

TRANSLANGUAGED DISCOURSES OF BEMBA AND ENGLISH: THE MOBILITY AND MIXING OF LANGUAGES IN A MULTILINGUAL SPACE

Gabriel Simungala

University of Zambia
gabriel.simungala@unza.zm

Hambaba Jimaima

University of Zambia
h.jimaima@unza.zm

Bronah Katundu Namatama

University of Zambia
mikandubnk@gmail.com

Abstract: Couched within the overarching framework of translanguaging, this paper attempts to show the real-life language practices of social actors away from the dominant narratives of translanguaging in bilingual education. Predicated on the mixing and mobility of languages across time and space, the paper uses casual conversations from two multilingual spaces, a university campus, and a marketplace. Firstly, the paper shows the mixing of the English language and Bemba, a widely spoken indigenous language in Zambia while arguing that the Bemba-English translanguaged discourses provide evidence for the mobility and the disembodiment of language and locality. Secondly, the paper argues that the spread and circulation of Bemba in multiple localities should be seen as the mobility of bits and pieces and/or resources akin to urbanity and hybridity. The paper concludes by bringing into the spotlight the dynamics of the Bemba-English translanguaged discourses in which morphemes as semiotic resources create new lexical items which destabilize expected linguistic norms and boundaries.

Key words: translanguaging, mobility, mixing, Zambia, University of Zambia, Soweto Market

1. Introduction

Drawing on the notion of translanguaging in which language users select and deploy particular language features from a unitary linguistic repertoire to make meaning and negotiate particular communicative contexts (Vogel & García 2017; Simungala et al. 2022a), we use two multilingual contexts of Zambia, the University of Zambia Campus and Soweto market to show, the interaction of Bemba, an indigenous language and the English language, in casual conversations. Essentially, we attempt to show how languages work together in these two multilingual spaces where the population is a mixture of people of different ethnic affiliations from all parts of the country (Katundu 2020). Shifting from the dominant narratives of translanguaging in bilingual education, we show the real-life language practices — translanguaged discourses, comprising the English language and Bemba, a widely spoken indigenous language in Zambia. We argue that the Bemba-English translanguaged discourses provide evidence for mobility and the disembodiment of language and locality. We show that the spread of Bemba should be seen as the mobility of bits and pieces and/or semiotic resources akin to urbanity and hybridity which privilege social actors as active manipulators of their means for meaning-making. Thus, we bring into the spotlight the dynamics of the Bemba-English translanguaged discourses in which morphemes, as semiotic resources, — create new lexical items which destabilize expected linguistic norms and boundaries.

The structure of this paper is such that the upcoming section provides a context for the study by highlighting Zambia's language situation, including the multilingual realities and the regionalization of languages. This will be followed by the methodology and the presentation as well as the discussion of findings. A summary and conclusion will then be provided.

2. Contextualizing the study: Zambia's language situation

Zambia is a Central African country, covering a total area of 752,612 square kilometers with a population of about 19 Million (Central Statistics

Office 2022). Its growing population is distributed across its 10 provinces with the Lusaka province, which houses the Lusaka district, the nation's capital, accounting for the highest percentage. Zambia boasts of about 72 languages and ethnic groups culminating in between 20 to 26 language clusters (Kashoki 1990/1998; Wakumelo 2010; Marten & Kula 2008; Simungala & Jimaima 2022; Simungala et al. 2022b). The presence of multiple and mutually intelligible languages predisposes the country to multilingualism (Jimaima 2016). This multilingual norm entails that social actors speak at least two or more languages in Zambia. Thus, in many parts of Zambia, Marten and Kula (2008) argue that there exists a complex situation of language use, multilingualism, and code-switching, where speakers employ several different languages in different contexts. And the two spaces discussed in the paper will highlight this complexity in a manner apparent.

Of the seventy two languages and ethnic groups, seven have been designated and legislated as regional languages in the 10 provinces of Zambia. This has meant that the seven languages are used as official regional languages in respective provinces, thereby demarcating Zambia into seven linguistic zones (Jimaima & Banda 2021; Banda & Jimaima 2017). Bemba is the regional language for the Copperbelt, Luapula, Northern, and some parts of Muchinga and Central provinces; Nyanja is designated for Lusaka and Eastern provinces while Tonga for the Southern and parts of Central provinces; Lozi for the Western province and Lunda, Kaonde, and Luvale for the North-Western province (Mambwe 2014; Simungala & Jimaima 2021b). The 7 regional languages are used for educational purposes, broadcasting, and limited government functions in the respective provinces/regions alongside the English language, which is the national official language (Banda et al. 2019). The legislation of languages in particular provinces provides a context for the study which attends to notions of mobility and mixing, as well as the productive deployment of a language such as Bemba, away from the provinces where it was legislated.

