

**LANGUAGE MAINTENANCE: THE CASE OF CHISENGA IN
MCHINJI DISTRICT**

M.A. (APPLIED LINGUISTICS) THESIS

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**LANGUAGE MAINTENANCE: THE CASE OF CHISENGA IN MCHINJI
DISTRICT**

M.A. (Applied Linguistics) Thesis

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DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, hereby declare that this thesis is my own original work which has not been submitted to any other institution for similar purposes. Where other people's work has been used acknowledgements have been made.

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For the ever loving parents Patson and Eletina Chikaipa

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ABSTRACT

This study focuses on maintenance of Chisenga, a minority language spoken in Mchinji district situated in the central western part of Malawi that borders with Zambia. The study aims at exploring factors governing the maintenance of Chisenga among the Nsenga that settled within the predominant Chichewa speaking area. The methodology was predominantly quantitative although some elements of qualitative approach were included. Key informant interviews were conducted with the chiefs, elders and some businessmen. Questionnaires were also administered to the general public in the three villages. Findings of the study show that community centred initiatives, endogamous marriages, frequent home visits, the home language policy, Mudziwathu radio station and cross-border trade have all enhanced the maintenance of Chisenga in spite of years of prolonged contact with Chichewa. The study concludes that the trading patterns that have taken place along the border for so many years, cultural orientation and lately the blossoming of media institutions that use Chisenga both in Malawi and Zambia have greatly influenced people to maintain the language along the border. The study argues that the maintenance of Chisenga in Mchinji depends on these varying factors, a large contribution from its status in trade.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract.....	v
List of figures.....	ix
List of Tables	x
Appendices.....	xii
List of Acronyms and Abbreviations	xiii
 Chapter One	
Introduction.....	1
1.1 Chapter Overview	1
1.2 Socio-historical background	1
1.3 Statement of the Problem.....	3
1.4 Objectives.....	5
1.4.1 General objective.....	5
1.4.2 Specific objectives.....	5
1.4.3 Hypotheses.....	5
1.5 Significance of the study.....	6
1.6 Definition of Terms.....	6
1.6.1 Minority language.....	6
1.6.2 Majority language.....	7
1.6.3 Language maintenance.....	7
1.7 Organisation of the Thesis.....	7
 Chapter Two	
Literature Review and Theoretical Framework.....	9
2.1 Chapter Overview.....	9
2.2 Theoretical Framework.....	9
2.2.1 Ethnolinguistic Vitality Theory.....	10
2.2.2 Social Network Theory.....	12
2.2.3 Domain Analysis Theory.....	14
2.2.4 An Overview for the application of the Theories: The Integrated Approach.....	16

2.3 Literature Review.....	18
2.3.1 Factors favouring Language maintenance: Insights from previous studies.....	18
2.3.2 Factors associated with the society as a whole	19
2.3.3 Individual/Ethnic group related factors.....	26
2.3.4 National Language Policies.....	31
2.4 The Dynamics of Language maintenance: Irregular Patterns.....	33
2.5 Chapter summary.....	34
Chapter Three	
Methodology.....	35
3.1 Chapter Overview.....	35
3.2 Research Design.....	35
3.3 Sampling Procedures.....	36
3.3.1 Study area.....	36
3.3.2 Research sample.....	40
3.3.3 Sampling Techniques	41
3.4 Data collection techniques and Tools.....	41
3.4.1 Survey Questionnaires.....	41
3.4.2 Key Informant Interview Schedule.....	41
3.4.3 Participant Observation.....	42
3.5 Data analysis.....	42
3.6 Ethical Considerations.....	42
3.7 Limitations of the study.....	43
3.8 Chapter summary.....	44
Chapter Four	
Results and Discussion.....	
4.1 Chapter Overview.....	6
4.2 The demographic patterns of Chisenga native speakers.....	6
4.2.1 Identification of the Cisenga speakers by age, marital status and birth place.	6
4.2.2 Linguistic Background of the respondents.....	48
4.2.3 Marriage patterns and Birth place.....	50
4.2.4 Level of education and Occupation of the respondents.....	3

4.3 Language use patterns in various domains.....	6
4.3.1 Home/Family Domain.....	7
4.3.2 Neighbourhood Domain.....	
4.3.3 School domain.....	62
4.4 Inter-generational Language Maintenance	64
4.5 Analysing the Practical maintenance factors for Cisenga.....	66
4.5.1 Institutional support; Mudziwathu and other radio stations	67
4.5.2 The Status factors.....	71
4.5.3 The residents ‘uncertainty’ of the other languages	74
4.6 Chapter summary	75
Chapter Five	
Conclusion.....	74
5.1 Chapter Overview.....	74
5.2 Summary of study Findings	74
5.3 Implications of the Findings.....	77
5.4 Areas for further Study	81
References.....	83

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Interview Schedule for the Key Informants.....	869
Appendix 2: Survey Questionnaire for the general public.....	91
Appendix 3: Tables on significant and correlation tests.....	101
Appendix 4: Map of the languages of Mchinji.....	102

LIST OF FIGURES

Fig. 4.1. Overall distribution rate of inter-marriages with the other ethnics.....	
Fig. 4.2. Overall distribution rates of the respondents' home visits	50
Fig. 4.3. Distribution rates of the family language use patterns with family members....	57
Fig. 4.4. Language use in the neighbourhood domain.....	60
Fig. 4.5. Distribution of language use patterns in the school domain.....	62
Fig. 4.6. Overall distribution rates for Cisenga use in age groups.....	64
Fig. 4.7. Distribution rates on the radio stations tuned in by family members.....	67
Fig. 4.8. Distribution rates for the impact of Mudziwathu on Cisenga	69
Fig. 4.9. Overall rates for the chosen occasion on the home visits.....	71

LIST OF TABLES

Table 4.1. Demographic summaries of respondents on age, marital status, birthplace and education.....	7
Table 4.2 Summary on the respondents' linguistic background.....	48
Table 4.3. Summary on the respondents occupation and level of education.....	4

LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

CBO's	Community Based Organizations
JSCE	Junior Secondary Certificate of Education
MCRS	Mudziwathu Community Radio Station
MBC	Malawi Broadcasting Corporation
MKT	Market
PSLC	Primary School Leaving Certificate
SNT	Social Network Theory
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Science
UNESCO	United Nations Education Scientific & Cultural Organization
ZA	Zambia
ZNBC	Zambia National Broadcasting Corporation
ZBS	Zodiak Broadcasting Station

Chapter One

Introduction

1.1 Chapter Overview

This chapter provides background information to the study with a focus on the socio-historical background, and the present language situation in Mchinji. In addition, the chapter discusses the problem statement, the general and specific objectives, hypotheses and significance of the study. It also highlights the operational definitions of the main key terms in the study. The chapter concludes with the organisation of the thesis.

1.2 Socio-historical Background

Ranger (1928), Kashoki and Ohannesian (1978) reported that the Mpezeni Ngoni adopted and use Chisenga, a language of the Nsenga whom they raided. The background of the Nsenga ethnics and their Chisenga language is well understood upon reviewing the Mpezeni Ngoni history. It is difficult to divorce the Nsenga history from the Mpezeni Ngoni especially in the use of Chisenga, migration and settlement in various places. Thus, of interest in this discussion are the Nsenga who were incorporated in the Ngoni ethnic group due to conquests, intermarriages and the effect this mixture had on their language, Chisenga.

The Nsenga, who are native speakers of Chisenga, migrated to Mchinji with the Ngoni from the Luangwa River valley in Zambia more than a century ago (Barnes 1959, Rau William 1974, and Isichei 1997). Studies by Read (1936), Rau William (1974) and Kishindo (2003) claim that the Nsenga were absorbed into the Ngoni ethnic group during Mfecane¹ and

¹ The conquest movements of the Ngoni into Central Africa from South Africa initiated by their king Shaka Zulu.

migrated into the area under the latter's banner. Pachai (1973:31) observes that the Ngoni migrants had few pure bona fide members because they incorporated large numbers of indigenous tribes through marriage, conquests, or by political over-lordship. Hence, the Nsenga being some of the victims ceased to operate as a separate ethnic group and aligned themselves with the Ngoni leadership. Barnes (1959) reported that some of the members were elected to important positions, for instance Chiwere Ndhlovu was appointed as a military leader in the Mpezeni Ngoni kingdom. Similarly, Read (1936) and Rau William (1974) observed that several tribes acknowledged their origin as either Nsenga or Chewa by kinship or clan but rushed to assume the Ngoni identity in order to enhance their status and political allegiance.

Pachai (1973) and Rau William (1974) state that Mpezeni Ngoni, who presumably incorporated the Nsenga, migrated to Mchinji upon the request of Mkanda, the chief of the Chewa, who wanted protection against the fierce Mapule tribe that was advancing towards his territory. Since it was on mutual agreement, the Ngoni were given free pieces of land where they established their villages, namely, Zulu and Mlonyeni, which lay side by side with the predominant Chewa ethnic group (Pachai, 1973; Langworthy, 1975). Linguistically, it is observed that the Ngoni ethnic group that settled in Mchinji are regarded to be Nsenga because of the language adopted from the ethnic group they conquered and incorporated. Miti (2001) documented that Chisenga variety is spoken by the Ngoni people who occupied the territory that straddles the Zambian-Malawi border around Chipata (in Zambia) and Mchinji (in Malawi). And in a similar vein, Pachai's (1973) study on the Ngoni reveals that Chisenga was used among ethnics who settled in Zulu village whereas part of those from

Mlonyeni shifted to Chichewa, the language of the majority. Therefore, in terms of language use, the Ngoni migrant group is preferably referred to as the Nsenga.

1.3 Problem Statement

Since the arrival of the Nsenga in Mchinji it has been difficult to determine and make any claims on their language status. However, the 1998² national population census report stipulates that almost 5.3% of the total population in the district use Chisenga as the everyday household language. It also documents that at national level the language is spoken by 0.2% of the total population out of which 81.3% of the people are from Mchinji. Much as the 1998 population census report provides evidence that Chisenga is spoken in Mchinji, census data alone cannot be relied upon to determine whether the language is being maintained or not. Censuses usually underestimate the actual use of other languages outside the home domain. The census data fail to explore beyond the home language use and the impact of other factors such as culture, religion and education. Therefore, the study seeks to present an in-depth picture of the sociolinguistic situation at the societal level.

The available literature on language maintenance and shift has so far focused on different minority languages in Malawi, for instance, Kayambazinthu (1989/90) and Matiki (1996) on the Lomwe, Kayambazinthu (1995) on Tumbuka in their locality, Kamanga (1999) and Kishindo (2003) on Ngoni, Matewere (1999) on Yao and Zimpita (2003) on Indians or Asians, with no similar study on Chisenga. Findings from these studies are not conclusive on the instances of maintenance or shift; hence we cannot replicate reasons for the current status of Chisenga using other language experiences.

² The 1998 census was used because the 2008 report had not been released by the time of study.

There is also overwhelming evidence that the variation in the historical background of the minority languages make it difficult to study them within a single framework (Kayambazinthu, 2003: 146). Gibbons and Ramirez (2004) reported that the differences in the historical, cultural and natural backgrounds have resulted into the varied factors that perpetuate the maintenance of minority languages. Therefore, it is appropriate to argue that it is difficult to predict with absolute certainty the factors that induce the speakers to either maintain their languages or shift to another language. Thus, based on these insights the study seeks to explore how Chisenga has been maintained by the Nsenga migrants who came together with the Ngoni from present day Zambia and settled among the Chewa subjects of Mchinji in Malawi, in the nineteenth century.

The socio-historical discussion shows that migrations, conquests and invasions are some of the major forces behind bringing different language speaking groups in contact. According to Clappitt (1995), when the groups come in contact, three principle outcomes are expected and these include the fact that the speakers may decide to continue using their native language in all the domains; choose to use the newly introduced language in all the functions; or choose to use the native language in some domains and the additional language in others. Apart from the absolute adoption of the new language, the other two attempts that entail the maintenance of the native variety succeed upon surmounting the challenges of contact with the language of the majority. Therefore, the study wants to establish whether Chisenga is maintained and used as the first or second language bearing in mind that the Nsenga ethnic group is in contact with the predominant Chichewa speakers. Thus, there is still unexplored information on how the Nsenga have maintained their language in the area where Chichewa is a predominant variety.

Since no one has done a study on Chisenga maintenance and no conclusive or less obvious results on the previous language studies, it is deduced that there still remains a gap in our understanding of Chisenga maintenance in Mchinji district. Therefore, an in-depth study on the main factors that have influenced language maintenance of Chisenga in particular communities was conducted to address the situation.

1.4 Objectives

1.4.1 General Objective

To explore factors governing the maintenance of Chisenga in the Malawi-Zambia border district of Mchinji.

1.4.2 Specific Objectives

Specifically the study will:

- a.** identify the speakers of Chisenga (i.e. how many respondents speak the language)
- b.** analyse the domains of language use.
- c.** discuss factors motivating the inter-generational maintenance of Chisenga.

1.5 Hypotheses

The study tested the following null hypotheses:

- a.** there is no significant relationship between the level of education and language use in the home domain.
- b.** there is no correlation between the programmes listened to on Mudziwathu (Our village) radio station and the daily language use in the home domain.

1.6 Significance of the Study

The study makes a contribution to the theoretical, practical and even policy aspect of language issues. Theoretically the present study fills an existing gap in our understanding of language maintenance among Chisenga speakers. Practically, most minority languages are not valued by speakers of majority language because they have no national or official status. The study therefore demonstrates which minorities maintain their language and by so doing adding value and status to the language.

The study of Chisenga is also significant because much as the language is spoken in the Malawi-Zambia border district, the expectation is that there might be so many influences associated with its maintenance different from those derived in other studies. Therefore, the knowledge that the study generates may be useful to language policy makers and other stakeholders when they discuss issues pertaining to language use and planning, particularly mother tongue education. Thus, the appropriate language policies derived can assist in the socio-economic advancement of the area.

1.7 Definition of Terms

This section briefly defines the three main key terms in the study which are: minority language, majority language and language maintenance.

1.7.1 Minority Language

Minority language is defined as the language that is not dominant in a territorial unit such as the state because the speakers of the language have less power and the language is generally spoken by a smaller number of people (Skutnabb-Kangas and McCarty, 2006: 7). The term

sometimes refers to a language spoken by a community that is smaller in number in relation to one or more language communities in the same area, territory or community and whose members feel that their language and culture is threatened, oppressed or otherwise denied expected roles within the larger community or communities (Kubik, 2003). For the purposes of this study the definitions were used interchangeably.

1.7.2 Majority Language

The term majority language refers to language of a dominant group, in terms of number and/or power (Skutnabb-Kangas and McCarty, 2006: 6). This study adopted the same definition.

1.7.3 Language Maintenance

Language maintenance is defined as an attempt to resist the cultural power of other languages that are spoken by the majority and/or languages that are socially dominant (Gibbons and Ramirez, 2004). Similarly, Fasold (1984) regards maintenance as a situation where a community collectively decides to continue using their language when two different ethnic language speaking groups are in contact with one another. Thus, it implies that, in language maintenance the minority language speakers resist the pressure of the language of the majority and continue using their ethnic language in all domains.

1.8 Organisation of the Thesis

This thesis is organized in five chapters. This first chapter has presented the contextual background, which is the basic information on the status of the Nsenga as they arrived in

Mchinji. The chapter also discusses the problem statement, the general and specific objectives and the significance of the study.

Chapter two covers the literature review, and this includes the presentation and discussion of themes related to the study. The chapter also discusses the theoretical underpinnings guiding the study, which largely are the highlights of the ideal concepts of the various language maintenance phenomena.

Chapter three is the methodology which includes the techniques and justification of the data collection methods involved in carrying out the research. It also highlights some of the ethical considerations undertaken during and after the research.

Chapter four presents and discusses the findings of the study. And Chapter five concludes the study and discusses its implications.

