudes toward other learners from different ethnolinguistic backgrounds.

Responses to the inclusion and use of more local languages on the radio expressed adult respondents' linguacentrism. Almost all of them said they wanted their mother tongues to be heard on the radio, even those from minority language groups such as Lambya and Nyakyusa. These were also conversant in more viable regional languages, but the question of costs and benefits did not occur or appeal to them. We therefore observe that these respondents' responses were based on their feelings and beliefs that their languages were equally important and therefore deserved to be used in mass communication; they were not based on rationalism or pragmatism.

The most preferred languages for inclusion on the radio, TV and in print media included Chinyanja, Chiyao, Chitumbuka and to a lesser extent Chilomwe. The reasons respondents gave for their inclusion were that people express themselves better on the radio, TV and in week-end papers in their mother tongues and therefore saw no reason for their exclusion. They further stated that the use of the mother-tongue in mass communication did not only symbolise self-expression, but also that it was a better and

wider means of mass communication among speakers of a common language than the use of English and Chichewa for grassroots communication as in the previous era. There was also a general view that the inclusion of local languages provided their native users with their own identity first before identifying themselves at regional or national levels through a second language.

The reasons that subjects gave for their attitudes towards other languages and their speakers were thus accommodating. The support for the inclusion of these languages for use in the mass media was based on sentimentalist arguments in the context of language development. A number of the respondents, particularly speakers of the non-Chewa dialect of Chinyanja and those of Yao and Tumbuka origins, felt that the time had come to reinstate their language rights by including them as national languages. The communication argument was also advanced along with the value argument on the issue of the broader scope of indigenous languages.

Responses from adults, including parents and the general public, expressed stronger sentiments than those from learners in high school or in primary school. Adults seemed most concerned about the inclusion of their mother tongues in mass communication. These were, to a large extent, sentimentalist and value-oriented feelings. When one respondent was asked how she felt about other local languages and their speakers, she said:

Let each group use its own language. I feel I am not myself without the use of my home language and among my people. I would thus also want it to be used for communication on the radio so that our people in the village can know what is going on in the country. Chichewa was used like this for years; why not Chiyao, Chitumbuka to their respective speakers and my language too?

A considerable number of respondents claimed that they knew at least one more Malawian language or at least a smattering of it apart from their mother tongue. Some

claimed to be conversant with the three languages proficiently, especially the spoken mode. In a country where oral communication is widely used by the majority, this was most desired. We thus note that the reasons for the inclusion of local languages in mass communication were for practical exigencies, such as communication in the work place among speakers of a common language, for cultural identification, for pleasure and freedom of expression.

However, there were a few respondents who did not like the use of a diversity of languages in mass communication. They were particularly resentful of the ascendance of the Chinyanja dialect as opposed to the Chewa dialect on the radio. These were Chinyanja speakers of the Chewa dialect that was dominant under the former government. Besides, they detested the elevation of Chiyao, Chitumbuka, Chiyao, Chilomwe, Chitonga and Chisena as official languages. For them the Chewa dialect of Chinyanja was in a state humiliating retreat and heading for some form of relegation into oblivion. This was only understandable, given the symbolic role that Chichewa had in the pre-1994 period.

We have suggested that respondents' attitudes to Malawi's six main languages elevated to the official position - Chinyanja, Chiyao, Chitumbuka, Chilomwe, Chitonga and Chisena - were based on sentimentalism, and instrumentalist and communication values. Sentimental and value attitudes are essentially intrinsic views of language. This is in spite of the observation that almost all respondents expressed the wish to have their respective languages used on the radio and in print media. With regard to instrumental and communication attitudes, we could argue that these are extrinsic views of language, which serve private and public purposes.

From a cognitive perspective, attitudes seemed fairly similar among different groups towards particular languages and their groups. General members of different groups seemed to have judged the original need for the development of their mother tongues for self-expression and communication. There was also the broader argument that they would provide a focus for regional identity and subsequently a national identity. In a similar

vein, learners' and parents' attitudes towards English were based on reasons of expediency. They viewed it as a language of wider communication, particularly in education, international diplomacy, in political rallying and in the eventual attainment of national unity. They saw English as rising above ethnic affiliations and individual ethnolinguistic groupings.

While most respondents understood the reasons why the government chose a former colonial language, English, for documentation of all official records, they expressed dismay and strong opinions as to why a single local language achieved official and national status which, even after the 1994 democratic elections, played such a superior role in high domain functions. This, they argued, was because other indigenous languages were neither being developed nor given such a role, particularly in mass communication on the radio. This does not mean, however, that they were entirely comfortable with the role played by English. Occasional views were expressed by some who felt threatened by the dominance of English, but this did not amount to a general concern.

In view of the attitudes toward other local languages and their groups, it is the affective-conative variable that emerged showing Malawians' impassioned concern for the inclusion of indigenous languages in mass communication; they also felt that viable regional and national languages deserved a place in high domain functions. There is thus room to argue that both traditional and modernizing considerations demand some measure of equity and equality in the role that these languages should play along with English, the language of power. Traditionalists strongly expressed concern about cultural reasons of ethnic authenticity and preservation of these values, and used these as an argument for national unification. They saw that national unity was attainable from the respect accorded to each language, culture and its group, and a recognition of the diversity of languages and their cultures in harmonious co-existence.

Between what we have described as traditional and modern elements there was, however, little expression of ambivalence toward English. Respondents largely saw it as a dominant language having extrinsic merit. Learners, teachers, parents and the public

generally viewed English as an important language in various spheres of life and with unquestionable international credentials. Thus, while they saw the value of indigenous languages at grassroots level and the need to develop them for ethnic affiliation and identity into nation-building, they also showed sufficient pragmatism in regard to the role of English in the national life.

While a considerable number of respondents recognised and widely endorsed English as a significant language for instrumental purposes, many still felt that local languages, still played a crucial role, particularly in the work place. They therefore argued that the official view of relegating them to a secondary role was merely an illusion.

Crawhall (1992) (in Heugh (1993)) notes that in Zimbabwe, people displayed a much stronger preference for the use of Shona, whereas initially speakers of Shona believed that English was the more important language in providing access to rewards. Besides, the rest of the Anglo-phone Africa has this attitude towards English. We might note that only Tanzania has a literacy rate of above 75% in its national language, kiSwahili. This is largely attributed to Nyerere's Ujamaa philosophy, which empowered the majority of the population to use kiSwahili in participating fully in the national life (Mbise, 1999). We may also note that English language programmes have never proved successful in empowering marginalised communities anywhere (Tollefson, 1991).

In this regard, respondents felt that all viable local languages needed to be promoted and used in the work place to ensure that there was no undue ethnolinguistic advantage in security of employment for particular groups on account of any viable language's pre-eminence.

6.9.7 Attitudes towards English

We have noted above the general pragmatic attitude towards English as an official language of communication, largely to avoid the use of the multiplicity of languages, such as in documentation. This also comes as a result of its role in the national life generally, particularly in higher education, where most textbooks appear in this language, and in international transactions such as in the procurement of loans. This is with such

bodies as the IMF (International Monetary Fund) and the World Bank. These bodies stipulate that all such transactions shall only be carried out and signed in English as the transactional language. From the different opinions expressed by respondents, we see that English has had both a positive and negative impact; but it has largely been accepted for its instrumental and communicative functions.

However, we also observe that the disadvantage suffered by users of indigenous languages could certainly be attributed to the speakers' own socio-political subordination and the lack of institutional support afforded these languages. For example, there is not a single Malawian language that is used in the sale of tobacco, maize, tea, or in the reports in estates that employ thousands of Malawians who have no proficiency in English. It may also well be the case that there is the negative attitude of the users themselves towards the functional value of their mother tongue. This negative attitude, therefore, has inevitably resulted in a marked lack of language vitality among speakers of local languages (Beukes, 1991).

These positive and negative attitudes should be seen in the context of the total socio-economic and political situations that Malawians have gone through and still experience. Both attitudes are dependent on the individuals' perspectives. The majority of the respondents, however, have indicated the benefits accruing from their use of English. In addition to learners and parents in the work place, there are also uneducated parents who hold it in high esteem because of its economic cachet for their children's education and career prospects.

Observations and discussions with respondents revealed that a select few seemed to have struck a balance between two value systems, that of the English culture and their own. These respondents, who are invariably in high education ranks, feel that English has not had bad effects on their lives, languages and cultures. They believe English has contributed to peaceful co-existence. This is in terms of cultural diffusion which they view as functionally positive. As a result they claimed that English has not had a negative

impact on the alawian culture in this context. If anything, they feel their culture can still be expressed through English. This is similar to what Schmied's (1991) research also found out on the impact of English in a number of countries in post-colonial Africa.

Those who hold this view grew up in urban areas largely after independence in 1964, and were therefore associated with Western values in the boarding schools or urban day schools they attended. During holidays they returned to their educated parents or guardians in the same urban areas. The point is that they had little contact, if any, with traditional upbringing to appreciate African rural customs and their traditional values. From this perspective it can be understood why they feel that English has not had a devastating cultural impact on alawian values, as they feel the 'mix' has fulfilled their lives functionally. Whether indeed this is the case is a subject of much speculation.

This is because each ethnolinguistic group in alawi has its own customs and traditions peculiar to it. This is between patrilineal and matrilineal groups, largely. For example, in the former, when a young man marries he pays 'lobola' (or 'malowolo' in Chitumbuka), a term borrowed from the Nguni groups who settled in northern alawi, to his parents-in-law. Normally, this takes the form of cattle, but today it could be money. This is common among the Ngoni, Tumbuka, Ngonde, Lambya and Nyakyusa in the northern region, but to a lesser extent among the Tonga in Nkhata Bay district. For inheritance purposes, the offspring belong to the man's family. On the other hand, in the latter, among the Chewa, Nyanja and ang'anja ethnic groups in the central and southern regions, and among the Yao too, upon marriage, the husband moves to the wife's home. Lobola is not presented to the wife's home and the offspring belong to the wife's uncle who is the custodian of his sisters and their offspring. He and his brothers are usually referred to as *ankhoswe*. This is how the system works between the two in determining marriage and inheritance. The Sena, in southern region are patrilineal, like people in the northern region.

The issue here is that as a result of intermarriages, these customs and traditions have not been fully recognised appreciated and followed. Most of this results from the fact that

many did not grow up in rural areas. Thus the impact of English along with its Western values on a couple, which is an independent entity with strong individualistic approaches to life, is that there has been no need to accommodate different views or interference from elders with traditional wisdom from the rural areas. In Malawi, most concepts of the extended family and other rituals, such as the initiation of boys, and particularly of girls, cut across ethnic boundaries, with differences in details only. The reference to customs and tradition being affected by English and its values and hence the respondents' attitude toward the language is relevant to some of these Malawian aspects of life. These aspects that transcend ethnic boundaries with little respect for individual cultural values are the ones that some of those brought up in urban areas appreciate. This is a result of urbanisation, which tends to encourage cultural aspects that are common to most groups. Those peculiar to particular ethnolinguistic groups have been confined to the home, if possible, or resulted in their relegation. The ultimate result has been a breakdown in communication and in people's attitudes and values, between English or Western values and Malawian ones.

Attitudes towards English have also been seen through the observation of the extended family. Dissatisfaction has been expressed particularly against the educated who have been blamed for disregarding their relatives in rural areas in pursuit of individual comforts. An example of this is the mode of dress among the youth, particularly among girls who wear trousers, which is strongly detested in traditional Malawi, especially by the elders in rural areas. The general manner of dress and conduct among the youth, which respondents from parents and the public expressed as unbecoming, is blamed on the influence of English and its Western values. This may perhaps be the result of the influence of the TV and other forms of cultural diffusion that are deemed to have a negative impact on the Malawian culture in general, and not necessarily an influence of English per se. Traditional elements therefore have tended to see English and urbanisation as synonymous and therefore both are blamed for having a negative impact on Malawian culture. To some extent, Siachitema (1985) makes similar observations in her study.

We now weigh the hypotheses assumed in this study (chapters one and five) against the responses.

Hypothesis 1. The education policy and the overall national policy are fragmented, poorly planned and incoherent, in the sense that they do not have vision and clarity, and they fail to accommodate educational and socio-cultural interests of the various users.

Ample evidence has been given from the responses to confirm the above hypothesis. With regard to the education policy, the research reveals that only one local language, Chinyanja, is used in early education as an instructional language. This is contrary to the 1996 reviewed policy, which stipulates that the five other languages elevated to the official status would be employed as media for instruction in early education. In the schools where the study was carried out there were no other teaching and learning materials observed. This is evidence of an incoherent language-in-education policy which only exists rhetorically but lacks practical implementation. The available literature informs us in this study that mother tongues are crucial for the cognitive development of learners, but this is not the case in the present Malawian language-in-education policy. It therefore fails to address and accommodate educational and socio-cultural interest of learners first, and of the general public at large, in recognising their regional languages as forms of self-expression and identity and a source of pride in the use and development of these languages. The responses testify to the fact that their concerns are not addressed in practical terms.

Hypotheses 2 states that the status and use of local languages in mass communication and as tools for the general upliftment of the citizenry is unclear and suffers from lack of implementation. This hypothesis is confirmed by the bulk of the respondents' clamour for the equitable use of viable regional languages for communication and for use in high domain functions such as in the work place. A considerable number of respondents lamented the token official status that these local languages have as viable regional languages: Chiyao, Chitumbuka and Chilomwe. Others elevated to the official status in 1996 are Chitonga and Chisena. In practice, however, these five local languages are only

used in ten-minute news broadcasts and are never heard again on the national radio in programmes such as 'Alimi' (a farmers' programme), or in educational, sociocultural and entertainment programmes. All such programmes are presented in Chinyanja only. Chinyanja still reigns by default, which is not what the policy stipulates. The implication is that people of Nyanja origin, particularly those of the Chewa dialect, tend to feel superior and regard themselves as first class citizens, while the rest are marginalised linguistically, culturally, economically and politically. This only leads to the continued socio-economic and political tensions that the previous government implanted in the minds of the people.

With regard to the print media in local languages, only Chinyanja appears in the weekly *Malawi News*. None of the five other languages elevated to official status are employed in print media.

Hypothesis 3 states that the absence of the implementation of the verbally pronounced policies has tended to create tensions with socio-economic and political implications, which require address. This overlaps with hypothesis 2, and we have argued that the subjects' statements do not tally with what is on the ground. The policy stipulates that there are now six indigenous languages which should be used in early education and in mass communication equally. Responses show that this is far from what the actual situation is. Only Chinyanja continues to assume a functional role in both education and in mass communication on the radio and in print. Thus the assumption still holds true. Tensions have been created as a result of what would be described as the unequal sharing of the independence cake. The fact that other ethnic groups and their languages are still marginalised has resulted in the socio-economic and political tensions as they are still not empowered in their respective domains. With regard to the non-implementation of local languages as instructional media in education, there seems to be no programme in sight to date from the Ministry of Education and Culture to address the larger question of implementing the language education policy. Most of the respondents' expressed a strong desire for the use of their languages for equitable reasons. Observations and interviews also clearly indicated that there are not enough qualified teachers to meet the demand in

the schools that have mushroomed as a result of the introduction of free primary education after the 1994 elections. Again, the assumption of the non-implementation of both the language education policy and the national language policy still is confirmed by respondents' statements on what is evident in practice. The government's pronouncements have been mere rhetoric and lip service.

From the statements of respondents from different ethnolinguistic groups, whose attitudes and views ranged from sentimental, instrumental, value-oriented and the communicative needs, it seems clear that they would like to see the elevation of local languages, especially as vehicles for self-expression and communication. They expressed serious concerns for the recognition of these languages in education and in the identity of their values and called for their place in mass communication, regionally and nationally.

To redress the situation, they demand the equitable use of these languages on a par with Chinyanja and English, which have been accorded a 'high' status in the Malawian diglossia. They further see indigenous languages as symbolic and therefore as potential levers to raise them from a position in which they are only confined to their tribal environment to one in which to assert themselves to deal on equal terms with speakers of all other languages in the country.

Following Hofman (1977), the results of the respondents' statements can thus be divided into two: extrinsic and intrinsic dimensions of attitudes. This distinction is actually dependent on the individuals' evaluation of the language in question - whether one places value on the language as an object in itself, or views it as a useful instrument to achieve certain set goals. Related to this is the distinction drawn between the public and the private use of the language. This is where the extrinsic dimension is realised as instrumental in private or for communication in public, and the intrinsic dimension as sentimental in private and value-oriented in public.

We now look at the extrinsic dimension. Many respondents showed a positive inclination towards the use of English, first for instrumental reasons and second for communication purposes, nationally and internationally. The positive role played by

English in the education system therefore represents their private life and its role in intranational and international communication represents the public dimension. We have also attempted to show in this chapter that with regard to the private dimension both educated and uneducated parents whose position was obviously influenced by a vision of their children's future, all viewed the English language as a powerful instrument for satisfying personal ambitions. The knowledge of English, or lack of it, was considered to be directly linked to the individual's chances of success or failure. This is in relation to employment prospects, with level of salaries, status and prestige that go with the language. The chapter has also shown that many Malawians also see English as playing the role of a delicate 'ethnic balance' by guarding against ethnocentrism in the work place: to offset the state of affairs in which Chichewa as a symbolic national language gave special favour to people of the Chewa origin and speakers of Chichewa. Amid the use of other local languages, they view English as a welcome integrating and unifying force. This confirms findings in other studies that attitudes do not usually reflect how individuals behave.

Most learners preferred English for instrumental reasons in education. However, their endorsement of English could not necessarily be associated with their proficiency and usage, particularly at primary and secondary school level. It was thus basically seen as a means to an end.

In our evaluation of the subjects' responses, therefore, in as much as English is largely learnt at school, and in as much as these learners will need the language for academic reasons, if for no other reasons, their responses are instructive (Cooper and Fishman, 1997). This is with respect to Malawians learning and using English in the different situations they find themselves in. With the introduction of free primary school education, every Malawian child is now given the opportunity to learn English. It seems that those who see a knowledge of English as contributing to specific personal goals, which they view as important, are likely to learn it best and use it for a variety of reasons.