As will become apparent, the paper leans on Blommaert's (2010) view that human language has changed in the age of globalization: it is

no longer tied to stable and resident communities, it moves across the globe, and it changes in the process. It is our considered view that Bemba goes to show that linguistic enclaves are not a given as the language (like many others) has spread beyond its legislated provinces to all parts of the country and has become the widely spoken indigenous language. The regionalization of languages meant that in a province, say, the Northern province in which Bemba, Mambwe, Namwanga, and Lungu, among many other languages, are found, Bemba was chosen by policymakers as a regional language and subsequently as a medium of instruction arising from the perceived fact that it was familiar language. However, Jimaima (2016) reminds us that the regionalization or zoning of the seven languages was based on the assumption that the said languages were static and bounded in particular homogenous communities and regions. As will be shown, Bemba, which should have been restricted to Muchinga, Northern and Copperbelt provinces has now found its way into Lusaka province and is productively deployed across a range of domains. The Central Statistics Office in their 2020 report acknowledges this fact. Banda et. al (2019) observed that the regionalization of languages was based on classical sociolinguistic notions of boundedness, immobility, and stability, which champion the idea of a community of practice, container societies thriving on homogeneity. Jimaima (2016) refers to Banda and Bellononjengele (2010: 108) who acknowledged the spreading of languages outside of their legislated zones arguing that this “has helped to create a complex relationship between ethnicity, language use, and linguistic grouping” in multilingual Zambia.

The research areas we use in this paper to demonstrate the mobility and mixing of Bemba are inhabited by people from different linguistic backgrounds all because of mobility. Owing to trade and education, people from all walks of life converge in time and space at the Soweto market and the University of Zambia (Katundu 2020; Simungala 2020). In this connection, it is important to relate this understanding to the sociolinguistics of globalization, a paradigmatic shift away from an older linguistic and sociolinguistic tradition in which language was analyzed primarily as a local, resident, and stable complex of signs

attached to an equally local, resident and stable community of speakers (Blommaert 2010; Makoni & Pennycook 2007). By finding Bemba, in a space away from where it was not legislated, mixed with English in translanguaged discourses, our argument is that we must see languages as mobile objects that no longer tied to an “organic” speech community residing in a particular space, but moving around such places on the rhythm of globalizing flows of commodities, people, messages and meanings. (Blommaert 2012)

With the background thus laid then becomes extremely important that when attending to instances of language at a market or in a university in a multilingual context, one ought to account for mobility, unboundedness, and shifting locality of language (Blommaert & Rampton 2011). We are thus informed by Cicourel (1992: 296) who argues that “[i]t is important to locate the analysis of language and social interaction in a wide variety of social activities that are implicitly and explicitly known to the participants and the investigator” (in Blommaert 2014). To this end, as we look at the casual conversations of students and the traders at the market, we will show that language is to be seen as an entity that can be both full as well as truncated and that “the real “language” we have and can deploy in social life: biographically assembled patchworks of functionally distributed communicative resources” (Backus & Blommaert (2012: 28).

3. The notion of translanguaging

In accounting for the mobility of Bemba and the Bemba-English mix in social actors’ communicative repertoires, we turn to the notion of translanguaging. As a recent and relatively new term, translanguaging has been used in line with code-switching/mixing as it refers to multilingual speakers’ naturally shuttling between languages. While code-switching/mixing was more of a conscious effort to switch to a particular code (language) as used in bilingual classrooms, García (2019) observes that the concept of translanguaging has emerged to disrupt the naturalization of languages as codes or entities. Translanguaging can be traced

to Cen Williams who first coined the term in Welsh to refer to pedagogical practices in which English and Welsh were used for different activities and purposes (i.e., reading in one language, writing in another). Baker (2001) then translated the term into English as translanguaging. Thus, translanguaging started as a pedagogical practice, where the language mode of input and output in Welsh bilingual classrooms was deliberately switched (Williams 2002). Owing to its origin, translanguaging has often been applied to the analysis of classroom interaction and indeed bilingual education. For instance, García (2011) noted that students used translanguaging to mediate understanding, construct meaning within themselves, include and exclude others, and demonstrate knowledge, among other meta-functions.