Chapter Two

Theoretical Framework and Literature Review

2.1 Chapter Overview

This chapter examines the factors that have accelerated the maintenance of minority languages both locally and globally. Prior to providing a detailed account of the minority language situation, the chapter examines the theories that provide the guiding principles to the study. Secondly, the chapter gives a critical understanding of language maintenance in relation to language shift. Then it discusses the factors perceived to have favoured the maintenance of languages in different circumstances. Finally, the chapter assesses the trend or pattern of maintenance based on the empirical studies reviewed.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

The study is guided by the Ethnolinguistic Vitality Theory (Giles, Bourhis, and Taylor, 1977) complemented by the Social Network (SN) (Milroy and Milroy 1987) and Domain Analysis (Fishman, 1972) theories. The rationale behind the choice of Ethnolinguistic Vitality serving as an overarching theory is that it is a multifaceted paradigm which uses both the linguistic and socio-economic factors in its overall analysis and interpretation of a sociolinguistic situation. It raises issues of interest in the study, for instance, how status factors, institutional and control factors and demographic factors impact on language maintenance. The Social Network Theory sheds more light on the effect of interpersonal relations or linkages of ethnics both within and outside their respective communities. Domain Analysis Theory complements the study in assessing reasons for the choice of language in different institutional contexts. Therefore, the theories give a catalogue of relevant factors that are

used as parameters in exploring the extent of Chisenga language maintenance in Mchinji. Thus, the subsequent sections give a detailed discussion of the Ethnolinguistic Vitality Theory, the SN Theory and ultimately the Domain Analysis Theory.

2.2.1 Ethnolinguistic Vitality Theory

This theory is used at the macro-social level of analysing language use and change in an ethnic group. According to Rasinger (2004), and Myers-Scotton (2006), the theory states that the ethnic group ability to overcome language change in contact situations with other ethnic groups is determined by its strength in the catalogue of socio-economic factors, which includes demographic, status, and finally the institutional support and control factors. It is stipulated that vitality refers to when the ethnic group responds positively to the mentioned features in combination thereby making it to behave as a distinctive and active collective entity (Kulbrandstad, 2001: 6). The strengths and weaknesses in each of the highlighted variables provide a rough classification of an ethnolinguistic group having low, medium and higher ability of language sustenance among the other groups in a contact situation (Yagmur and Akinici, 2004). Thus, the groups that have a higher vitality in the aforementioned socio-economic factors are likely to maintain both their language and identity traits whereas the low vitality groups go through linguistic assimilation and fail to endure any language contact.

In the foregoing discussion, a number of socio-economic factors are rated to affect the sustenance or endurance of the ethnic groups in the language contact or multilingual setting. Bourhis (2001) explains that the demographic factors relate to the number and distribution pattern of ethnic members throughout a particular region or territory. He argues that these include variables such as birth rate, rate of mixed marriages, rate of migration, and the

concentration or proportion of speakers. Besides this, it is observed that the persistence of an ethnolinguistic group is highly affected by the institutional support and control factors. Kulbrandstad (2001) argues that this comprise the direct or indirect formal and informal support which an ethnolinguistic group receives from various institutions, for instance, mass media, education, government, industry, religion, politics and cultural groups. In addition to the two variables, namely demographic and institutional support and control factors, the ethnolinguistic group continues to function because of the status it holds over other groups in a contact situation. Yagmur and Akinici (2004) have argued that the language status in economic, social and historical aspects contributes greatly to the existence of the ethnolinguistic group as an entity. The theory therefore, claims that the ethnic groups rated highly in the socio-economic variables discussed are likely to maintain their vernaculars whereas those with low strength are susceptible to language shift processes and their language gets replaced by the dominant language. Thus, the theory accounts for the speaker's vernacular language maintenance or shift based on the ethnic groups' position in the range of the socio-economic factors.

The theory highlights some of the benchmarks that the study regards as crucial in assessing the maintenance of Chisenga among the native speakers in Mchinji district. Similarly, the study examines the position of the Chisenga speakers in different socio-economic variables such as distribution, whether concentrated or scattered, the economic prosperity in comparison with the hosts, and some of the institutional factors that have an impact on language maintenance. Despite the theory's weakness of concentrating on the objective aspects of language change in an ethnic group (Bouhris, 2001); the subjective contributions from the respondents are going to be addressed by the two subsequent theories. Thus, the

justification of using ethnolinguistic vitality theory emanates from the fact that it provides the socio-economic factors that mirror the ability or inability of the ethnic language maintenance.

2.2.2 Social Network Theory

A Network is defined as a boundless web of ties that link people to one another, however remotely (Milroy and Milroy, 1992). According to Hamers and Blanc (2000), this represents the sum of all interpersonal relations that one individual establishes with others over time. The Social Network theory states that the interpersonal interactions take place within the domains of language use such as family life, neighbourhood, market places and schools. Gibbons and Ramirez (2004) observed that the theory works on the understanding that different types of social contacts establish network ties or linkages that adequately account for the linguistic behaviour exhibited by the individuals. Thus, the network ties closely correspond to the domains within the societal structures. However, despite such cases the theory centres on the individuals' experience of the language not the societal use of the language.

In the account of the theory, Milroy and Milroy (1997) raise ways of assessing how the ties work together in influencing the language of the individuals in the networks. They observed that the interaction that individuals have with one another by reference to intensity or frequency greatly affects the use of a particular language. According to Gibbons and Ramirez (2004), the ties are either dense and multiplex (close knit) or weak and open (loose knit). The dense and multiplex ties evolve in a situation when one engages in a relationship with an individual who also happens to form numerous relationships with other people who know each other (Myers-Scotton, 2006). Therefore, the theory broaches the view that language

groups which are bound to close knit ties rise above linguistic change because the relative strength of the network ties for the vernacular language use among the members of the community is strong. In view of this, the study adopts the similar perception to assess the conservative force or resistance of the Chisenga speakers against the pressures of change that originates outside the network. Thus, any strong ties among them account for the community's high levels of solidarity to maintain the Chisenga language despite many undercurrents from outside forces.

It is also expected that there are other groups that cannot have a dense and multiplex network but the open and weak interactions. According to Gibbons and Ramirez (2004), these comprise communities that are not strict to vernacular norms which ultimately make them vulnerable to external pressures of linguistic change. The theory stresses that such loose knit ties mostly exist in communities that are geographically mobile and have few sufficient established interactions among their members (Milroy and Milroy, 1997). They argue further that the groups are characterised by limited use of their vernacular languages hence the language shift situation. Thus, the theory is used in establishing the kind of network ties that exist among the different language speakers to account for language use.

In view of the foregoing discussion, the understanding of the theory is that at community level the close knit ties among the members ensure solidarity which underlies the language maintenance of any vernacular despite the presence of official or national languages (Kayambazinthu, 2000). This means that even economically handicapped or powerless ethnic groups existing in well-defined communities can obstinately oppose the values of the outsiders and maintain their ethnic identity and linguistic norms. Overall, the theory assists in

examining and analysing the type of network relationships and linkages that exist among the speakers of Chisenga and outside communities in different domains. However, the theory centres on the relationships among individuals and fails to explain the influence that demographics and institutions can have on language maintenance. Thus it accounts for the state of Chisenga in Mchinji district based on the community members' level of solidarity to adhere to their language.

2.2.3 Domain Analysis

Apart from the theories discussed above the study has also adopted the domain analysis model. Fishman (1972) defined domains as theoretical constructs that can explain language choice which are supposed to be more powerful explanatory tools than more obvious (and observable) parameters like topic, place (setting) and interlocutor. Hence, the overarching argument of the theory revolves around the use of languages in various institutional contexts of multilingual settings. The theory stipulates that speakers consciously or unconsciously use one appropriate language to fit a specific context than another (Msajila, 2004). This means that in any particular context one language is likely to be chosen by the speakers to discuss particular kinds of topics. Haberland (2005) claims that domain can be referred to as major clusters of interaction being regulated by a common set of language behavioural rules. From this perspective, it is concluded that the choice of language in the domains is contextually dependent and is usually under the guidance of rules and policies just like in the classroom and courtrooms. Thus, it gives an insight that language choice in institutional context is far from random but dictated by usage.

However, Msajila (2004) claims that the domains on their own are essential to make us understand and appreciate that language choice and topic are related to the widespread socio-cultural norms and expectations. That means the domain concept ties the languages and institutional contexts together and account for language choices even outside a particular multilingual group, in the out-group interactions. But according to Haberland (2005), though such is the case, the domains are not properties of languages and calls for a careful observation of the multilingual group in order to establish specific languages that are used in the different domains.

Hohenthal (1998) also raises the point that the domains differ in all the multilingual settings because language as behaviour reflects socio-cultural patterning. She argues that the domains differ among themselves because of peoples' socio-psychological understanding and then the societal-institutional level. In addition, Msajila (2004) points out that the speakers' psychological understanding of the domains identifies them as formal or informal, intimate and inter-group domains. Furthermore, they can be identified at institutional level whereby many emerge from the formal domain such as schools, media institutions and the informal domain comprising of the home or family and neighbourhood domains. Thus, since they operate as social institutions of the speech community the domains are important in retrieving the substantive evidence of language use.

The study finds it useful to use the theory because according to Garcia (2003), the formal and informal domains are important to survey language maintenance as they constitute areas of inter-generational use and transmission of ethnic languages. It is expected to shed more light on how languages operate in the various domains whether they are instituted through policies

and laws or chosen randomly. In this regard, the study gave the respondents an opportunity to report on the language use in various formal and informal institutions out of which the analysis of the findings was done in respect of the domain analysis model. Thus the theory aligned the vitality of Chisenga in the different domains of language use thereby ascertaining the extent of maintenance in Mchinji.

Domain analysis complements the ethnolinguistic vitality theory because it is argued that the latter concentrates on the objective factors disregarding the group members' perception of the vitality of the group (Kulbrandstad, 2001). Therefore the domain analysis as a supplementary model provides a picture of the subjective general beliefs of the group vitality. It executes information about the respondents own desire to behave in certain ways regarding key aspects of their own group vitality. Therefore, using the guidelines from both ethnolinguistic vitality and domain analysis theories, complemented by the social network analysis, give the possible current status of Chisenga in Mchinji. Thus, the subsequent discussion justifies the suitability of the three theories in the study.

2.2.4 An overview for the application of the theories: integrated approach.

A number of theories have been proposed to account for the conditions that promote language maintenance and shift, however none of them adequately or fully predict any change of language behaviour in times of contact or power imbalance. Kulbrandstad (2001), and Myers-Scotton (2006) among other scholars have indicated that where language is maintained, the societal group and individual factors interact and work together to influence the process. Therefore, since no single theory has fully explained all the factors, the scope of the study combined three theories to account for language use. In this regard, the study has

adopted the integrated approach in the application of the theories to establish the parameters of Chisenga language maintenance in Mchinji district. The ethnolinguistic vitality theory informs the study about the significance of assessing the sociological or societal variables in language maintenance. Since this theory lacks an explanation on the variables that concern individual relations, in group or out-group, the study has also adopted the social network theory. The theory informs the study in terms of the significance of assessing interpersonal linkages/network ties among individuals in the society as regards language maintenance. The study has also adopted the domain analysis theory which stipulates the actual use of languages in various institutional settings. This directs the study to investigate the maintenance of Chisenga in the different domains of language use. Therefore, the three theories are important in creating an understanding of the conditions regarded as precincts for the Chisenga language maintenance. Thus, none of the theories discussed above claims to be fully comprehensive or exclusive hence the integration.

2.3 Literature Review

2.3.1 Understanding Language Maintenance in relation to Language Shift

The concept of language maintenance is understood better when related to the theme of language shift. These are two related concepts in which the absence of one aspect inevitably results in the imminence of the other whenever two language groups come into contact. In view of this, Tabouret-Keller (1968) defined the two concepts as ‘the relationship between change and stability in habitual language use when populations differing in language are in contact with each other.’ Similarly, Fasold (1984) regards maintenance as a situation where a community collectively decides to continue using their language while shift refers to a community consciously or unconsciously giving up its language in favour of another

language. Batibo (2005: 102), on the one hand, claims that ‘language maintenance is a situation in which a language maintains its vitality even under pressure.’ On the other hand, Gibbons and Ramirez (2004) defined it as an attempt to resist the cultural power of other languages that are spoken by the majority and/ languages that are socially dominant.

In regard to these definitions, maintenance concerns the decision to continue using the language that a group has all along traditionally used whereas shift is to gradually give up the language in favour of the powerful. Therefore, in maintenance, the speakers of a migrant or indigenous minority language remain steadfast against the incessant pressure exerted by the language of the majority and continue to use the ethnic language in the various domains. This view is adopted as a working definition in the study because it offers the framework for understanding the factors that have perpetuated the Nsenga immigrants to retain their language in the face of the predominant Chichewa speakers. However, since the various studies have argued differently on the factors favouring maintenance, the subsequent sections critically review the literature.

2.3.2 Factors favouring Language Maintenance - Insights from previous studies

There are many conditions or factors that have resulted into the maintenance of different minority or indigenous languages in the state of language contact and power imbalance. However, according to Myers-Scotton (2006) some of the conditions inducing maintenance in some of the groups have accelerated shift in the others. Consequently, such ambivalence of the factors underscores the significance of reviewing local, regional and global studies in order to establish any possibility of the existence of the maintenance pattern. Critical

analyses of some factors or conditions that have been regarded as crucial to influence language maintenance follow this discussion.

2.3.2.1 Factors associated with the society as a whole

Demographic Factors

The various studies that include Gibbons and Ramirez (2004) and Myers-Scotton (2006) have related the minority language maintenance to a number of demographic factors, which include the number of speakers living together, concentration of the residential pattern and the physical proximity to original homes. They have argued that large numbers of speakers that live together in a community are likely to maintain their languages due to the frequent interactions among the members using the same language. Myers-Scotton (2006: 91) established that the size of the group matters most in language maintenance. From examples of the Hungarian migrant groups that are residing in Slovakia and Austria, she observed that the high Hungarian population living in some of the 400 established villages within the Slovak-Hungary border has necessitated the maintenance of the language and managed to overshadow Slovak, the national language, both in the education and media institutions. In contrast, in Austria, the small sized Hungarian speaking community has failed to maintain their language in the face of the German speaking majority (Myers-Scotton, 2006). Thus, as discussed above the various studies have concluded and insisted that the sizes of the minority language speaking communities have got a great bearing on language maintenance.

The UNESCO (2002) study on endangered languages observed that the numerical disadvantage of most of the small speech communities or linguistic minorities have made them to easily merge with larger ones and in the process give up their language and culture. This is perceived in contrast to the larger migrant or indigenous groups that are able to

diffuse the pressure of the host community and in a process maintain their languages. Thus, it gives the impression that demographic patterns have serious implications on language maintenance.

Although a relatively positive picture has been portrayed in the above section, some concerns have been expressed about the inability of the large number of speakers to maintain the language. Hakuta (1992) studies in USA and Garcia (2003) in Canada and Australia have discovered that some large sized migrant groups failed to retain their original language and instead adopted English. They have argued that the groups in these respective countries succumbed to pressure and shifted to the more dominant or instrumental language, which served their interests better. Contrary to the views that small numbered migrant groups fail to maintain their languages, Burnaby (1993) has argued that the maintenance of the aboriginal languages in Canada is among the small sized groups. Similarly, Hatoss (2003) states that the small number of Hungarians living in Queensland, Australia, have managed to maintain their mother tongue among dominant speakers of English. In this case, generalizations or assertions of language maintenance based on the number or size of migrant populations are risky because there is no such direct relation. Thus, the ambivalent results and contradiction derived defeat the whole idea of predicting language maintenance based on demographics of communities.

Other causes of maintenance that relate to demographics include the distribution and proximity of the people within the language group. Garcia (2003) and Batibo (2005) observed that a group physically concentrated with people living in one village likely maintains the language because of the frequent interactions among its ethnic members. The

argument in both studies is that a close-knit residential pattern has a positive impact on maintenance because it ensures the preservation of the various aspects that unify the ethnic group, which include language and cultural ideologies. Holmes (1993) and Myers-Scotton (2006) further argue that the proximity or contiguity provides a chance of retaining the traditional language. Thus, it promotes orientation of the new generations to the ethnic language and culture of the homeland.

However, the foregoing account is impossible in instances where the respective ethnic language lacks market value. Largely, it is established that most often, groups strive to adopt or maintain the language that has value and ensures maximum access to benefits (Holmes, 1993 and Kamanga, 1998). Simmons (2003: 11) indicates that individuals adopt or maintain profitable languages that enhance their well-being and contribute positively to their social identity. Therefore, proximity and a concentrated living pattern is not an end to the maintenance of minority languages unless complemented by other factors, for instance language value. In this regard, the status of a language in minority communities does not solely hinge on them. Thus, verification can be done upon conducting a substantive study on their impact in relation to the other aspects.