Finally, it is quite possible for anyone group to hold both positive and negative attitudes towards a language, its culture and its people simultaneously. We would therefore posit that where language shift has been accomplished, this might result in the breakdown of the instrumental-integrative distinction as observed among the Irish by Edwards (1985). In the present study, we observe that the majority of the respondents hold positive attitudes to other local languages and their speakers and positive attitudes towards English for its functional value.

However, for those in high education ranks who hold positive attitudes towards both extrinsic and intrinsic aspects of life, there is the possibility that the instrumental-integrative distinction may well have broken down (Siachitema, 1985). We would thus conclude this chapter by observing that the data in the present study have shown that language as an object of attitudes can be a pointer beyond itself towards a people's concerns which would be as varied as individual enhancement, for intergroup identification, national pride, and general communication. Language is an object of reflection when our attention is directed towards it, and therefore a valuable indicator of concern. In this regard, we suggest that the issue of what purposes language serves deserves a much more central place in public and academic planning than what the present study has so far revealed about the situation in Malawi.

Chapter Seven

ISSUES IN THE NATIONAL AND EDUCATION LANGUAGE POLICIES

*Africans can rediscover their
genius only in their own
languages.*

(Pra, 1995:71)

7.0 Introduction

This chapter raises issues that have risen in this study so far. First we try to explain the inherent characteristic problems within the Malawian society itself. We look at why there has not been any visible change on the ground even after the language-in-education policy and the national language policy at large were revised in 1996. Second, the nature of problems arising from this is outlined and discussed. This is followed by suggestions on how a comprehensive policy can be devised, using a possible model that would be sufficiently pragmatic to be acceptable to all.

7.1 Ideologies of ethnicity and regionalism versus language practice

In order for us to understand the problems of language planning and policy formulation in Malawi, we need to look at what is inherent within the Malawian society itself and its mindset. The Malawian society has a political-ideological nature, and this is overlooked in analyses of language planning. What we generally assume is that ideas underlying language planning and policy making are theoretical-linguistic, or sociological ideas. These ideas are already embedded in the political ideologies of interested powerful groups in the society. We perceive, therefore, that what is practical, in terms of utilitarian or scientific aspects effecting policies, is subservient to and modeled according to arguments that are based on perceived or ideological congruencies between the language situation and the political situation in the country (Blommaert, 1997). The country has been, and is

still, governed by socio-economic battles for power, and linguistic battles which are essentially between conservatism and pragmatism. To explain the latter let us consider how the former operates. In other words language policy issues cannot be analysed by considering the languages themselves. We need to place them in a wider framework of political activities and development. The political implication is that this would enable us get a clearer picture of how political ideologies actively structure society and how hegemony is made visible as is the case of the present study.

To go back to the socio-economic analysis, in order to understand contemporary Malawi, we must take ethnic particularism seriously, and not assume that Banda, the former president, was an aberration on an otherwise healthy body politic. According to Vail (1981:122-123), 'Ethnic tensions do exist in Malawi, they have been growing since independence and should be assessed.' The problem with Malawi seems to be that regional and ethnic politics 'are almost always played in the state field in the pursuit of social, political, or economic advantages.' (Mandaza, 1994:13). These ideological perspectives continue to be a major stumbling block for the effective implementation of language policies, particularly after the 1996 review because of the power conflict between the ruling class and state interests.

Those who wield power in Malawi are drawn from a group of the bourgeoisie and *petit bourgeoisie*, comprising an educated elite of lawyers, academics, clergymen, wealthy businessmen, land owners and top civil servants (Chirwa, 1999:94). Their interest is to enrich themselves and not develop the country. For politicians, the ruling party and the state are the platform for self enrichment and the people are just a vehicle for holding on to that power. This is the analysis that we would offer, that an ideological struggle after Banda thrives, where ethnicity and regionalism are at the root to inherit the state as a class. The elite continue to accumulate political power and economic resources, after the collapse of a highly-centralised state dictatorship that ostensibly attempted to keep the country unified. The present status quo then attempts a reconfiguration of this class based on

ethnicity and regionalism to hold on to power at whatever cost, for political gain but to serve national interests. It attempts to refine the regional and ethnic ideological approaches in the name of multiparty democratic movement, where this class pays lip service to national policy matters. There is thus a deaf ear turned to efforts at creating meaningful language policies towards the upliftment of the entire population. The populace is thereby perpetually hoodwinked, and ethnicity and regionalism have become useful tools for mobilizing its support. Supporters of the bourgeoisie identify themselves along ethnolinguistic and regional lines, which has become a public secret norm of political behaviour that fails to deliver national interests.

Essentially this is a group of ardent tribalists who continue to play the language and ethnic policies of the Banda regime and pursue a policy of systematic exclusion of people, just as the previous regime did to exclude those from the north, as well as the Yao and the Lomwe from the south for political power (*Africa Watch*, 1990:550).

There is thus rhetoric on 'national unity' and 'nation-building'. The ideologies have become a strong power that mitigates against the development of genuine national identity (Chirwa,1999:95). Analysts see these twin concepts of nation-building and national unity as bases upon which many African states proclaim that tribal, regional, racial and linguistic values, should therefore be buried and replaced by the concept of national identity (SAPEM,1993:05).

Mandaza (1994:7) argues that the concept of ethnicity or tribal identity and consciousness are rather transient and ephemeral. What should be the case is to view each other nationally, as Zambia did in Kaunda's humanistic philosophy, where he attempted to forge a genuine 'one-nation' concept. One way of how he attempted to achieve this was to transfer people, particularly in the civil service, from their home base to work in other regions. Kaunda's Zambia also promoted seven local languages, with no single language or ethnic group considered superior or dominant.

The Banda regime did the opposite after proclaiming a similar approach as we shall exemplify in the paragraphs to follow.

Following Mandaza's (1994) contention, the categorisation of ethnolinguistic, social and political behaviour becomes a little nebulous in describing a country's population and therefore raises serious analytical and theoretical problems. We discern that such categorizations are mere attempts to manipulate the masses for the personal comforts of the bourgeoisie and *petit* bourgeoisie at the expense of the nation at large. This bourgeoisie is thus at heart comprised of ardent culture brokers who continue to craft ethnic ideologies and define cultural characteristics of members of various ethnic groups but do nothing else in the interest of the common person (Vail, 1989:11). On this basis some languages, such as Chiyao, Chitumbuka, Chilomwe, Chitonga, and Chisena, have, since 1996, been elevated to the official status but actually perform token functions within their respective communities and at national level as well.

One could analyse the elevation of the cited languages to official status as merely representing the power brokers within the ruling United Democratic Front (UDF) under president Bakili Muluzi. Chiyao was promoted to the official status because it is the current president's language. Chitumbuka was elevated because 'the new president was not particularly favoured by people from northern Malawi and this step was meant to appease them' (Matiki, 1998:22). The elevation of Chisena came about because it represents a community where one of the UDF's stalwarts, Peter Fachi, the Minister of Justice comes from. For similar reasons, Chitonga, the language of Aleke Banda (no relation of the former Head of State) had to be elevated to official status. Since voting was on ethnic lines, this was also a ploy to have one of the languages in the north, from where the party's vice president comes. Chilomwe, a language that most Malawians have never heard spoken by its speakers, came to be elevated to official status because of the power that Brown Mpinganjira, a Lomwe, and reportedly the most powerful minister within the ruling UDF government, wields.

It is quite clear that the elevation of these local languages to the official status, much as some of them may well be viable languages regionally or nationally, is not based on sociolinguistic determination. It is seen that promoting the languages of these political heavy-weights was done in order to gain support in the important constituencies. This was more for the politicians' own benefits than for the masses they represent. In doing so the emergent politicians continue to 'commit ethnic suicide' to inherit the state as a class of their own (Mandaza, 1994, Chirwa, 1994). This is empty rhetoric as a pretence for the achievement of national unity. This has been a carry-over from the Banda era to the post-1996 period the method used by the 'nationalist' bourgeoisie and *petit* bourgeoisie to hold on to the monopoly of power for social, economic and political gains.

The politics of marginalisation by which members of select ethnolinguistic groups were declared insiders and the excluded as outsiders became a counter-productive strategy for survival. The result was that this behaviour only increased tribal and ethnolinguistic consciousness, nepotism and corruption. The same strategy has been resurrected in the post-1996 period with rhetoric appeals to address the language problem in education and national contexts.

The other strategy that has been carried over to the present day is that of 'regional balancing.' In Banda's era, this meant the promotion of people, not on merit but on the basis of their regional or linguistic origins. This again only resulted in the promotion of mediocrity and increased regional consciousness. In the old regime, the state and the ruling Malawi Congress Party (MCP) was Chewa-dominated through the process of ethnic domination and purging. Victims were unceremoniously dismissed and detained (Chirwa 1994/5:60). Now it has become largely Yao-dominated (Chiyao being the current president's language) or UDF-dominated.

7.2 Evidence of regionalistic and ethnolinguistic practices

It has been observed that the use of Chichewa has not narrowed socio-political differences. In fact it has made them even more pronounced (Kishindo,1994:140). It has also been observed that the previous regime's language and cultural policies were 'potentially a tragic mistake, leaving behind a residue of discontent, and removing, in the short term, the possibility of making Malawi a cultural unity.' (Vail, 1981:149). This means that it flawed the basis of the country's political, linguistic and cultural foundation because of the politics of inclusion and exclusion, while at the same time advocating national unity and identity through a single language as a factor of this unification.

To promote these ideologies and as a way of social and ethnic alienation, the politics of the post-independence era (1964-1994), and of the post-1994 democratic elections, have drawn upon the language of ethnic symbols and stereotypes (White and Vail, 1989:151). One way of showing this as explained above was through the description of northerners as *onyada* (proud) or *ozikonda* (pompous) people. The Lomwe of the South were considered to be *amasenga* (ardent believers in witchcraft). The idea here was to create a sense of inferiority and guilt among these ethnolinguistic groups targeted for marginalisation (Chirwa, 1994:103). This is how the concept of in-groups and out-groups was effected. Its sole purpose was to make identified ethnolinguistic groups socially and psychologically appear as outsiders. The result was the loss of national identity, resulting in nepotism and corruption referred to above.

In chapter three we discussed Banda's ideology as the basis of the language policies that he followed. These have affected the incomprehensibility of policies followed by the present rulers. This was also encouraged by sentimental linguists, such as Timpunza-Mvula (1992:46) who claim that 'there has not been any ethnic antagonism to Chichewa language policy; this can be ascribed to the charismatic and pragmatic leadership of Dr. H. Kamuzu Banda and the people of Malawi themselves.' Kishindo (1994) has refuted this claim as 'wishful thinking'. He believes that it requires only simple

observation to note that up to day 'tribalism or to use the preferred term, regionalism, is rampant in Malawi, and is expressed in the most unsubtle and strident manner even by the leadership.' The present leadership which still employs his ideology has not rid itself of his mindset. One of Banda's ideological views expressed by his own paper, *The Daily Times*, (February 14 1989:01) stated that,

His excellency the Life President has strongly warned civil servants from the northern region who he said referred to themselves as more intelligent than those from other regions to stop preaching regionalism... The life President said that when planning for development projects in the country, such officials were giving priority to the northern region, and at times trying to seek development aid to go to the north.

Such a contradictory policy statement from the leadership which itself promoted regionalism was intended to dislocate one ethnolinguistic group from the other, thus applying the concepts of insiders and outsiders. Here we see that the cultivation of national identity has failed, and ethnic differences have not been narrowed: the glaring fact that the dominance of Chinyanja (previously Chichewa) which is understood largely in the centre and in the south still persists. With reference to the purging referred to above let us consider another report from the Banda regime which the present leadership still upholds:

The life president said that it has been reported to him that teachers from the north teach to the best of their ability only when they are in their own region...But when these teachers are transferred to other regions they do not give their best... The Life President said teachers do this with the intention of hampering children from the central and the southern regions furthering their education so that all the top jobs are eventually held by those from the north. 'Teachers to teach in own regions'

(*Daily Times*, Feb. 14, 1989.p.1).

The post-1994 government has not reversed this policy. All teachers can only teach in their respective regions, unlike Kaunda's policy mentioned earlier on. What the present politicians have done is to uphold this and deny the north all teaching and learning materials in early education in their mother tongues. Neither has the present government attempted to develop teaching and learning materials in the learners' languages in early education. It is a case of 'old wine in new bottles': the old policies still apply. There is undisguised anti-northern sentiments from the leadership itself.

From this it is difficult to suggest that either the previous or present language policy has had any success in the face of the overly tribalistic and regionalistic stance. We would agree with Short (1974:274) in his comment that the introduction of Chichewa as a national language proved a divisive rather than a unifying influence. This was echoed by a subsequent observation that the proscription of Chitumbuka from its use in the media as a language of early instruction created a situation which resulted in bitter resentment throughout the northern region, a situation made worse by Chichewa speakers who claimed that the people from different ethnolinguistic groups other than their own were 'cultureless because they had no language' (Vail, 1989:183).

Most recently, it has been observed that the continuation of the use of Chichewa as *the* national language has failed to create unity among diverse ethnic groups. This was the conclusion drawn from a radio listenership survey whose results have shown that Chichewa is preferred less in the Tumbuka-speaking northern region than in the south, and that people in the north are largely indifferent to Chichewa being used monolingually as the symbolic language for broadcast to the exclusion of the other local languages (Kishindo,1994:141). These observations can only indicate the brutalisation and humiliation experienced by speakers of other languages and the continuation of faulty language policies.

7.3. Evidence of regionalistic and ethnolinguistic practices from 1994 elections

The ideology of regionalism and ethnicity as a factor impeding the effective implementation of national policies can be further exemplified by the behaviour at polling in the 1994 democratic elections. The elections were notable for their ethnic divisions or relevance of ethnicity with regard to the composition of, and allegiance to, political parties (Mchombo,1998, forthcoming). Mchombo observes that the Tumbuka in the north as a block voted for the Alliance for Democracy (AFORD). They obtained all 33 seats in the north, only three seats out of 66 in the centre, and none in the south. Their northern leader, Chakufwa Chihana, was a Tumbuka. The Malawi Congress Party (MCP) with their leader Dr H. Kamuzu Banda, was largely the party for the centre, which is predominantly Chewa. They scored a majority of 51 seats but with only 5 seats in the south. The United Democratic Front (UDF) with a stronghold in the south, which is ethnically diverse but which had suffered under the Banda Chewa-dominated government, particularly the Yao and Lomwe, rallied behind Muluzi, a Yao, and the party's leader. The UDF obtained 73 votes, but with only 12 seats in Banda's stronghold in the centre. This pattern of voting enabled Muluzi to win, with the south as also the most densely populated of the three regions.

The only English daily then commented:

People voted for candidates not because of the policies their parties stand for, but rather the region a party leader comes from...people from each of the three regions preferred to have a president from their own region.

(Daily Times, 19 May, 1994).

What is clearly discernible is that the power bases of each of the main parties is closely linked to the ethnolinguistic and regional identities, on one hand and the economic characteristics of their leader and inner core supporters, on the other. This demonstrates that ethnicity and regionalism are still used as ideologies for political

and linguistic mobilisation. There clearly seems to be a poverty of a concrete ideology to improve the country's situation. This can only be tantamount to a tendency toward parochialism and premordalism (Chirwa, 1994:19). There are no fundamental principles, politico-economic and linguistic programmes to guide the country. What the emergent bourgeoisie along with its petit bourgeoisie has done is to compete for political and economic resources, access to power, jobs and the maintenance of cultural dominance through the control of the state machinery by continuing with the old regime's policy, only this time with a shift toward the UDF's ideology. If Banda's regime emphasised 'Chewaisation', a term coined by (Lwanda, 1993 in Chirwa, 1994/5) the present government emphasises 'Yaoisation', and to some considerable extent Islamisation. For the present government, the two concepts have become factors to reckon with in regional and national politics where linguistic and religious affiliation are key factors towards individuals' economic upliftment. (The head of state is a Yao by origin and a pronounced Moslem).

As the situation stands, there seems to be a fragmented policy, that is not formulated in accordance through any scientific linguistic surveys, but one that is largely arrived at along ethnolinguistic, regionalistic and also religious lines. A solution to this could be recognising the country's historical, cultural and linguistic diversity as suggested in chapter three. This could be the source of social, cultural, linguistic and political pride on which to base sound and coherent language policies for the development of all. This would go a long way toward preventing parochial identities from being manipulated for social, economic and political advantage, which is dangerous for the country's democratic future. There is nothing basically wrong in regionalism or ethnicism, if this only means the preservation of a region's or ethnic group's cultural, linguistic and other values. This would go some way toward the preservation of national values. What seems to be wrong is the politicisation of ethnicity and regionalism for achieving personal advantages without attending to matters of state such as planning and effecting policies based on equity and for the interests of the country as a whole.

7.4 Problems in the education language policy and in the national language policy

Since 1996 we have not seen the formulation of a genuine restructuring programme to address the lack of implementation of the use of local languages for instruction in early education and in mass media.

7.5 Problems in the implementation of the education language policy

African languages have generally not been developed in sub-Saharan Africa. An example is South Africa, where African languages existed before Afrikaans, but were never developed to the level of Afrikaans in the early decades of this century. This is because the colonizers wanted African languages to serve as a medium of Bantu education only. An African language was, however, considered incapable of offering scope for intellectual training, and thus of serving as a vehicle for advanced knowledge (Roy-Campbell,1997:11). When the Afrikaners came to power in 1948 Afrikaans had progressed to replace English as the medium of instruction in Afrikaans-dominated institutes such as the Universities of Pretoria, Stellenbosch and Bloemfontein.

The use of language for promoting an exclusivist concept of nationhood has been an ideological cornerstone in apartheid South Africa. Ironically Banda too used it in independent Malawi, where all local languages were suppressed, with attention given to the development of his mother tongue, Chichewa. In both South Africa and Malawi this involved the strengthening and perpetuation of ethnic division among learners from different ethnolinguistic backgrounds. This was an attempt, as pointed out by Alexander, (1990) (in Bhanot 1994) to keep these languages in tribal bondage 'in order to imprison their speakers in their ethnic cultures'.

The question of the lack of development of languages and their use in early education is crucial to the debates around the transformation of education for all.

