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Introduction

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The articles in this special issue cover a range of topics related to coloniality, language ideologies, language policy and classroom practice in Malawi, Namibia, Zambia and Zimbabwe. The findings and conclusions reached have relevance not just to southern African countries, but to the so-called Global South generally.

Language ideologies have been defined as "morally and politically loaded representations of the nature, structure, and use of languages in a social world" (Woolard 2021:1). Language ideologies affect not only language practitioners and linguistic specialists but also ordinary people in society. Language ideologies also mediate between language and forms of speech and social structures that define speakers of particular speech forms. Language ideologies have also been linked to distribution of power and value judgements and distinctions based on languages and language use. In this regard, Woolard (2021) reminds us that language ideologies are not just about how ideas, conceptions and discourses are formulated; they are also about how "mental constructs and verbalizations are captured in embodied practices, dispositions in material phenomenon such as visual representations." (p. 2). It is also the case that language ideologies are packaged as part of the curriculum and syllabus provisions including content therein, and in institutionalized activities, schedules and material culture, which shape communities' and mass media language choices, and language of teaching and learning. Since the education systems and language education policies and practice in place in Africa, Southern Africa, in this case have a missionary and colonial heritage, it can be argued their institutions, agents, curricula and other activities are informed by coloniality. There is coloniality of power seen in hierarchies of structures of domination and exploitation based on language differences and epistemic forms, among others and coloniality of knowledge and

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modes of knowing which involved the "imposition of the coloniser's own Euro-American epistemology, own patterns of expression, and their own beliefs and images (Quijano 2007:169)" cited in Dastile and Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2003: 111). Some of these issues and how to overcome them inform the papers in this volume.

LANGUAGE IDEOLOGIES

Language ideologies are also implicated in the process and product of language standisation. This may involve selection of a particular language or dialect and codification of a speech form accompanied by rules and norms of how to speak or write it. It can be argued that the advent of colonialism in Africa also set in motion the dominance of the standard language and illegitimisation of the so-called non-standard languages as languages of power and authority. The standard colonial language was favoured while African languages were minoritized and relegated to the cultural authorities and not as languages of business, education and high-level institutional memory and practice. The standard language ideologies became the frame on which postcolonial language policies, social inequalities and dominance of the majority by the few Africans who had mastered the standardized European tongues was anchored. In this conceptualization, standard language ideologies refer to those beliefs, attitudes and practices resulting from the language codification and standardization processes.

Standard language ideologies are part of what is generally called language ideologies. Makoe and Mckinney (2014: 2) describe language ideologies as "the values, practices and beliefs associated with language use by speakers, and the discourse which constructs values and beliefs at state, institutional, and global levels". The monolingual ideology that teaching and learning should be in a singular standard language derives from the standard language ideology. Language zoning in multilingual contexts of Africa, hierarchization of- and social structuring of - language and the one-nation-one language are components of language ideologies. However, since existing language ideologies influence the selection of standardized African languages, among many, as languages for lower-level local government functions and initial literacy development at regional levels, the standard language ideologies and language ideologies are interconnected.

In terms of social structuring and prevailing language ideologies, European languages such as English and French are perceived as superior and able to handle scientific and concepts related to modernity and globalization. African languages are perceived as incapable of handling complex and technical descriptions of phenomena. As far as language education is concerned, African languages are thought to be only good for 4 to 7 years of basic education. This ideology still underly and is pervasive in many language education policies in Africa. Generally speaking, English and other European languages occupy the top level, followed by standardized African languages, and at the bottom are the non-standardised languages spoken by the majority of Africans.