Education, Occupation and Institutional Factors

Apart from the demographic factors, other scholars such as Garcia and Cuevas (1995), Schiffman (1998), and Garcia (2003) have shown that education, occupation and institution levels are crucial to the maintenance of minority languages. In their studies, they established that low level educated language groups have more chances of retaining their traditional language unlike those that are highly educated. Schiffman (1998) discovered that educated Tamils in Malaysia go about seeking more opportunities that require use of the language

acquired from school hence low chances of maintaining their vernacular. Similarly, Garcia (2003) observed that most educated Mexicans living in the United States of America are less likely to use their vernacular, Spanish; instead they spend most of the time using English which gives them access to maximum benefits or a high status. Thus, the studies portray a picture that educated people fail to maintain the traditional language as they are highly influenced by their educational level or occupational status in the society.

However, Garcia and Cuevas (1995) have objected to such views and argued that the highly educated act as bilingual teachers thereby professionally orienting their fellow ethnic members without necessarily shifting the vernacular language. In fact, this has brought an understanding that the uneducated are easily lured to adopt the language perceived as valuable in the society because they lack exposure to know its consequences. This contradicts the idea that a high level of education is an absolute catalyst of language shift not maintenance (Holmes, 1993). In order to avoid the aforementioned contradiction on the influence of the level of education in language maintenance, empirical studies not predictions have to be undertaken for each particular minority or indigenous language. Thus, this implies that an empirical study on Chisenga is appropriate to establish the kind of impact that the level of education of its natives has on the language maintenance.

Beside the factors discussed above, institutions such as educational, religious, media and the government are collectively identified as influencing maintenance of the minority language (McAlpine and Herodier, 1994, and Jeon, 2008). In fact, they have defined schools as education institutions where most of the language socialization takes place. It is indicated that the languages can either be taught as subjects or medium of instruction so much so that

the failure to fall in between any of the two aspects minimises their chances of being retained at school level. However, Yashiro (1992) and Gibbons and Ramirez (2004: 151) argue that though the public school atmosphere has not favoured the individual and social needs of immigrant communities, the languages can be maintained in their own school set up. Gibbons and Ramirez (2004) indicated that societies have put in place a system of ‘ethnic’ or ‘Saturday’ schools, where students both from primary and secondary schools obtain minority language instruction thereby assisting greatly in keeping the languages alive. It is also observed that such maintenance classes are offered by private institutions (Yashiro, 1992). Holmes, Roberts, Verivaki and Aipolo (1990) and Garcia (2003) have recognized the establishment of such private schools among the minority groups in New Zealand and USA, which remarkably provided a radical step towards the maintenance of the ethnic languages.

Nevertheless, the existence of community and private schools is not an end to the maintenance of the minority or indigenous languages. Holmes (1993) argues that despite the involvement of the schools some of the ethnic minorities have miserably failed to maintain their languages. The most cogent reason behind this has been pointed out as lack of materials and the government’s support in training teachers. Joen (2008) adds that most of the ethnic members withdraw from the schools since they do not earn any academic credit for attendance as in public schools. The demotivation is aggravated when the language lacks an instrumental value (Holmes, 1993). Thus, the availability of the language teaching institutions and the use of the language as a medium of instruction cannot explicitly provide predictive assertion on the minority language maintenance.

Peterson (1997) and Garcia (2003), among others, have noted the influence of mass media as a factor in language maintenance. These include both the electronic and print media. On the part of the electronic media, Peterson's (1997) study of Navajo ethnic group in USA discovered that radio and television stations established in the area had greatly influenced the maintenance of the traditional language. Similarly, Garcia (2003) comments that Koreans are induced by the Korean television and radio programmes in the maintenance of their language in the USA. Besides this, the print media has also influenced maintenance of the minority languages. Pan (2001: 239) indicates that Chinese language is maintained in the USA because of the easy access to the Chinese magazines and newspapers. Garcia (2003) cited the regular publication of English newspapers in Australia as accelerating the maintenance of the language above all the other factors. Rohani et al (www.tc.columbia.edu/centers/cmll/publish, 2009) also argues that the maintenance of Japanese in the USA has been inevitable because parents force their children to use the language and engage with media that is in Japanese, which include novels, comics, newspapers and books. Thus, the media is among the effective means of maintaining minority languages.

However, the fact that most of the electronic media stations, whether television or radio, have to get consent from the government for operation means that the languages used in these institutions have to be in compliance with government policies. Nyati-Ramahobo (2008) reports that the government of Botswana has instituted the use of English (official) and Setswana (local) languages only in both private and public television and radio stations, which means that the other minority languages have been neglected. Such government interference on which language to be used as official or unofficial has adversely affected the maintenance of the minority languages. Thus, not all languages can be prioritised in the

media hence it is not the absolute way of deducing language maintenance in a particular ethnic group.

Religion has also been recognized as a powerful force as regards the maintenance of minority or indigenous languages. Gibbons and Ramirez (2004) indicate that unofficially, religion can induce maintenance because churches, mosques, and temples serve as centres of social activity. They argue that the Greek Orthodox Church apart from being a major site for meeting of Greek speakers also serves as a catalyst for the maintenance of the variety in Australia. In consensus, Holmes et al (1990) have indicated that in New Zealand, Greek plays an essential role as a liturgical language and the church, Greek Orthodox, is the focus of the whole community. In Sydney, the weekly use of Spanish in various church services has facilitated the maintenance of the language among immigrants (Gibbons and Ramirez, 2004). Thus, apart from reinforcing the social interaction the church has supported the maintenance of different languages.

Despite the earlier observation, Holmes et al (1990) counter-argued that not all languages of the migrant ethnics are privileged to have an emotional or traditional attachment with the church service, for instance, the Chinese and Cantonese language in New Zealand. Myers-Scotton (2006: 103) also claims that Puerto Rican immigrants in USA have resorted to using English in their churches in order to attract young people who do not have the mind-set of planning to go back to Puerto Rico. It is argued that they prefer to worship in English despite retaining their original Latino cultural values, which includes food. Therefore, the church or any form of gathering should not always be expected to serve as places for retaining the migrant or minority languages because people adopt the varieties that are perceived to be

valuable. Thus, empirical investigations are necessary to ascertain whether there is any impact on language maintenance from the church dominated by members of a particular linguistic minority.

2.3.2.2 Individual or Ethnic group related factors.

The role of Attitudes and Ethnicity

The role of attitudes or identity beliefs to language maintenance has been recognized by a number of scholars including Holmes (1990), Kayambazinthu (1995), Zimpita (2003), Smieja (2003), Gibbons and Ramirez (2004), and Myers-Scotton (2006). They have classified attitudes as positive, negative or indifferent depending on the degree of symbolic or socio-economic value manifested by each language. In these studies the speakers' attitudes have determined the maintenance or shift of the language, the inter-generational transmission or non-transmission of the language and the expansion or reduction of the domains in which it is used. The case in point is that of the positive attitudes executed by the Tongan immigrants in New Zealand towards their language because it holds the symbolic value of their culture (Holmes et al 1990). Similarly, Kayambazinthu (1995) established that the speakers' positive attitude towards Tumbuka language is a result of its symbolic or utilitarian value in the maintenance of their ethnic identity. Zimpita (2003) noted that the Asian socio-economic standing has encouraged them to positively maintain their traditional language. Similarly, Kamanga (1999) and Kishindo (2003) observed that lack of socio-economic value influenced the Ngoni to shift into the languages of the majority. Both have deduced that the different attitudes of the speakers were dependent on how they valued their language in comparison to that of the majority. Thus, positive or negative attitudes evolve out of the speakers' perception of the language's symbolic or utilitarian value.

However, the fact that attitude is individually though sometimes socially constructed, means that the studies conducted are not conclusive on the patterns of behaviour for different ethnic groups. Kayambazinthu (1989) and Matiki (1996) studies on the Lomwe indicate that their inferior attitude to maintain their ethnic language emerged from the prejudices that were directed towards them by the host community. In this regard, Hatoss (2003: 72) notes that attitudes in relation to ethnicity and identity are multi-faceted hence not unidirectional to language maintenance. Thus, no one can predict the people's attitudes towards their minority or indigenous languages since they are dynamic and vary with different individual speakers or language groups.

Other studies have adopted Smolicz (1981) argument that wherever language is regarded as crucial to the speakers' cultural identity, people are more likely to maintain it longer irrespective of the pressure from majority group and culture. This revolves around the speakers' positive attitudes to retain the language as a means of preserving cultural identity. However, others have counter-argued that it is sometimes possible for the ethnics to preserve their ethnic identity without even retaining the traditional languages. Kishindo (2003: 216) study on the Ngoni cited the loss of Chingoni language but the maintenance of cultural identity through dances and songs. Therefore, despite the speakers shifting to another language they have maintained their cultural identity through other traditional customs. In view of this, it can be argued that the relationship between identity and language maintenance still remains problematic and it is not unidirectional (Hatoss, 2003). The key point is that ethnics vary considerably in the priority they give to various aspects that denote the identity (Smolicz, 1981). This means that the positive identity markers do not usually

indicate an instance of language maintenance. Therefore, it remains to be established whether there is a unidirectional relationship between identity and language maintenance in the Nsenga community.

Preference of intra-ethnic marriages

This is also regarded as one of the important factors in the maintenance of the minority or indigenous languages. Holmes et al (1990) study of three communities that include Tongan, Greeks and Chinese, in New Zealand found that young people are encouraged to find partners and marry within their ethnic groups. She argued that parents would even organise a trip back home to pre-arrange for the marriage of their children in support of the language maintenance at community level. Similarly, Garcia (2003), and Sanchez-Castro and Gil (2009) in their respective studies found that the ‘endogamous’ marriages influence the maintenance because the children grow up using more of their parents traditional ethnic language than children from inter-ethnic marriages. Thus, the intra-ethnic marriages have a substantial weight against the shift from the minority languages.

However, the foregoing view is possible only if the linguistic minorities live in physically distinguishable ethnic groups. Holmes et al (1990) observed that linguistic minorities that live in less physically identified groups readily accept intermarriages because to a greater extent they are unable to withstand the pressure from members of the dominant group. Such ‘exogamous’ partnerships most of the times settle for a particular dominant language that best serves them in the everyday affairs (Clyne and Kipp, 1997). Apart from this observation, Odisho (2001) claims that the exogamous marriages are also influenced by different conditions which include, higher education, mobility and income. It is, therefore, the

language of high value which is adopted in such families. Consequently, the applicability of the above conditions renders it difficult to predict the maintenance of minority languages in intra-ethnic marriages. The ambivalence of the results signifies the importance of evaluating the respective communities to establish their impact on language maintenance.

A positive orientation to the homeland

It is argued that frequent visits to the original homes reinforce language maintenance in migrant communities. Hulsén, de Bot and Weltens (2002) study on the migrant Dutch minority in New Zealand established that their ties with the homeland enhanced the maintenance of the ethnic language. Similarly, Gil and Sanchez-Castro (2009: 38) observed that strong links with the country of origin and on-going contact with family and friends both promote maintenance. Matiki (1996: 21) discovered that lack of direct contacts of the Lomwe in Malawi with the people from their area of origin in Mozambique partly affected the motive of retaining their native language. According to Holmes (1990), the homeland is crucial to the young generation because it provides them with good reason of using the ethnic language over the second language. Consequently, it is adjudged that the absence of such ties predicts less maintenance of the traditional language. Thus, the migrant's strong ties with his or her original homeland, though not an ultimate factor provides a motive for maintenance of his or her minority language.

However, though it is inherent for the migrants to visit their original homes at some point that does not guarantee the maintenance of the traditional variety. It is reported that the Vietnamese are able to visit frequently their original homes from the USA but that has yielded nothing as regards to reinforcing the use of their traditional language (Myers-Scotton,

2006). She argues further that most of them opt for English because of its instrumental value. Apart from this, the young people might also fail to sustain the inter-generational maintenance when the language is already devalued because they do not want to be associated with it. Rohani, Choi, Amjad, Burnett and Colahan (www.tc.columbia.edu/centers/cmll/publish, 2009) have indicated that young children are sometimes influenced by the school language to become more assimilated into the dominant society. Therefore, from the above arguments there is no direct relation between the regular visit to one's original home and the minority language maintenance. Thus, such a gap can be redressed through detailed studies of the impact that the visits have on the respective ethnic groups in regard to the maintenance of languages.

The Role of Ideology in Language Maintenance

'Ideology' in language maintenance refers to perceptions about the use of language varieties in the interest of a specific group. According to Kroskrity (1998) and Myers-Scotton (2006), ideology can be crucial in language maintenance because the group expresses the sense of oneness. They have cited an example of the Arizona Tewa Indians who up to date have lived as a distinct cultural group despite accommodating some of the values of the host communities that include the Hopi and Euro-Americans. It is argued that their dominant ideological aspects are linguistically conservative because they all contribute to the maintenance of the Tewa language. For instance, they believe in 'ceremonial ideology' for fixed prayer without language innovations, 'Tewa talk' for ceremonies, and 'Purist Ideology' that disregards input from other languages (Myers-Scotton, 2006: 140).

Besides this, Jeon (2008) explored the relationship between language ideologies and maintenance among Korean Americans of different generations. In the study he discovered that many parents with young school going children hold assimilationist ideologies and speak to their children in English only, and shift to the pluralistic ideologies of supporting their children to learn Korean once they are in college. Therefore, Korean is perceived as desirable in addition to English according to the ideologies of the Korean immigrants (Jeon, 2008). In view of the foregoing, each ethnic group that values its own language has particular ideologies aimed at maintaining the respective language. It is against this background that the study finds it significant to explore some of the Nsenga ideologies that have impacted on the maintenance of the language.

2.3.2.3 National language policies

Many scholars including Batibo (2005), Myers-Scotton (2006), Nyati-Ramahobo (2008), and David (2008) recognize the role national language policies play in solving language problems that includes the maintenance of minority or indigenous languages. They have raised a general observation that government policies in different countries have incorporated the need to engage in the practical or utilitarian use of the minority or indigenous languages. For instance, Namibia adopted a policy that says indigenous or minority languages should be elevated to a national status (Batibo, 2005). Similarly, Nyati-Ramahobo (2008) indicated that in Botswana the policies have called for direct funding of linguistic associations that focus on culture and language development. Therefore, it is observed that many countries have managed to develop paperwork policies that aspire to maintain minority languages.

However, some concerns have been expressed about government policies being too superficial as they have lacked implementation. Batibo (2005) argues that the Namibian policy to support indigenous or minority languages is merely symbolic because it has recognized two languages namely English and Afrikaans, as official and national languages respectively whilst the others have been neglected. This signifies that implementation of policies is a big problem for many governments. Besides this, it is also on record that some governments do not have explicit policies to the extent that they neglect the responsibility of maintaining languages, for instance in Cameroon it is the Non-Governmental Organisations that decide on the languages to be retained (Myers-Scotton, 2006). Thus, the mere codification of the minority or indigenous languages in the policies of various governments does not imply commitment to language maintenance.

A number of scholars (Hakuta, 1992; Hernandez-Chavez, 2000; Garcia, 2003; and David, 2008) have indicated that language policies directly impact on both socio-economic and political status of the minority language. They have argued that most language policies prioritise the maintenance of languages that have better economic and political status in a country. Myers-Scotton (2006: 382) corroborates the idea and explains that the Australian government policy offers support to only the minority languages that bring economic benefits to the nation. Therefore, this means that governments exert a lot of effort to retain only the minority languages that have economic and political value.

On political status, both the government policies and overall support rendered to the languages have great impact on either shift or maintenance. Myers-Scotton (2006: 385) has argued that some minority or indigenous languages are favoured because of their political

and numerical dominance, for instance Beti language is favoured in Cameroon because politically it is the first language of the current president who has been in power since 1982. Similarly, the overwhelming support of English as official and national language in the USA indicates that the political status of the country in reality disregard the presence of other linguistic minorities (Hakuta, 1992). Thus, the economic and political status has impacted greatly on the linguistic minorities turning most of them into subordinate positions. Hence, it remains to be established whether Chisenga maintenance is related to both political and economic status factors.