For some strange reason, while much research has shown that mother tongue instruction is vital for cognitive development in the early stages of learning, many Malawian parents do not seem to see the advantages and value of mother tongue instruction. In South Africa this was to be expected. Many Blacks saw the use of indigenous languages in early education as part of the general oppression through Bantu education, which was perceived by the oppressed people as yet another ploy on the part of government to limit opportunities for them. It was therefore not designed for the enhancement of cultural heritage as the government claimed; it was to further the divide-and-rule ideology (Mahlalela-Thusi, 1999). Interestingly, in Malawi non-Chewa-speaking communities saw the government policy in an independent country to harbour similar motives.

As a result, the connotations of the development of African languages and their use, particularly the use of Chichewa in Malawi, was greatly resented as a means of indoctrinating others into Chewa culture and its domination. As in South Africa, parents in Malawi consider English as the language of liberation, and it was difficult to convince them to accept the cognitive and the psycho-social benefits of the mother tongue as a medium of instruction.

7.6 Examples of parental resistance to the use of mother tongues in early education

Some parents' views are presented here to show their resistance to the use of mother tongues in the debate on mother tongue instruction in early education. A member of one of the opposition parties, the social Democratic Party, said:

it does not require research to know that a child taught in English will learn better than a child taught in the vernacular.

Eston Kakhome, in *The Nation*, May, 24, 1996.

In the same edition of the paper, a lawyer, Stanley Ng'ombe, said:

Let's face it, I think there is a problem here. May be the Ministry of Education should put emphasis on English which is the basis of everything.

One local parent observed that

these leaders send their children to private schools where they learn English from kindergarten.

Margaret Nawela, *The Nation*, 26 May 1996.

Others still expressed their reservations on the use of mother tongues, pointing the limited vocabulary in handling topics in science, etc. One parent queried:

I want to know if there are equivalent words like atoms and radioactivity in Sena, Yao, Lomwe, Tumbuka etc.

Yotamu Kasakula, *The Nation*, 26 August, 1996.

Some felt that the power of English is so strong that it cannot be done away with, because the country relies on Western aid:

As long as we remain dependent on the West for our bread and butter, the idea of vernacular teaching is a non-starter

Adamson Muula, *The Nation*, 28 August 1996.

All the above sentiments clearly lack the psycholinguistic knowledge on the advantages of mother tongues in the child's cognitive development, concept formation and knowledge acquisition at an early age. These ideas are not based on beliefs which have not been scientifically evaluated. These parents' attitudes are the result of the indoctrination by the former president's attitudes and leanings towards English at the expense of local languages. When neighbouring Tanzania had kiSwahili as a medium of instruction in schools, Banda said:

Some do not want English at all. Next door, they are saying Swahili. For Malawi, I do not think we can do away with English. I cannot even set a time limit.

Banda, 1968,5.

The central idea, of course, is not one of doing away with English, but to provide learners with a sound grounding for further learning from a pedagogical perspective. This then has become one of the major obstacles towards the development of African languages as instructional media, because both parents and learners share similar beliefs and attitudes towards African languages.

The truth is that local languages and English occupy different, but complementary functions. The conceptual basis here is the social organisation of a community that determines the domain each takes (Appel and Muysken, 1987). According to this study, when two speakers use two different languages they will rarely use both languages in all circumstances. This position is similar to that of sociolinguists such as Fishman (1968) in his study of Puerto Ricans in New York. The point of departure for Fishman was the question: who speaks what language to whom and when? He identified three factors that are involved in language choice: group membership, situation and topic. Using Fishman's analysis we observe that local languages are mostly used in the home in social gatherings, religious matters, when children play among themselves, in intimate personal matters, in watching football, etc. (Moyo, 1996, 2000). Local languages dominate our private domain; English on the other hand, is used in intra-communication in the workplace, and in inter-communication and in socialisation with people of different ethnolinguistic backgrounds.

In learning and teaching contexts, however, it has to be recognised that the language in which a child has proficiency is the most profitable in knowledge acquisition. Regardless of whether English is used in H (high) or formal domains and local languages in L (low) domains in the Malawian context, when it comes to the development of all languages, local languages must be given the attention so that they are capable of maximum utilisation. There is therefore a need for an attitude change on the part of the general

public and some authorities who are charged with the responsibility of developing local languages and also the implementation of the revised 1996 language policy in education and in the national life.

In teaching and learning contexts, if learners fail to express cognitively-demanding concepts and their deepest emotions in their indigenous languages, it might become extremely difficult for them to express these feelings in an unfamiliar language. Speakers must have labels for their thoughts, feelings and abstract issues in their mother tongue to be able to trigger them when they speak in English unlike the semilingual condition (Mahlalela-Thusi, 1999:28).

As a result of both the neglect of the development of indigenous languages and the 'straight for English' policy in some private schools in Malawi, semilingualism has evolved considerably. Appel and Muysken (1987) consider this 'a linguistic malaise.' The concept refers to someone who speaks two languages but both at a lower level than monolingual speakers. The danger here is that the majority of learners (see Williams, 1996) end up with learners who have neither proficiency nor competence in either of the languages - their mother tongue and English, as a result of insufficient grounding in the mother tongue first. The argument therefore is to develop the mother tongue to play a complementary role and not a subordinate role to English in both education and in the world outside classroom.

7.7 Problems in the language in education policy

We now turn to itemize some of the problems inherent in the language education policy, which up to now have not been implemented:

- Lack of clear objectives and ways of implementation.
- Lack of research findings within Malawi to indicate that the country is technically ready to implement the policy. For example, some languages lack standardised

orthography, have no dictionaries, no teachers, no learners' textbooks and other forms of teaching and learning materials.

- Personnel problems: the lack of native language speakers competent to teach in the same language are two different things altogether. Native speakership alone is not synonymous with expertise (Rampton, 1990). There is the need to have teacher training programmes to specifically cater for the various indigenous languages to be developed. Many teachers are needed as a result of the introduction of free primary school education after 1996.
- Inadequate policy awareness campaigns: a lot has to be done to sensitise the public on the merits of mother tongue instruction.
- As a result of the above, many Malawians are confused and regard the policy as detrimental to the acquisition of good English and therefore a good education. To them the two are synonymous. Moreover, people find that the various official environments and opportunities in Malawi call for a knowledge of English rather than that of vernacular languages. They have thus come to question the rationale for developing literacies which are of little economic and political promise. For example, literacy in English is one of the requirements in many employment advertisements. Social, political and economic gain obtained from one's knowledge of English is remarkably high. Whether English is indeed used throughout such employment in the workplace is another matter.
- Opposition to mother tongue instruction is very common in the print media. This has resulted in an outcry that the 1996 policy will mean the demise of English. The principal secretary of the Ministry of Education clarified the position by saying that 'Unfortunately people are misinterpreting the policy. English will remain a compulsory subject from standard one to eight.' (*The Nation*: 1997:08).

Apart from the problems cited above, the development of African languages and the implementation of the language policy as promulgated in 1996, which has not been effected in any classroom, there are other problems such as methodologies. A deficient factor in the language-in-education policy in Malawi is the fact that there is little attempt, if any, to harmonise language policy with wider educational goals which includes developing methods that are child-centred and inquiry-based (Harlech-Jones, 1998). It is difficult to envisage participative, child-centred and inquiry-based education when a considerable number of children who cannot speak Chinyanja are required to read, speak and understand a language that they hardly hear spoken in their environment at home. This is the case with the bulk of learners from typical Yao speaking homes in the south and from the entire northern region. Besides, almost all their teachers neither speak the language nor have expertise to teach effectively through it. Being sent by the government to teach in their respective regions from 1989 has compounded the problem of the teachers' lack of proficiency in the language that appears only in the textbooks available for learning and teaching.

This creates a problem of developing lessons based on communication, when teachers lack proficiency, competence and expertise in the medium of instruction. The ultimate result is that teachers revert to their home languages in content subjects, and not even code-switching is used. They hope this will assist their learners to understand both concepts and content. This is in defiance to what the policy stipulates.

Apart from the above problems, cited from Kamwendo (1997), Awoniyi (1982:58) has classified problems of teaching African languages thus:

- lack of secondary school teachers, especially well-trained graduates;
- little enthusiasm in the study of African languages by students because of the status of and emphasis on English in most anglophone African states;
- inadequate evaluation and testing techniques, and
- finally 'the most significant reason why the teaching of African languages is so inadequate is because of the defects of the curriculum.'

In the Malawian situation, all the problems that Awoniyi outlines apply. Also in Malawi, the only teachers that have expertise in the teaching of African languages are those trained in Chichewa (now Chinyanja), as it is the only language that has been studied since 1968, from primary school up to tertiary level. Yet, policy makers elevated five other local languages which have not received any development for them to be used as instructional media. This clearly indicates lack of co-ordination in language planning.

Ansre (1969) in Bodomo (1997) sees the problem in sub-Saharan Africa in the right perspective with the following observation, which aptly sums up the situation in this study:

One of the root causes, if not the only one, is the lack of clearly stated policy...in the educational system...There is no policy statement on what should be the ultimate aim of their study, no suggestions on the content of the course and no provision for obtaining adequately trained staff and carefully prepared material. As a result of the absence of policy there is lack of co-ordination between what is done at various levels of the education system.

The above is typical of the situation in this study where hardly any effort is made to address these issues, which makes the policy incoherent and considerably fragmented.

7.8 Lessons from interactional studies

Apart from problems of incoherence of policies and the absence of any form of implementation of the policies that are there in both education and in national life, there seems to be a problem within the ruling elite. The government seems oblivious of the fact that the promotion of one dominant language, creating a diglossic powerful gap with the rest of other local languages, can have detrimental effects on the country. There is therefore a need for a cautious approach to language development toward socio-economic and political development of the country at large.

In interactional studies, Chick (1996) contends that historically marginalised and even stigmatised languages and their varieties should be used fairly constantly among their speakers as they wish and desire where these languages apply. The policy in Malawi

under Banda did not allow this from a constitutional perspective. The policy now is silent on the promotion of this as the ruling elite still uphold the former position. Chick's argument is that other languages and their varieties should be legitimised by actually implementing them, thereby promoting access to these institutions. Let us look at Chick's (1996) proposal for language in education and also outside these contexts. For KwaZulu-Natal, in South Africa, he proposes one possibility in which he sees merit in a policy of bilingual language. His proposal is that English would remain the main language of tuition in higher learning and isiZulu would become a secondary language as he envisages the situation:

This would mean that students would have the right to Zulu translations of examination papers, and where bilingual examiners are available, the right to write their papers in Zulu. To promote bilinguality among academics so that they could code-switch appropriately and assess papers written in Zulu, measures such as incentives to staff for becoming proficient in Zulu and affirmative action appointments for first language Zulu speakers could be implemented.

(Chick, 1996, 378)

It has to be mentioned here that in the context of South Africa, it has a language policy that operates at regional and national levels, where at regional level the policy takes into account the most viable and widely used language, hence the proposal here for the use of isiZulu in institutions of higher learning. If we apply this idea to Malawi, it would first require our identification of viable regional languages to be used alongside English, in order for such a proposition to work. This would be a situation where not only English and Chinyanja are used, but wherever the identified viable indigenous languages, with a literary history such as Chitumbuka in the north and Chiyao in the south, can be employed in educational contexts and also in wider mass communication.

Chick's (1996) study is based on the notion of empowering the majority in academics, in the workplace and in public life in general, where multilingualism is the norm (Makoni, 1999). Chick (1996) sees the implementation of such a programme as entailing what he has referred to as linguistically coping with 'social justice' for all. The problem in the case of Malawi would be that the use of local languages in higher education institutions, particularly, would demand the development of these local languages first: they have to be codified, and dictionaries and grammar books developed to be on a par with Chinyanja. Once this has been achieved, financial resources permitting, the suggestion would be worth experimenting. However, this basically requires the will power on the part of educationists, who are themselves implementers.

Fairclough (1992) observes that the practice of sociolinguistics is hegemonic in nature. The image projected is an idealised one in the sociolinguistic order, where each variety of a language is applicable in its own context and for its purposes. His contention is that this is in fact what obtains in reality, but only becomes an objective of the dominant groups. These groups exercise power ideologically and in practice by getting the desired languages or their varieties or discourse types accepted to them as appropriate for use in prestigious public domains such as in schools, universities and in the work place. In fact in Malawi, this is how Chichewa, which adopted the former president's own dialect, attained its status for use in such high domains and as the only language to be studied at university level along with English. The suggestion here is that there is need to make a choice of a viable language or languages. Other varieties will need to be accommodated as each situation demands, to take into account Chick's notion of social justice, but within the chosen variety to be standardised as norms for use in formal contexts.

In continuing with the dominance of a single local language as the present ruling elite has done, this has had detrimental effects on the development of other equally viable local languages. One such result is that it has created feelings of tensions among speakers of these different languages, which is contradictory to what the policy stipulates. The worrying implication is the unwitting maintenance of the hegemony of the diglossic

situation in which Chinyanja and English persist for 'high' functions and others 'low'. This represents the continued promotion of a Nyanja-English elite, thereby still marginalising other language groups in both high domain and low domain functions. In the process other languages remain non-functional beyond tribal bondages whereas they could easily be equally developed. We would suggest therefore that an effective implementation of programmes needs to be devised to improve the current situation.

7.9 Suggestions for policy intervention

What the language-in-education policy and the national language policy in Malawi require is an interventionist approach to devise programmes. This would go a long way towards bringing about greater development, equity and participation of the entire citizenry. It would thus be an attempt to redress the marginalisation of masses of people in socio-cultural, economic and political life. This suggestion is made in view of the flawed conceptualisation of the current policies which present the country with massive problems, stemming from the lack of will on the part of the government and politicians and a concern for the future of its populace.

This has come about as a result of the fact that those in power have their interests served and protected through the use of Chinyanja and English alone. But they fail to uplift the other local languages and thereby cater for the needs of the ethnolinguistic groups that have been excluded for over thirty years. There has to be a realistic relationship between policy process, policy pronouncements and actual practice. Strategies have to be developed to empower other languages and their groups for a fairer, more effective education and training system and more equitable use of viable local languages.

We thus need to draw a relationship between what we discuss now and the theoretical assumptions we discussed in chapter two about what constitutes a policy and the policy process. We observed that these are conceived as rational activities which aim at resolving group conflict over the allocation of resources and values in order to restore the cohesiveness, order and functionality of a society

(Harman,1984). These could also be viewed as exercises of power and control and how values are allocated among different groups. This allocation is both material and social. This political approach focuses on how a sociolinguist should analyse, as in this study, the bases of power and the values that the policy reflects. This should consider whether this is how they relate and mediate their actions within state organisations such as the Ministry of Education, charged with the responsibility of effecting policy programmes, and the Malawi Broadcasting Corporation (MBC) which is responsible for equitable dissemination of information in all languages to be understood at grassroots level.

7.10 The analysis of policies

The analysis of policies then depends on how they are evaluated in terms of their nature and scope. This entails that policies should spell out what the government should do with regard to procedures taken, and the implementation of the mechanism for taking such action. This study has shown that none of these have been carried out: no informed procedure before policy formulation has been followed. Second, concrete sociolinguistic surveys have not been carried out to arrive at the promulgated language policies in education and at national level. Finally there has been no implementation programmes such as the provision of real resources, language learning and teaching materials or qualified teachers to effectively teach. What we thus have are symbolic policies that remain rhetorical, and they need change and implementation. They are not based on the multi-dimension of the problems or on acceptable principles from the language planning perspective (de Clerq, 1997). They lack effective strategies; they are contradictory in practice and therefore incoherent and fragmented.

To restate, before a policy can be formulated and implemented four stages have to be properly followed, in the following order:

- i. policy initiation;
- ii. formulation;

- iii. implementation ;
- iv. evaluation;

In most instances the conceptualisation of policy formulation and implementation is considered as a separate exercise. What normally obtains is that matters of policy formulation are the domain of politicians and the implementation becomes the responsibility of more technical and administrative experts. The latter are invariably politically neutral to ensure objectivity and rationality. In Africa this is difficult because those who implement policies receive directions from politicians. They are often appointed for their party affiliation rather than for their competence and neutrality. This means that they only effect the aspects of policies that serve the interests of the ruling elite or groups to which they have allegiance. This becomes problematic and the implementation of policy is often neither effective nor smooth. In the end the failure to properly deal with the implementation of the education language policy and the national language policy is attributed to the lack of institutional and resourcing capacities of state bureaucrats or the inadequate control systems over bureaucrats (de Clerq, 1997).

For example, the World Bank reports have revealed significant discrepancy between their policies and how they are implemented in Africa. The Bank's loans have not in any way uplifted the plight of the masses. Often the beneficiaries are the officers who handle the disbursement of funds. It is well known that in Malawi, learners and those in rural areas have not benefited from the proclaimed language policies. They have not been empowered to make any worthwhile contribution to the national life and for themselves educationally, socially, economically and politically. In language policy matters, we observe that those in authority have resisted the need for institutional reforms to strengthen the implementation capacity.

7.10.1 Implementation strategies: top-down vis-à-vis bottom-up approaches

The problem of implementation is the result of lack of what is intended and what the policies stipulate. The process should include bargaining and negotiations between national and local leaders. Left to national actors alone, they will 'use their power or discretion to subvert or transform the original goals.' (McLaughlin, 1987). This is because these officials wield considerable power in Malawi, and that implementers of policies serve the interests of their political masters and not the country. This is a top-down approach, where policy makers exercise decisive control on state-controlled institutions what they will disseminate, and in what language(s). The information they disseminate eventually filters to the ground. The result has been confusion in how such symbolic substantive policies are to be implemented.

7.10.2 The backward mapping approach

One approach for resolving the implementation problem is the backward mapping approach. This entails the decentralisation of power and maximisation of discretion at the lowest point of the implementation process. This is because the approach believes that the closer one is to the source of the problem, the better the chances for the individual's ability to influence it. The problem with the top-down approach (7.10.1 above) is that policy makers are too remote from the concrete situation and dynamics on the ground to enable them monitor the implementation. The result is that policies become vague, ambiguous and broad as is the case in Malawi. In the backward approach suggested here what is required is 'a movement back and forth between policy formulation and implementation' (Barrett and Fudge 1981). This would ensure the clarification of vague, ambiguous and broad policies as each phase becomes closely monitored. The top-down approach emphasises the power agenda of policy makers to safeguard their elite interests while underestimating the crucial role that policy has to play through other agents.