Taking an expanded approach, one that goes beyond pedagogic spaces, Otheguy et al. (2015) advances that translanguaging is the deployment of a speaker's full linguistic repertoire without regard for watchful adherence to the socially and politically defined boundaries of named (and usually national and state) languages. In this way, as we will show, the productive use of Bemba (as it is mixed with English) in a Nyanja legislated and designated space, heightens the practicality of translanguaging. Individual preferences are at the centre of language use since actors cannot be compelled to use Nyanja but rather, they deploy whatever is in their repertoire. For Vogel & García (2017), translanguaging is a theoretical lens that offers a different view of bilingualism and multilingualism as it posits that rather than possessing two or more autonomous language systems, as has been traditionally thought, all users of language, select and deploy particular features from a unitary linguistic repertoire to make meaning and to negotiate particular communicative contexts. The particular communicative events that Vogel & García refer to, include contexts for casual conversations we have drawn upon. García & Wei (2014: 40) stretch the point further when they posit that "all translanguaging is multimodal" and signal a "trans-semiotic system with many meaning-making signs, primarily linguistic ones that combine to make up a person's semiotic repertoire" (cf Jimaima & Simungala 2019)".

Students' casual conversations and trade in the market show that translanguaging is both going between different linguistic structures and systems and going beyond them. It includes the full range of linguistic performances of multilingual language users for purposes that transcend the combination of structures, the alternation between systems, the transmission of information, and the representation of values, identities, and relationships (Wei 2011). In concluding our conceptualization of the notion of translanguaging, we wish to underscore that understanding the theoretical foundations of translanguaging privileges the appreciation of the mobility of Bemba and its mixing with the English language for meaning-making purposes. Vogel & García (2017) posit that the core premises that undergird translanguaging theory when taken together, seek to challenge previous models of bi- and multilingualism, and in so doing, elevate the status of individuals and peoples whose language practices have been traditionally minoritized and labeled as being "non-standard." This comes to life as we look at the interaction of Bemba, a local and an indigenous language as it interacts with English, a global language.

4. Research sites and the data

The University of Zambia is a public university located in Lusaka, Zambia. It is Zambia's largest and oldest public learning institution. The university was established in 1965 and officially opened to the public on 12 July 1966. It has two campuses, the Great East Road campus and the Ridgeway campus with 13 schools/faculties accounting for well over 30,000 students. Being the largest and most prestigious university in Zambia, UNZA enrolls students from the dispersed multilingual localities of Zambia and beyond (Simungala & Jimaima 2021c; Simungala 2020; UNZA Strategic Plan 2018). The university is situated on the south side of the Great East Road about 9 kilometers from the town centre. Soweto market is the single largest urban market in Zambia, has stores, and stands numbering well over 7,200 (Sichilima et al. 2016). It derives its name from Soweto, a South African township,

and is located along Los Angeles road on the western part of Lusaka city behind another market called City market. Lusaka being the capital city of Zambia is a getaway to most parts of the country.

The population of students and traders is a mixture of people of different ethnic affiliations from all parts of the country. This has led to a complex linguistic and cultural diversity that has broadened actors' communicative repertoires which are easily spotted in their daily interactions during casual conversations and transactions. This will become apparent given that as people crisscross spaces, it is not always the case that they lose their language, on the contrary, they carry with them their linguistic repertoire which they blend with those found in the new place (Bloammaert 2010; Jimaima 2016).

At the University of Zambia, the data were collected from a purposefully sampled graduate class of sixteen students (eight females and eight males) over eight months as part of a larger research project on language and globalization. This was done using an ethnographic approach, in which the students' language practices were observed during causal conversations, lectures, and academic group discussions. Consent was obtained to collect data in this naturally occurring setting from each participant. However, the participants were not reminded each time they were being observed as the researcher needed to collect data that was naturally produced (See Simungala & Jimaima 2021d for a detailed discussion). Data collection at the Soweto market was equally done in a similar manner. One of the researchers got consent from the traders and sat with them for six weeks to observe their language practices as they conducted their trade. Selected conversations at both UNZA and Soweto market were recorded and some have been used to illustrate instances of mixing, blending, and hybridity.