2.4 The Dynamics of Language Maintenance: Irregular Patterns

The foregoing discussion generates debate on the regular factors and patterns that have resulted in the maintenance of minority or indigenous languages. Similar to Batibo's (2005) observation, the critical analysis above fails to establish a regular pattern of factors that contribute to the maintenance of the languages because the factors regarded as a cause of language maintenance in one group have impacted negatively on the other. This implies that the differences among linguistic minorities perpetuate the maintenance factors to differ too. Therefore, failure to identify a particular factor or pattern behind language maintenance from the global, regional and local studies underscores the significance of conducting a study in the Nsenga ethnic group. In this regard, due to the irregular pattern of maintenance factors, empirical studies of each minority language should be done to substantiate the theoretical understanding. Thus, the study avoids the risk of predicting factors influencing the maintenance of Chisenga because a single factor may have one effect in one community but the opposite in another.

2.5 Chapter summary

The chapter has presented an overview of the various studies done on language maintenance and the debates initiated from them. A number of factors discussed as causes of language maintenance have failed to present a regular pattern in the various studies. Hence this study deduces that there are no conclusive results to the factors accelerating maintenance and on this perspective it views that an empirical investigation has to be undertaken in the Nsenga communities.

Chapter Three

Methodology

3.1 Chapter Overview

This chapter discusses the techniques and justifies the research paradigms that have been used in the study. It explains and justifies the data collection methods and analysis procedures used in the research. The research used both qualitative and quantitative data collection methods. The qualitative method focused on the language attitudes and behaviour towards the maintenance of Chisenga. The quantitative paradigm was used on the basis of enumeration and the statistical calculations done to find out the possibility of the case.

3.2 Research Design

Since the study focused on the ethnic's language attitudes or behaviour towards the maintenance of Chisenga, it took into consideration both the qualitative and quantitative research approaches. The quantitative paradigm was used on the assumption that the statistical measures are to discover the reality which is in this case consistent with the behaviour of the subjects (Bryman, 2003, and Saville-Troike, 1982). The qualitative paradigm was used despite being assumed subjective because the research also focused on the possible meanings, beliefs, experiences and influences of the behaviour. Hence, the two paradigms were combined for the purposes of triangulation and as argued by Bryman (2003) that the combination of several lines of sight helps the researcher obtain a better and more substantive picture. As such, the study found it crucial to combine the research approaches in order to derive the substantive results.

The study employed the ‘mixed method design’ or ‘dominant-less dominant design’. Using this approach the researcher presents the study within a single dominant paradigm but elements of the other paradigm are adopted to answer particular questions (Cresswell, 1994). In this study, quantitative approach is the dominant paradigm with qualitative elements being employed with regard to the questions of the language attitudes or habits. The quantitative approach was largely employed because the study aimed at exploring and quantifying objective experiences, and essentially the degree of consistency in behaviour, and amount and nature of variation in language use in the various domains, and according to Saville-Troike (1982:117), this is best achieved through quantitative means. Both approaches in this design helped the researcher to unearth the information behind the use of Chisenga in some of the villages in Mchinji district. Thus, it gave the researcher a chance to probe beyond the native speakers’ avowed assertions, experiences behind some behaviours and understanding of some events.

3.3 Sampling Procedures

3.3.1 Study area

As earlier stated, Mchinji district is situated to the western side of the central region and it has an estimated total population of 324,098 people (NSO Population Census Report, 1998). The study was carried out in three villages namely Kayesa (in TA Zulu), Nyoka (in TA Mduwa) and Menyani (in TA Mlonyeni) (see map in Appendix 4). The choice of the Chisenga speaking villages and Traditional Authorities was purposive simply because they are the most well-known since migration from the present day Zambia. Secondly, a good part of them are situated along the border where there are regular interactions with other Nsenga relations, traders and smugglers. The researcher also noted that most of the people from the

three villages are involved in foreign currency exchange deals along the Malawi-Zambia border. They are able to interact and offer services to the residents of either country. Apart from this, a handful of the people engage in farming and sell their produce to vendors who smuggle it into Zambia (Mchinji Socio-economic profile; 2008-2012). Thus, the socio-economic activities of the area, which include subsistence farming, trade, money laundering and smuggling of goods, are the main means of economic sustenance.

Furthermore, the villages were purposively identified because the study targeted Chisenga respondents that manifested the values of the Nsenga ethnic members from Mpezeni kingdom and not just claimants. In this regard, the three villages manifested the most salient cultural features of the Nsenga, which include dances like Ingoma, Insindo, Masewe, and the Ncwala ceremony which is performed annually. With regard to the information solicited from the key informant interviews, Ncwala is the ritual ceremony which usually takes place at Mtenguleni, the Mpezeni headquarters in Zambia. Respondents reported that several cultural activities are performed at the ceremony and these include presentation of tithe to the king, killing of a cow with a spear, dances like Ingoma, Insindo and Chitelela among others. However, despite being regarded as a Ngoni ceremony it is reported to be dominated by the use of Chisenga rather than Chingoni. Thus, respondents indicated that the ceremony is dominated by Chisenga and a smattering of Chingoni in some instances.

In fact, the respondents argued that Ncwala has greatly promoted the values of the Nsenga and at the same time created a boundary with the hosts Chewa's Kulamba ceremony performed at Mkaika in Katete, Zambia. This is in comparison to the Chewa ethnics of the area who are well known with dances such as Chimtali, Mganda, Nyau and the annual

Kulamba ceremonial event. The Nsenga also differ greatly from the Chewa in marriage systems because, as the study has established, the former are patrilineal and the latter are matrilineal. There are also subtle differences in their types of food although the Nsenga spoke highly of beer drinking. Thus, the cultural ceremonial events and marriage systems establish the more elaborate boundary indices between the Nsenga and Chewa ethnic groups.

It is also crucial to indicate that the Nsenga live in concentrated settlement patterns. They have maintained what was earlier reported by Pachai (1973) that two villages were established upon their arrival in Mchinji, namely Zulu and Mlonyeni respectively. This has remained the same until the present day though some other small villages have mushroomed with regard to the increase of the Nsenga population. The inhabitants of the villages interact freely among themselves and other different neighbouring ethnics, including their relations in Zambia. Thus, they have a concentrated settlement pattern and they often visit their original homeland, namely, Zambia.

3.3.2 Research sample

The study collected data from a total of 150 respondents who were categorised by age and sex. It purposively targeted the subjects who displayed the characteristics of belonging to original Nsenga background. Apart from the ordinary people or residents, the sample also constituted of key informants who were purposively sampled and interviewed because of being regarded as rich sources or gatekeepers of information on the subject. These included three chiefs' elders from each village, three senior group village headmen, Mudziwathu community radio station manager and three other prominent business people from the Nsenga ethnic group.

The study had equal number of representatives categorised into the age ranges of 13-35years (for young people), 36-55 (for middle aged) and 56+ (for the old); and these constitute the commonly used age ranges for language maintenance (Msajila, 2004). Children below 13 years were deliberately left out because they are within the critical language acquisition period in which they can acquire other languages and make a difference to language maintenance. However, the study used the observation method on the children in order to satisfy the objective of inter-generational language transmission. Thus, the variables of age, sex and vitality were used to assess whether the native Nsenga members continue to speak the language or not.

3.3.3 Sampling Techniques

The study employed a multi-stage sampling technique because the question of language maintenance was being dealt with at different levels. In the first instance, at the district level a purposive sampling was used to identify the villages that have more native speakers of Chisenga in comparison with others. After the selection of the villages, the same purposive technique was also employed to list the households that are ethnically of Nsenga background. The justification of using the technique was to engage the respondents that have an in-depth knowledge of the linguistic and cultural background of the ethnic group.

The households to be interviewed were selected using the probability sampling technique. The researcher established that the TAs have the following population and households, Zulu; 63,054 people and 13,483 households; Mlonyeni, 27,181 people and 5,659 households; and Mduwa 58,363 people and 12,070 households. This gives a total of 148,598 people and 31,212 households (NSO, 1998 Census report). However, due to the fact that the total

number included people from different ethnic backgrounds other than the Nsenga, the researcher was induced to purposively sample the concerned Nsenga households only. Therefore, the Nsenga household listings derived in the villages were as follows: Menyani registered 203 households, Nyoka totalled 257 households, and Kayesa recorded 190 households. Despite the differences in the number of Nsenga households, the study initially opted for proportional representation of at least 50 respondents from each village in order to give them equal chances of inclusion and avoid unnecessary variations. In this case, the *nth number* for sample selection of each village was derived upon dividing the total Nsenga household number of the village by sample size of 50. The technique was suitable because it helped to avoid subjectivity or bias in selecting the households.

However, at each household the respondents were selected using the purposive quota sampling technique. In this technique, the researcher chose a particular member of the family according to age and sex in order to satisfy the age range categories that were established at the outset of the study. However, it is essential to indicate that Menyani had 49 respondents because the researcher was informed about a sudden death in the village and people were preparing for the funeral hence it was resolved to interview 51 respondents in Kayesa village. The difference of two people had no significant changes to the results of the study because more than three quarters of the respondents were already interviewed in Menyani village. Thus, the study involved the multi-stage levels of sampling from the district through the respondent at household level.

3.4 Data collection techniques and tools

In this study data was collected using three techniques namely: the survey, interview and participant-observations. Below is the detailed discussion on the techniques and tools used in gathering the different kind of data.

3.4.1 Survey Questionnaires

The questionnaire was the main data collection tool of the survey and it targeted 150 respondents, 50 from each village. The questionnaires gathered data on the issues like demographic information, linguistic repertoires, patterns of language acquisition and use, issues to do with language identity and maintenance among others. There were more closed than open questions in order to avoid unnecessary variations on the state of Chisenga in the area. However, a few open questions were incorporated and respondents expressed their views freely but without unnecessary variations.

Questionnaire Administration

To ensure the high response rate, the researcher avoided giving out the survey questionnaires to the respondents to fill. Instead, the researcher asked the questions from the questionnaire and recorded the respondents' answers on the same questionnaires. The author employed Chisenga language in asking questions to respondents in order to collect more valuable data. Thus, the questionnaires were self-administered by the researcher.

3.4.2 Key Informant Interview Schedule

The key informant interview schedule as a tool had a set of general questions on the themes of historical background, migration, economic and other maintenance issues. It asked specific questions aimed at gathering data on the themes raised to the key informants that included

the chiefs' elders, village headmen, business people and Mudziwathu Community radio station manager. Therefore, it collected information on the history, socio-cultural and economic background of the Nsenga through the opinion of leaders in the villages.

3.4.3 Participant Observation

Apart from the two techniques mentioned above, the study also used the participant observation method to gather data on some patterned forms of cultural behaviours and the overall sociolinguistic situation. A tape recorder and writing pad were used to record the behaviour shown by the respondents in the course of the data collection and some other group activities that took place within the period. Thus, the tools helped in the retrieving or decoding the data at the analysis stage.

3.5 Data analysis

With regard to the objectives of the study, the data was analysed both quantitatively and qualitatively. The Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) was used in the analysis of quantitative data to come up with frequencies and correlations that depict the extent of the Chisenga maintenance. The qualitative data, that included participant observation data and the key informant data, was categorised accordingly and derived patterns of interpreting language maintenance. Similar concepts from these two types of data, participant observation and key informant interviews, were grouped together and complemented the arguments on the themes generated from the quantitative data.

3.6 Ethical Considerations

The study had to abide to the ethical research standards as it sought consent from the chiefs and respondents themselves before conducting and recording the interview. The data

collected was treated with a high sense of confidentiality so that it should not jeopardise the privacy of respondents in respective areas. In this case, no names have been divulged as to who said what. Thus, these included some of the steps that were taken to avoid posing the respondents or subjects to great danger for responding to sensitive issues.

3.7 Problems, Challenges and Limitations of the study

The major limitation for the study was the issue surrounding the re-demarcation exercise of the borderlines of Malawi and Zambia. Most of the people were afraid to respond to the questionnaire because they thought that it is an investigation aimed at repatriating the Zambian nationals who are resident in Malawi. They suspected that a common denominator of identifying them is the use of Chisenga language. But the researcher addressed this problem by ensuring them that the study was being conducted for academic purposes as stipulated in the identification letter from the institution.

Secondly, some of the villagers could not understand that the project was an academic exercise hence nothing in form of reward as a token of appreciation would be given to those involved. In fact this issue arose because some funded research institutions or individuals had given money or other materials to respondents. Such villagers were convincingly talked to on the type and purposes of the research.

The study found it difficult to deduce the absolute native speakers of the language because of the incorporation of the different ethnic group members from intermarriages, migration, employment and trade among the other reasons. However, this was mitigated by obtaining the respondents general characteristics and a detailed examination of a number of factors related to their language use.

3.8 Chapter summary

The chapter has given an overview of how the study was carried out. It includes the data collection methods, justifications of the methods and approaches that were used in the study. The subsequent chapters, four and five, will discuss the findings and conclusion respectively.

Chapter Four

Results and Discussion

4.1 Chapter Overview

This chapter presents and discusses the results of the study. The discussion responds to the study objectives and relates the findings to the three theories that have been incorporated as the guiding framework to the study. The chapter is divided into three main sections. Firstly, it identifies the people that frequently use Chisenga in the study area. Secondly, it elaborates on the patterns of language use in different domains, and examines people's perception on the significance of maintaining Chisenga over other languages in various domains. Thirdly, the chapter discusses possible factors that have facilitated the inter-generational transmission and maintenance of Chisenga in Mchinji district.

4.2 Demographic characteristics of Chisenga native speakers.

4.2.1 Identification of the Chisenga speakers by age, marital status and birthplace

One of the objectives of the study was to identify Chisenga speakers among the residents of the three villages. The study achieved this by examining the general characteristics of the respondents because they directly impact on the factors that result in language maintenance. The general characteristics on age groups indicated whether the old generations have managed or failed to pass on the language to younger children. Data on marital status determined the actual number of speakers who are single or married to fellow ethnic members (endogamous) and live together hence revealing more on the language taught to the children and intergenerational switching. Birth place exposed the respondent's physical

nearness to their original homes and concentration of the residential pattern. Data on respondent's demographic characteristics is presented in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1 Demographic summary of respondents' age, marital status, birthplace and education.

Generation/Age	Menyani		Kayesa		Nyoka		Total Aggregate	
13 – 35 yrs	16	33%	20	39%	16	32%	52	35%
36 – 55 yrs	17	34%	21	41%	16	32%	54	36%
56+ yrs	16	33%	10	20%	18	36%	44	29%
Total/Aggregate	49	100%	51	100%	50	100%	150	100%
Marital Status								
Never Married	14	29%	20	39%	12	24%	46	31%
Married	27	55%	31	61%	29	58%	87	58%
Separated	3	6%			5	10%	8	5%
Divorced	1	2%			1	2%	2	1%
Widowed	4	8%			3	6%	7	5%
Total/Aggregate	49	100%	51	100%	50	100%	150	100%
Birthplace								
Malawi	39	80%	44	86%	29	58%	112	75%
Zambia	10	20%	7	14%	21	42%	38	25%
Total/Aggregate	49	100%	51	100%	50	100%	150	100%
Education								
None	17	35%	12	24%	26	52%	55	37%
PSLC	23	47%	23	45%	9	18%	55	37%
JSCE	9	18%	16	31%	15	30%	40	26%
Total/Aggregate	49	100%	51	100%	50	100%	150	100%

Data showed that the respondent's age ranged from 13 years to 84 years with the highest concentration on the age range 36-55 (36%) and 13-35 years (35%) followed by the age range of 56 years and above with 29%. There were slightly more males than females, representing 52% (N=78) and 48% (N=72) of the total respondents in the study respectively. The survey data further showed that the majority of the respondents 58% (N=87) were married whereas 31% had never been married; 5% widowed; 1% divorced and 5% separated. Findings also showed that 37% (N=55) of the total respondents had never gone to school

against a high proportion of 63% (N=95) who had formal education. In the findings, the age range of 36 to 55 years had many subjects simply because they were readily available and the most active in the village by the time of study.

4.2.2 Linguistic Background of the Respondents

The study collected survey data on the linguistic background of the respondents to find out their first, second and third languages. Table 4.2 below gives the summary of respondents' use of the languages.