The idea of standardizing languages is alien to Africa. It essentially entails the elite in society colonizing language and putting fixed rules about its use, some of which are alien to the speakers of the language, as one needs formal education to master them. The standard language ideologies can be said to be

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integral to the colonial and European quest to dominate African-nation-states they had curved among themselves after the 1884-1885 Berlin conference when European countries divided the continent among themselves. This naturalized European imperialism and colonization of Africa in all spheres of Africans' endeavours. The standard language ideologies were central for the colonial governments to enforce imperial power and to dominate the linguistic, socio-economic, philosophical realms and knowledge systems in the emergent nation-states. The European standard language ideologies and other ideologies filtered into local Africans' ideologies, and in most cases suppressed, altered or completely erased them. Through contact with European-type education and economic structures, Africans got inducted into the practices and ways of Europeans' knowledge systems and ways of knowing to the detriment of local ones deemed archaic or retrogressive. Indoctrinated Africans became disciples for the elevation of European ideologies and became its gatekeepers ensuring that European ways triumphed over local ways of speaking and writing. For instance, long after the colonial period, it is Africans and African institutions that demand that standard English be the language of teaching and learning in primary, secondary and institutions of higher education. Academics and academic scholarship also play a key role in propagating English-based curricula, discourses and the philosophical academy and ways of knowing behind it.

Thus, the partition of Africa into nation-states and standardisation of languages can be seen as part of the grand scheme of colonialism for easy control and power of the colonised. This allowed the European colonialists to put actors and institutions to exercise and oversee the colonial enterprise. Actors included political figures, chiefs who were recruited to oversee villages, as well as African teachers trained in the ways of Europeans who acted as gatekeepers to knowledge structured through European languages and epistemologies.

Coloniality/decoloniality and language ideologies

In the recent past, there is growing interest in notions of coloniality/decoloniality and the Global South theories as a reaction to the domination of European and North American theoretical and epistemological frameworks. Coloniality has been conceptualised as varied and multifaceted knowledge structure on which Western civilisation is anchored and projected. The standard language ideologies are at the centre of how such knowledge is structured and projected. Alongside or imbedded in the ideologies and projections are notions of Western civilisation and modernity expressed in and through standardised language. We want to argue that standard language ideologies, Western civilisation and modern education together with systems of knowledge and disciplinary practices, were and are the key means to export Western cultural identities and 'civilizing' practices, packaged as 'modernity', to the colonised and the rest of the world.

Coloniality and modernity have been described as two sides of the same coin (Aquijano 2007; Mignolo 2007). The decolonial turn entails a critical awareness of the dark side of modernity, which is coloniality and its propensity to minoritize and dominate through its global imperial designations and inclinations. At another level, decoloniality entails delinking from and reconstituting current epistemic systems through reclaiming the

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knowledge systems, languages and ways of speaking, ways of knowing, and ways of life and being and doing that modernity erased (Maldonado-Torres, 2017). This should necessarily involve disavowing domination by questioning and exposing both the strategies of epistemic Eurocentrism and the core of imperial/colonial knowledge production (Maldonado-Torres, 2017).

In this paper we argue that the dominated people do not just accept their minoritized positions resulting from the negative effects of coloniality as permanent and fixed. There is need to identify the strategies and ways the dominated circumvent the structures of knowledge designed to keep them subjugated, as well as undermine the principles of the rhetoric of the actors and institutions that support the structures. In his applied language studies and sociolinguistics from an African perspective, Banda (2018, 2020) is critical of studies that characterise people from the so-called global south as permanently powerless to the colonial legacy and the forms of social structures of subjugation wrought by globalisation and coloniality Western influences. He argues that there is need to reflect on and chronical the ways that these people circumvent these vices. Further, Banda (2020) argues that scholarship needs to detect and isolate the stratagems that the marginalized deploy to contest the manifestations, signs and representations of social structures of inequality. Otherwise, scholarship, including those that claim to be writing from the global south perspective, risk characterizing "inequalities as permanent and fixed, and victims of unequal treatment as perpetually condemned and never able to rise against the structures that oppress them" (Banda, 2020: 14).