5. Translanguaging and the circulation of Bemba beyond its legislated localities

The data gathered shows social actors translanguaging practices for their meaning-making engagements. Thus, alongside the English

language as we will show below, students' use of language (see Simungala & Jimaima 2021a for a detailed discussion on the multi-lingual realities of students at UNZA) was the deployment of their full linguistic repertoire without regard for watchful adherence to the socially and politically defined boundaries of named (and usually national and state) languages (Otheguy et al. 2015). Table 1 is the key to understanding the conversations extracts that follow. For conversation extract 1, from UNZA, we have called the participants as interlocutors A and B while for conversation extract 2, we use the symbol T for trader and C for customers (cf. Simungala & Jimaima 2021b; Katundu & Jimaima 2020).

Table 1

Notation used in conversations

Symbol	Meaning
Bold	Words in the English language
Italics	Words in the Bemba language
T	Trader
C	Customer

Conversation extract 1

Interlocutor A: **This way,**

Interlocutor B: *Yaa kanshi efili* **entrance** ... <laughter>
'So this is the way the entrance is'

Interlocutor A: *So palya mwampela amadirections na ukudropa nadropa aah*

Just at the time you gave me directions, I even disembarked *from the bus*)

Interlocutor B: *Mwamonafye eee*

'So you just figured that'

Interlocutor A: *Naishiba ati yaa* **one time** ... <laughter>
'I then knew that it's done'

Interlocutor B: *Eee*

'Yes'

Interlocutor A: *Ee mwacitako* **explore**

'Yes at least you've explored'

- Interlocutor B: Twaendako
'Yes we've moved around'
- Interlocutor A: *Mwapwa na ukupwa lelo?*
'So you've finished *exams* today'
Nati lelo mwapa?
'Am asking, have you finished *exams* today?'
- Interlocutor A: *Awe, we have up to Friday.*
'No, we have up to Friday'
- Interlocutor B: *Ooh*
'Oh okay'

In the conversation extract 1 above, it is interesting to see the translanguaged discourses of Bemba and English which were very prominent. To corroborate this finding from our observation, the Central Statistics Office (2010), in the Census report, put Bemba at 17.6% in Lusaka province. As a regional language of three other provinces, the presence of Bemba cannot go without mention as it has found its way into a place it was not legislated. This augments the argument for the disembodiment of language and locality. The presence of Bemba in Lusaka, away from Muchinga, Northern, and Copperbelt provinces ascertains the role of mobility in place and that language cannot be tied to a locality. Arguably, this defies the expectations of policy formulators who zoned and legislated languages. The mobility of social actors means that they carry along with them languages as they do not automatically conform to linguistic practices they find. To this end, we concede to Blommaerts' (2010) view that the state is not the only player in status planning as individual choice and preferences engender powerful forces that transport language(s) from one locality to the other. Evidently, the idea that the state is an omnipotent and infallible actor in linguistic vitality vis-à-vis language policy can not be sustained. This is why Banda & Jimaima (2017) are quick to remind us that it is an error of judgment the claim that language vitality was always connected to governmentality. We turn to another conversation extract below to strengthen the argument.

Conversation extract 2

T: **Hello my brother!** *Nsapato yabwino yokosa iyi pano osapitilila, these shoes are very nice and strong*

‘Yes boss, nice and strong shoes here, don’t by pass. These shoes are very nice and strong’

C: *Tumoneni kaReebok ako, mpeni right side*

‘Let me see that Reebok one, give me the right side’

T: *Mufwala size shani badaddy?*

‘What size do you wear daddy’

C: **42 or 8**

T: *Ni original iyi, elo na mutengo ulifye bwino sana*

‘This one is the original and the price is just fine’

C: *Nishinga iyi ine?*

‘How much is this one’

T: **K100** *fye*

‘Hundred kwacha only’

C: *Ee! K100 for a salaula shoe? Awe shikwete mwe!*

‘Ee! K100 for a second hand shoe, no I don’t have’

T: **Daddy**, *nsapato za musalaula ni zo kosa maningi kuchila za mushop*

‘**Daddy**, second hand shoes are stronger than the ones from the shop’

C: *Ninjishiba but nilifye na K80*

‘I know but I only have K80’

Ok, *letani yamene iyo*

‘Ok give me the very one’

C: **Thank you so much**

From the conversation extract two above, we see three languages namely, Nyanja, the regional language for Lusaka which accounts for 61.9% usage and Bemba as well as the English language. This is an instance of translanguaging involving three languages. It should be noted that there is no limit to languages that may comprise a translanguaged discourse. This is because as people crisscross spaces, it is not always the case that they lose their language, on the contrary, they carry with them their linguistic repertoire which they blend with those found in the new place such as the Soweto market (Bloammaert 2010; Jimaima 2016).