Table 4.2 Summary on the respondents' linguistic background

Language	Category	Menyani		Kayesa		Nyoka		Aggregate	
Chisenga	1 st Lang	49	100%	49	96%	50	100%	148	99%
	2 nd Lang			2	4%			2	1%
	3 rd Lang								
	Total	49	100%	51	100%	50	100%	150	100%
Chichewa	1 st Lang			2	4%			2	1%
	2 nd Lang	47	96%	46	90%	48	96%	141	94%
	3 rd Lang	2	4%	3	6%	2	4%	7	5%
	Total	49	100%	51	100%	50	100%	150	100%
English	Nonspeak	17	35%	12	24%	26	52%	55	37%
	2 nd Lang								
	3 rd Lang	32	65%	39	76%	24	48%	95	63%
	Total	49	100%	51	100%	50	100%	150	100%
Bemba	Nonspeak	21	43%	31	61%	34	68%	86	57%
	2 nd Lang	2	4%	3	6%	2	4%	7	5%
	3 rd Lang	26	53%	17	33%	14	28%	57	38%
	Total	49	100%	51	100%	50	100%	150	100%

The survey data showed that majority of the respondents, 99% (N=148), acquired Chisenga as their first language against 1% (N=2) that acquired Chichewa. Data further revealed that 94% (N= 141) of the respondents acquired Chichewa as their second language compared to the 5% and 1% of Bemba and Chisenga respectively. The study established that 5% of the

respondents were more fluent in Bemba than Chichewa because they were oriented to the former whilst in Zambia. The data also showed that 63% and 38% of the respondents use English and Bemba as third languages respectively. Thus, the majority of the respondents, 94% (N= 141) were bilingual in Chisenga and Chichewa.

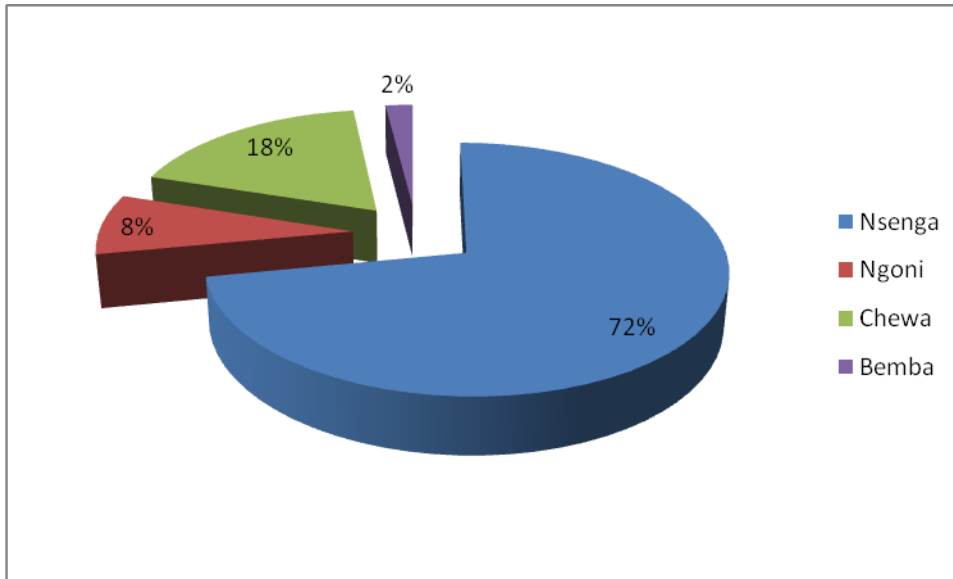
However, the dominant first language used was Chisenga with Chichewa and Bemba being used as second languages in some other institutions. The respondents did not rule out knowledge of Chichewa because of influences such as education and occupation. They claim to have learnt just enough of Chichewa to get by while avoiding all other forms of social interactions with the host ethnic members. What was interesting though is how they managed to learn using Chichewa and English at school but maintaining Chisenga at home. Therefore, the findings show bilingualism as a common feature of the respondents' linguistic background because no one reported to be monolingual in Chisenga.

The key informants mentioned the fact that Chisenga is maintained as the first language in the area because it is part of them. This corroborates with Swilla's (2005: 3) argument that ethnic members are expected to acquire the native language when it is often closely linked to their ethnicity. Similarly, the Nsenga expect every ethnic member to acquire Chisenga as the first language. It also agrees with Smolicz (1981) observation that when language is regarded as a core cultural value people are likely to maintain it longer despite pressures from other majority groups. Therefore, the fact that the Nsenga are oriented to Chisenga as the first language indicates that they live as a distinct cultural group despite accommodating languages of the host community.

4.2.3 Marriage patterns and birth place

Information on marital status determined the state of marriages in the Nsenga society, which is the rate of endogamous and exogamous marriages, and their impact on language maintenance. Figure 4.1 below present the rate of inter-marriages with other ethnic groups.

Figure 4.1. Rate of inter-marriages between the Nsenga and other ethnic groups

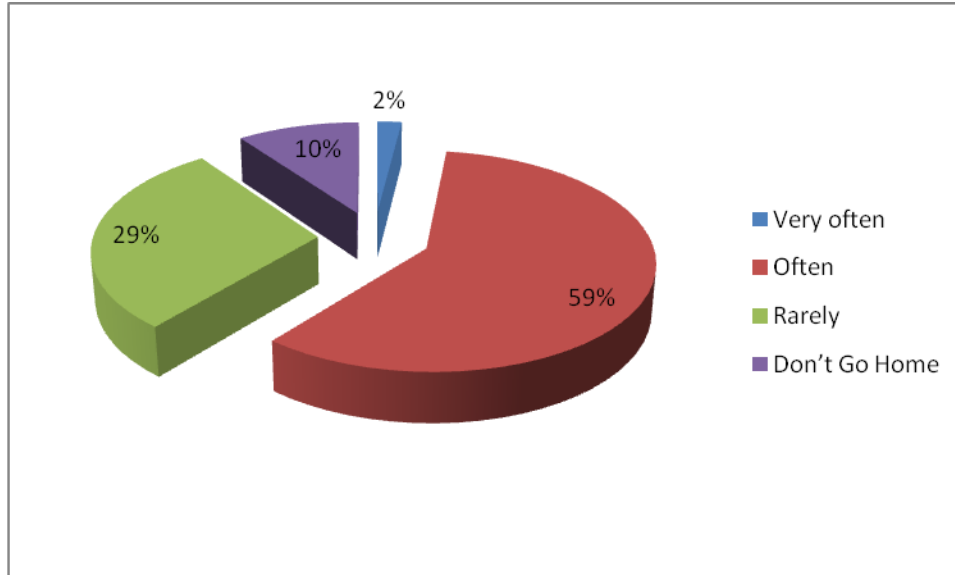


Data showed that overall, the majority of the marriages (72%, N=108) in the three villages are endogamous, that is between partners from the same Nsenga ethnic group, and 18% are married to Chewa, 8% and 2% married to Ngoni and Bemba respectively. However, survey data also revealed that Menyani village had a higher endogamous marriage rate at 86% (N=129) compared to Kayesa and Nyoka which have 82% and 50% respectively. The study recorded the higher rate of exogamous marriages with the Chewa in Nyoka village (47%) than in the other villages. Data also showed that 3% of the respondents from Kayesa are married to the Bemba.

The findings show that the areas of study are concentrated with Nsenga native speaker marriages. Information obtained during the key informant interviews indicated that parents encourage their children to find marriage partners among the Nsenga ethnics themselves, consequently the children born from such families have no choice but acquire Chisenga as the first language. The key informants also reported that their patrilineal marriage system forces the partners from other ethnic groups to stay in the village and adopt the Nsenga language and its cultural values. This finding agrees with Sanchez-Castro and Gil's (2009: 41) observation that resistance to inter-ethnic marriages supports language maintenance because children grow up using more of the parents' traditional ethnic language at the level of community interaction. It also subscribes to Giles (1977) ethnolinguistic vitality theory which argues that when the rate of mixed marriages is demographically low there is high concentration or proportion of native speakers hence maintenance of their language. Therefore, endogamous marriages among the Nsenga have influenced the maintenance of Chisenga in Mchinji district.

Apart from marital status and age, the birth place also proved to be an important characteristic for determining the status of Chisenga in the three villages under study. Table 4.1 also shows that 25% (N=38) of the respondents were born in Zambia, their place of origin, but 75% (N=112) reported to have been born in Malawi where the study was conducted. However, the study was interested to find out the frequency at which the Nsenga visit their place of origin. Therefore, Figure 4.2 presents the survey data on the frequency of home visits that the respondents make to their original home in Zambia.

Figure 4.2. Frequency of the respondents' home visits



Data showed that more than half of the respondents, 59% (N= 89), visit home ‘often,’ than 29% (N= 44) who ‘rarely’ go home. Only 2% indicated that they go home ‘very often’ against 10% who reported ‘not going home.’ The latter comprised a few of the younger generation who have not been given a chance to attend the cultural ceremonies in Zambia. The frequent home visits to the original homeland have strengthened the use and maintenance of Chisenga. This concurs with the literature on the positive orientation to the homeland. For instance, Hulsén et al (2002) indicated that the strong ties that Dutch minority in New Zealand established with homeland enhanced the ethnic language maintenance. The maintenance of Chisenga can also be mirrored from the perspective of Social Network theory which argues that language rises above linguistic change due to relative strength of the intensity of network ties of its speakers, in this case the Nsenga with relatives from the original homeland.

4.2.4 Level of education and Occupation of the respondents

The study collected data on the level of education and occupation of the subjects. Both variables showed impact on the lives and language use of the people in the three villages. Table 4.1 shows that 37% (N=55) of the total respondents had never gone to school against a high proportion of 63% (N=95) who had formal education. Out of this total aggregate, 52% (N= 26) was reported to be from Nyoka village followed by 35% (N= 17) from Menyani. Of these 63%, 37% had PSLC and 26% possessed JSCE. Nyoka had the highest qualified educated rate of respondents of the 63% with 30% JSCE holders. Almost 74% (N= 111) of the total respondents had PSLC and below. A few had JSCE.

The study observed that formal education did not have a substantial negative impact on use of Chisenga because of the linguistic environment that children encounter outside the classroom. Key informants and respondents (57%) reported that the interactions between the Nsenga children and others outside school are largely done in Chisenga. In addition, parents adopt or emphasize on the home language policy which restricts the school going children to Chisenga within and outside the home premises. Therefore, education is not a major force towards language shift in the Nsenga societies and this agrees with other studies, for instance, Gibbons and Ramirez (2004), who argued that despite the unfavourable public school atmosphere to maintain languages, the minorities can find their own means outside the school set up. However, it contends against the observation made by Garcia (2003) on the Mexican people in the USA that educated people are bound to shift their language because of their status in the society. Thus, the home language policy and constant interpersonal interactions are adequate to force school going children or educated people to use Chisenga.

The validity and reliability of the results were confirmed by the Chi-square C-test done on the null hypothesis that ‘there is no significant relationship between the level of education and language use in the home domain.’ The study established that the value of $X^2 = 2.563^2$, $P = 0.633$, therefore $P > 0.05$ (See Table 1 in Appendix 3), hence this shows acceptance of the above hypothesis. It indicates that the two domains use different languages and are not related in any way. Thus, there is a tangible difference in the use of the languages between the domains hence the Nsenga maintenance of the native language despite attending school.

Similarly, data was collected on occupation respondents assume after school to find out its impact on the maintenance of the language. Therefore, Table 4.3 presents data summary on respondents’ occupation.

Table 4.3. Summary of occupation respondents assume after school

Occupation	None		PSLC		JSCE		Aggregate	
Student			21	38%	18	45%	39	26%
Pastor			1	2%	1	2%	2	1%
Farmer	33	60%	20	36%	9	22%	62	42%
Business	2	4%	2	4%	1	3%	5	3%
Retired					1	3%	1	1%
Agro-Business	20	36%	11	20%	10	25%	41	27%
Aggregate	55	100%	55	100%	40	100%	150	100%

The survey data showed that 42% (N= 62) of the respondents were subsistence farmers as opposed to 27% of agro-business entrepreneurs, 26% students and 1% pastors. Those who were agro-business entrepreneurs, 25% were JSCE holders and 20% had PSLC. Data also revealed that despite being exposed to formal education most of the respondents’ occupations were fairly homogenous as either subsistence farmers or agro-business entrepreneurs.

Since most of the respondents were subsistence farmers followed by the agro-business entrepreneurs, they all agreed that Chisenga was the common and important language used when interacting with the traders from Zambia. The key informants who included businessmen reported that Chisenga had a good bargaining power. Similarly, the researcher observed that each time one arrived in Mchinji the taxi touts or drivers greeted would be customers in Chisenga, like “*Muli tyani mweo, manje muyenda border?*” (Which means; ‘How are you....? are you going to the border now?’). They ignored the significance of knowing ones’ ethnic background and the possible language used. Therefore, the Chisenga greetings or welcome remarks show the extent of the language’s bargaining power in the area.

The study found that though a good number of respondents had attended school, 55% with PSLC and 40% with JSCE, they are still inclined towards familiar occupations of agro-business and subsistence farming. The respondents expressed the view that they see no value in clinging to school languages, namely English and Chichewa, but maintaining Chisenga which is a trade language than Chichewa. This finding agrees with Simmons (2003: 11) that individuals adopt or maintain profitable languages that enhance their well-being and contribute positively to their social identity. It is also in consensus with Milroy and Milroy (1987) Social Network theory which stipulates that concentrated interactions among the speakers of the same language likely result into its maintenance. Similarly, the study is in line with the Ethno-linguistic Vitality theory claims of ‘language status’ as catalyst for maintenance but at the same time it differs from its assertion that only stronger languages used as medium of instruction in education have chances of survival. Thus, despite a good

number of the Nsenga attending formal education they still have maintained their minority native language because of its status in the trade domain.

Therefore, from the general demographic characteristics it can be seen that there are still many native speakers of Chisenga despite the long history of the area being dominated by the use of Chichewa. The study found that the speakers of Chisenga are highly concentrated in all age categories and this shows that parents pass on the language to their children. The data corroborates Holmes et al (1993:17), that the Nsenga have promoted the home language policy, which in this case restricts the family members to use Chisenga whenever in contact with fellow ethnic members and others who understand it. Therefore, despite the young age group being influenced by many underlying forces outside the ethnic language group, for instance, school peers and neighbourhood friends, parents in the area have acknowledged forcing their children to use the community language in the normal daily interactions. However, respondents also admitted that it is increasingly difficult to maintain the ethnic language when children start school which is dominated by the use of the host language. But the parents indicated that the dominance of Chisenga both in the trade and other socio-cultural activities have counteracted the effect of Chichewa in the area.

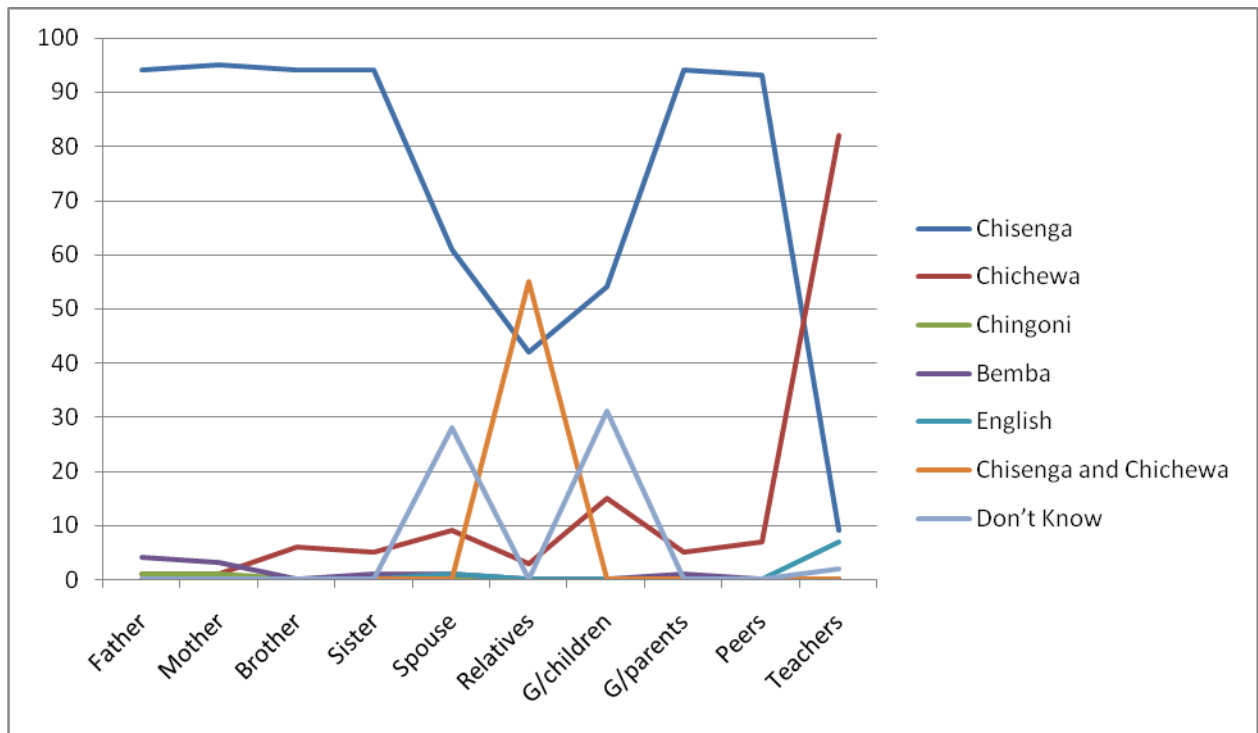
4.3 Language use patterns in various domains

The second objective of the study was to ascertain the language use pattern in the various domain settings. It was interested in establishing the significance of using Chisenga over the other languages in domains that included home, the neighbourhood and school. Below is the analysis of the various domains of language use in the study area.