Moreover, taking Maldonado-Torres' (2017) argument about epistemic reconstiution and Garcia and Baca's (2019: 2) understanding of decoloniality "as a political, epistemic and ethical project that surfaces from local histories, elsewhere and otherwise, and speaks back to this world system that affects all aspects of society", then local agency and actorhood become the means and localised spaces that can be used as sites at which "knowledges and epistemic alternatives that move us beyond Western categories of epistemology, thought and feeling" (p. 2), are consumed and produced. The classroom becomes the site of knowledge and ideological struggle; a site at which African and Western/Northern categories of epistemology and ideologies interact. However, in order to cultivate alternative ways of knowing, epistemologies and a lasting decolonial stance, it is important to identify and provide alternatives ways of intellectualisation and forms of modernity without recourse to Western/ Northern epistemologies and ontologies. This means decolonising disciplines and recognising that universalisation and Eurocentric tendencies in disciplines and epistemologies are part of the colonial enterprise still in place. The classroom can be a site at which current curricula, disciplines and epistemologies are disrupted through alternative ways of knowing and epistemologies.

Banda (2009, 2010) has argued that not just the sociolinguistic and applied language terminology, but also the language policies and models of classroom practice are infused with aspects of coloniality. Concepts such as 'additive bilingualism' and mother-tongue based bilingual education do not reflect the language reality and how languages are used in Africa. Languages

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are not acquired sequentially and use of multiple forms of named languages is a common feature in Africa. The subtext in both 'additive bilingualism' and mother-tongue based bilingual education models is that English is the main language and African languages should be added to it or that African languages should be used for 4-7 years or so in preparation for instruction in English in secondary school and higher education levels. More recently, Makoni and Pennycook (2019) have argued that terms such as 'vernaculars', 'local languages', 'indigenous languages', and 'mother tongues' although 'universalised' in Applied Linguistics, are as part of the "colonial order of things". These terminologies are infused with ideologies located in the Western/ Northern histories and epistemologies in which these terms were originally conceptualised. Southern scholarship needs to expose that once translocated to Africa and the global south, these terms are still shaped in colonialism and framed by its Western/Northern historically situated epistemologies (Pennycook and Makoni, 2019).

When we talk about the standard language ideologies, we should not only be concerned with colonial languages versus African languages; we need to consider the effects of standard African languages used mostly in initial literacy development in basic primary schools, and the majority non-standard languages used in everyday interactions. The standardised African languages were devised by missionaries, colonial governments or their agents in the image of European languages (Banda, 2016). Therefore, the standard African languages represent an attempt to de-naturalise African languages and are part of the colonial enterprise and are integral to Western modernity, ways of knowing and knowledge system. As noted above, they are valued lower than standard European languages, but higher than non-standard African languages. In this regards, standard language ideologies and coloniality have infiltrated and propagated local ideologies to value (standard) English and knowledge in English, which are associated with modernity, higher than (standard) African languages, which are associated with African culture and tradition, and not science and technology.

Therefore, there is need to recognise and expose the continuities and discontinuities in coloniality and colonial policies and practices and the accompanying ideologies that function to naturalise hierarchisation of languages and socio-economic inequalities in local histories, memories, and local political thought and theories. Thus, we need to recognise that terms such as 'vernaculars', 'local languages', 'indigenous languages', and 'mother tongues' as used in relation to classroom practice, carry with them the Western/Northern epistemological expectations and ideologies, that favour a monolingual pedagogy, and disadvantage many African learners whose languages are not the chosen standard language of instruction. In this connection, it needs to be argued that language 'zoning' in which the language education stipulates one 'local language', 'familiar language' or 'mother tongue' as the regional language for learning and teaching, usually in the first 3-4 years of basic education, is itself borne out of the colonial ontology. In African contexts where it is the norm for people to use many local languages, familiar languages or mother tongues in their interactions with others and in their languaging practices, the choice to use one language only is, first, exclusionary as it is sometimes the case that not all

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learners speak the chosen language. Second, it also saves to limit multilingual people's ability to express themselves efficiently and clearly, as the norm is to use a language or languages together (hybrid form) or alongside with others.

Decolonial pedagogy and translanguaging

One strategy of de-linking from the colonial power matrix (Maldonado-Torres, 2017) is to de-naturalise the current language-in-education policies, the disciplines and the concepts that define a particular reality in the applied language field in this instance. This entail seeking alternative forms of knowledge and ways of expressing such knowledge. This will involve not just identifying covert and overt indexes of marginalisation and inequalities in language policy pronouncements, but also identifying strategies the so-called marginalised groups use to re-negotiate the unequal power dynamics resulting from the negative effects of coloniality. In this way, we can document how they challenge and question the social structures of inequalities normalised in language education policies, for example by their languaging practices.