As can be seen, when the trader beckons the customer using English-Nyanja translanguaged discourses, the trader tries his luck not knowing the language the customer will respond to. The trader opens the conversation with ‘Hello my brother!’ then switches to Nyanja *Nsapato yabwino yokosa iyi pano osapitilila* and back into English by translating the very Nyanja discourses into English when he says ‘these shoes are very nice and strong’. The customer chooses to respond in Bemba-English translanguaged discourses. From these discourses, we notice the shuttling between and among languages. In this respect, the customer goes against the normative expectation to respond in Nyanja, the regional language for this space. The customer would have understood what was said in Nyanja as Bemba and Nyanja are mutually intelligible but if this was not the case, the English discourses communicated the intent of the Nyanja. Thus, we see the (un)intentional deployment of different resources, which, in part, confirms the argument that social actors always use language from their positionality in informal settings (Simungala & Jimaima 2021c). When the trader notices the customer’s preferences, they also shift and they deploy Bemba which confirms that the “local use of language remains fluid and adaptable to be molded following users’ intention” (Adami & Sherri 2019). In this way, we note that it is because of mobility that we find Bemba at UNZA and Soweto markets as locality and language have been disembodied.

6. Towards an appreciation of an urban variety of Bemba

In this section, we draw attention to particular lexical items in conversation extracts 1 and 2 above. These are *kaReebok*, *baDaddy*, *amadirections* and *ukudropa*. It should be highlighted here that there are varieties of Bemba which scholars have distinguished as Standard Bemba, Rural Bemba, and what can loosely be referred to as Town Bemba. Thus, we are quick to note that the words *kaReebok*, *baDaddy*, *amadirections*, and *ukudropa* be looked upon as hybrid forms of Bemba that define urbanity. This is because the words are a mixture of morphemes from

Bemba and English which is a common practice in Town Bemba as a variety. Spiltuik (1998) reveals that Town Bemba should be understood as a hybrid language, a cover term for a set of Bemba-based multilingual practices that exemplify urbanity with a large number of English loan words. Thus, *kaReebok*, *baDaddy*, *amadirections* and *ukudropa* found in extracts 1 and 2 feed into Spiltuik notion of urbanity and hybridity. Consequently, whenever we refer to the mobility of the Bemba language beyond its traditional enclaves, we need to attend to what variety is mobile as the language has several varieties. Arguably, the circulation of resources from Bemba should be seen in light of the circulation of resources of an urban variety that interacts consistently with English resulting in hybridized forms of language. And given the fact that the mixing is happening in trading spaces where both the old and young are found, mixing and hybridized forms are not age restricted, they are available for use by both the young and the old in the unfolding of discourses.

The point we make here relates to hybridity in which extracts above have shown some loan words from the English language and the mixing of morphemes from English and other languages. From the observations, it was apparent that some actors spoke Rural Bemba and Standard Bemba also known as *Icibemba nkonko* (hardcore Bemba). However, what is spotted here is Copperbelt Bemba where urban/town varieties thrive. On why Interlocutor A in line 3 would rather use urban Bemba and not rural or standard Bemba in a space like a university is a matter Spiltuik (1998) had touched on with regards to notions of “modern urban life” in contrast to “traditional rural life”. The construction, and indeed, the (re)creation of the word *kaReebok*, *baDaddy*, *amadirections* and *ukudropa* not only feeds into the idea of hybridity but also speaks to the convergence of Bemba and the English language, a matter we discuss further in the next section.