4.3.1 Home/family domain

The home domain is crucial to the language maintenance because it is the area where the family members acquire the ethnic language (Gibbons and Ramirez, 2004). However, the family members may develop different language patterns depending on the social relations formed in their daily lives. Figure 4.3 below shows the extent to which different languages are used in the home domain when interacting with members of the family and others who are close to them.

Figure 4.3 Distribution of the languages used when interacting with family members



Overall, the survey data showed a higher percentage use of Chisenga (94%, N= 141) with all the members except when the respondents spoke to the relatives and teachers which had 42% and 9% respectively. More than half of the respondents, 55%, preferred to use both Chisenga and Chichewa when speaking to their relatives. The respondents argued that they are influenced to use both languages because relatives belonging to different ethnic groups

always choose the language that is mutually intelligible to them. Data from the survey also indicated that a very high proportion, 82%, of the respondents use Chichewa only when interacting with teachers from schools located in the Nsenga communities. Similarly, the respondents argued that teachers come from different ethnic backgrounds and regard Chichewa as the appropriate medium of communication for inter-ethnic communication. Thus, Chichewa is taken as language of inter-ethnic communication when other ethnic group members cannot understand Chisenga.

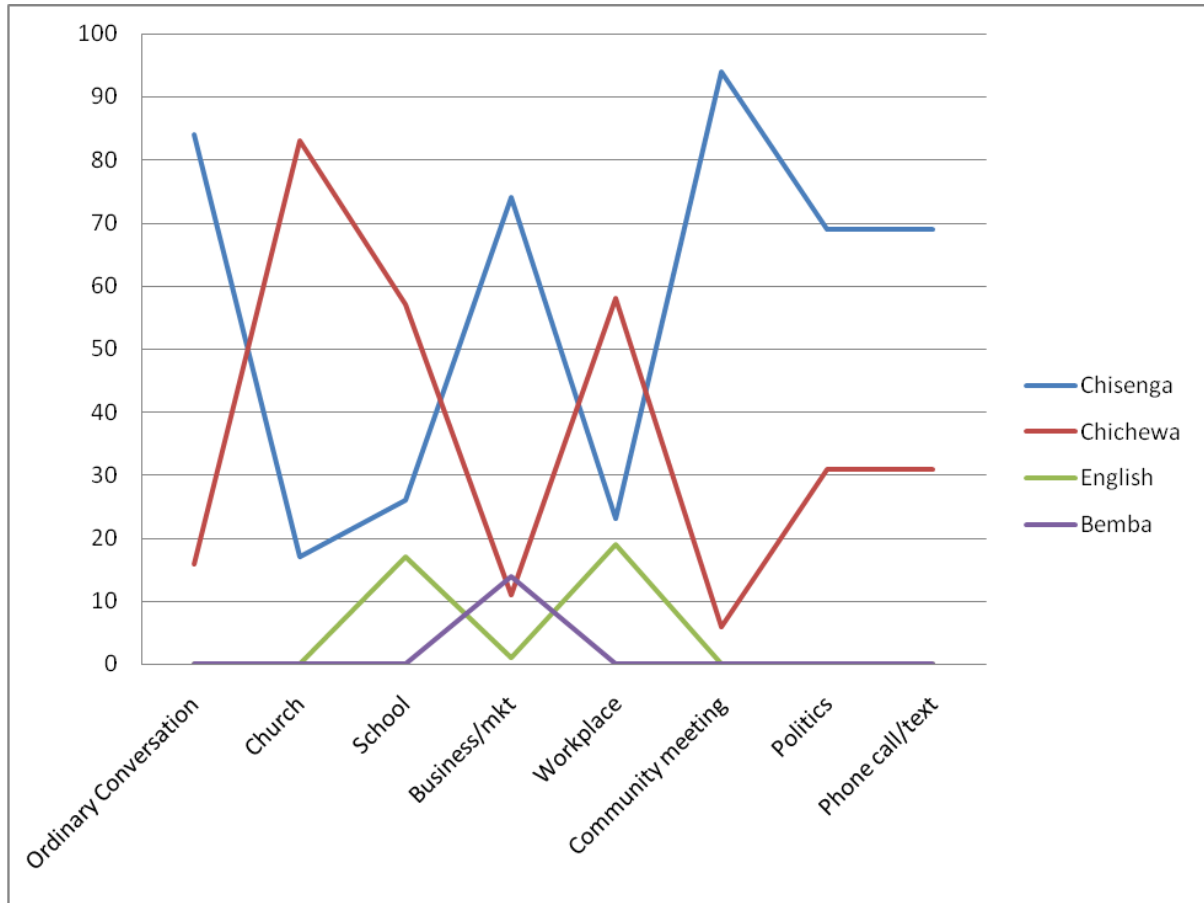
The respondents reported use of Bemba with father (4%) and mother (3%) in some instances. They argued that the language prevails in Nsenga communities as a result of some exogamous marriages especially with the Bemba female partners hence the language is used though to a lesser extent. In addition, the respondents revealed that they interact with the Bemba in different markets and use the language if the trading partners do not know Chisenga. However, the fact that Chisenga has a higher percentage rate in interaction with the native members substantiates its maintenance in the home domain despite operating as a minority language in the area where Chichewa is a predominant variety. Respondents argued that Chisenga functioned as a symbol of identification for all family members, not only among the communities in Mchinji, but for all Nsenga people both in Malawi and Zambia. Data gathered in the survey also revealed some useful insights on the way family social gatherings like weddings, initiations, baby naming days, funeral and religious festivals enhanced the maintenance of Chisenga. The key informants reported that exposure to regular events that attracted a wide circle of family members and friends also assists in the maintenance of the native language. Thus, family is regarded as a nucleus as far as Chisenga language maintenance is concerned.

The findings are consistent with Fishman (1991: 190-92) views that the family-neighbourhood-community activities could be seen as providing a setting for language maintenance because they are not only an effective means of reinforcing and expressing family bonds, but also become a symbol of unity. This also agrees with Myers-Scotton (2006) and Kroskrity (1998) that some ethnics have dominant ideological aspects that are linguistically conservative and these have contributed to the maintenance of the respective languages, for instance, various beliefs in ‘ceremonial ideology’ that disregards input from other languages. It also corroborates the social network theory of Milroy and Milroy (1987), which argues that multiplex interpersonal interactions that an individual establishes with other members who also happen to form their countless webs of ties but using a similar language indicates maintenance of the language. Finally, it agrees with the domain analysis theory which argues that only one language is chosen in a particular context to discuss particular kinds of topics, which means that Chisenga is the appropriate choice in the home domain.

4.3.2 Neighbourhood Domain

In this study, the examination of the language use in the neighbourhood domains showed how Chisenga is perceived both within and outside the communities involved. The aim of the study was to establish the common language of interaction that is used by the different ethnic members. In this case, the data collected revealed the possibility of Chisenga use and maintenance over the other languages in surrounding communities. Figure 4.4 presents summary rates of the language use with other members in the neighbourhood domains.

Figure 4.4 Language use in the various activities of the neighbourhood domain



Data shows the interaction of the languages in this domain. It reveals that Chisenga is often used in the neighbourhood domain except in the church, school and workplace activities compared to Chichewa and other languages. More than three-quarters of the respondents used Chisenga in community meetings (94%), for instance, the traditional courts, followed by ordinary conversations at 84%, then the business or market activities at 74%, and 69% each in the politics and phone calls or texts. However, there is a sharp decrease in the use of Chisenga with inter-ethnic members in the neighbourhood domain as it registered 26% in school activities, 17% in church activities and 23% at the workplace as compared to Chichewa 57% at school, 83% at church and 53% at the work-place. The respondents indicated that there is a decrease in using Chisenga with the interlocutors in these institutions

because of the ready stipulated rules and policies that govern the institutions. They argued that churches and schools have readily prepared literature in Chichewa and English, therefore, restricting them to use the languages. But the respondents were quick to indicate that they are able to use Chisenga mainly in the church when attending the sermon in the neighbouring villages of Zambia.

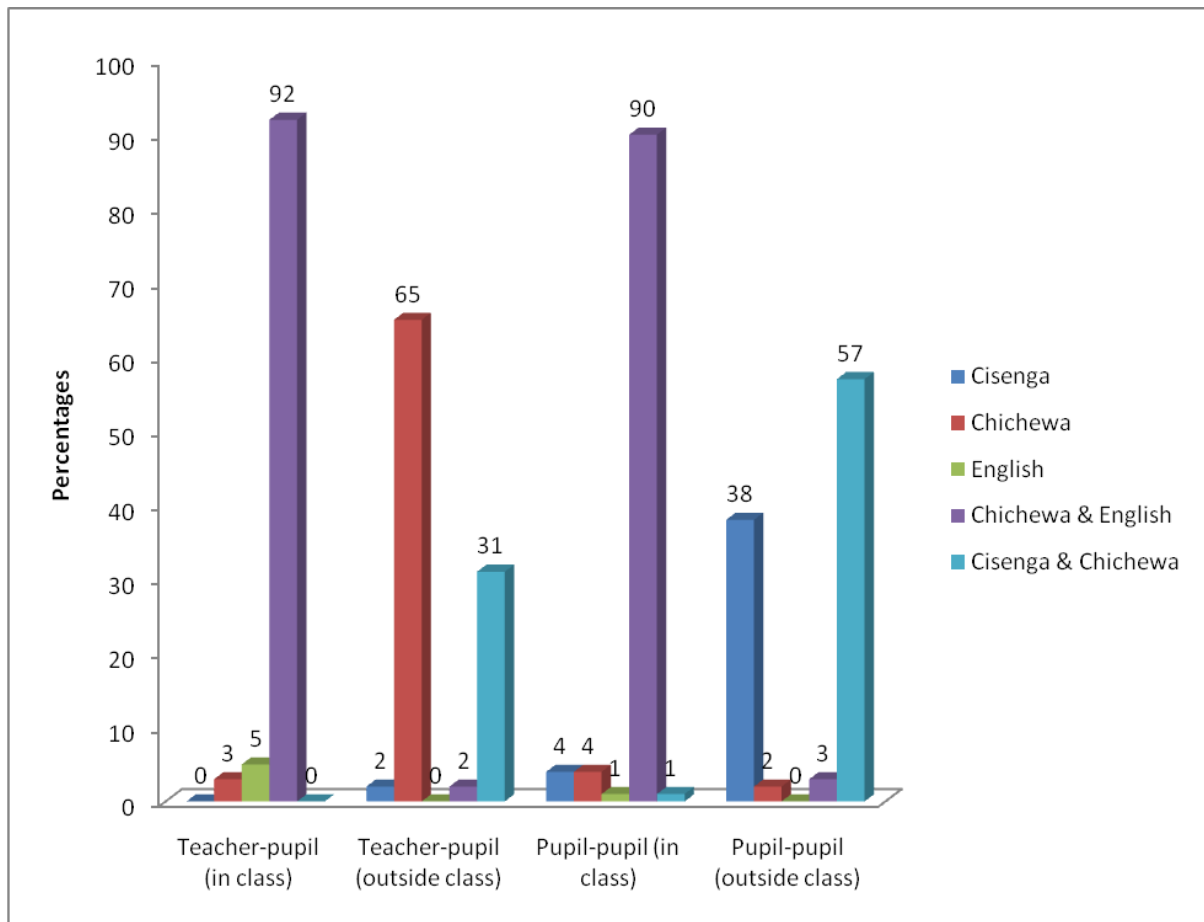
The findings also showed use of Chisenga in politics and phone calls or texts. The key informants reported that the only way politicians gain support in the area, especially those campaigning for parliamentary seat, is to communicate in Chisenga. They indicated that using the ethnic language shows that the person hails from the area hence can serve them better. The survey data also showed that respondents, up to 69% (N= 104), use Chisenga in phone conversations whether to their friends or in matters related to business. Hence, this indicates the extent to which ethnic members have maintained the language despite technological advancements.

However, the respondents indicated that the use of Chichewa should not be overemphasized because as the national/official language it claims a higher rate in institutional activities. In this case, despite neighbours belonging to different ethnic groups Chisenga still remains the most important language used in the neighbourhood. For instance, Figure 4.4 shows that in business or market places 74% (N=111) of the respondents reported to use Chisenga compared to 11% of Chichewa. The finding agrees with domain analysis theory that language choice is contextually dependent in the in-group and out-group interactions. Thus, this is overwhelming evidence implying that Chisenga is being maintained both within and outside the home domains because of its trade status.

4.3.3 School domain

School is an agent of socialisation where different language groups meet and interact. However, the study was interested to establish the common languages that are used by teachers and pupils both inside and outside the classroom environment. Its focus centred on how school going children from Nsenga ethnic group have managed to maintain their native variety despite integrating with fellow pupils from different ethnic backgrounds. Figure 4.5 shows the distribution rates of language use patterns in the school domain.

Figure 4.5 Distribution of language use patterns in the School domain



The survey data showed that 92% (N= 138) of the respondents favoured the use of both Chichewa and English in the teacher to pupil interaction inside the classroom environment

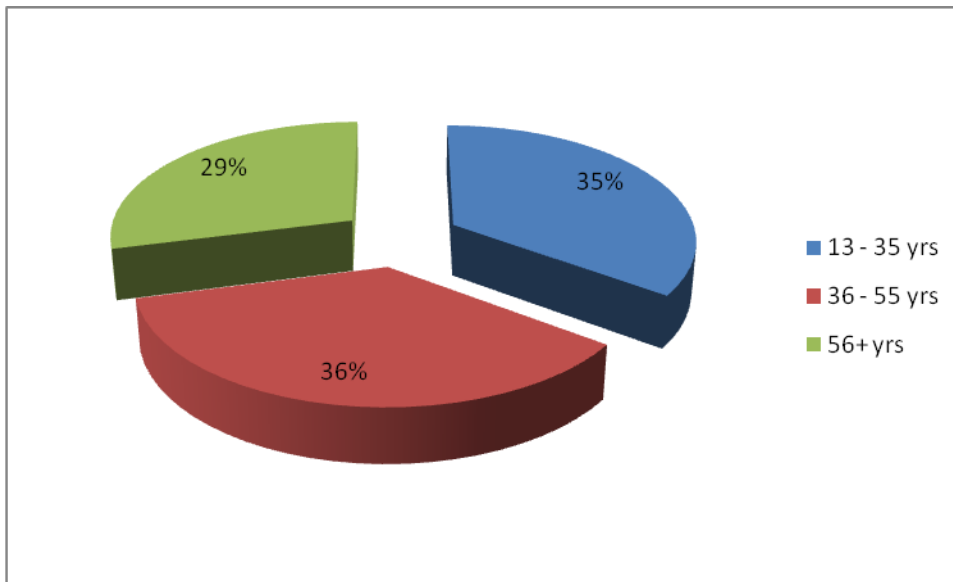
against 5% and 3% of English and Chichewa respectively. Similarly, the majority of the respondents (90%, N= 135) reported that the pupil to pupil interaction inside the classroom is dominated by the use of both Chichewa and English. Respondents (90%, N=135) argued that Chichewa and English are favoured in both cases because school policies regard the two as official subjects and media of instruction in schools hence that cannot be overlooked by any other ethnic group. In the outside classroom environment, 65% of the respondents indicated that the teacher to pupil interaction is dominated by Chichewa compared to 31% who reported that both Chisenga and Chichewa are used. The respondents argued that it usually depends on the language choice of the teacher. However, Chichewa is used frequently since it is the prescribed medium of instruction. In the pupil to pupil interaction outside the classroom environment, 57% of the respondents indicated that they use both Chisenga and Chichewa followed by 38% who reported that the children use Chisenga only.