Therefore, instead of taking language education policies and practices in Africa as a-given, which essentially function to reinforce and validate colonial ideologies as well as inequalities and marginalization as natural consequences of acquiescing to societal norms or academic standards, it is important to point out breaches and cracks in hierarchised social structures, and isolate strategies that can be used to overcome inequalities and marginalization. This is obviously a challenge to not just to sociolinguists and applied linguistics, but to Southern Theorists generally, as they seek alternative forms of knowledge and ways of expressing such knowledge. Some scholars have championed translanguaging as a decolonial practice. Makalela (2016, 2019) goes further and applies the African value system of *ubuntu* 'I am because of you are' to the fluid language use in multilingual Africa. In what he calls Ubuntu translanguaging pedagogy, "languages are interwoven in a system of infinite dependent relations that recognise no boundaries between them" (Makalela, 2019: 238). He sees translangaging as counter hegemonic and promoting decolonial pedagogy, in which the "interdependence in the language systems and their fluid, overlapping and discursive nature … match the everyday ways of communicating [and] where the use of one language is incomplete without the other" (Makalela, 2016: 194). In this conceptualisation, translanguaging becomes an innovative teaching practice, which enhances learning and teaching in contemporary classrooms by disrupting the standard language ideology, which privileges monolingual English learning and teaching.

In short, there is need for decolonial post-monolingual theorisation and the democratisation of scholarship, as well as alternative forms of knowledge. This calls for pedagogy that promotes difference and divergency in the production and dissemination of knowledge. Alternative Southern Theories will need to recognise that learners can use not just language, but a mix of languages to develop and express their knowledge of concepts, metaphors and other semiotic modes. This would also help them develop cross-linguistic capabilities across multiple languages in their repertoire to subvert and destroy structural systems of

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subjugation that duplicate hierarchies of racialized, gendered and classed power (Banda, 2020).

SUMMARY OF SPECIAL ISSUE ARTICLES

The issues discussed above and others are addressed in various ways in the papers in this volume.

Iipinge and Banda explore the negative effects of the language ideologies that favour English over African languages and translanguaging for classroom practice. Using focus group data with English Second Language (ESL) teachers, interview narratives from English Head of Departments (HODs), classroom observations and informal chats with grade 12 learners at six secondary schools in Northern Namibia, the study finds that although students struggle to cope with instruction and content in English, ESL teachers insist on teaching in the language. Even in cases where they could easily and efficiently explain a concept by switching momentary to Oshiwambo, they avoid it in the belief that doing so would impact negatively on students' proficiency in English. Iipinge and Banda conclude that the result of this situation is that ESL teaching and learning tends to be teacher-centred with little or no involvement from students. Iipinge and Banda also conclude that the language hierarchy and the one- nation one-language ideologies have negatively impacted teaching and learning in Namibia, as in the main, society also only considers schooling in English, as education and a sign of modernity. The status of indigenous languages is thus compromised as parents perceive them as not desirable for education and socio-economic mobility of their children. Iipinge and Banda use the metaphors of *mute* to describe the fact many learners are voiceless as they find it difficult to speak and discuss content in English; and the metaphor of *deaf* to describe the fact that many learners are unresponsive as they do not understand content delivered in an unfamiliar language.

Iversen and Mkandawire consider language ideologies in relation to multilingual practices in classroom in Zambia and Norway. In particular, they investigated the perceptions of pre- and in-service teachers from the two countries of the role multilingualism plays or can play in the two countries' education systems. Although the language ecologies of the two countries are different, the challenges to efficacious multilingual classroom practices the respondents from the two countries identified were similar. However, the solutions they gave were dissimilar, and also their comments on language policies were different. Their findings are that there seems to be more acceptance of multilingual solutions including the teaching learning the learner's first language, or involving other learners, teachers and parents as literacy mediators from Zambian teachers. Faced with the same problem, Norwegian teachers tended to lean towards monolingualism and assimilation of learners into Norwegian. Zambian in-service teachers critical of the current language policies in Zambia, particular the monolingual orientation in the language of teaching and learning. The Norwegian respondents tended to support the current policies.