The backward approach informs and guides the way policies are changed or introduces aspects of reforms and research as the entire process is likened to a chain co-ordinated process, not a one-way process, largely driven by set political agendas. Samoff (1996) in de Clerq (1997) makes a distinction between the conceptualisation of policies as official policy statements and as policies made in practice or policies in use. The former leads to reforms being designed and handed over by new politicians to their officials. The latter, however, requires a strategy for dealing with and involving all the implementers in policy reforms. In the implementation phase what is required is an analysis of set goals and strategies or policies which are pursued by different actors involved. Thus different national and local officials and the general public need to be involved, making the entire process an interactive one.

In this way the final policy that emerges becomes the product of all stakeholders in various arenas and therefore a policy that is genuinely made and understood at all levels of society. Such a policy becomes the result of this socio-political practice or activity between competing objectives contending with one another (Fulcher, 1989 in de Clercq, 1997).

A singular policy level does not determine policy at all levels, but may influence, affect or even contradict and be inconsistent with policies at other levels. The changing of policies or sociopolitical practices will influence other policies in different areas at different levels. In all these actor interactions, there are power relations that have to be restructured and negotiated to arrive at an effective and comprehensive policy that takes into account the views and experiences of all the citizenry on the ground and not one that just serves the interests of those at the helm of power..

7.10.3 Evaluation of education restructuring policies

The Malawi education policy needs to move from a singular autocratic policy toward a more democratic one. From the 1994 democratic elections, the socio-

political situation has remained fluid on the implementation with hardly any interaction at the various levels that we have referred to in the preceding paragraphs. This therefore has had no impact on the power relations between the top officials and the masses on the ground.

What is required is a re-conceptualisation of the policy problems a result of the implementation of how these problems relate to, strategise around and review the agendas of different policy actors and how these affect the existing social relations in education. Sound policies need to have the scope and pattern which can deal simultaneously with what is possible and desirable towards embarking on a comprehensive language education policy for social equity and economic growth. The Ministry of Education and Culture therefore needs to plan with regional counterparts how to effect and implement policy reforms. This should aim at strengthening and improving conditions of the pedagogical process, which includes better infrastructural inputs, professional and pedagogical support and provide more curricular support in terms of the development of language teaching and learning texts and other materials.

The Ministry of Education and Culture needs to promote a culture of debate on how to improve and restructure the relationship between the state and the civil society. This will help to make policy implementation process more democratic, consultative and accountable to the masses it serves. This is a process that requires careful conceptualisation because of the unequal and uneven power relations in the various parts of the constituencies (Humphreys and Reitzes, 1995, in de Clercq 1997).

The argument here is that in a country of scarce resources such as Malawi, this would allow for the empowerment of ethnolinguistic communities that have since 1968 been excluded from using their viable local languages as media for instruction and have also been prevented from participating in planning to question the legitimacy of government policies that fail to deliver. Such an

evaluation process entails that the state be endowed with sufficient organisational and institutional capacity and resources for mediating between different groups. The educators therefore need to be centrally involved in the implementation of such reforms among the various actors at different levels. The authorities should move towards a more evolutionary policy planning whose aim is to improve the fit between the intention of the policy change and the condition on the ground, to blend top-down policy initiative and bottom-up participation and to promote continuous interaction between all policy actors (de Clercq, 1997). In this way the current language policies would cease from being viewed as mere gestural and rhetoric political slogans and policy makers would now be involved in the handling of the practical problems. This would be an important part of reformation.

To this end the situation requires policy researchers to develop strategic skills and knowledge to understand and take into account the cost effective approach in order to intervene and change the system. These would be policy priorities upon which plans can be made for reform strategies. In practice not all five local languages can be used as instructional media, if we consider the costs of producing of learning material in all of them. The Ministry would therefore need to develop common policy priorities and plans for intervening in the education system. We shall return to the question of which languages should be adopted for development later in this chapter.

Other intervening processes would include mobilisation through well-focused campaigns and pilot programmes to be carried in all regions. In addition the Ministry needs to work in partnership with non-governmental educational organisations such as publishing houses, language development bodies, such as the Centre for Language Studies, and other interest groups, to plan and evaluate how to deliver better quality services and activities from the most rural areas, which have the least facilities. Above all there is the need to strategise and devise programmes to change the culture from a monolingual view to a multilingual one

which would give it more ethos. It also needs to build a national managerial and leadership capacity towards a multilingual society.

This aspect is important as there would be key implementers of the educational reform who would engage with existing educational teaching and learning problems and practices. These implementers would thus need to break the formal conservative and often bureaucratic attitudes to enable them use their discretion to modify policies when necessary (de Clercq, 1997). Once the policy reforms can build a capacity of educators, a path would then be set towards redressing the current impasse.

So far the education leadership which also includes the ruling politicians, has turned a deaf ear to these issues. This has resulted in the lack of decisive direction and inappropriate strategic intellectual skills and knowledge in the implementation of the so-called revised 1996 policy. If policy formulation and reforms are to be more effective in creating conditions beneficial to all, there is a need to improve its role on many fronts. It will need to conceptualise adequately the policy problem and develop strategic priorities, plans and programmes. Furthermore, it will need to be more rooted in the realities of the Malawian situation, and make more effective strategies which would have to include some form of backward mapping as an implementation approach, discussed above. This is another aspect of evaluation and of policy development.

7.10.4 Textbook writing and materials development in the promotion of indigenous languages

The evaluation of current policies and reformulation of language policies are in the end valueless unless similar effort is made with regard to textbooks and other teaching and learning materials, for these are crucial in empowering learners academically. This raises a problem in Malawi, where there has been little development of local languages, with the exception of Chichewa, since 1968. The rest of the local languages have not received any development. Literature in

English or indeed in indigenous languages has treaded a thorny path as a result of the 1969 Censorship and Control Entertainment Act, which established the Censorship Board. This forbade writing in languages that were banned and thus not official. This also censored whatever was written in the recognised official languages, English and Chichewa.

It is important therefore to discuss the development of textbooks and other material in line with the need to reform current policies and accommodate other languages to complement English particularly in the teaching and learning contexts.

If local languages are to complement English as instructional languages, they will need to develop their textbooks and other materials to be on a par with texts and other materials used in English. They will need to be rewritten in order to engage learners in higher order thinking. Within these indigenous languages, the textbooks that have to be developed will need to focus on how learners can think in abstract terms in Chiyao, Chinyanja and Chitumbuka, for example.

It cannot be disputed that a considerable amount of time that learners spend in doing their homework is spent with text materials (Reynolds, 1997, in Mahlalela-Thusi, 1999). In view of the absence of any meaningful textbooks for learners, particularly given the history of a total ban on all other local languages in any form of written works, there is a need for such textbooks and other forms of learning materials. This will place textbooks in a unique position of authority to augment a teacher's lessons.

There are a number of teachers in Malawi who do not have expertise in the content subjects that they teach. Different materials in the viable local languages and textbooks will thus need to be developed. These will generate interest in languages that learners are familiar with and also be expedient to use; after all most teachers typically have less capacity or confidence to venture beyond safe

boundaries of the printed word. Good textbooks will also enable learners to think and explore beyond what is in the book.

In the development and production of teaching and learning materials, they will need to follow communicative lines that include group work, pair work and projects that will engage learners and generate interaction. In this way learners will develop vocabulary and thinking skills in given languages and thus be enabled to use languages in action. In this light textbooks undoubtedly become the lifeblood of the education system.

Apart from this, textbook writing and the development of relevant teaching and learning materials being advocated here should also help to meet the learners' perceived needs in this age. Along with this students' textbooks should also have the expected academic rigour and not lack in literary or linguistic merit. Two views of texts exist: the 'deficiency' view and the 'difference' view. Basically the former argues that there is a need for materials to save learners from teachers' deficiencies. There are teachers who tend to think that the syllabus is well-covered and the exercises well thought out. Such teachers might therefore be tempted to think that they do not need published teaching material. On the other hand, there are teacher-proof materials, which even deficient teachers would do well with (Allwright, 1981, in Mahlalela-Thusi, 1999).

Depending on the teacher, some materials would reduce the teacher to mere classroom managers, whereas others would develop their expertise that would be needed for classroom activities. Textbooks and other teaching and learning materials to be developed should therefore not tend to be conservative but liberatory.

In the colonial times, a considerable number of textbooks and other materials tended to serve state policies of making learners mere functionaries of the state. These new textbooks will need to make a paradigm shift to become agents for

cultural and ideological transformation of the individual learner and of his society. Most of the textbooks we see from the old times were designed to control learners direction of thought processes and placed boundaries on knowledge acquisition. The aim was thus to dwarf the minds of learners by conditioning them to servitude as Kallaway (1984) observed with regard to Bantu education among Blacks, particularly in South Africa. In other colonial territories such as Malawi too, a number of texts had similar motives.

The texts being advocated here, therefore, should not be ideologically censured but contain provocative intellectual ideas. Because of the low status assigned to indigenous languages, they will need this development and be in step with the needs of the modern times. The issues to be covered in these texts should affect all in both rural and urban areas to appeal to youthful readers. Furthermore, they should reflect the sociocultural values of the different Malawian communities. For example, one such text that has constantly featured on the secondary school syllabus is *Kukula ndi Mwambo* (Growing up with Customs and Traditions). This is an educative book on cultural and moral upbringing of the youth, but it specifically deals with the Chewa culture. Similar textbooks could be written in other languages that reflect the cultures of their respective communities. This would contribute tremendously to the national cultural heritage where learners could learn to read about other cultural beliefs and customs, and thus grow up with a wide knowledge of how Malawian societies are governed by their beliefs and customs. As the analogy goes, for thirty years the entire nation has only been allowed to eat only a quarter of the orange with the rest of it denied by government decree. This may be considered as an unequal sharing of the independence cake. The language too will need not to be too archaic in portraying the historical past; it should be timeless enough to spur readers to read on.

Furthermore, these materials will need to bear in mind an important aspect, which is the cognitive and affective aspect that most books in local languages lack. Textbook writers will need to bear in mind the paradigm shift referred to in the

previous paragraph with regard to content and methodology that is used in the books. These texts will need to transform to function in the modern social, economic and political contexts to enable learners to read the present world through their own languages and demonstrate a critical language awareness approach with regard to mother tongue usage. Apart from aiming at cognitive and affective capacities, the meaningful study of indigenous languages will thus mean that the study of language must ensure the relationship between a language and reality, regardless of whether the subject is religion, sports, geography, history or politics. This will enable learners to judge the value of their perceptions of other languages. Learners will in this way be given the opportunity to develop abstract thinking and a democratic intellectual freedom within the realm of local languages and express things as they perceive them without inhibitions. They should offer responses from both sides of the coin, as it were, from such texts and not be one-track-minded. This is indeed necessary if society has to change and modify itself to meet unforeseen threats, problems and opportunities. It will further go a long way toward facilitating the notion of transfer of skills from an indigenous language into a second language, in this case, English, as texts from both languages will be pitched at similar levels academically. Besides, in terms of learners' development, this will expose them to the functions of the left and right sides of the brain: the left hemisphere focuses on verbal and factual content such as names and the analysis of ideas logically, whereas the right focuses on mysterious aspects such as the arts. The developed texts will thus need to accommodate visual literacy and such aspects as drawing, where learners can engage critically with the arts, just as books in the second language, English, do.

A project in the writing of books here in local languages, will need to be collaborative between writers of indigenous languages and those of English textbooks, so that writers share ideas in content and linguistic approaches. This again becomes one aspect that national educators will need to liaise with their regional and district counterparts for the good of the entire education system.

7.10.5 The use of local languages in mass communication

In the top-down and bottom-up approaches in language policy formulation, the central idea is to reach people at all levels. For the masses on the ground this would be in programmes relating to health, agriculture, etc., that would fulfil their lives. However, this means that appropriate languages would need to be employed in the various communities.

For example, health extension services in the Ministry of Health would make their input using viable local languages in health education programmes to reach the targeted communities in rural areas. Along with this, the publication of specific booklets and magazines need not be in Chinyanja as in the present system in Malawi; they should be in the language of the locality. Similarly in programmes about the prevention of diseases such as malaria and tuberculosis, appropriate local languages would be chosen to reach the targeted communities. Radio broadcasts too will need to use specific languages that are understood by the targeted communities.

Consideration should be given to the production of literature - of pamphlets, posters and leaflets - in languages that are intelligible and understood in various rural communities, bearing in mind that 90% of Malawi's population is rural. UNESCO reports of there being 2379 radio receivers in Malawi (Hutchenson, 1996). Kishindo (1994) observes that only one fifth of the total population has access to radios.

Officials from the Ministries of Agriculture and Health as well as from other agencies, too, would need to liaise with policy officials to use viable languages to reach the bulk of the rural population. Thus local languages will not be restricted to private life as mere languages of ethnic identities; they should be recognised for the crucial role they play in the national development at various levels as languages of instruction, communication in agricultural, health and homecraft activities that affect peoples' lives in rural areas. In a country with a high level of

illiterac(estimated at over 60% (Osman, 1994)) it cannot be assumed that the only communication used by the government in English and Chinyanja on the radio and in print media readily reaches the bulk of rural communities. The proposal made here therefore needs to be interpreted as suggesting a supplement to the current language policy practice, which is exclusive. Since language also 'manifests the individuality of a people's identity' (Kishindo, 1994:144), rural people will also feel a sense of identity within the national framework if they are reached through their own languages.

7.10.6 The use of English in literary production

It is interesting to observe that Malawi's language policies played a significant role in the promotion and retardation of the literary industry. Only English and Chichewa, where they could, gained in the number of works that could be published in the written mode. The rest of the languages were banned to exist in the written form and could not be performed in mixed ethnolinguistic audiences, with the exception of the 'gyrating maidens', who were comprised of mobilised women from all sections of society. These were transported to perform for the life president at political rallies.

The language policies also affected entertainment with regard to what films, plays or any other form of public production would be performed for an audience. English being the most favoured language from colonial times enjoyed considerable esteem with a wide readership from the literature that was published for well over thirty-six years after independence, up to 1994. Since the language was accorded this prestigious status which gave artists international readership, very few of them could ever dream of writing in their vernacular or indeed in any other local language they knew well. The other and the only indigenous language in which publications could find their way suffered as writers and the public in general felt and still feel that Chichewa is of inferior status in literary production (Kamwendo, 1998).

While not denying the need for writers to be read internationally, and the economic rewards that accrue from such a choice, the effect and respect that English has had on the local readership and the market, in comparison with Chichewa when both were the only languages allowed in such enterprises has been detrimental. This is particularly so for the growth of the literary industry in local languages.

In Banda's era the state-controlled Malawi Broadcasting Corporation (MBC), and the only non-print mass media channel, played a leading role in the promotion of literary works in English for both the youth and adults. Regional and national drama competitions and festivals were held annually with the sole purpose of promoting the English language industry. The University of Malawi's 'Travelling Theatre' added more influence with its regular tours of performances in various schools nationally. The most popular literary programmes on the national radio were devoted to such programmes as the 'Writers' Corner', where the present author was its chairperson for five years. 'Theatre of the Air' was another programme that was highly featured on the air. The former was broadcast on Sundays while the latter was aired every Friday. Both programmes had a high listenership in the absence of a television station as Banda would believe that such a channel would be subversive by screening foreign programmes, featuring crimes films and news of the rise of military regime governments. The worst impact of the increase of literary productions in English on readers and artists alike was psychological. Publishers have shown little interest in published works in indigenous languages; and they have all along projected this image of indigenous languages being unmarketable.

Artists and readers too have fallen prey to this notion that literary works in the vernacular are of inferior quality and not perhaps mentally intriguing or challenging as those published in English. Njabulo Ndebele (1989:50) (in Kamwendo (1998)) argues that writers such as Thomas Moyo, Ibsen and Tolstoy attained world fame by writing in their own languages and not English.

This idea, however, seems to be still unpalatable among both writers and readers in Malawi.

The Malawi Writers' Group founded in the early seventies by students such as Lupenga Mphande, Frank Chipasula and Jack Mapanje as leading members, all of whom are poets, held their weekly discussions of locally written works in English. These were cyclostyled and distributed in advance for pending meetings held at some appointed venue in the evenings. The composition of its founder members had a significant message in that it countered the particularism and ethnic essentialism of the established literature in Chichewa. It also included students from outside Malawi. These students came from Nigeria, Mozambique, Zimbabwe and also from the Sudan, which gave the group a truly pan-Africanist hue. Most of these writings found their way to the 'Writers' Corner' programme at the Malawi Broadcasting Corporation. The advantage of using English as the medium of its discussions was not only because of its international stature, but this also was a deliberately and consciously selected strategy, whose effort was to promote a pan-Africanist image of the national identity rather than the Chewa identity alone (Mphande, 1996). This is precisely what the medium of Chichewa failed to achieve as it largely relayed Chewa values which lacked the national embodiment. For example, Frank Chipasula's opening poem in his *Visions and Reflections* entitled 'The Struggle for African Independence' resonates with remarkable force in the context of Banda's imperialising autocracy and Africa's colonial past.

Apart from this, the use of English in Malawi has acted as building blocks, particularly in Banda's attempt to transform the political and sociocultural unmaking of the country, which is not different from Ngugi's (1986) decolonisation of the African mind, in terms of thinking along Western lines first and view African values only as secondary.

People's access to knowledge and information was controlled by the only daily then, *The Times*, owned by the head of state, along with the week-end version, *The Malawi News*, which conceded a page to Chichewa. The week-end edition featured short stories, which again were published largely in English and very occasionally in Chichewa. Today, *The Malawi News*, which is still a week-end edition of *The Daily Times*, still carries stories in Chinyanja on political, literary, cultural and other stories targeted at the masses. Similarly, the leading and widely-read newspaper in English, *The Nation*, also has its *Week-end Nation*, which devotes five to six pages of its 16-paged paper to Chinyanja. No other language appears in Chinyanja in both of these papers.

It is strange and somewhat incomprehensible that both of these major papers still arrogantly regard Malawi, not as a multilingual country, but rather as a country with one indigenous language, which either the editors or their authorities assume is intelligible, and understood by all speakers of more than eight indigenous languages. This arrogance is simply undemocratic. This is in spite of the 1994 reviewed language policies and the linguistic rights enshrined in the Malawi Constitution. Malawi's organic literature was thus fundamentally subverted to the president's bent Western interest through the promotion of literary works to be published in English. This is the sinister reality that the appropriation of African traditions projected the ultimate aim 'to create a class of African middlemen through which missionising colonial cultural status quo could be maintained' (Mphande, 1996:85).