7. The Mixing of languages in multilingual contexts

In this section, we draw attention to the dynamics of mixing and the outcome lexical items from the English and Bemba languages. This is best

captured under translanguaging which embraces the integration of multiple languages in the same speech event or linguistic context (cf. Simungala and Jimaima 2021b, Katundu and Jimaima 2020). In the observation of traders and their interaction with customers, it was noted that Nyanja, a lingua franca, and Lusaka's regional language was the widely spoken language followed by Bemba, a language we have concentrated on concerning its spread from its ethnic enclaves of Luapula, Northern and Muchinga provinces. In this regard, we present extracts from the Bemba conversations recorded at Soweto.

- (1) T: *Basister iseni mupepi.*
 'My sister come closer'
- (2) T: *BaMummy bandi, umutengo ulifwe bwino elo nimaoriginals tafifeda nokufeda, moneni mukati, tapali difference nakunse*
 'My mother, the price is fine, these are originals that do not fade, just check there is no difference between the inside and outside part'

In example (1), we notice that a trader is beckoning a customer to come by. The trader refers to the customer as a sister, a strategy to get their attention as is the case in African cultural settings, in which any lady/woman is one's sister or mother. The case is the same for men. In example (2), the same scenario continues as a customer is called mummy. Our interest here is with the *ba*, a Bemba bound morpheme which in this case is functioning as an honorific marker. At other times, the prefix *ba-*, is a morpheme used for plural marking and as an honorific prefix. In this connection, *basister*, combines features from two languages, *ba-* drawn from Bemba and *sister*, *mummy* which are English lexemes. This brings to the fore how language is used in different ways to construct social identities and how patterns of interactions reveal the social relations among speakers. In examples (1)–(2), *ba-* has been used by speakers to denote the social relationship that exist between them. In other instances, we saw the *ba* being combined with the English lexemes such as *daddy*, *customer* as a form of respect or pluralization to form

the words such as *badaddy* and *bacustomer*. In this way, we see the mixing of resources from two different languages to make meaning in a quest to appeal to the customers. The mixing occurring here, according to Blommaert (2010) is about bits and pieces of languages that may be mobilized as an emergency lingua franca in a quest to serve a need in a moment of the trade.

The examples in (1)–(2) support Simungala & Jimaima’s (2021a) view that social actors draw on bound morphemes from different languages as bits that they combine with lexemes from another language, particularly English, to make meaning. Extracts 1 and 2 have revealed that speakers may use bits and pieces as semiotic resources and as bound morphemes from other languages to combine with lexemes from different languages in meaning-making. Traders and customers alike were observed blending bound morphemes from Nyanja, Bemba, and other local languages with lexemes from the English language. The realities shown in extracts 1 and 2 and examples (1)–(2) are normative practices. It is no wonder Banda (2009) observes that blending and mixing are not new to Africa, as before missionaries decided to bring “order” to the “myriad” of African tongues through codification and standardisation, mixing was the norm. In examples (3)–(5), we take another perspective on the mixing and blending of resources from Bemba and the English language.

(3) C: *Nishinga amaddresses pano?*

‘How much are the dresses here?’

(4) T: *Izeni mupepi basister, nayachipa amaddresses pano ni, K50 imo.*

‘Come closer my sister they are cheap dresses here, it’s K50 one.’

(5) T: **Thank you basister mukese paMonday take sula yambi amaddresses**

‘Thank you my sister you should come on Monday, we will open some more dresses.’

One point comes out clearly in examples (3)–(5) and even in all the extracts. The point is that the mixing of morphemes from different

languages occurs at the level of individual lexical items from Bemba and English. Thus, in the mixing and blending of morphemes, we wish to draw out *nima***originals** from (1)–(2) and *amadresses* from (3)–(5). The two examples show that speakers were using plural forms from Bemba (*nima* and *ama*) while still maintaining the English plural form *-s*. This results in a kind of double or echo pluralization. The plural morphemes drawn from the Bemba are attached to the English lexemes. This combination brings into the spotlight a peculiar feature of plurals we wish to refer to as double or echo pluralization.

In the examples shown from extract conversations 1 and 2 as well as examples (1)–(5), we realize that the supposed linguistic borders and boundaries assumed to exist between languages are permeable as speakers may choose to use linguistic resources closer to the standard in an informal setting. With this multilingual reality created by the contact phenomenon between English and Bemba, Simungala & Jimaima (2021) advise that there is a sense in which the mixing of resources from different languages destabilizes some of these expected linguistic norms. Concerning plural formation, Katundu and Jimaima (2020) argue that the plural formation in the discourses of the traders and customers is a major point where the combination of bound morphemes from Bemba and English lexemes was deployed supporting the argument that during translanguaging speakers create complex structures that defy established artificial boundaries.