These results are consistent with Hohenthal (1998) argument that the choice of language in the domains is contextually dependent and usually it is under guidance of rules and policies just like in the classrooms and courtrooms. Through the key informant interviews, the study established that children in the young age group mainly learn Chichewa from school because it is a medium of instruction. However, they are forced to use the mother tongue in the home domain because of the home language policy. Thus, under the policies of the Ministry of Education, English and Chichewa have been instituted as the official languages to be used in the delivery of lessons irrespective of languages used in the different ethnic groups.

4.4 Inter-generational Language Maintenance

The last objective of the study was to find out how Chisenga has been transmitted from one generation to the other. It was interested in finding out the measures taken in inter-generational maintenance and at the same time establishes threats towards the retention of Chisenga. Furthermore, this proved worthwhile in assessing the possibilities of language shift. Figure 4.6 below summarises rates on Chisenga use across different age groups or generations.

Figure 4.6. Distribution of Chisenga speakers across age categories/groups



The survey data showed that overall the respondents from age group of 36 to 55 years, 36% (N=54) spoke Chisenga against 35% (N=53) and 29% (N= 43) of the young and old age groups respectively. More than half of the respondents (69%, N=104) were parents regardless of the age categories and almost 42% (N=63) belonged to the ages of 18-40 years. The key informants argued that the transmission of family values across generations was more pronounced hence insignificant differences were realised on the use of Chisenga. Thus, the

overall percentages of the use of Chisenga in the different age groups signify that currently the language is being successfully maintained from the old to the young age group.

Different reasons were advanced as regards the maintenance of Chisenga. The respondents in the young age group of 13 to 35 years argued that Chisenga is maintained because of its higher status in trade and the continued mobility of the Chisenga speakers in the area. Those in the middle age group, that is, from 36 to 55 years, reasoned that the survival of Chisenga depends much on the continued cultural practices, such as Ncwala ritual ceremonies, and measures enacted against interference of other ethnic groups. The respondents indicated that once the children are initiated into the language and the cultural practices, it is least expected of them to shift into other languages. However, in the middle age category of 36 to 55 years, respondents argued for the introduction of Chisenga to replace Chichewa as the language of instruction in schools. The old age group of 56 years and above indicated that the survival of Chisenga centres on the cultural and language orientation that parents give to their children. But they emphasized that the language's high status in trade has augmented the maintenance of the language through generations. The age groups concluded that they were confident of the survival and maintenance of the language because of its higher cultural and trade value as compared to other languages within the border area of the two countries. Thus, the above factors that include trade, cultural practices and home language policy have necessitated the maintenance of Chisenga across age groups or generations in the study area.

The findings are consistent with the argument of the social network theory that interpersonal interactions whether in a family or workplace have an edge towards the maintenance of the common used language (Myers-Scotton, 2006). It also agrees with views from Fishman (1991: 414) and Clyne & Kipp (1997) on the centrality of the family and all processes that

build informal face to face intimacy and affection in as far as the inter-generational transmission of mother tongue and cultural identity is concerned. Fishman (1991: 413) and Clyne & Kipp (1997) argue that since linguistic minorities are too weak to successfully compete with the majority for any decisive say in the mass media and other government institutions, initially at least they can only compete for control over their own intimacy and then strive to go on from there, from the firm foundations of their little culture to greater selected corners of their own modernity. Fishman (1991) indicates that the language maintenance efforts of minorities begin “close to the direct inter-generational mother tongue transmission nexus”, which resides in the ethnic home-family-neighbourhood-community network. Therefore, the fact that the Nsenga are linked together in different relationships induces the maintenance of Chisenga over other languages.

4.5 Analysing the Practical maintenance factors for Chisenga

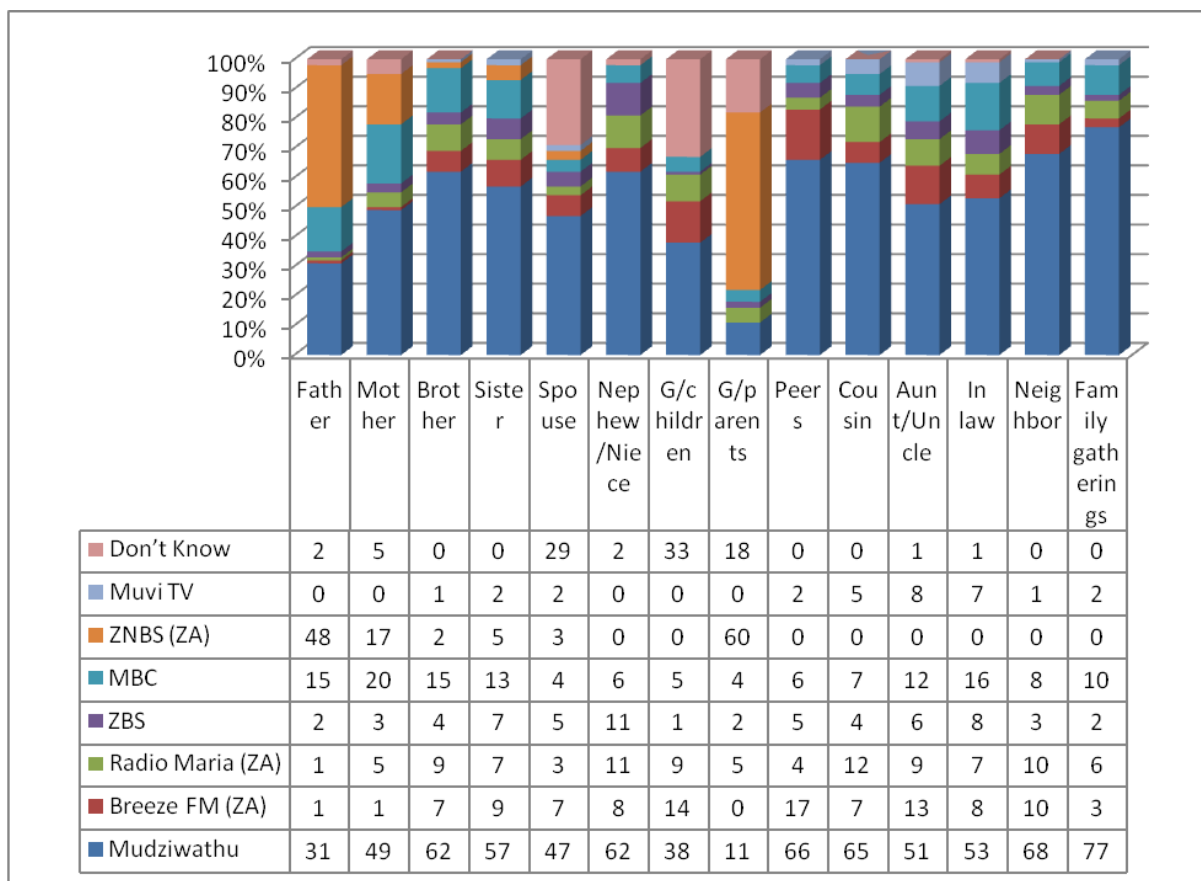
There are a number of measures or factors that have influenced the respondents to maintain Chisenga as the mother tongue in the area under study. However, the study discovered that the existence of different institutions and various cultural practices that take place in the area have had an impact on the maintenance of different languages. Therefore, the institutional and cultural practices were taken as prevalent practical aspects as far as Chisenga language maintenance is concerned in the area.

4.5.1 Institutional support: Mudziwathu and other radio stations

The study noted that there are some institutions in the area which have effectively utilized different languages, for instance radio and television stations. The area has access to radio stations such as Mudziwathu (Our village), Malawi Broadcasting Cooperation (MBC),

Zodiak Broadcasting Station (ZBS), Breeze FM, Zambia National Broadcasting Cooperation (ZNBC) and Muvi Television station among the others. Therefore, the study examined the role these institutions have played in managing the different languages which included Chisenga, Chichewa and others. This was achieved upon assessing the radio stations that the respondents prefer to listen to and the impact they have made on language use as presented in Figure 4.7.

Figure 4.7 Distribution rates on the radio stations tuned in by family members



The figure shows that there is a high preference (77%) for Mudziwathu compared to other radio stations among family members. Basically, the respondents argued that family or community gatherings, which include Community Based Organisations (CBOs) and Mudziwathu radio listening clubs, prefer to tune to radios that present both developmental

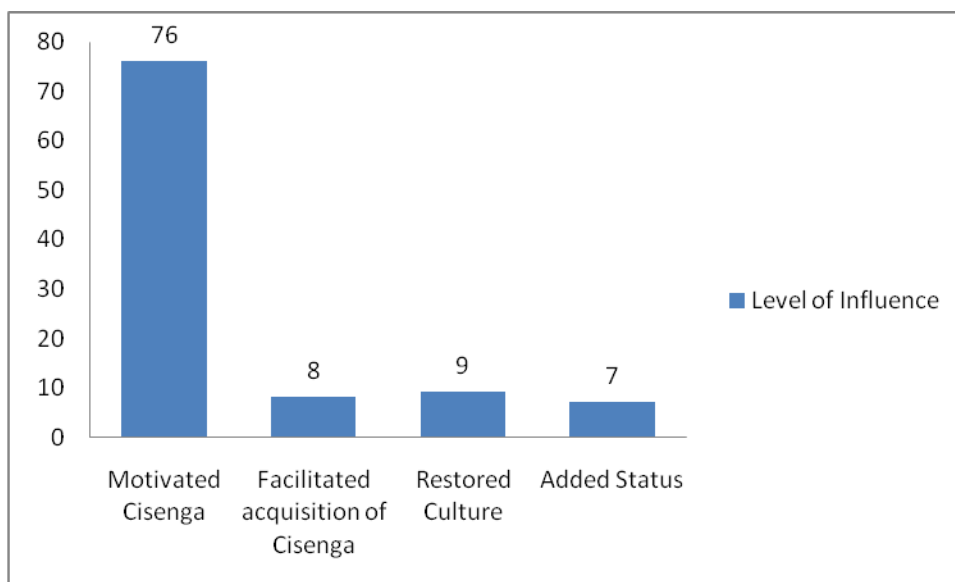
and cultural programmes in the local native language. The Mudziwathu community radio station is situated within the locality and has most of its programmes in Chisenga which include, *Katani Kambwiri* (Take the hoe), *Muli tyani?* (How are you), and *Mwachoma tyani* (Good afternoon). It was reported that the names of the programmes were given by the listeners hence most of them preferred the use of Chisenga as part of showing ownership and Nsenga ethnic group association.

In one of the key informant interviews, it was reported that use of the local language on the radio improved peoples' participation and contribution to the various development programmes taking place in the area. Respondents also indicated that unlike other radio stations, Mudziwathu is on the frequency that is easy to tune to. However, the data show audience of other national radio stations that include MBC and ZBS, and three-quarters of the respondents justified their action as crucial because the stations keep them updated on what is happening within and outside Malawi. They played down their impact on Chisenga maintenance because the stations are not regularly tuned to compare to Mudziwathu radio station. Therefore, it is important to stress that Mudziwathu is a new institutional factor strengthening the maintenance of Chisenga.

The respondents also reported that apart from Mudziwathu other community radio stations from the neighbouring Zambia that broadcast some programmes in Chisenga have assisted in the maintenance of the language. As shown in Figure 4.7, the respondents prefer listening to Zambian radio stations such as Radio Maria (Zambia), Breeze radio station and also watch the Muvi Television station. In all these stations Chisenga is the main language of broadcast. Respondents reported that in these private and faith-based community stations the coverage

of programmes is favoured compared to those that use other languages. The findings also showed that the respondents preferred to watch Muvi television station from Zambia because it beams most of the programmes and advertisements in Chisenga. Therefore, the conclusion was that both the radio and television stations had an impact on the maintenance of Chisenga. Figure 4.8 presents the summaries of the people's perceptions on the impact the radio and television stations have made on Chisenga.

Figure 4.8 Distribution rates for the impact of Mudziwathu on Chisenga



Data in Figure 4.8 above shows the effect of Mudziwathu community radio station on the maintenance of Chisenga in Mchinji. In the study, more than three quarters (76%) of the respondents claimed that Mudziwathu community radio station has motivated the use of Chisenga whereas 9% argued that Mudziwathu has restored the cultural practices with the introduction of the cultural and musical programmes like *Katani kambwiri* and *Muli tyani*? Besides this, some respondents, 8% and 7% each indicated that the radio has facilitated the acquisition of Chisenga and improved its status respectively. The views advanced by the

respondents indicate that Mudziwathu through its many programmes has practically influenced the maintenance of Chisenga.

Therefore, for purposes of reliability, validity and practicality of the results of the study the C-test (correlation test) was done on the null hypothesis that ‘there is no correlation between the programmes on Mudziwathu and the daily language use in the home domain.’ In this test the study established a positive correlation coefficient (.245), (see Table 2 in Appendix 3), indicating that there is a statistically significant ($p < .001$) relationship between the two variables such that listening to more Chisenga programmes has influenced the maintenance of the language. Therefore, this shows that Chisenga speakers like listening to the programmes broadcast in their own native language.

This is consistent with Peterson’s (1997) findings that the KTNN radio station in America has helped to keep the Navajo language alive in many domains with news, sports and public broadcasting. It also corroborates Giles (1977) ethno-linguistic vitality theory that both the official and unofficial decisions to use a particular language in an institution greatly impacts on language maintenance in some communities. In general, Mudziwathu and the other media institutions that use Chisenga in their programmes have positively impacted on Chisenga maintenance in Mchinji.

4.5.2 The Status factors

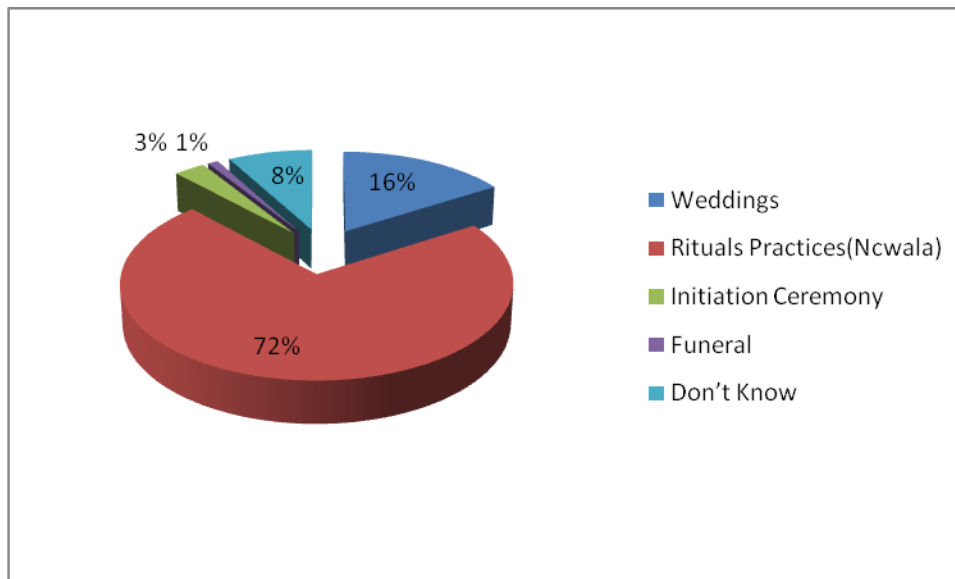
The study also established that the maintenance of the languages in the area depended heavily on the status given to them. It was discovered that Chisenga was a symbolic part of the culture apart from being used in the business or market activities of the area. Thus, below

is a detailed explanation on how Chisenga is perceived by its native speakers and the surrounding communities.

4.5.2.1. Chisenga as an indispensable part of culture

Apart from the institutional factors, the study established that the area had a rich cultural heritage which centred on using Chisenga. Respondents reported that Chisenga was used in most of the families in order to identify with culture and other community members. The study established that there were various cultural practices that the Nsenga ethnic group attended to in their original homes as in the summaries given in the figure below.