It is further observed that

Entertainment halls in schools and colleges were flooded with productions of *Hamlet*, *Macbeth*, and *Julius Caesar*. Students became more familiar with famous actors, such as Sir Laurence Olivier and John Gielgud, than with performers in their own literary traditions.

(Mphande, 1996:85).

In addition to this, literary magazines, such as the Writers and Artists Services International (WASI) and the French Cultural Centre in Blantyre, have been constantly used for advertising detailed announcements of the best British films and other British productions along with French ones. WASI has also carried serialisations of 'Understanding *Macbeth*', paid for by the British Council, presumably as part of the orchestrated campaign to entrench the place of Shakespeare in the Malawian curriculum. It should be mentioned that there is nothing wrong in advertising *Macbeth* as such, but the issue is that it would be preferable if learners would initially learn to appreciate their own cultures and traditions first before introducing them to another culture. The effect of the introduction of world cultures first, particularly through English, has the alienating effect with little pride, if any, being developed in the learner for his/her own identity with his/her culture. Second, these platforms, the WASI and the French Cultural Centre, have not given similar announcements or mention of courses in the only indigenous language in use then, Chichewa.

The promotion of literary publications in English has resulted in massive publications of works such as Joe Mosiwa's *Who will marry our Daughter*, Mapanje's *Of Chameleon and Gods* and *Chattering Wagtails of Mikuyu*, Mphande's *Crackling at Midnight*, Chimombo's *Napolo Poems*, James Ng'ombe's *Sugarcane with Salt*, Francis Moto's *Gazing at the Setting Sun* and many more. The English publications, by far outnumber all publications combined in various indigenous languages.

It must be mentioned, however, that this huge success in the production of literary works suffered from the government's wrath of absolutist control of the infamous Censorship and Control of Entertainment Act and its Censorship Board for more than thirty years of the previous government's rule. The present government, while having relaxed the rules in practice, has in effect not repealed the Act. The Censorship Board heavily censored published and local productions

of plays and other works in English and Chichewa. The activities of the Censorship Board had tremendous control on the access of information and literary imagination of other countries in an already limited scope of languages through which writers could express themselves.

Nothing could be published that was deemed 'prejudicial to public security' to promote ill-will among Malawian inhabitants.' This was anything that the government deemed to be subversive or leading to the promotion of industrial unrest. One such case in point was the dismissal of the host of the 'Writers' Corner' on the Malawi Broadcasting Corporation (MBC), Nyokase Madise, for opening up radio spaces for opposition views contrary to those held by the status quo. The institution of such Censorship regulations had inimical effects in the publication of literature in both English and Chichewa as they brought about a state of stagnation in the literary production, where budding writers were left with no foundation on which to build upon, and work out their artistic strategies.

What the publications in English demonstrate is that literature and politics are intertwined and that if there is to be any change in both politics and in the curriculum, this has to be initiated by the civil society, resulting in a bottom-up approach. This seems the only plausible process of improving people's lives by creating a consciousness through their linguistic rights, to write and publish in all languages, not just in English and Chichewa.

7.10.8 The inadequacy of mother tongues in the literary industry.

In chapter two we observed that the coming of European Christian missionaries initiated the literary production through the written mode in Malawi. This was later supported by the colonial government. Pioneer writers in indigenous languages tended to project their writing toward Christian moralisation, and this was invariably dependent upon biblical stories and traditional life. This was exemplified by the translation of John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* by Charles Chinula from English into Chitumbuka as one such case in point. Titles in early

plays and novels included Chifulumira's *Kazitape* (Tale Tells), *Zomfula mkazi wa cimaso maso* (Zomfula the Unfaithful Wife) by Jacob Zulu, among others. The basic motive here was not only to convert 'natives' to Christianity but also to assist in assimilating them to European values and aesthetics. Such an agenda therefore signified the extent to which the colonisers wanted to align culture as a critical axis in their colonising mission

In Malawi such colonial projects were advanced by introducing the three C's (Commerce, Christianity and Civilisation), which acted as catalysts in the globalisation of European capitalism. When the colonisers came to power this was effectively mediated through the three R's: Reading, (W)riting and (A)rithmetic. Such strategies therefore had the assurance of bringing *lux in tenebris* (light in darkness). (Mphande, 1996).

It must, however, be appreciated that in colonial times a considerable number of literary texts were ironically written in at least three indigenous languages in Malawi - Chinyanja, Chitumbuka and Chiyao - but particularly in the first two languages. In comparative terms, the colonial period had a more even publication record than the restrictive post-colonial period. The latter has been referred to as one of 'literary drought' (Kamwendo, 1998:34).

Even with only Chichewa as the language through which indigenous literature could appear in the written mode, syllabi were stifled in schools as the following lament illustrates:

The most important question is: How can the youth be interested in reading about Malawian culture in a novel when there is no Malawian novel among their prescribed books in their classroom?...it is even sadder to note that in schools no Malawian novel has yet found its place--whether at primary school, Junior Certificate, or Malawi School Certificate level. This fact alone...portrays the much-hated ugly impression that anything European is superior to Malawian.

(Ntaba,1984: 06).

In a further criticism of the infamous censorship rules, Ntaba, himself a prolific writer in Chichewa, observes that '90% of the creative writers' material was being rejected by the censors.' He notes that 'there was a deliberate attempt to discourage writers'. His view is that all this was 'political opposition in the guise of literature' (Ntaba,1984:8-9). We could possibly presume that the reference here is to any literature against the Banda dictatorship. Comparing the attitude of the authorities toward literature in general, he remarks that there was a more stable and secure market for literary works in Zambia, where his last two novels *Ikakuona Listiro Sikata* (Once guilty, always one) and *Kukwatira Tileke* (Let us stop Marrying) found a lucrative market, which was not even available in his home country, Malawi.

A related lamentable situation is that none of the other prominent Malawian languages such as Chitumbuka, Chiyao, Chilomwe and Chisena were given the opportunity given to Chichewa to develop their languages through published works in the post-independence era. The government policy totally marginalised these other languages to the extent that there are adults over thirty-five years today, who have never seen their languages in print, in any form, but particularly in literary publications such as poetry, plays, short stories, etc., as the field research has established in this study. Literary publications in languages such as Chiyao, Chisena and Chilomwe 'remain non-existent; one, therefore, cannot talk of a novel in Chiyao, a short story anthology in Chilomwe, or a collection of poetry in Chisena in Malawi' (Kamwendo,1998:34).

The result of this is that it has given rise to wide disparities in literary publications between Chichewa and the rest of the indigenous languages. The Writers and Artists Services International (WASI) reports of a survey which shows that between 1900-1988, 142 literary works were published in three languages. According to the survey, English had the most frequent publications,

followed by Chichewa, the national language, and then Chitumbuka (Kamwendo,1998:34). There is no mention of any other publication in the other indigenous languages. Such a scenario has been influenced by the hegemony of publishers in English, who have promoted an image that publications in local languages are not a viable market. This has further led to the lack of inspiration among both budding writers and readers as well in taking their own languages seriously in literary concerns. It is pathetic to observe that after well over thirty six years after independence, a considerable proportion of the Malawian public is still steeped in the bondage of linguistic imperialism of English, even not to appreciate written works in their own vernaculars that express their own cultural and traditional values.

7.10.9 Considerations for a comprehensive national language policy

Before we consider a more democratic and accommodating national language policy, we look at other African models in order to place Malawi's situation in a relevant setting.

a) The Senegalese model

Senegal's policy aimed at promoting African culture through a negritude policy, using the French, the language of its colonial master. Indigenous languages were thus only for local communication, while French became the official and national language. The education system followed a curriculum based in France, in order to effect a policy of assimilation (discussed in chapter two). As expected it became difficult for French to take root and spread country-wide as the planners had hoped. It thus became unsuccessful and failed to serve as the country's lingua franca. It was soon overtaken by Wolof and the concept of negritude only came to be restricted to the arts and literature [Ohly, 1987 (in Kishindo, 1994)]. Wolof therefore came to be the vehicular language used as a medium of instruction in pre-school and primary education. It also came to be an optional subject at university as 80% of its population uses the language.

Heine (1992) contends that what remains is for it to be legalised so that it can be used effectively in the socio-economic development and in nation building. From a sociolinguistic perspective Senegal represents a typical exoglossic nation.

b) The Zambian model

Closer to Malawi is Zambia, whose education policy follows a 'straight for English' policy from standard one along with seven indigenous languages which are used in mass communication. These include Chibemba, Chilozhi, Cinyanja, Chitonga, Cikaonde, Cilunda and Ciluvale (Kashoki,1978). In secondary school, however, only Cibemba, Cinyanja, Cilozhi and Citonga are offered as subjects, with English as the medium throughout the education system. In order to obtain a school certificate one has to pass English, which is also the language used in commerce and in government for official documentation (Sililo, 1985, in Kishindo,1994). This makes Zambia yet another example of an exoglossic nation. In pedagogical terms, the Zambian case has not worked well because of poor didactic methods used to teach Zambian languages and English, along with the inefficiency of teaching staff [Ohly, 1987, in Kishindo (1994)].

Everything therefore seems to be in a state of flux. There are re-organisations, new programmes with experimental classes set up. The success or failure of these efforts have to be determined.

c) The Tanzanian model

Tanzania has largely based its policy on the politics of Ujamaa culture (Abdulziz,1971, Blommaert,1997).This aimed at establishing an adopted African language, Kiswahili, as a national language and as a means of fostering political awareness. Kiswahili was initially adopted as a language of trade and education from pre-colonial to colonial days, and thus spread from the coast to the hinterland of the former Tanganyika. In

the fight for independence it became the primary language for anti-colonial expression which was used by the Tanganyika African National Union (TANU), now Chama cha Mapinduzi (party of the revolution) in its independence campaigns.

With the attainment of the country's independence, it became both a medium of instruction in primary school and also the language of mass communication and politics in the media (Hill, 1985). Blommaert (1997) refers to it as the language of Tanzania's political ideology story, where it is used for explicit political propaganda. As a national language, other languages do have social status in the social or cultural life in the country (Batibo, 1987). Kiswahili's predominance is recognised but it has failed to replace English in disciplines of knowledge which it cannot cover terminologically (Kishindo, 1994:129). The result is that English, which was originally intended to serve as a second language for communication still plays the role it did in colonial times. Heine (1992) observes that Tanzania pursues an active endoglossic policy.

d) Malawi

We now return to Malawi to consider an inclusive policy with viable languages that accommodate the bulk of its rural population as well. Since colonial times, there have been debates as to whether the country should have a single local language for mass communication. The proposal to have Chinyanja only was rejected by one of the governors, Sir George Smith, who pointed out that,

Though the spread of the dialect throughout the country would be advantageous...it would tend to merge various tribes in the protectorate at a greater rate than it is at present, and this I consider undesirable. One of the chief safeguards against any combined rising is the individualism of the various tribes, and the small scattered white population; this I think should be postponed.

(Smith,1918, in Kishindo, 1994).

Again we observe that such a policy would be aimed at denying groups with other languages the use of their languages as cultural forms of expression, or mere forms of communication in their restricted communities. Since colonial times three languages have been used as languages of early instruction in education by missionaries: Chinyanja, Chitumbuka and Chiyao. All three have relative histories of literary traditions. For example, Ridde published *A Grammar of Chinyanja Language as spoken at Lake Nyasa, with Chinyanja-English-Chinyanja Vocabulary* in 1880. A more comprehensive text was published by George Henry in 1891 titled *A Grammar of Chinyanja; a language spoken in British Central Africa on and near the shores of Lake Nyasa*. This was followed by David Scott's publication in 1892 called *A Cyclopaedic Dictionary of the Mang'anja Language Spoken in British Central Africa*. In addition literary texts such as *Kalulu (The Hare, Folk Tales)*, *Nzeru za Kale (Wisdom of the Past)* and many others were published in Chinyanja.

Chiyao too had useful publications including *Collections of a Handbook of the Yao Language* in 1871 by Edward Steere. MacDonald translated parts of John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, a text that Chinula also translated into Chitumbuka. Yohanna Abdalla, the foremost Yao historian, published *Cikala ca Wayao (The olden times of the Yao)* and other texts followed these (Kishindo,1994).

In Chitumbuka, Walter Emslie published *Notes on the Tumbuka Language as spoken in Mombera's country* and a *Table of Concords and a Paradigm of Verbs of the Tumbuka Language as spoken in Mombera's country*. These were followed by Donald Mackenzie's publication of *Notes on Tumbuka Syntax* in 1911, which was followed by *An Introductory Grammar of the Tumbuka Language* two years later.

The literary tradition in these languages would act as a basis for their further codification and development.

The problem of the education language policy and the national policy is perhaps a result of linguistic imperialism, as Phillipson's (1991) sees it, and the hegemony of English, since both parents and learners in this study seem to think that 'education equals English'. An additional factor is the result of enclosing groups. While the proposition to offer initial education in most local languages is a very attractive one, the cost argument persists. The argument advanced here is that not all five local languages elevated to the official status can be developed as media for instruction. Malawi faces serious economic problems. These would be aggravated if it were to embark on publishing teaching and learning materials in five local languages in addition to English materials as well. The situation would be further compounded if we added literacy materials and publication for information and campaigns in health and agricultural programmes in so many languages.

7.10.10 Suggestion towards the harmonisation of local languages

For more than forty years Chichewa hindered non-Chewa speaking learners from acquiring knowledge as the language was unfamiliar to some learners. In mass communication the non-Chewa speaking communities were kept away from what the government's policy was on issues such as health and agriculture. We therefore suggest that to avoid idiosyncratic ideas being introduced by any one leader or ruling elite, closely-related languages (with mutual intelligibility) be aligned. This should accommodate larger groups of learners having one of few languages, while reaching the masses in languages that are intelligible to them, although they may not necessarily be their first languages.

The concept of harmonisation is viewed synonymously with language unification.

Essentially the concept,

seeks to construct a common language for such dialect groups by employing as much as possible forms which are common to all variants in the group, and, where this is not possible, by use of forms common to the predominant majority or previously-attained literary forms.

(Lestrade, 1935, in Msimang, 1994).

This fusion of dialects or speech varieties, would then present a dialect democracy situation, where we can achieve a standard written form (Bodomo,1997:478). If we consider all the dialects in northern Malawi, such an inclusive process towards the selection of a major dialect of Chitumbuka, that is intelligible to the majority of speakers in the region, would be acceptable to all as a standard speech variety. This would be a fair proposition. Similarly, among the various dialects of Chinyanja, one dialect, the Mang'anja dialect, for example, would emerge as intelligible and therefore as acceptable to the majority speakers of the language. Chiyao would also follow suit. This proposition would go a long way towards harmonising languages and avoiding some form of puritanic notions. Linguists would work out agreed-upon orthographies as a prelude to the unification of various dialects for wider use of the three viable languages.

In South Africa suggestions towards such forms of harmonisation are being made as not all eleven languages can be used in early education or in mass communication for the economic reason we have given above (see Msimang, 1994, Alexander,1992). For example, before the rise of Shaka Zulu, only Nguni was the viable language among intelligible varieties subscribing to Nguni. isiZulu acquired its name with the rise of the military prowess of Shaka Zulu. Attempts are now being made to harmonise isiZulu, isiXhosa, siSwati and isiNdebele as all these are mutually intelligible to their speakers. An agreed-upon dialect would possibly be the isiZulu, given its standard written form. Similarly, in Gauteng, southern Sotho is a possible dialect that would emerge as the lingua franca for the

region because of its long literary tradition, for it is also intelligible to speakers of Sepedi (or northern Sotho) and seTswana. The adoption of this notion therefore becomes workable on account of being cost effective towards a comprehensive development of African local languages particularly in the written form. Other variants will be acceptable within the context of their usage in their respective speech communities.

It bears noting that this is not an argument for mere social engineering and the suppression or collapsing of any one dialect; it is based on economic considerations. The dialects considered in each case share common origins, linguistic features and their applicability may differ in their variants only. In this study, speakers of Chinkhonde, Chilambya, Chitonga and Chingoni all understand Chitumbuka as we observed in chapter two; hence it is suggested that Chitumbuka be the regional lingua franca for the north. This is because the language is understood among both learners and the general public. Likewise, some Lomwe speakers understand Chiyao and the majority of Lomwe speakers speak and understand Chinyanja, although it has different dialects. Similarly a considerable number of speakers of Chiyao are also speakers of Chinyanja, which is largely intelligible among speakers of Chiyao, but the demographics would warrant the use of Chiyao as a regional language in its own right. In the central region, Chinyanja is the only language which would obviously become the major lingua franca of the region. Chinyanja would therefore undoubtedly become the lingua franca for both central and southern regions, where Sena speakers also understand and speak the Mang'anja version of Chinyanja. Chiyao would be another in the densely populated districts of Blantyre, Chiradzulu, Zomba, Machinga and Mangochi in the South. There are also cultural similarities among each of these groupings, with the north being largely patrilineal, and the centre and the south matrilineal, with the exception of the Sena in the south who are patrilineal.

In this effort it must be borne in mind that people are normally averse to change (Msimang, 1994):152). This is not because the move is wrong, but because it

tampers with egoistic feelings and means taking people from the known to the unknown. The proposed harmonisation would also be associated with solidarity and social equality, where the chosen dialect is not only for standard use as a norm, but where other variants of respective languages may be used in their speech communities. We believe that this grassroots language planning would receive acceptance from the bulk of the population in different regions, as it does not essentially promote any form of puritanism of anyone dialect. It is largely for cost-effective reasons then that this rationalisation is suggested in both educational and mass communication contexts. The acceptance of the proposal would be significant and demonstrate the power of horizontal medium in language development. Thus if harmonisation has to succeed, it has to enjoy the acceptance at grassroots level, but this acceptance will require a considerable amount of education of the general public. It would have to be made known to them that their linguistic and cultural self-identity will not be taken away from them as a result of this. Therefore, it should not be construed to be based on political considerations but on common identities of speech communities within the region.

Thus community or regional dialects would be shaped by prevailing circumstances. What the concept entails then is the recognition of its reality not only in the eyes of the language practitioner but also for the masses. Its main purpose is to unify, not to divide and separate (Msimang, 1994:159).