8. Summary and conclusion

The evidence presented in this paper leads to three interrelated conclusions. Firstly, the spread of Bemba from its ethnic enclaves of Muchinga, Northern, Luapula, and Copperbelt provinces to Lusaka province attests to the role of mobility as languages cannot be tied to localities because they are intrinsically mobile as even their finality is mobility (Blommaert 2010). By regionalizing languages, the policy formulators seemed to have predicated their understanding of this

phenomenon on classical sociolinguistic notions of boundedness, immobility, and stability, which champion the idea of the community of practice and container societies thriving on homogeneity. The presence and productivity of Bemba at both UNZA and Soweto market, even in the presence of Nyanja, the provinces' legislated language, blatantly reject the narratives of fixity owing to the disembodiment of language and locality. Thus, what has happened at UNZA and Soweto Market is the dissolution of traditional linguistic boundaries and calls into question the artificiality of political assignment of languages to specific domains (Reid & Otheguy 2015).

Secondly, the study has shown that to a very large extent, the Bemba spotted in Lusaka at UNZA and Soweto market can best be captured as the mobility of bits and pieces akin to urbanity and hybridity. This conclusion does not however deny the mobility of other varieties such as Standard Bemba. It simply makes a case for the mixing of resources for English and Bemba, which was more salient than the other languages which came into contact with Bemba. With the influence of mobility, we argue here that the hybrid forms we noticed in which we saw some loan words from the English language and the mixing of morphemes from English point to Copperbelt town Bemba as the variety circulating the most.

Finally, we have shown the dynamics of mixed resources from the English language and Bemba as the deployment of a speaker's full linguistic repertoire without regard for watchful adherence to the socially and politically defined boundaries of named languages (Otheguy et al. 2015). Consequently, this brought into the spotlight a rejection of stability and boundedness as students and traders as well as customers at the market were able to manipulate language resources for their meaning-making instances. We have shown that with this reality, the blending and mixing of bound morphemes from Bemba and the English language create what we referred to as double pluralization as the plural marker from both languages are integrated into a newly formed lexical item that can neither be placed in the English language nor Bemba language.

References

- Banda, Felix. 2009. Towards multilingual models of education in South Africa. In Prah, Kwesi Kwaa & Brock-Utne, Birgit (eds.), *Multilingualism: An African advantage*, 102–118. Cape Town: CASAS.
- Banda, Felix & Jimaima, Hambaba & Mambwe, Kelvin & Simungala, Gabriel. 2019. Interrogating terminological aggregation and inconsistencies in the Zambia's language-in-education policy. In Banda, Felix (ed.), *Theoretical and applied aspects of African languages and culture. Festschrift in honour of Professor Mildred Nkolola-Wakumelo*, 243–264. Cape Town: Centre for Advanced Studies of African Society.
- Banda, Felix & Bellononjengele, Basirat Olayemi. 2010. Style, repertoire, and identities in Zambian multilingual discourses. *Multicultural Discourses* 5(2). 107–119.
- Blommaert, Jan. 2010. *The sociolinguistics of globalization*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Blommaert, Jan. 2012. Chronicles of complexity: Ethnography, superdiversity, and linguistic landscapes. *Tilburg Papers in Culture Studies* 29. 1–149.
- Blommaert, Jan. 2014. From mobility to complexity in sociolinguistic theory and method. *Tilburg Papers in Culture Studies* 103. 1–25.
- Blommaert, Jan & Rampton, Ben. 2011. Language and superdiversity. *Diversities* 13(2). 1–21.
- García, Ofelia. 2019. Translanguaging: a coda to the code? *Classroom Discourse* 10(3–4). 369–373.
- García, Ofelia & Wei, Li. 2014. *Translanguaging: Language, bilingualism and education*. Basingstoke, U.K.: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Jimaima, Hambaba & Simungala, Gabriel. 2019. Semiotic creativity and innovation: Offshoots of social media addiction. In Ndasauka, Yamikani & Kayange, Grivas Muchineripi (eds.), *Addiction in South and East Africa*, 143–156. London: Palgrave Macmillan Cham.
- Jimaima, Hambaba & Banda, Felix. 2021. Selling a presidential candidate: linguistic landscapes in time of presidential elections in Zambia. *Social Semiotics* 31(2). 212–229.
- Kashoki, Mubanga E. 1978. The language situation in Zambia. In Kashoki, Mubanga E. & Ohannessian, Sirarpi (eds.), *Language in Zambia*, 99–4646. London: International Africa Institute.