Figure 4.9. Overall rates for the chosen occasion on the home visits



The survey data showed that the majority of the respondents (72%, N=108) like to patronize Ncwala³ ritual practice in their home visits. There is a great difference if it is compared with the other functions or activities that are attended, for instance, 16% of the subjects reported to favour weddings, 3% and 1% initiation and funeral ceremonies respectively. Similarly, data from both the key informant interviews and survey in three villages showed that respondents

³ A Ngoni/Nsenga ritual ceremony that takes place annually at Mtenguleni in Zambia.

liked to patronize the Ncwala ritual practice at Mtenguleni in Zambia. Substantial higher percentages were recorded with Kayesa leading by 77%, seconded by Menyani with 71% and Nyoka with 68%. Therefore, Ncwala is the most important symbolic ritual ceremony that is performed annually and has improved use of the native language.

These findings, especially the use of the language at the Ncwala ceremony as well as in songs and dances, illustrates the assertion of Smolicz (1980) that language is the core value of culture in some ethnic groups. This shows that the Nsenga have retained both the cultural practices and the language so much so that the language is a core value together with the culture. In addition, the results are consistent with Kroskrity (1998) and Myers-Scotton (2006) arguments that the ethnic group's language ideology promotes linguistic conservatism and sense of oneness. The Nsenga lived in distinct cultural groups and promoted their own ceremonial ideologies in the native language. Thus, the ethnics have created various boundaries within which other ethnic groups are not allowed to showcase their cultures to ensure maintenance of the status of Chisenga.

4.5.2.2 Chisenga as a trade language

The study has also found that the cross-border trade between the residents living close to the border of both countries has influenced maintenance of Chisenga. It was indicated that among residents of the area, 30% earn their livelihoods through trade with people of Zambia, who also largely happen to be Nsenga. The respondents reported that common language for business is Chisenga because apart from belonging to same ethnic group most of the people from Zambia have better knowledge of the language. They indicated that the immediate neighbours from Zambia are typical Nsenga natives who were just alienated from them

because of the national boundaries. As such the interactions in the trading activities have induced the retention of Chisenga. This is underscored in Figure 4.4 as the use of Chisenga in business is reported to be 74%, which is higher than 14% of Chichewa and 11% of Bemba respectively. Therefore, the cross-border trade which is largely dominated by natives from the same ethnic group from the two countries has influenced maintenance of Chisenga.

However, apart from belonging to the same ethnic group, key informants also reported that the Nsenga from the areas under study are most enterprising and dominant in trade comparing to Chewa ethnic members. Hence, the Nsenga find it appropriate to use own native language than engaging in a language whose members are not business oriented. Similarly, Whiteley (1974) shows how Swahili, as national language, dominated Kenyan market places and the change of its position in the areas that were located along the border. For instance, he indicated that the dominance of Luo trading group at Sondu border had perpetuated the use of Luo language compared to Swahili hence maintenance of the former. Thus, a high trade status of Chisenga coupled with prevalence of large numbers of Nsenga ethnic members in business promoted the retention of the language.

4.5.3 The residents ‘uncertainty’ of the other languages

The key informants indicated that Chisenga is retained both within and outside the home domain because they are ‘uncertain’ about the future of other languages as far as socio-economic advancement is concerned. As earlier indicated, Chisenga is enjoying a high status value as compared to Chichewa in most of the socio-economic activities. Hence, the respondents in the survey exercise expressed ‘uncertainty’ on what the future holds when they shift to Chichewa. They reported that Chisenga has given them socio-economic mobility

of interacting with people from both Malawi and Zambia therefore it is worth acquiring unlike Chichewa. The respondents argued that use and retention of Chichewa in the Nsenga communities would be like creating a dangerous position for the subsequent generations because the language does not have the same socio-economic benefits as Chisenga.

It was also reported from the key informant interviews that the continued government efforts to re-demarcate the national boundaries indicated the possibility of the Nsenga from the border being integrated to fellow ethnics in Zambia. Therefore, they argued that there is deliberate maintenance of Chisenga in order for the speakers to understand fellow ethnics in Zambia. Thus, the Nsenga ethnics are ‘uncertain’ about the future of the other languages in the various activities that include trade and cultural practices hence maintenance of the native language.

4.6 Chapter summary

This chapter has presented and discussed findings of the study which set out to identify the factors that have governed the maintenance of Chisenga in Mchinji district. The discussion has shown that the important factors contributing to the Chisenga maintenance include regular social and cultural interaction between ethnic members, the home language policy, the higher rate of endogamous marriages, and the institutional support from Mudziwathu and surrounding community radio stations in Zambia. It is also noted that the high status value of Chisenga in the cross-border trade and the ‘uncertainty’ of the ethnic members on the future of other languages compliments the factors inducing the retention of Chisenga in Nyoka, Menyani and Kayesa villages, and generally in Mchinji.

Chapter Five

Conclusion

5.1 Chapter Overview

The purpose of this study was to explore the possible factors that have governed the maintenance of Chisenga in the Malawi-Zambia border district of Mchinji. To this effect, the first chapter of the thesis provided general background information, the problem statement and the objectives of the study. Chapter two centred on the theories guiding the study and review of the literature on previous studies conducted both at the local and international level. The chapter discussed similar case studies from various areas and in the process identified some gaps not successfully filled. Then, chapter four has discussed the findings of the study by making a reference to the objectives of the study from chapter one. This chapter therefore, summarises the key findings of the study and then discusses the implications of the findings on the contemporary theories of language maintenance, and the inclusiveness of the minority languages in the various socio-economic activities. Then, the chapter suggests areas of further research with regard to the Chisenga language maintenance in Mchinji.

5.2 Summary of Study Findings

As earlier indicated in section 1.3, the original problem addressed in the study is about the factors that have induced the maintenance of Chisenga in a Chichewa dominant area. This has been accomplished by answering the following questions; how many respondents speak or use Chisenga; where do they use Chisenga and why (the domains of language use); what factors have induced the maintenance of the language in Mchinji; and above all, what

strategies have influenced the inter-generational maintenance of Chisenga. Thus, the observations presented below relate to the questions above.

The findings of the study demonstrated the complete spectrum of language maintenance possibilities in Mchinji district. An attempt through research on the above objectives was made to find out the factors that have contributed to the maintenance of Chisenga. It was observed that several steps were taken within the societies or communities themselves to retain the native language. In the first instance, the study demonstrated use of community centred initiatives in the maintenance of Chisenga. The study established that the area has a large number of Chisenga native speakers who regularly engage in social interactions using Chisenga among themselves in different activities. This has ensured retention of the language. Furthermore, the findings indicated that the pride of the Nsenga in the symbolic use of their language in various cultural practices, for instance, Ncwala and existence of intra-ethnic marriages have enhanced the maintenance of Chisenga. Then, there is the home language policy which restricts family members to the native language. This has greatly ensured that school going children should not lose the native tongue when in contact with other languages. Thus, these comprised some societal or community centred initiatives that have ensured the maintenance of the Chisenga variety.

Apart from societal centred initiatives, the maintenance of Chisenga has also received much support from institutions, mainly Mudziwathu and other surrounding radio stations. The presentation of the programmes in Chisenga has initiated the use and maintenance of the language, and in some quarters it greatly enhanced its status. Though, it is unusual for the minority languages to receive much support from institutions, the Nsenga have been

privileged with a community radio station which focuses on development related activities taking place in the area in Chisenga. The study further reveals that other institutions like school and church, which use different languages, have failed to reverse the status quo of the language in the Nsenga communities. Thus, the media especially radio stations have contributed greatly to the maintenance of Chisenga because they use the language when disseminating information about development in the study area. The findings have also demonstrated the significance of the cross-border trade in the maintenance of the language. Respondents argued that the inter-border trade between the people of the two countries is the overarching factor in the maintenance because it recognizes Chisenga as a mutual trade language. Thus, it is the prominent language used to get maximum returns hence such status has necessitated its maintenance among natives and the neighbours.

The findings also indicate that Chisenga is used in the various domains settings except in those that have readily stipulated policies on which languages are appropriate, for instance, schools, churches and work related domains. However, it is worth indicating that the respondents have the privilege of using Chisenga in the Church domain whenever they attend sermons in the neighbouring localities in Zambia. Thus, the use of Chisenga in the various domains instils confidence in the future prospects of the language hence the retention.

This summary of findings forms the basis for the conclusion of language maintenance of the study. With reference to the first objective which was on identifying the speakers of Chisenga, it can be concluded that 99% of the respondents are Chisenga speakers. Regarding the second objective on the question of where do they use Chisenga, as in domains of language use, it can be concluded that the language is used in almost all the domains except

those that are guided by formal policies, for instance, the school and church domains. Hence, this demonstrated the maintenance of the language in the study area. On the third objective which examined the factors motivating the inter-generational maintenance, it is found that the inter-border trade, use of Chisenga in the broadcasting media, home language policy, intra-ethnic marriages, home visits and cultural practices like ‘Ncwala’ have all necessitated the passing on of Chisenga from the forefathers to younger generations. Thus, with regard to the main objective of this study the conclusion which could be drawn is that the maintenance of Chisenga is a result of an inter-play of varied factors; however, trade among themselves and other ethnics plays a greater role.

5.3 Implications of the Study

The findings of this study, as summarised in section 5.2, have profound implications on the theory and practice of language maintenance specifically for minority languages in Malawi. The first question that can be posed is to what extent minority languages should be maintained when in prolonged contact with a dominant variety. The fact that minority languages are comparatively spoken by a smaller group of people poses a great challenge on their maintenance. However, the study of Chisenga has several implications towards the other languages in the same category. The first implication drawn from the study is that the ethnic members of indigenous minority languages need to take an initiative and come up with necessary measures of preserving the native variety. Largely, the study indicated that the Nsenga have put in place various measures to retain the language, for instance, the vibrant cultural practices and home language policy. Therefore, the natives whose languages are on the verge of demise should not wait a redress of the government policies but learn from the Nsenga experiences. Secondly, the study serves as a lesson to contemporary planners to

avoid relegating minority languages as inimical tools towards development. They need to be considered as a resource for development in the respective areas used just as Chisenga is a medium both in trade and some community based related issues. Practically, this means that indigenous minority languages should be maintained because they are tools for development or social transformation in the areas in which they are spoken.

Another question can be: What role should institutions play in the maintenance of minority languages? With regard to the study, the implication is that institutions like the media need to consider the maximum use of minority languages in order to enhance their maintenance. In fact, it is on record that there are several community radios that have blossomed in Malawi and since they are situated in the localities that are known to use different indigenous languages, it is significant for them to adopt such varieties. Similarly, this implies that the government should consider implementing the long awaited mother tongue education policy in public schools to ensure the retention of native languages. Thus, such institutions should give more time to the use of the indigenous languages.

The research also provides pertinent information on the theories used in contemporary studies. In fact, the study views that there is no absolute theory that incorporates all the factors that lead to language maintenance. The study suggests that the difference in the factors that initiate language maintenance call for the use of an integrated model or paradigm. Similarly, the study has used an integrated model consisting ethnolinguistic, social network and domain analysis theories because no single theory could account for the factors that have facilitated Chisenga language maintenance.

5.4 Areas for further study

This study focused on the question of Chisenga maintenance in the Malawi-Zambia border district of Mchinji. There are some questions that need further research from the issues that have been presented or that were not a focus of this study.

First, the study concentrated on unveiling the factors that have governed the maintenance of Chisenga in Mchinji but did not examine the respondents' ability to read and write using the language. Therefore, a study on the literacy levels of the respondents in Chisenga can be another fertile ground worth researching because this would give additional information on their capacity of maintaining the language longer than expected. Secondly, further investigation is required on the cross-over influence that other languages, especially Chichewa, has on the Chisenga proficiency. It is expected that this can reveal the use of the original Chisenga from Zambia thereby signifying any possible changes towards a shift to other languages.

Finally, a study can also be done on the attitudes of the speakers towards other languages spoken in the area vis-à-vis the use of Chisenga. This would help to find out how the Nsenga perceive the other languages and possibly establish further reasons for the failure of dominant language(s) in the area to dislodge Chisenga in several domains.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Key Informant Interview Schedule

Designation; _____ **Questionnaire No;** _____ **Date:** _____

Thank you for your time dedicated to responding to this questionnaire. I am **Victor Chikaipa**, a student from Chancellor College doing a language research specifically in some selected villages of the TA's of Zulu, Mlonyeni and Mduwa. I have got a few important questions that are expected to guide my research; however your responses will be treated as strictly confidential.

Part A: Key Informant's Bio data (Tick the appropriate box)

a1	Sex	Male []	Female []
a2	Village and Traditional Authority	Village T/A	
a3	Age of respondent		
a4	Marital Status	Married [] Single [] Others[]	
a5.1	Highest Level of Education completed	None[] PSLCE[] JSCE[] MSCE[] DIP +	
a5.2	Last class of formal school attended?		
a6	What do you do for a living?		
a7	What is your ethnic group?	Chewa[] Nsenga[] Ngoni[] others[]	
a8	What is your home language?	Chichewa[] Chisenga[] others[]	
a9	What is your country of origin?	Malawi [] Zambia[] Others[]	
a10	Year of arrival in Mchinji		

Part B. Objective 1. Identify similarities/differences between the Nsenga and the cultures of other ethnic groups.

B11. When did the Nsenga arrive in Mchinji?

B12. What were the reasons for their dispersal from their original home?

B13. Where did they first settle in Mchinji?

B14. Name the languages that are used most often in this area?

B15.1 State how the languages are used here in Mchinji?

B15.2 Where are these languages specifically used?

B16. What are the cultural differences between the speakers of these different languages?

B17. What are the cultural similarities between the Nsenga and others background?

B18. Do the Nsenga have own cultural practices? Explain.

B19. What type of language is used in the Nsenga cultural practices for instance, dances and songs, ritual practices, initiation ceremonies among the others.

Weddings		Religion	
Ritual practices		Disputes Resolution	
Initiation ceremonies		Dances & Songs	
Funeral		Others (Specify)	

B20. What sort of interaction exists between the Nsenga and their neighbouring communities that have different language background?

B21. What is the language used in such interactions?

B22. Explain the kind of social boundaries that the Nsenga have created to avoid encroachment of other languages/cultures into their communities.

Part C. Objective 2: Language use in the different domains

C23. What language do you use at home?

C24. Do you instruct your children to use the same language? [Why]

C25. What is the language that children use at school?

C26. How has this affected their proficiency in Chisenga? And [What measures have you put in place to avoid the situation]?

C27. What efforts are being made by the families/society at large to continue using Chisenga in the areas it is spoken?

C28. Do the Nsenga language speakers exist in established villages or are they scattered in different locations?

C29. What are the attitudes of the Nsenga towards the speakers of other languages?

C30. Do the Nsenga allow interethnic marriages? If yes, how has this affected their languages use; If no, why do they not accept such marriages?

C31. What language is normally used in the buying/selling of goods?

C32. Does this have any influence on the use of Chisenga?

Part D. Objective 3: assessing factors motivating the intergenerational maintenance.

D33 What language is used or enforced at home?

D34 How are the children exposed to the Chisenga language?

D35. What mechanisms are put in place to make sure that the children learn Chisenga?

D36. Do you discourage your children using the school language? Explain

D37. Are there any differences in terms of the flavour between Chisenga spoken by the new generations here in Mchinji and that from the ancestral home in Zambia?

D38. Chichewa as the predominant language in Mchinji is it highly regarded in the Nsenga communities? If **yes/no**, why?

Part E. assessing the impact of Mudziwathu community radio station and the cross-border relations on the use of Chisenga.

C39. Do you listen to Mudziwathu radio station?

C40. Are there any programmes in Chisenga?

C41. If **yes/no** how has this affected the use of Chisenga in the respective localities?

C42. In what language(s) do they record the community development programmes in the Nsenga villages?

C43. How has the Nsenga reacted to this development?

C44. What is your comment in terms of the language use on the radio?

C45. Do you have any knowledge that the Nsenga visit their ancestral home in Zambia or their ancestors come to visit them here?

C46. For what functions do they normally visit each other?

C47. Hasn't this affected the use of language in the various Nsenga communities?

Part F. General Questions

C48. Do you see Chisenga surviving in the coming ten years or so?

C49. What makes you to harbour such perceptions?

C50. Any comment on the language situation in Mchinji or Malawi as a whole.