Since all living languages are subject to change, it follows that if dialect democracy would become functional, there would be only three local languages (four including English) instead of more than eight. This would increase intelligibility of languages at official level and therefore make a considerable saving with regard to materials production for schools and in mass communication as well. The increase in intelligibility can be exemplified from the example of Karanga, Zezuru, Manyika, and Ndau, all of which have been fused into the present Shona in Zimbabwe, or how Kwenya, Kgatla, Ngwato, Ngweketse

and seTswana have been united to form standard seTswana in Botswana (Msimang,1994). Other varieties will thus tend to be included in the process of unification. Again, this does not militate against the maintenance of different cultures nor result in imposing an artificial language in the dialect that emerges as the standard in the identified areas or regions. Msimang's (1994) contention is apt when he argues that the fact that Austrians speak German does not make them cease to be Austrians. Similarly siSwati and isiNdebele speakers will not cease to be Swazi or Ndebele if isiZulu comes to be recognised as the lingua franca. In Malawi, too, Sena and Lomwe groups by origin will not cease to be what they are respectively if these groups recognise the choice and use of Chinyanja among them. Chitonga and Chinkhonde will remain in use in their communities, but for standardization purposes, Chitumbuka would be used. No language will thus be swamped as a result of the proposed unification.

The multiple use of African languages has thus raised problems of viability and materials development particularly. This has also led to the lack of development of common terminology among them. With harmonisation, this would be enhanced. Any language has the potential of any kind of thought if given the opportunity and with harmonisation, a language would be enriched by borrowing freely from other dialects to be incorporated in the standard dialect.

The development of terminology as a feature of modernisation has been grossly neglected in African languages and this is attributable to lack of good and sound language policies (Bodomo, 1997). Malawi would benefit from the example of Japan, where it decided that 'from the Meiji period onwards, all academics who work towards a thesis are required to translate one major work from a foreign language into Japanese' (Prah,1993:76-77). The idea here is that the process of translation itself would encourage one to be sufficiently innovative to generate new terms which would eventually find their way into the lexicon of the local language. In this way it can capture the African creative genius. The educated would thus be asked to contribute to the development of their mother tongues by

adapting terminology to write textbooks and translate great works, as Nyerere did by translating *Julius Caesar* into Kiswahili. In this way new terms come to be coined and incorporated into the translated language. This also promotes the dissemination of world knowledge, apart from the mere development of terminology. Such a steady supply of literature would contribute to the literature in African languages.

The suggestion of choosing three languages in Malawi is not arbitrary. We have given their literary traditions as a base for their development. The choice of Chitumbuka, it is argued, is that its elevation to official status in 1996 was by a presidential decree and not through sociolinguistic consideration. The reason for the decree was that the new president was not particularly favoured by people from the north and this step was meant to appease them (Matiki, 1998,22). In Banda's rule, the 1968 decree saw the demise of Chitumbuka when 'Chichewa was chosen as a national language because it was president Banda's mother tongue.' (Matiki,1997:527). This policy made the Chewa culture the dominant strand of the Malawi cultural fabric (Chirwa,1994/95). Banda's unpopular policies, both domestic and foreign, and his intolerance of political dissent or criticism of his linguistic policies hit the country with one of the worst human rights abuses (Mchombo, forthcoming). The most affected in this repression were the Tumbuka, whose linguistic and cultural values suffered a major onslaught of Chewa imperialism. This was more so since Tumbuka had well-established dynasties and had developed their language, culture as well as their economic and political institutions during the 19th century (Mchombo, forthcoming; Pachai,1973). From colonial times through to independence, 1964-1968, Chitumbuka was a viable regional and national language. As a regional language, it emerged as an intelligible lingua franca among speakers of five other languages. This is also the case with Chinyanja and Chiyao.

The inclusion of Chitumbuka, therefore, is not necessarily based on demographic figures; it represents not only the entire marginalised region linguistically in

Banda's era, but its choice makes it a powerful linguistic broker in national life towards sociocultural, economic and political life for all. This is a worthwhile effort towards genuine national unification that would break the current hegemony of the use of Chinyanja and English only. It is for the same reason that Chiyao is suggested towards equitable use of local languages and to avoid the idiosyncratic imposition of any one language by politicians. However, the suggested three languages here will also need to be verified by sociolinguistic surveys.

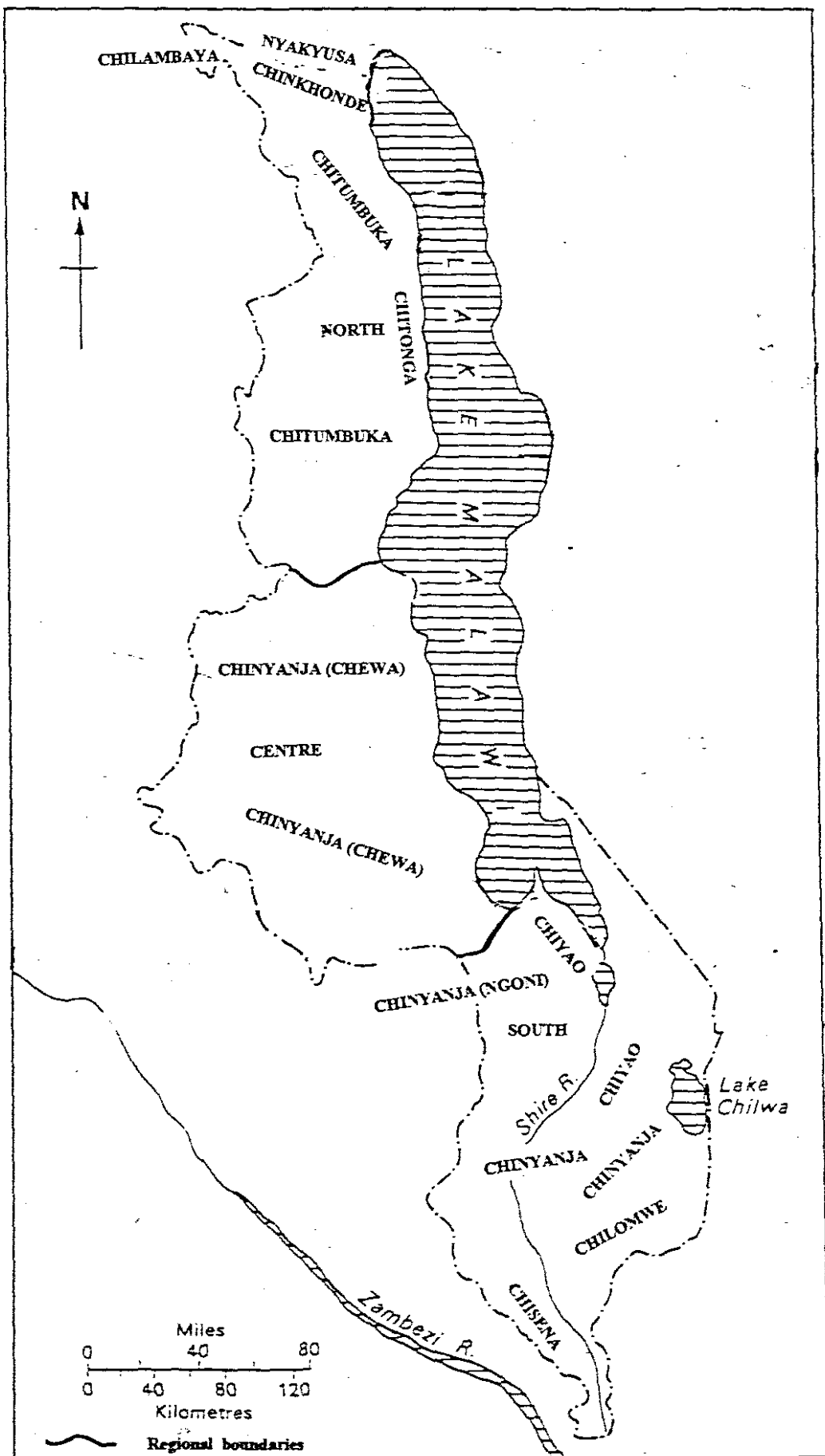
7.10.11 Other language policy considerations

What we have discussed above does not argue a case for the immediate overhaul of what is there now, it is a suggestion for serious consideration for the future. In considering language policy formulation, our concern is for the country in general and the education in particular, where the policy will need to offer some balance. This is between three sets of concerns: national political concerns, pedagogical concerns and concerns that deal with social justice (Reagan, 1987).

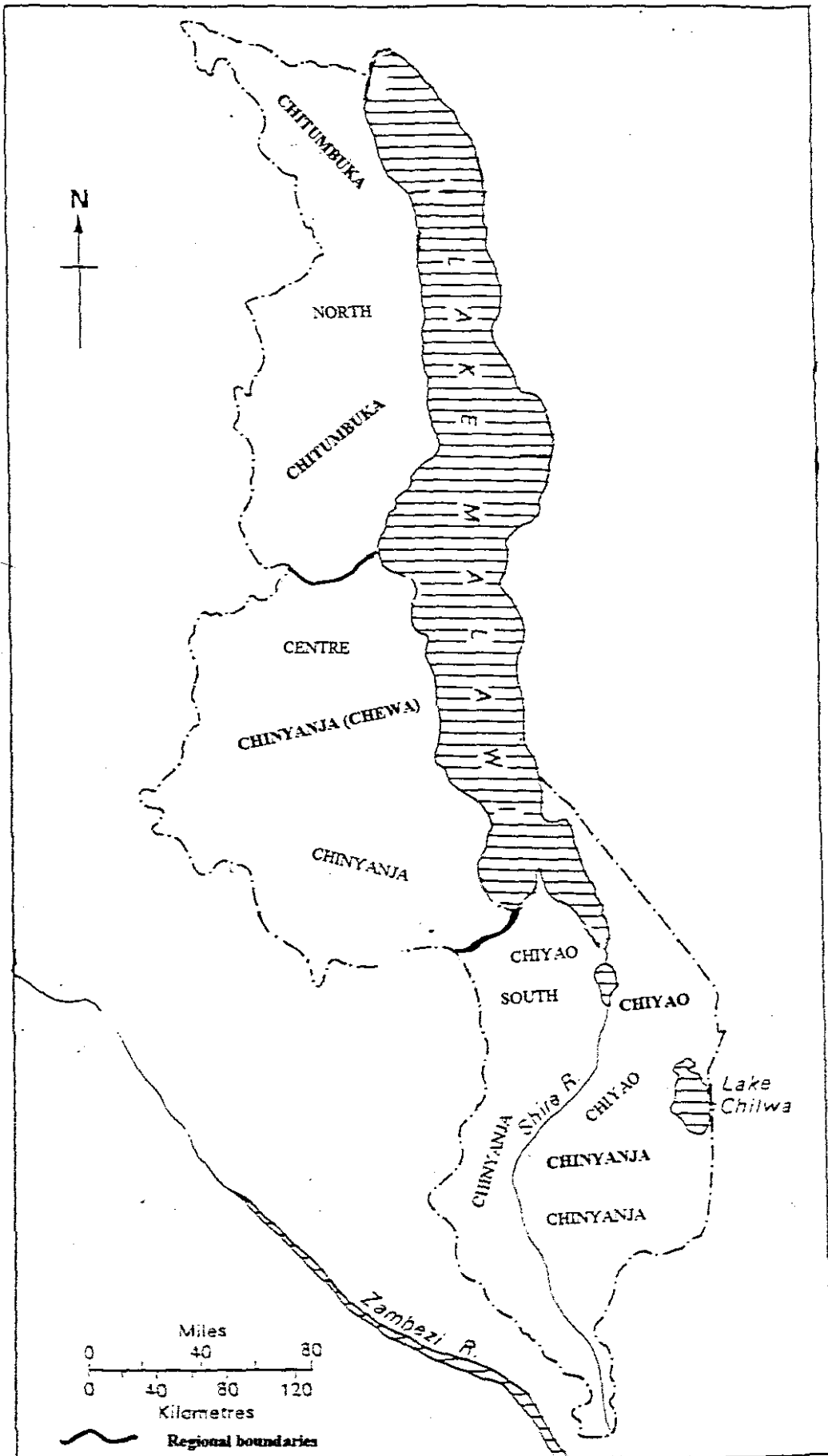
National political concerns need to include those issues and questions that have faced the country since independence. These include the democratic role of languages, the protection of minority languages, the role and place of languages of wider communication, and the role of English. Pedagogical concerns need to focus on the media for classroom instruction: at what point a child can be shifted from one medium to another, the question of how many local languages should be learned and later studied in such a multilingual country, for what purposes learners need to study local languages, apart from English, and so forth. The concerns for social justice relate more to questions of how and by whom language policies are determined and how they are implemented.

We cannot state here in this study how the balance among the three languages suggested here should be achieved. This is for language planners, policy makers and the Malawian population at large to determine. What we attempt to do here is

MAP 2. SHOWING AREAS WHERE INDIGENOUS MALAWIAN LANGUAGES ARE SPOKEN



MAP 3. SHOWING SUGGESTED LANGUAGES OF WIDER COMMUNICATION AND THEIR AREAS/REGIONS



make possible suggestions and their alternatives towards a comprehensible national language and language-in-education policy. (see Map 2 showing the indigenous languages spoken in Malawi and Map 3 showing the suggested three languages of wider communication).

7.10.12 Development of literacy

Literacy can be 'seen as a cline or continuum along which an individual's level can be measured' (Elugbe, 1997:458). In Africa, literacy largely means one's ability to read and write at the level one can be declared a literate. In Malawi the literacy rate is very low (Osman, 1994). Therefore literacy should be promoted to improve the various communities' quality of life and also to integrate communities into the national process by reading about experiences in other regions as such and about national life. Functional literacy therefore becomes a component of social development, where the basis of literacy remains the acquisition of language skills and the widening of an individual's horizon through reading and writing. This will enable the rural people to read about government programmes targeted at them that affect their lives and also be able to make useful contributions towards the development of such programmes.

There is thus a direct correlation between a country's level of literacy and its socio-economic and technological development. In rural areas the promotion of literary programmes in different languages would need to be provided by the efforts, not only of the government and its agencies but also by bodies such as religious organisations and other interested groups to teach literacy in mother tongues, - in major languages but in minority languages as well. Language development is of little value if it is not associated with literacy, whether formal or informal.

A major impetus for the development in the three suggested languages of wider communication is in view of the launching of the free primary education in 1996 as part of the 1994 election promise of the present government. This implies that

all children of school age should read a Malawian language and be able to read and write, preferably their mother tongues first, or the language of their immediate community which they already speak and have proficiency in. More teachers will then need to be trained to meet this demand of learners.

7.10.13 Towards a democratic language policy

In making suggestions for a democratic language policy for both education and national life, Malawi would do well to emulate the case of Nigeria with well over four hundred languages. Out of these, Nigeria has chosen three major languages: Hausa spoken in the north, Igbo spoken in the south east and Yoruba in the south west. We could therefore suggest here that at the primary school level, the medium of instruction from standards one to four be retained in the mother tongue or language of the learners' immediate environment. This is in view of the harmonisation proposed in 7.9.6.4. As long as the learner has sufficient proficiency in the language used in the immediate environment, this will ensure effective learning through that language. It is suggested that English at this level be offered as a subject. From standard five throughout primary education up to tertiary level, English becomes the central medium of instruction. In addition to this, all pupils should study two Malawian languages as subjects. These two would comprise the viable language of their own area, plus one from three of the suggested regional/national languages: Chiyao, Chinyanja and Chitumbuka. From historical experiences it is suggested that no one language be known as a national language.

The situation here is very different from the Tanzanian case, which has kiSwahili as the national language. In that country no one can claim that kiSwahili is their original mother tongue out of more than two hundred languages. In Malawi the three suggested languages could be studied up to university, for example. At primary school level, a Tumbuka learner would study English as the central medium from standard five, then have Chitumbuka and Chiyao as subjects of study. A Yao learner would study English as the medium of instruction from

standard five, and study Chiyao and Chitumbuka as the other regional/national languages. A Nyanja learner would study English as the instructional medium from standard five, and Chinyanja and either Chiyao and Chitumbuka as local languages of study. We could add that in the terminal examination success in a Malawian language, other than the candidate's own, should be a condition for the award of the Malawi School Certificate of Examination (MSCE). This will be after eight years of studying another Malawian language which is not the candidate's mother tongue.

From the proposed policy we see that a future goal of the policy is to foster authentic national unity through language, by creating a situation in which every Malawian learner becomes proficient in at least two of three local languages of wider communication used in the country. This will reflect a genuine multilingual society in which the citizens become proficient and thus empowered to use local languages for wider communication. Elugbe (1997) remarks that recent events in the world show clearly how economic and political power are important issues in national unity than language alone. Events and experience in Somalia, where a monolingual society failed to prevent civil war, make a sharp contrast with that of South Africa, where differences in language, race and religion have eventually been overcome in the interest of economic growth and political stability. In a multilingual society, such as Malawi, and most African states, the language issue has to be carefully balanced as it can be a factor of discontent and tension. If not properly balanced, this can erupt in ethnic-cleansing wars as recent experiences have shown. The suggestion for Malawi is that the three suggested languages of wider communication become official along with English, with minority languages also promoted and fully safeguarded.

7.10.14 A pluralistic alternative

What seems most plausible at the national level in official and mass communication contexts is to conceptualise a variety of alternatives to co-exist in

Malawi's diversity. The diglossic dominance of English and Chichewa that has characterised the Malawi education and national life need not remain a feature anymore because of its exclusive nature. There is need to envision a pluralistic future where different languages in different locales are used. The greatest advantage of such an approach is that it allows for, and indeed protects, the cultural, religious and linguistic diversity that reflects the country. This view should be welcomed by the majority of the population. It should also lead to some considerable resolve of a theme that has been discussed in this study - the fundamental democratic nature in which Malawi's language policies should be formulated and implemented.