Mashinja and Mwanza show how some teachers in Namibia have disrupted official monolingual policy language education policy pronouncement by adopting translanguaging to teach initial literacy in multilingual classrooms. They illustrate initial literacy development and

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epistemic benefits of translanguaging as a pedagogic practice in multilingual Namibia. They argue that the classroom is transformed and recontextualised from a site of monolingual epistemic violence to a democratic space for initial literacy and epistemic development where learners use linguistic features from named languages for learning. They conclude that basic education and in initial literacy development in particular can benefit from heteroglossic practices which learners are already familiar with, and thus they argue for need for policy makers to recognise such languaging practices as legitimate forms of classroom practice in multilingual contexts as found in Namibia.

Nyimbili and Mwanza use data from an experimental study to show the benefits of teaching initial literacy through translanguaging. One class was taught through English, monolingually and the other was taught translingually using the blend of languages spoken in the community. They use quantitative data analysis package SPSS and Levene's test the significance of variance of scores between the translanguaging class and the monolingual class complemented by thematic analysis of the qualitative class teacher interview narratives and classroom observations data. They found there is a significant link between translanguaging, learner participation, motivation and understanding of the content which eventually resulted into improved learner performance. They argue that the liberating effects of translanguaging and the counteraction of marginalisation of languages and their speakers become socially and cognitively empowering. They conclude when the curriculum is disrupted and decolonised through translanguaging, learners are empowered by drawing on their social and cultural knowledge leading to multiliteracy development, cultural preservation and learners' identity affirmation as well as learning outcomes improvement.

In their paper, **Hang'ombe and Mumpande** capture the effects of the colonial heritage and the coloniality power matrix of domination, repression and linguistic and cultural erasure long after the colonial government and white rulers had ceded political power in Zimbabwe. The language in education policy after Zimbabwe's independence in 1980 continued with the hierarchisation of language with English at the top followed by Shona and Ndebele, with Tonga and other languages at the bottom. They argue that before the recent policy changes (2013 and 2020) which recognised Tonga as one of the official Zimbabwean languages, Shona, Ndebele and English were used as languages of teaching and learning at basic and primary education. The academic performance of Tonga learners who had to have their initial literacy development, for example, in unfamiliar Ndebele or Shona languages, suffered with many dropping out. They claim there was erasure of Tonga culture and identity in the schools, with some learners from Tonga homes changing their names to Shona and Ndebele names to fit in and blend with the ethnic groups deemed 'superior', and also as a strategy to avoid dehumanising taunting discourses and treatment levelled against those identified as Tonga. However, they note that the recent change in language education policy in which formerly marginalised languages such as Tonga can have basic and primary education in their language has restored some of the lost pride in Tonga culture and being Tonga. They also note the 2020 policy pronouncement that all officially recognised languages must be taught in schools and that the language of teaching and learning in schools must be the language of examination, are further incentives for Tonga learners to learn

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and use as the language. At the same time, the authors are cautious of the variance one often finds between policy pronouncements and actual practice.

Manthalu and Emmanuel Ngwira's paper evaluates the 2014 change in language education policy in Malawi. English was made the sole language of learning and teaching material from basic to tertiary education. They use Benhabib's (2011) notion of communicative or concrete universalism to argue that the new policy exposes the majority of Malawian learners to two forms of marginalisation: the lack of English exposure outside the classroom means the learners do not have opportunity to practice and meaningfully engage with the language; and, the policy devalues and erases local systems of knowledge and ways of expressing it. They note that systemic forms of marginalisation can be linked Eurocentrism and coloniality, under the guise of globalisation that underpin Malawian education, which function to erase local cultures, literature, and ways of being human. The paper concludes that language education and national language policy generally needs to account for diversity and differentiates people as individuals and communities.

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