- Kashoki, Mubanga E. 1990. *The factor of language in Zambia*. Lusaka: Kenneth Kaunda Foundation.
- Makoni, Sinfree & Pennycook, Alastair. 2007. *Disinventing and reconstituting languages*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.
- Mambwe, Kelvin. 2014. *Mobility identity and localization of Lusaka in multilingual contexts of Urban Lusaka*. Cape Town: University of the Western Cape. (Ph.D. dissertation.)
- Muyebaa, K.C. 1998. The mismatch in the Zambian Language Policy. In *WCCES 10th World Congress*. Cape Town: University of Cape Town.
- Otheguy, Ricardo & García, Ofelia & Reid, Wallis. 2015. Clarifying translanguaging and deconstructing named languages: A perspective from linguistics. *Applied Linguistics Review* 6(3). 281–307.
- Puloc'h, Meghann. 2020. *Zambia: Resource-rich but vulnerable to shocks*. Working Paper d6bb2e44-f3f8-4d50-8d3d-f, Agence française de développement.
- Park, Mi Sun. 2013. Code-switching and translanguaging: Potential functions in multilingual classrooms. *Working Papers in TESOL & Applied Linguistics* 13(2). 50–52.
- Simungala, Gabriel N. 2020. *The linguistic landscape of the University of Zambia: A social semiotic perspective*. Lusaka: University of Zambia. (Doctoral dissertation.)
- Simungala, Gabriel & Jimaima, Hambaba. 2021a. Sociocultural narratives and the anthropomorphic power of agency in a semiotic landscape. *Southern African Linguistics and Applied Language Studies* 39(2). 195–209.
- Simungala, Gabriel & Jimaima, Hambaba. 2021b. Multilingual realities of language contact at the University of Zambia. *Journal of Asian and African Studies* 56(7). pp.1644–1657.
- Simungala, Gabriel & Jimaima, Hambaba. 2021c. Towards an appreciation of individual positionality and the global-local interface: Facebook Actorhood in Zambia. *Journal of Multicultural Discourses* 16(3). 227–244.
- Simungala, Gabriel & Ndalama, Deborah & Jimaima, Hambaba. 2022a. Communicative practices from the margins: The multilingual and multicultural repertoires on university spaces. *Journal of Asian and African Studies* 57(4). 712–724.

- Simungala, Gabriel & Jimaima, Hambaba & Chikuta, Prisca. 2022b. Indigenous languages in an online space: Translanguaging for visibilisation of multilingualism and multisemiotic modes. *Language Matters: Studies in the Languages of Southern Africa* 53(2). 85–109.
- Spitulnik, Debra. 1998. The language of the city: Town Bemba as urban hybridity. *Journal of linguistic anthropology* 8(1). 30–59.
- Spitulnik, Debra & Kashoki, Mubanga E. 2001. Bemba. In Garry, Jane & Rubino, Carl (eds.) *Facts about the World's languages: An encyclopedia of the World's major languages, past and present*, 81–85. New York: H.W. Wilson.
- Sichilima, Timothy & Mapemba, Lawrence & Tembo, Gelson. 2016. Drivers of dry common beans trade in Lusaka, Zambia: A trader's perspective. *Sustainable Agriculture Research* 5(2). 15–26.
- Vogel, Sara & García, Ofelia. 2017. Translanguaging. In Noblit, George W. (ed.), *Oxford Research encyclopedia of education*. <https://oxfordre.com/education/view/10.1093/acrefore/9780190264093.001.0001/acrefore-9780190264093-e-181>
- Williams, Cen. 2002. Extending bilingualism in the education system. In *Education and lifelong learning committee* ELL-06-02, 4–6. <http://www.assemblywales.org/3c91c7af00023d820000595000000000.pdf>
- Wei, Li. 2011. Moment analysis and translanguaging space: Discursive construction of identities by multilingual Chinese youth in Britain. *Journal of pragmatics* 43(5). 1222–1235.