7.11 Summary

This chapter has raised issues of language planning, implementation and reforms as a long-term challenge that require precise decisions and not mere gestural, rhetoric pronouncement. The effectiveness of any policy requires the co-ordination of efforts and the power relations in a country. We have also noted that such policies should not favour any sector, essentially on the basis of economic and linguistic dominance over others. Also discussed are issues that hinder rational planning and implementation which are largely based on vested interests of the bourgeoisie and *petit* bourgeoisie. This situation has largely undermined the development of other local languages that this class does not want promoted and used widely. In the process, the ruling elite have become myopic as to the necessity of indigenous languages which constitute an important part of human resources which therefore can be regarded as the bedrock of the country's cultural manifestation. Chibwe (1976) (in Bodomo, 1997:480) observes that,

If the African is to have roots in the way of life into which he is born and which his earliest emotional and social experience have their setting, he must be taught an appreciation of the culture of his people and his native tongue in which that culture finds its fullest expressions. Otherwise our educational system will only succeed in producing men and women who are linguistically and therefore culturally displaced persons.

This would therefore go some way towards preventing the linguistic and cultural derailment of which politicians in Malawi have been guilty. It is argued that policy formulation must tally with policy implementation for the benefit of all; it should not only be for cultural development and identity, but also for larger development purposes in both urban and rural life. It is only when mother tongues occupy an important place in both the education system and in national life that we can claim to be on the road to a truly modern society. To achieve this we have shown that there is the need for a sound conceptualisation of problems in each given situation and to have a grasp of the educational dynamics on the ground as well as the best ways of addressing these challenges.

Furthermore, we have discussed the need for a more critical dialogue and the development of a pedagogical debate between education authorities, politicians and stakeholders in the civil society. To this end strategic policy thinking and interventionist programmes become appropriate for implementation. In this study the development of teaching and learning materials have been found to be an urgent matter requiring attention to empower those that have been hitherto disadvantaged. This, it is hoped, would go towards a fairer and more effective language policy both in education and in the world outside the classroom.

Finally, for a more effective and inclusive policy from which all can benefit, we have suggested a move towards harmonisation which emphasises a more pragmatic view to the choice and use of languages and their dialects. It deplores the conservative view of their being 'pure' languages and 'correct' ones. These views have negative implications for harmonisation. What is hoped for is a change in the horizontal medium as shown by the suggested three languages, each for one of the three regions - languages chosen for their common historical and linguistic features. In time this would lead to a common dialect for regional/national use in wider communication. The Labovian notion of all dialects being of equal status is held here. This is for a common language that considers all lexical differences in dealing with a particular language as synonymous. The idea is thus to rally all linguists and concerned language boards for the promotion of harmonisation.

The fruits from this would be good from a cost effective viewpoint as this will reduce the use of more than eight languages to only three, along with English. This would enable each learner to initially learn through a regional language, and then through English and study another language. This should ensure genuine national integration.

Chapter Eight

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

8.0 Introduction

The first part summarises some of the pertinent findings arising from the study and draws conclusions from them. The second part makes recommendations for future research in the area of study.

8.1 Findings from respondents' statements

The study has shown that the bulk of the respondents favour the inclusion of indigenous languages for use in the mass media, particularly on the radio and in print media. Respondents' statements also indicated accommodating attitudes towards speakers of other local languages and their languages. Only few elements showed evidence of linguacentrism, which indicated fears of the loss of their previous dominant language in national life.

Both learners and parents showed a strong desire for the 'straight for English' policy as an instructional language from standard one and opted for their mother tongues as subjects of study only. However, they strongly called for the inclusion of mother tongues on the radio and in print media for both communication and socio-cultural identity.

What has clearly emerged is that English is largely viewed in instrumental terms. It seems learners need it in order to pass examinations. It has not occurred to both parents and learners, particularly, to consider it for communication purposes. This is only considered secondary. As a result teachers focus more on enabling learners to pass the subject in examinations than on communication in activities outside the classroom. Language areas such as the use of modal verbs, for example, which are largely useful in speech, are not covered. The result is that learners' usage shows deficiency in these areas when they leave school and join the world of real communication. The conclusion to be

drawn from this is that both parents and learners do not want to be educated through their mother tongues because the mother tongue has no cachet in the broader economic-political context.

Ethnolinguistic groups which had been excluded under the Banda rule expressed their passionate desire and yearned for the inclusion of their languages for use on the radio. This was for communication, sociocultural identity, and a sense of national belonging: after a long time, their languages should also be used as media for communication at the national level.

8.2 Language policy and democracy

One of the issues emerging from this study is that the hegemony of English and one local language is considered as an unhealthy model of society, where a small elite of English- and Chinyanja-speaking people controls policy-making organs, while the majority remain excluded. What we notice here is the key role that a language or languages can play in creating balances that include the masses in the linguistic life of the nation - actively participating in some measure of social, economic and political benefits for their societies. This means that language policies should attempt and be interpreted within a framework that emphasises power and competing interests (Tollefson, 1981, 1986). In more specific terms policy should be seen within the context of its role of serving the interest of state and the various linguistic groups that it dominates or has within its structure.

Since language policy is seen as a state function, the various language groups that are excluded from the institutions set by the state power will likely view such policies as a threat to their very existence. This is a threat to their socio-economic and political advancement as there are direct relationships between language policy, the social organisation and political power. The restriction of some languages into ethnic bondage or to particular domains is to legitimise the domination of specific language groups, while institutionalising the marginal status of populations who speak minority (and therefore excluded) languages. Thus, the struggle over language rights in itself constitutes an effort

to disregard minority groups, and this might lead to an unhealthy relationships with the state.

The conclusion the we would make is that it is possible that while language planning is viewed as reflecting relationships of power, it can also be used for the exclusion of many and reflect the interests of only those who dominate. If individuals are not allowed to use their own language in the workplace, for example, they are alienated, not only from their workplace, but also from themselves. In that sense, language policies that do not allow individuals to use their own languages at work are 'unnatural, anti-human and anti-cultural' (Tollefson, 1981:201). The monolingual or bilingual ideology as practised in Malawi in the workplace must be understood within the context of power and domination. Policies that contribute to the hegemony of particular languages are a result of the predominance of undemocratic structures established by the status quo, where linguistic diversity should be the norm, not only for minorities but for the entire commitment at a macro-level where all are included in policy decision-making.

A democratic commitment translates into the use of mother tongues both at work and in school as a fundamental human right, not just the use of a mother tongue as an expression of ethnicity. Commitment to democracy therefore means a commitment to the struggle for language rights.

8.3 Implementation failure

This study has revealed that there are conservatives who still view the predominance of Chinyanja as having the symbolic status of a national language. The concomitant approach at the level of practice and implementation is a bifocal model of language usage with a strong diglossic dimension. These conservatives still feel that Chinyanja should dominate at the local level in mass communication and in a number of domains, and that English should keep its previous status in the domain of higher academic education, in documentation, in diplomacy and in international communication. The downgrading of the use of the rest of the local languages to token ten-minute news broadcasts on the

national radio reduces them to little significance compared to the socio-economic development they are supposed to play in the general life of the populace.

The study has shown that there is the absence of a pluralistic model in practice. There is therefore a mismatch between theory and practice as there is no accessibility of language resources for the socio-economic and general upliftment of all citizens. At the national level, the maintenance of one local language for use only for its symbolism or homogeneity becomes a utopia in an extremely multi-ethnic and multi-cultural society. It becomes difficult therefore to see how monolingualism-cum-multilingualism can be attained (Blommaert,1997). How this idea of a single national language became pervasive in many post-colonial African states is difficult to fathom as such a project was doomed to fail. Such ideas can only have been inspired by political-ideological motives rather than by the outcome of rational and scientific exercises; as Bamgbose (1994:36) observes, it seems that we are obsessed with the number 'one', all in the name of national building which has never been realised. Therefore, the suggestions for the improvement of the current language situation is well-considered for a just social engineering. It is the outcome of such political-ideological options that continually clash.

This linguistic behaviour of the ruling elite has now created tension and some form of antagonism among speakers of different languages towards Chichewa or Chinyanja and its culture. Mere observation has shown that it has not been 'uncommon among non-Chewa speakers to speak the language deliberately badly, trivialise its cultural traditions, or downplay its importance in schools' (Chirwa,1994: 107). The attitude still persists because the policies have not changed.

The conclusion we can make is that Malawi has to come to terms with its multilingual nature and recognise the language problems it faces. We have examined the country's policy pronouncements and the overwhelming conclusion seems to be that policies remain unclear, incoherent and fragmented. There are a number of loopholes ranging from the political-ideological conflict to a lack of implementation even of what is already there. This is largely the result of a lack of political will and commitment from the

government, as well as from the apparent language agenda harboured by the ruling elite to maintain the status quo for its personal interests. The lack of commitment does seem to be the result of fear for equity for those in whom power resides, in that their power will be subsequently eroded and undermined if the masses are empowered linguistically, and thus come to attain some measure of knowledge and improve themselves. They would rather maintain linguistic conservatism than promote linguistic pragmatism.

The authorities have employed a Western language, English, in a prominent position because the language is associated with 'modernity' and because the ruling elite believe that linguistic multilingualism is a feature of backward and undeveloped states. The English language is also used as a medium through which scientific and technological knowledge must swiftly and efficiently be propagated and investments attracted. In short, the imported language has become the language of power and influence. It has become the unmarked case just as the standard variety is the 'unmarked' version in conventional ideology (Harlech-Jones, 1998). The lack of an authentic policy only indicates a language agenda dictated by politicians through bodies under the direct control of the state such as the formal education system, the civil service and the state-controlled media, the Malawi Broadcasting Corporation (MBC), and *The Nation*, a daily newspaper owned by the deputy president of the ruling United Democratic government which is sympathetic to government views.

As a result of the entrenched regionalistic, ethnic practices and the deprivation of linguistic empowerment and equity to improve people's lives, there can be no equality where the government has created inequality. This can only come about if there is visible evidence to redress the linguistic practice at different levels to improve the socio-economic and thus the political situation for all. Some could argue therefore that the bifocal model has played a reactionary role vis-à-vis the indigenous languages, where the status of English has been an obstacle to the extent to which the majority could contribute to the development efforts of the country. We can only hope that the mandate by the government to let the Centre for Language Studies formulate a new policy will lead to 'a

great day' and not to another resemblance to the policies before. W.B. Yeats (1967) may be evoked to capture our hopes and fears :

Hurrah for evolution and more cannon shot!
A beggar upon horseback lashes a beggar upon trot.
Hurray for evolution and cannon come again
The beggars have changed places, but the lash goes on.

'The Great Day' (W. B. Yeats).

What we are looking forward to is a new vision with carefully thought-through policies and not where 'the lash goes on' as the situation obtains now. Good policy development is a crucial factor for the attainment of the ideals of the nation state where linguistic rights and practicality are seen as mutually interacting concepts.

The Malawi situation would thus do well to emulate the South African Constitution by introducing the concept of sociological status. In this model, it would be required to use viable languages in public life, which could take 'into account usage, practicality, expense, regional circumstances and the balance of the needs and preferences of the population as a whole or in the province concerned' (South African Constitution, 1996: 06). If this emulation would be translated into practice, it would give citizens access to shared social, economic and political life and thus diminish the frequent abuse of power through language practice as all languages need development and imaginative space.

8.4 Leadership failure

It is pertinent to observe that situations in Africa seem to repeat themselves, as very few lessons seem to be learnt. The report of a survey commissioned for UNESCO-OAU conference held in November, 1994, concludes thus:

Even if states, international and regional organisations devote substantial human and financial resources, without doubt African leaders have not yet become sufficiently conscious of what is fundamentally at issue in the promotion of African languages and the importance of these in the general development of the

country. Such an awareness is the *sine qua non* condition for the take-off of an effective language policy.

(Twahirwa, 1994:12)

In Malawi, like elsewhere in Africa, there seems to be little political will to effect even the policies that have been made by those in decision-making positions who are politicians themselves. It also seems the case that language problems confronting governments are not urgent, and hence solutions to them could wait indefinitely. Language problems in Africa are comprised of avoidance, vagueness, arbitrariness, fluctuation and declaration without implementation (Bangbose,1991:06). Apart from generating the will power, the leadership could also take note from the above that 'multilingualism is the African lingua franca' (Desai,1995:29). Politicians and language planners therefore need to strive to work toward this range of nation-wide interactions to arrive at authentic multilingual policies as the norm. We cannot capture the African reality on the basis of Western notions of discrete languages and a single dominant mother tongue. There is therefore the need for a radical change leading to the promotion and elaboration of indigenous languages, and harness our languages into the nation-building process in ways that are democratic and not divisive. This does not, however, mean bidding farewell to English 'but reducing English to equality' where it becomes a complementary language. This would be converting English into a popular rather than an elite lingua franca (Alexander, 1994, in Bhanot, 1994:38).

The top-down approach therefore fails in a multilingual setting as shown in this study and is far from what is recommended by scholars who concern themselves with policy-making and implementation. Evaluation and genuine revision should be an intrinsic part of the process of implementation (Hambleton,1983, Hyder,1984). Policies should be flexible as they are analogous to scientific hypothesis, which means that certain information about environment is changing all the time, as is the scientific or academic knowledge that is relevant to a theory. This lack of inclusive policies renders the uneducated passive, helpless, confused and profoundly suspicious of government

(Mansour,1980). A similar situation is Achebe's analogy, shortly after Nigeria's independence, an analysis that fittingly captures the current Malawian situation:

We had all been in the rain together until yesterday. Then a handful of us -- had scrambled for one shelter the former rulers had left and from within they had sought to persuade the rest through numerous loudspeakers, that the first struggle had been won and that the next phase-- the extension of our house-- was even more important and called for new and original tactics; it required that all arguments cease and that the whole people speak with one voice and that any more dissent and argument outside the door of the shelter would subvert and bring down the whole house.

(Achebe, 1966, *A Man of the People*).

This amusing analogy befits many conditions in post-colonial Africa today, with Malawi a case in point. The modalities of language and 'voice' as in Mansour's terms have only resulted in discouraging the citizenry from active co-operation and participation in language matters because of lack of engagement for the benefit of the nation.

There has to be some 'piecemeal engineering' to language matters and not some vague, dogmatic utopianism that ignores the greatest and most urgent evils of society, in the name of searching for the ultimate good that amounts only to undemocratic measures (Popper,1966). The piecemeal approach faces current problems whereas utopian methods focus on some ideal while protecting vested power interests. Concepts of national unity, national integration and modernisation have been fronted as masks, while the ruling elite take a conservative stance to pressing language policy issues.

In the face of all this, what is required is mutual respect for all languages and their ethnic groups, with provisions for equitable and meaningful participation in the political process and in the management of the affairs of the state. This may hold the key to national identity (Chomsky, 1992). This entails the preservation of and celebration of linguistics and cultural pluralism which characterise Malawi and other countries in most of Africa.

This study thus concludes that the formulation of language policies is a complex and contested exercise. This is not just because of the interests involved, but because it is set in a matrix of equally, if not, more complex socio-economic policies where individuals hold varying interests. Language planning should therefore focus closely on these domains and contexts of language use which will be meaningful to the majority and not to a select few (Harlech-Jones, 1994). A cautious statecraft and the continued search for effective alternative policies is desired for its bearing on the unresolved debate about the national development strategy.

From the experience of the language debate in Namibia, it is clear that unity depends on a lot more than mere language policy: 'it depends at least on economic advancement and on even distribution of wealth, on an even-handed justice, on a responsible political system, and on equitable access to the facilities provided by the state.' (Harlech-Jones, 1998:17). If this situation does not exist the language of power, English, will be of little avail in achieving the goal of national unity. The construct of national unity, therefore, and with it, the assumptions about its relationships with the overall language policy, needs to be reviewed for comprehensibility to all. If language policy is left to politicians and guided by macro-level theorising, the indigenous languages will only continue to suffer.

Language policy, therefore, for all its pretensions at encouraging national unity, will do nothing to abate people's frustrations. It will only make itself become a focus for resentment.

Finally, it could be preferable if policy decision-makers would begin to think in terms of 'good marriages' in language-in-education policies and in national language policies, in which no one loses. This should be a situation where all partners play their roles according to their natures, their capacities, and by agreement; and in which all participants contribute towards enhanced success (Harlech-Jones, 1998:22). Ethnic unity and nationhood can still be attained if we sincerely adopt the democratic concept of unity in diversity, where there should be some linguistic restructuring in which the ideology or

myth of bilingualism or diglossia only is not desirable. This is for social, economic or political access and development. One hopes, therefore, that the language-in-education policy and the national language policy may yet prove to have a significant contribution to make towards the achievement of a more just, humane and democratic Malawi.

8.5 Recommendations for future research

- (1) The question of language planning and policy formulation is a daunting task, multifaceted and an interdisciplinary exercise.
- (2) We cannot therefore claim that this singular study suffices towards such efforts.

To bring this study to an end, therefore, we make a few suggestions for further research related to this study to be carried out. The suggestions made here would need to be investigated in order to further improve the criteria for policy formulation to accommodate all sectors of society. Such research would immensely contribute to the development of a sound language education policy and a national language policy for Malawi. In the following lines suggestions are made toward further research related to the area of study. The macro-aspects of most educational and national policies reflect the interests of a particular group or community (Eastman,1990).

More research will show whether the Malawian language policy in place reflects a bottom-up and top-down design or still inherently reflects a top-down approach only. This is important in the review and reformulation of more comprehensive policies to accommodate all citizens. Related to this, a broader investigation ought to be conducted on language attitudes in schools, the work place and in rural areas with the general public. This would be designed to establish what languages exactly the different sectors of society prefer to be used in different domains and contexts. Such interactional studies will go some way towards the designing of policies that take into account the different views and therefore the interests of the people at large, as these will show patterns of language use at different levels.

The current situation in Malawi suggests a shift toward the recognition of the role of cultural preservation as evidenced by the elevation of six indigenous languages to the official status. This is in pursuit of national identity, but obviously the government lacks the will to implement it. This means that the situation remains rhetoric only. The practice reflects political in-expediency carried over from the previous regime; there is no evidence of actual implementation of the reviewed language policy of 1996. In effect, language policies just as censorship policies, have not changed (Mchombo, forthcoming). We would therefore suggest that the Centre for Language Studies, previously the Chichewa National Board, the government and other agencies, should try to investigate to what extent national resources can be expended to sustain programmes that will develop other languages beyond the token ten-minute news broadcasts.

8.6 Recommended Surveys

In schools, there was a directive in 1996 to use the elevated six local languages as instructional media in early education. This has not taken off as there are no guiding principles.

8.6.1 Parents' and learners' attitudes

There is the need for a massive survey to be carried out before this can be implemented to find out parents' and learners' attitudes nationally towards languages of instruction. This would give an indication of what the people want - whether instruction should be given monolingually, bilingually or multilingually. In line with this, teachers should also be part of the research, in which they should be asked about their choices and perceptions to direct the trend of the research. The results of such attitudes survey might reveal something significant as circumstances are always changing. Policy formulations will therefore have to adjust as well and reflect societal demands and interest. Research in this area should be used as a tool to

indicate and, where appropriate, modify perceptions such as the wrongly-held view that 'learning through English equals education.'

8.6.2 Bilingualism and Multilingualism

Related to this is a need to research on bilingualism and multilingualism. We have observed in this study that Malawi, like many African states, is a multilingual country, where, in Desai's (1995) terms, 'multilingualism is the lingua franca' or norm. It is crucial therefore to investigate how many languages are taught in schools. Objectives such as national unification shall remain dreams only if multilingualism is not reflected in the languages taught in schools and used in the national life. Research in this area would thus be useful toward policy formulation in the language-in-education policy as well as in the national language policy.

8.6.3 Home language medium versus English medium

One other area that needs to be investigated is a comparison between the competencies of learners who study or learn through their home languages and those who study or learn through the medium of English. This has to be well-designed so that all variables, apart from the languages of teaching and learning, are constant. Again, results from such a research would be a valuable input in the formulation of the language education policy.

8.6.4 Teachers' competence and expertise

In line with this, research needs to be undertaken to develop teachers' capabilities or expertise. This is urgent in Malawi, in view of the huge increase in the number of schools at primary level as a result of the free education policy. This has meant that large numbers of untrained 'pupil-teachers' have been employed. Unless something is done to improve the quality of teachers and subsequently the quality of education, the situation might deteriorate and this would be disastrous for the country.

8.6.5 Teaching and learning materials

Along with this is an investigation into the development of appropriate teaching and learning materials in indigenous languages and also in other learning resources such as libraries. This would be to find out what resources are available and unavailable nationally.

8.6.6 Effective channels on policy matters

The Ministry of Education and Culture also needs to investigate effective communication channels on policy matters between schools and parents. This will encourage effective learning. It requires the co-operation and co-ordinated efforts of both teachers and parents. The communication instruments seem to be dysfunctional and therefore ineffective. There should be some collaboration between the Ministry, schools and parents.

8.6.7 The development of indigenous languages

The lack of the development of indigenous languages has formed a major part of discussion in this study. It would be beneficial if research would be undertaken to raise these local languages out of the doldrums and self-doubt in peoples' minds. This would be possible if research would focus on the promotion and enhancement of their use as media in early education and for use in publications, which are at present far less than those published in English by Malawians, and also for use in non-print and print media. Their prominence should also be given in the business world as viable languages. A considerable number of transactions are carried out in local languages, in local banks, other financial institutions and in local markets.

8.6.8 The development of non-African languages

In addition, there is the need in educational contexts to investigate the teaching and learning of non-African languages of relevance to the country as no one country is an island. Malawi needs to relate with other countries. For

example, there are other languages of socio-economic relevance to Malawi, such as French, Portuguese and German. French is already a teaching subject in schools and with the establishment of the French Cultural Centre in Blantyre, French studies and culture are fairly well-exposed in Malawi. Research into these languages, apart from the cultural exchange programmes with regard to cultural diffusion aspects, is necessitated by the increased diplomatic and particularly trade contacts between Malawi and France, Mozambique, Portugal and Germany. Mozambique is Malawi's neighbour where Portuguese is the official language. Communication would be the focal point of research here with regard to bilateral cooperation in diplomatic and trade links. Research into German would be of interest again for trade and tourism purposes but also as a way to sustain the massive increasing foreign aid that Malawi receives from Germany. Research would therefore focus on transactional communication between and among these countries and their languages.

8.6.9 Harmonisation of dialects of languages

The Centre for Language Studies has been mandated to lead in the study of language - in particular, the documentation of local languages - and to formulate the country's language policy. More research would be undertaken towards the harmonisation of common languages as suggested in this study. This would aim at minimising costs in the production of teaching and learning materials, training of language teachers and identifying viable local languages for use in classroom instruction and in non-print as well as in print media for mass communication.

8.6.9.1 Classroom-based research on theoretical issues.

With regard to educational contexts, there is a need also to research in theoretical issues in language learning and language teaching as to what entails learning or teaching in both first and second language contexts. This would be classroom-based research toward language

development which would contribute toward improving teaching and learning in general. It is also observed that science and technology are largely English-based. This has language implications in each of these disciplines. Research would therefore be carried out to empower and conscientise subject teachers about language issues, which would include unpacking concepts and terminologies used in these content subjects, in order that learners can understand them. This is because the extent to which language is bound up with other factors makes it difficult to disentangle language from the subjects of which it is the vehicle. This is particularly important in second language learning and teaching contexts. It is suggested that such research would be collaborative in nature between, say, the Centre for Language Studies and the Ministry of Education and Culture. Such research, where possible, would address national needs.

8.6.9.2 Mobility and diversity of language use in schools and society at large.

It is also noticeable that social demographics are changing and these changes affect schooling as well as the use of languages in different areas for employees who are transferred from one region to another, where different languages are used. It is therefore necessary to investigate the nature and extent of this diversity in the Malawian society at large and in its schools. This would enable the Centre for Language Studies and the Ministry of Education and Culture, for example, to strategise how viable harmonised languages can be developed and incorporated into policy formulation. In educational contexts, this would be one way in which the Ministry can cope with multilingual classrooms in urban centres particularly in view of people's mobility. Outside the classroom, this would ensure how the public would be educated to know languages of wider communication in the workplace, business and in social interactions. The responses from such research from schools and the public toward

diversity would need to be documented for both replication and good practice and the identity contexts in which pre-emptive action would be taken (Department of Education, NCCRD, 2000).

8.6.9.3 Analytical and action-based research.

There is also the need for analytical research which would increase the understanding of how language relates to learning in different contexts. This calls for action-based research to support the formulation of the language education policy and provide models of using different languages in the classroom. This research would also focus on how the common phenomenon of code-switching can be used effectively for utilising the human and physical resources in and outside classroom contexts. In the broader perspective, analytic research would be on issues related, for example, to socio-economic and political views of the public and the actual use of languages in these contexts, regionally and nationally.

Finally, the research programmes suggested here should be carried out by a large research cohort. This also calls for a consistent dialogue leading to a national research agenda, preferably directed by the Centre for Language Studies. Such research, again, should be collaborative and interactive, following top-down and bottom-up approaches. Hopefully, a workable and acceptable language policy will emerge for Malawian education and national life.

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Appendix

FIGURE 1 : PARTIAL LINGUISTIC PROFILE OF MALAWI

FUNCTION	LANGUAGE	ATTRIBUTES²	NOTES
Official	English	1,2	Inherited from the British colonial government.
Nationalist	Chichewa	1,2,,3,4,(5),6	Originally known as Chinyanja but later in 1968 designated as Chichewa and declared Malawi's national language. It replaced Chitumbuka on media broadcasts.
Group	Chichewa	1,2	Spoken by Chewa ethnic group.
	Chilomwe	(1),(2)	Lomwe ethnic group
	Chiyao	1,2	Yao ethnic group.
	Chitumbuka	1,2	Tumbuka ethnic group
	Chisena	1,2	Sena ethnic group
	Chikhokhola	1,2	Spoken in southern Malawi
	Chitonga	1,2	Tonga ethnic group
	Chingoni	(2) ³	Ngoni ethnic group. This language is almost dead; it is only used for ceremonial purposes such as traditional dances wedding ceremonies, installation of Ngoni chiefs e.t.c.
	Chinkhonde	1,2	Nkhonde ethnic group.
Chilambya	1,2	Spoken in northern Malawi .	

² See the appendix for an explanation of the attributes.

³ The Parenthesis shows that the attribute is not very strong for that group of speakers.

	Chisukwa	1,2	Sukwa ethnic group
	Chiswahili	(2)	No particular ethnic group. Spoken mostly by lake shore people.
	English	1,2	Mostly by British settlers and other English speaking expatriates.
	Greek	1,2	Greek settlers.
	Languages the Indian subcontinent	1,2	Malawi has a substantial population of Asians particularly from India and Pakistan.
Education-Lower Primary school.	Chichewa	1,2,3	Language of instruction from standard 1 through 4.
Education -Upper Primary to university.	English	1,2,3	Language of instruction from standard 5 through the University.
School subject	Chichewa	1	Taught in standard 1 through the University. It's compulsory in the primary school through junior secondary school. After that it's optional.
	English	1	Taught in standard 1 through the University. It's compulsory throughout until after freshman year.
	French	1	Taught in a few secondary Schools and at University of Malawi.
	Latin	1	Taught in some secondary schools, including the Kamuzu Academy, and in the University.

	Greek	1	Taught at Kamuzu Academy only.
Religious	Esoteric varieties of group languages	1	Used only by the initiated and special cult officials. ⁴
	All group languages	1	Mixed ethnic group members may use either Chichewa or English for services. If a group is ethnically homogenous, it may use it's ethnic language.
	Latin	1	For special catholic services.
	Arabic	1	Muslims use it for prayers.

⁴ An example of this type of language is the nantongwe language. Nantongwe is a cult of spirit possession among the Longwe. The language is understood by those who have suffered from nantongwe and by nobody else (see White 1987).

Appendix

Table 4 : Language Functions and Attributes

FUNCTIONS	SOCIOLINGUISTIC ATTRIBUTES REQUIRED
Official	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Sufficient standardisation2. Known by a cadre of education citizens
Nationalist	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Symbols of national identity for a significant proportion of the population2. Widely used for some everyday purposes3. Widely and fluently spoken within the country4. No major alternative nationalist languages in the country5. Acceptable as a symbol of authenticity6. Link with the 'glorious' past
Group	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Used by all members in ordinary conversation2. Unifying and separatist device
Educational (level specified)	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Understood by 'some' learners2. Sufficient teaching resources3. Sufficient standardisation
Wider communication	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. 'Learnable' as a second language
International	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. (On the list of potential international languages)
School subject	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Standardisation equals or exceeds that of the language of the learners
Religious	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. (Classical)

Source: Fasold, 1984:77.

LANGUAGE ATTITUDES, PREFERENCES AND USAGE

PUPULS'/LEARNERS' QUESTIONNAIRE

THIS QUESTIONNAIRE IS INTENDED TO FIND OUT WHAT YOU FEEL ABOUT THE LANGUAGES(S) OF THE CLASSROOM INSTRUCTION OF USE AT HOME, IN SOCIALISATION AND IN NATIONAL LIFE. YOU ARE NOT REQUIRED TO PUT YOUR NAME ON THIS DOCUMENT.

1. What is your age? _____ Sex _____
2. What is your first language that you first speak or spoke? _____ -
3. Do you live in an urban or rural area?

e.g. Urban: Blantyre, Lilongwe, Mzuzu.

Rural : Chitipa, Mchinji Mwanza

4. What is was your language of instruction from standard 1 to standard 4?

5. At which level do you teachers mostly use the mother tongue for teaching?

6. At which level do your teachers mostly use the second language?

Which second language do they use? _____

7. Which language do you prefer to be taught in? _____
Why _____

8. Are you satisfied with your proficiency/competence in your mother tongue?

9. Are you satisfied with your proficiency/competence in your second language?

10. Which standard are you in? _____

11. Which language do you use for talking to your teacher(s)?

12. Which language do you use for talking to your father and mother?

Father _____

Mother _____

13. Which language do you use for talking to your friends in the classroom?

14. Which language do you use for playing with your friends outside the classroom?

14. Which language(s) do you use mostly in your family at home? _____

15. Which language do you usually listen to the radio? _____

Why this language? _____

16. Which language do you use at the post office or hospital when talking to a post office officer, doctor or nurse? _____

17. Which language do you mostly use for writing to your friends? _____

Why this language? _____

18. Which language do you mostly use in your leisure reading? _____

Why? _____

19. Which language do you use in church or at the mosque? _____

20. Do you have any problem(s) in the language used in teaching content subjects e.g. e.g. Mathematics, Geography, Science etc? _____

20. Would you prefer to be taught in a local language through out your education career?

Yes _____ No _____ If yes, why? _____

If no, why not _____

21. Which Malawian language would you prefer to be mostly used on the radio and TV?

Give a reason or reasons for your answer _____

22. Do you think Malawi should have a local/indigenous language(s) for documentation in courts, parliament, commerce, industry and in technological information?

Explain _____

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR RESPONSES AND THE TIME YOU SPARED TO ANSWER THE QUESTIONS ABOVE.

LANGUAGE ATTITUDES, PREFERENCES AND USAGE.

TEACHERS' QUESTIONNAIRE

THIS QUESTIONNAIRE IS INTENDED TO FINDOUT WHAT YOU FEEL ABOUT THE CLASSROOM LANGUAGES OF INSTRUCTION, THOSE TAUGHT AS SUBJECTS, OF USE AT WORK AND IN NATIONAL LIFE. YOU ARE NOT REQUIRED TO PUT YOUR NAME ON THIS DOCUMENT.

1. What is the composition of your class(es) in terms of the learners' mother tongue background?

2. Which classes do you teach? _____

3. How would you assess the learners' ability range in their mother tongue(s) as languages of instruction? _____

4. What is their ability range in the second language of instruction?

5. What would you describe as the learners' advantage of their language background in your class(es)? _____

6. What would you describe as the learners' disadvantage of their language background in your class(es)? _____

7. a. What is your own background in terms of training in language teaching?

b. Experience _____

c. Interest in language teaching? _____

8. Have you undergone any training in teaching language(s)?

If any, state the course completed _____

9. What is the highest level of teaching language class(es)? _____

10. Do you feel you are able to teach in one, two or more languages? Explain _____

11. What do you think are the needs related to language teaching? _____

12. What do you know of the government's related language policy in education? _____

13. Do you have any special language support programme for teachers such as in-service training? _____

When did you last attend one? _____

14. The new language-in-education policy unveiled in 1996 states that learners be taught in their mother tongues in initial education. In your view, do you think the language policy is being implemented? Explain _____

15. Are there any texts and other teaching and learning materials in the additional official local languages? _____

16. How do they compare with the other books in English language, literature and those in Chichewa, for example? _____

17. Do you have any interaction with the community that your school has with its community? _____

18. If yes, what bearing does it have on language issues? _____

18. Do you teach content subjects? _____

19. If yes, at what level? _____

20. If so, do you pay attention to the language needed to express the content?

Explain _____

21. Comment on the progress or problems you see related to teaching and learning any of the languages in your school. _____

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR RESPONSES AND THE TIME YOU SPARED TO ANSWER THE ABOVE QUESTIONS.

**LANGUAGE ATTITUDES, PREFERENCES AND USAGE; FOR
PARENTS/WORKERS etc.**

THIS QUESTIONNAIRE IS INTENDED TO FIND OUT WHAT YOU FEEL ABOUT THE LANGUAGE(S) OF CLASSROOM INSTRUCTION, OF USE AT WORK AND IN NATIONAL LIFE. YOU ARE NOT REQUIRED TO PUT YOUR NAME ON THIS DOCUMENT.

1. What is your age-----Sex-----Highest level of education?-----

2. Tick whether you are a parent/worker, pupil or student.

Parent	Worker	Other

3. What is the first language that you speak or spoke ?
(If you learnt more than one language simultaneously, write both / all the languages).

4. Tick in the appropriate box where you spend / spent most of your early years up to now. If you live / lived more or less the same amount of time in more than one situation, tick more than one.

Urban: e.g: Blantyre, Lilongwe, Mzuzu.

Rural: e.g: Rumphu, Chikwawa, Mchinji.

Rural	Urban

5. What is / was the language of instruction in your schooling from std 1 to std 4 ?

And from Std 5 to 8?-----

6. How proficient in the language of instruction are / were most of the teachers ?

Tick the appropriate box.

Std 1-4	Very fluent	Some problems	Poor
Std 5- 8	Very fluent	Some problems	Poor
Forms 1-2	Very fluent	Some problems	Poor
Forms 3-4	Very fluent	Some problems	Poor
Tertiary education	Very fluent	Fairly fluent	Poor

7. At which level of your schooling do you think your teachers/ instructors/ teachers used the vernacular more, if any. State the class / form etc.

8. At which level do you think they use/used English only as the language of instruction ?

9. Indicate what English means to you by ticking one or more of the following boxes. English is the language of :

--	--

Higher education	
International contact	
National Unity	
The work place	
Socialisation	
Public affairs	
Indoctrination	
Corruption	

10. If none of the above sums up what English means to you, add another label here.

11. What language(s) of instruction would you like to be used in early primary education up to standard 8?

12. What language(s) would you like to be used for instruction in content subjects e.g. Biology, Math, Geography, etc in secondary school education?

13. And what language(s) of instruction would you like to be used in tertiary education e.g. in technical colleges, university, etc?

14. What reason would you have for your choice in numbers 12 and 13?

If you have another choice write it here.

15. Which language or languages would you like to be used officially in the democratic Malawi?-----

16. What reason(s) would you have for this choice?

If you have another suggestion write it here.

17. If you had a free choice when would you introduce English as the language of instruction?

Standard 1-4	Standard 5-8	Forms 1-4	at tertiary level	Not at all

If you have another suggestion write it here

18. Which language do you think should be mostly used in the following situations?

Write the language next to the situation. If you think more than one language more or less equally indicate that.

- a. In your family-----
- b. In the work place-----
- c. In your dealings with banks, government offices-----
- d. In shops, supermarkets, pubs etc-----

e. In your place of worship-----

f. In your dealings with providers of legal services, medical care etc-----

19. Suggest the language(s) you would like to be used for mass communication on the radio and TV.

20. What reason do you have for this choice?

21. Is/are there any language(s) you would suggest to be taught in primary/secondary school education for national integration or national unity?

22. What are your reasons for its/their choice?

23. Do you think that Malawi should have a local/indigenous language(s) for documentation in courts, parliament, business, commerce and technological information?

24. If any, state the language(s) and give a plausible reason for your choice.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR RESPONSES AND THE TIME YOU HAVE SPARED TO ANSWER THE QUESTIONS ASKED HERE.